

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION FORM FOR

A NEW SCHOOL TO BE OPENED

IN AUGUST OR SEPTEMBER 2008

Name of Proposed School

Delaware College Preparatory Academy

Name of Contact Person

Anita Roberson

Name of the Head of the Board of Directors

Lisa D. Goodwin
President

Mailing Address of Contact Person

P.O. Box 2588.,
Wilmington, DE 19805

Proposed Opening Date

August 2008

Telephone Number of Contact Person

302-507-3583

Grades for School

K-5

Fax Number of Contact Person

302-792-7172

E-mail Address of Contact Person

nita.roberson@dcpa.k12.de.us

First Year Enrollment

Total Number

120

First Year Grade Span

K-1

Second Year Enrollment

Total Number

180

Second Year Grade Span

K-2

Third Year Enrollment

Total Number

240

Third Year Grade Span

K-3

Fourth Year Enrollment

Total Number

300

Fourth Year Grade Span

K-4

ENROLLMENT BREAKDOWN BY GRADES

List the enrollment per grade for each of the first four years of school operation.

First Year Enrollment

Grade	Number
Kindergarten	60
First	60
Total 1st Year Enrollment	120

Second Year Enrollment

Grade	Number
Kindergarten	60
First	60
Second	60
Total 2nd Year Enrollment	180

Third Year Enrollment

Grade	Number
Kindergarten	60
First	60
Second	60
Third	60
Total 3rd Year Enrollment	240

Fourth Year Enrollment

Grade	Number
Kindergarten	60
First	60
Second	60
Third	60
Fourth	60
Total 4th Year Enrollment	300

NARRATIVE

As an introduction, describe the proposed charter school in one page or less. Include the specific grades to be served, target population (if any), school size, location (i.e., name of city or county), founding group, school focus or special educational approach, and any other descriptive information (e.g., parental involvement) that will provide a context for the remaining narrative in this application.

Delaware College Preparatory Academy ensures that our kindergarten through grade five students are prepared to succeed in the most demanding college preparatory middle and high schools in the nation. Through a structured, disciplined and academically rigorous environment, our students master core skills needed to succeed academically – reading, writing and math. An extended school day and an extended school year allow us to provide more intense academic preparation than what is traditionally provided in public schools. Students will receive over 160 minutes of literacy instruction daily (which includes 40 minutes of writing development), and 80 minutes of mathematics instruction every day.¹ Students will also receive instruction in science, social studies, art, and music for 80 minutes per week in each subject area. Modeled after other successful college preparatory elementary school programs, we intend to provide an education that rivals that which is found in the nation's most elite private, independent and suburban schools – an education that is made available from public dollars and is accessible for all children, especially those from limited means.

Our approach to educational excellence is simple. We do what has been *proven* to work in the best schools across the country.

- We hire the best teachers.
- We believe that all students can achieve.
- We set high academic and behavioral expectations.
- We use data continuously to drive our curriculum and staffing decisions.
- We make no excuses and take full responsibility for our students' success.

Our educational design uses a two-teacher instructional model in grades Kindergarten through grade two, maintains consistency in program pacing and delivery, requires a school-wide usage of the same systems and structures, and utilizes flexible ability grouping to meet the diverse needs of our students. We will infuse character development within our more traditional academic framework and will also create and maintain a school culture grounded in the expectation that all of our students can and will go to college.

We believe that there is nothing more important than ensuring that all children have an equal opportunity to succeed in this country. To be trusted with this responsibility is a tremendous privilege and we look forward to the opportunity to partner with the Red Clay School District as we, the Founding Board of Delaware College Preparatory Academy, begin this important work.

¹ On Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday students receive an additional 30 minutes of literacy instruction, which makes the daily total of ELA instruction on those days 190 minutes. In total students will receive over 15 hours of literacy instruction each week.

1. APPLICANT QUALIFICATIONS

- a. *Describe the involvement of each of the Delaware certified teachers, parents, and community members who have participated in the preparation of the application and the development of the proposed school.*

Delaware College Preparatory Academy ("Delaware College Prep") has established a Founding Board that consists of Delaware community members, Delaware certified teachers and parents of elementary school-aged children. The Founding Board has been actively involved in all aspects of the development of the proposed school model and completion of the charter application.

Founding Board members were specifically selected for their commitment to providing a rigorous college preparatory elementary education for students most at risk of academic underperformance, and for the professional skills and expertise they would provide to ensure that the school is governed well and is an organizational and academic success. Please see section 1c for additional information about the composition of the Founding Board.

- b. *Describe how the group that participated in the development of the application came together and if there are any partnership arrangements with existing schools, educational programs, business, non-profit organizations, or any other entities or groups. If any consultants or contractors were enlisted to help prepare this application, identify them, describe their qualifications, and indicate the areas where they provided information and assistance.*

Under the leadership of Anita Roberson, the Founding Board was identified, recruited and appointed through recommendations from Delaware community members, professional relationships of the Lead Founder and the Founding Board's growing membership. All Founding Board Members were carefully screened and interviewed by Ms. Roberson and the Director of Governance for Building Excellent Schools.² Among other qualifications, members were screened for mission fit, professional skills and expertise, governance experience, and deep commitment to serve.

Prior to confirmation as Board Members, all candidates received the Delaware College Prep Founding Board Member Job Description and submitted professional resumes and/or CVs for careful review.³ Upon official invitation to serve, each Founding Board Member signed Founding Board Member Agreements signaling their understanding of and commitment to the roles and responsibilities of Delaware College Prep Board Members.

There are no partnership arrangements that exist between Delaware College Prep and any existing schools, educational programs, businesses, non-profit organizations or other entities or groups.

The Lead Founder is currently completing a year-long Fellowship with Building Excellent Schools, a national non-profit organization that identifies and trains strong community leaders to

² Business Excellent Schools is an established national non-profit organization committed to improving the academic achievement of students in the nation's urban centers. For additional information and information about staff, please visit their website at www.buildingexcellentschools.org.

³ A copy of the Founding Board Member Job Description is located on page B4.1 in the appendix. A copy of Founding Board resumes can be found on page B2.1 in the appendix.

establish high performing charter schools in urban areas across the country.⁴ Within the highly competitive and nationally recognized program, Fellows receive training, exposure, and technical support to aid in the development of the charter school application, establishment of their Founding Board and implementation of their strategic plan post charter approval.

- c. *List the names, the places of residence, and the phone numbers of the Founding Board of Directors and indicate which members are teachers currently certified in Delaware, parents, and community members. Describe how the location of the founding group members is related to the proposed location of the charter school.*

Figure 1.1 outlines the names, places of residence, and the phone numbers of all Founding Board members, and indicates who among them is a Delaware certified teacher, a parent and/or a community member. In total, 100% of Board members are community members, two are parents, and one is a certified teacher.

FIGURE 1.1: FOUNDING BOARD MEMBERS

FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER	PHONE	RESIDENCE	RELATIONSHIP
Casson-Watson, Terry	302.293.6176	127 Westlawn Ct. Apt. 3C Wilmington, DE 19809	Community Member ⁵ / Parent
Faria, Tamekca	302.449.2471	14 S. Cummings Dr. Middletown, DE 19709	Community Member / DE Certified Teacher
Gaskins, Cyd	302.737.7521	112 Glencoe Ct. Newark, DE 19702	Community Member
Goodwin, Lisa	302.282.8141	112 Gladstone Rd. Lansdowne, PA 19050	Community Member ⁶
Mobley, Kendall	302.395.185	501 Frank Orchards Lane New Castle, DE 19720	Community Member / DE Certified Teacher/Parent
Roberson, Anita	302.507.3583	70 Chaddwyck Blvd New Castle, DE 19720	Community Member
Sheldon, Diane	302.832.2682	305 Wren Ct. Newark, DE 19702	Community Member
Townsend-Wilson, Angela	302.420-8765	25 Sunset Drive Newark, DE 19702	Community Member / DE Certified Teacher/Parent

The Founding Board is committed to addressing the academic underperformance of Red Clay's most disadvantaged students. With all members working or living in the community, each Board member has a vested interest in seeing that all children of Wilmington have a strong educational foundation starting in the earliest grades.

- d. *Describe the plans for further recruitment of Board members of the school, especially teachers to be employed at the school and parents of students to be enrolled at the school.*

⁴ Building Excellent School's core program is the Fellowship, a 12-month, full time comprehensive training program that prepares dedicated, hardworking and talented individuals to design and open academically excellent urban charter schools. An overview of the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship can be found on page C1.1 in the appendix.

⁵ The Founding Board has identified community member as anyone who lives and/or works in Delaware.

⁶ Lisa Goodwin currently works at JP Morgan Chase and has worked in Wilmington for over 12 years.

In accordance with the Bylaws, a seat will be reserved on the Board for a teacher who is employed by Delaware College Prep and a parent of a child enrolled in the school. The Executive Director will make recommendations for both seats to the Board's Governance Committee. The Executive Director intends to solicit nominations from staff and parents and will interview candidates before presenting them for consideration to the committee. The Teacher and Parent Trustees will be voting members of the Board.

Additional Board members will be nominated and elected to serve on the Board as the need arises. Prospective Board members may be elected at any Board meeting.⁷

e. *Describe how the background of each member of the founding group makes him or her qualified to operate a charter school and implement the proposed educational program. Describe how the Board of Directors has and will maintain collective experience, or contractual access to such experience, in the following areas:*

- 1) *Research-based curriculum and instructional strategies, to particularly include the curriculum and instructional strategies of the proposed educational program.*
- 2) *Business management, including but not limited to accounting and finance.*
- 3) *Personnel management.*
- 4) *Diversity issues, including but not limited to outreach, student recruitment, and instruction.*
- 5) *At-risk populations and children with disabilities, including but not limited to students eligible for special education and related services.*
- 6) *School operations, including but not limited to facilities management.*

The Founding Board of Delaware College Prep comprises community members, teachers and parents with skills that are diverse and broadly representative of the talents necessary to govern an effective charter school. Listed below is a summary of each Board member's experience.⁸

ANITA ROBERSON, LEAD FOUNDER

- **Board Specific Skills:** Business Management, Personnel Management, Diversity Issues (outreach, student recruitment), School Operations, At-Risk Populations
- **Summary:** Anita Roberson is currently a Building Excellent Schools Fellow and the Lead Founder of Delaware College Preparatory Academy. During the Fellowship program, Ms. Roberson is receiving over 600 hours of intensive instruction in urban education and will also complete a residency at Achievement First's Crown Heights Elementary School, a high performing college preparatory elementary school in Brooklyn, NY. Prior to joining the Fellowship, Ms. Roberson worked as the Director of Education for an alternative school for adult learners. In this role, she was responsible for managing all aspects of the school's educational planning, including curriculum development, class scheduling, hiring, managing 15 full- and part-time teachers and substitutes, and ensuring that students met the program's aggressive accountability standards regarding achievement. Prior to being promoted to this position, Ms. Roberson was the Director of Enrollment for the school. In this role, she was responsible for meeting student enrollment targets in a very competitive market through the execution of outreach and recruitment strategies. Ms. Roberson also has extensive experience in human resources planning, organizational development, training and leadership. After completing her degree in Industrial and Labor Relations from Cornell University, she

⁷ Please see the Bylaws which begin on page B6.1 in the appendix.

⁸ A copy of the resume of each founding board member can be found beginning on page B2.1 of the appendix.

worked for more than six years at First USA/Bank One in Wilmington, DE. She held several roles of increasing levels of responsibility in that organization including Human Resources Business Partner, Strategic Project Manager and Recruiter. The majority of Ms. Roberson's responsibilities involved leading teams with a variety of skill sets and expertise in the execution of projects that were directly linked to mission critical business initiatives.

TERRY CASSON-WATSON, FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER

- **Board Specific Skills:** Diversity Issues (Outreach, Recruitment), At-Risk Populations
- **Summary:** Ms. Casson-Watson is the New Castle Coordinator for the Resource Mothers Program of Children and Families First. Children and Families First is a non-profit organization that strengthens families and communities by providing quality social, educational and mental health services. The Resource Mothers program ensures that low income teenage and adult women who are pregnant receive the prenatal counseling, care and support needed to have healthy babies. In her role, Ms. Casson-Watson works directly with disadvantaged community members to ensure that they receive the counseling, advice, training and support needed to greatly improve the lives of their families. Ms. Casson-Watson has extensive experience coordinating community outreach and recruitment sessions to inform community members of the services provided by Children and Families First. She is familiar with advocating for the interests and needs of low-income community members and securing the appropriate resources required to resolve their immediate needs. She is the parent of an elementary school-aged child who recently attended a Delaware charter school. Ms. Casson-Watson graduated from PS DuPont High School and has also attended classes in business education at Delaware State College.

TAMEKCA FARIA, FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER

- **Board Specific Skills:** Research-based Curriculum and Instructional Strategies, Diversity Issues, At-Risk Populations, School Operations
- **Summary:** Ms. Faria is a Delaware certified teacher and a *Teach For America* alumna with ten years of teaching experience in urban middle schools. She has taught 6th, 7th and 8th grade mathematics, literacy, social studies, science, technology and physical education. Highly committed to addressing the disparities in achievement for low-income students, she assumed additional responsibilities as an academic advisor, collaborated with teachers to meet student needs, coordinated school-wide activities and served on the Principal's cabinet. Ms. Faria also has experience creating class schedules and developing strong partnerships with parents to facilitate the academic success of their children. She is currently employed at Delaware State University as the Associate Director of the Classic Upward Bound Program. In this role, Ms. Faria is responsible for coordinating the recruitment and selection of Upward Bound participants and outreach to targeted urban schools. She also provides academic and collegiate counseling to high school students. Ms. Faria holds a BS degree in American and African American studies from Wesleyan University and an MA degree in Educational Administration from New York University.

CYD GASKINS, FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER

- **Board Specific Skills:** Business Management (Accounting, Finance, Budgeting, Information Technology, Data Management), Personnel Management
- **Summary:** Ms. Gaskins is a Senior Director of Professional Network Operations at a major healthcare management company where she is responsible for managing information-technology resources, inter-disciplinary cross-functional teams impacting major corporate e-business initiatives, process improvements and reengineering efforts. In this role Ms. Gaskins is responsible for developing and managing a \$5 million budget. She has extensive experience in creating effective and logical systems, structures and processes vital to an organization's ability to meet its objectives. Ms. Gaskins also has extensive management and leadership development experience, through her management of people in operational divisions and on cross-functional teams. She has significant auditing, financial controls and accounting experience. She has held positions as an Internal Audit Manager within the Finance Division for a Fortune 500 company in which she was responsible for the implementation of effective audit programs. Ms. Gaskins has also held the positions of Corporate Accountant and Staff Accountant for a public accounting firm. Ms. Gaskins holds a BS degree in Accounting and an MBA in Finance from LaSalle University.

LISA GOODWIN, FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER

- **Board Specific Skills:** Business Management (Marketing, Budgeting, Data Management), Diversity Issues (Outreach), Personnel Management
- **Summary:** Ms. Goodwin is a Senior Marketing Manager at JP Morgan-Chase in Wilmington, DE. She is responsible for managing relationships with third-party vendors, sales and revenue forecasting, team management and managing a \$77 million dollar budget. Ms. Goodwin has extensive experience devising and implementing strategies to generate revenues in highly competitive markets. She also has a clear understanding of how to generate and create excitement for new ventures and how to effectively *brand* a product or concept in the larger community. Ms. Goodwin has experience developing proposals and soliciting funds from partners and external groups. She also has considerable experience leading teams and managing the professional development of staff. Prior to joining JP-Morgan Chase, Ms. Goodwin was a membership and marketing director for the YMCA. Ms. Goodwin holds a BS degree in Communications from Temple University.

KENDALL MOBLEY, FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER

- **Board Specific Skills:** Research-based Curriculum and Instructional Strategies, Diversity Issues, At-Risk Populations, School Operations
- **Summary:** Mr. Mobley is an Assistant Principal at Dickinson High School in the Red Clay School District. In this role, he is responsible for observing and evaluating teacher performance student activity programs. Mr. Mobley has direct experience in school operations including monitoring the safety and security of school property. In addition to assistant principal, Mr. Mobley has also held positions as the Dean of Students and Student Advisor for Newark High School. As Dean of Students, Mr. Mobley had direct responsibility for managing and monitoring the school's climate. He also had responsibility for facilitating parent, teacher and student conferences to discuss students behaviors that violated the Christina School District's Code of Conduct. As Student Advisor, Mr. Mobley provided the entire school community with supportive services designed to promote and enhance academic, personal, social, and career development for

its 9th grade students. Mr. Mobley also has five years of teaching experience and has held roles as an Intervention Specialist and Back in Control Trainer each designed to help at-risk children or their parents to stay focused on positive behavior choices and pursue a higher education. Mr. Mobley is pending conferral for his Master of Education Degree from Wilmington College. He holds a BS degree in Mathematics and Computer Science from South Carolina State University. He is an active Delaware certified teacher with a certification in secondary mathematics.

DIANE SHELDON, FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER

- **Board Specific Skills:** Research-based Curriculum and Instructional Strategies, Diversity Issues, At-Risk Populations
- **Summary:** Ms. Sheldon is a retired elementary school teacher with over 34 years of experience in an urban environment. Ms. Sheldon has taught at all elementary grade levels and has held long-term standing as the appointed grade teacher at two distinct elementary schools. Ms. Sheldon has extensive experience evaluating and implementing a variety of elementary curriculum targeting an at-risk population. She has also served as a technology specialist helping elementary school students gain computer skills by integrating best practices in literacy and math. She is also familiar with the use and effectiveness of developmentally appropriate assessment tools—both curriculum-based and national norm-referenced—for elementary school students. Ms. Sheldon holds a BS and an MS degree in elementary education from Cheyney University.

ANGELA TOWNSEND-WILSON, FOUNDING BOARD MEMBER

- **Board Specific Skills:** Research-based Curriculum and Instructional Strategies, Diversity Issues, At-Risk Populations, School Operations
- **Summary:** Ms. Townsend-Wilson is currently an educational and leadership consultant for NorthPointe Educational Corporation. In this role she provides educational analysis, data driven curriculum planning, training and coaching to teachers and school administrators. Her clients include Marion T. Academy Charter School and Kuumba Academy Charter School. Ms. Townsend Wilson has also served as a school administrator for Kuumba Academy Charter School. As the Dean of Students, she was responsible for the strategic planning and implementation of policies and procedures to ensure that school-wide instructional objectives were achieved. She also coordinated parent workshops and meetings and developed alternative educational plans for students who were performing below level. Ms. Townsend-Wilson also served as a Student Achievement Coordinator for Kuumba Academy. In this role she managed and coordinated the Delaware Student Testing program, planned professional development for staff and completed assessment reports for the Board of Directors. Ms. Townsend Wilson also has three years of experience teaching elementary school students and holds active Delaware teaching certification. Ms. Townsend-Wilson holds a Masters in Elementary Education from Wilmington College and a Bachelors of Science degree in Computer Information Systems from Goldey Beacom College.

The Board will continue to seek qualified individuals with experience in specific skill areas to best address the many critical areas of building and governing a successful charter school. The Bylaws grant the Board the ability to nominate and elect members at any meeting, thus facilitating the addition of Trustees as needed. The Governance Committee will nominate candidates to fill a total of fourteen seats on the governing Board. The Board also has within its powers the ability to create an Advisory Committee. Advisory Committee members are individuals with specific expertise who provide guidance and counsel to the Board on an as-needed basis. The ability to nominate Board

members at each meeting and to establish an Advisory Committee are two ways the Board will ensure its membership has a broad range of experiences from which to draw.

Angela Dennis, a special education expert with over 14 years of experience coordinating behavioral health and special education services in public schools is the first advisory member that will be recommended to serve on the advisory team. Ms. Dennis has already lent her expertise to the Founding Board in the development of the charter application. A copy of Ms. Dennis' resume has been included in the appendix on page B7.1

2. FORM OF ORGANIZATION

Identify the name of the organizing corporation, date of incorporation, and names of the corporation's officers and the office held by each. Attach a copy of the Certificate of Incorporation and a copy of the Bylaws of the corporation. The Bylaws must be consistent with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 29 Delaware Code, Chapter 100 (related to public bodies, public records, and open meetings) and provide for representation of the school's teachers and parents of students on the Board of Directors. The Bylaws must demonstrate that the applicant's business is restricted to the opening and operation of charter schools, before school programs, after school programs and educationally related programs offered outside the traditional school year.

Delaware College Preparatory Academy, Inc. was incorporated by the state of Delaware on November 14, 2006. The Certificate of Incorporation documentation is included on page K1.1 in the Appendix.

The proposed Bylaws of the Corporation begin on page B6.1 of the appendix. The Bylaws are consistent with the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act, 29 Delaware Code Chapter 100. The Bylaws also provide for representation of the school's teachers and parents of students on the Board of Directors. The Bylaws also demonstrate that the business of Delaware College Preparatory Academy, Inc. is restricted to the opening and operation of charter schools, before school programs, after school programs and educationally related programs offered outside of the traditional school year.

The incorporator is Anita Roberson, and the members of the Founding Board are Terry Casson-Watson, Tamekca Faria, Cyd Gaskins, Lisa Goodwin, Kendall Mobley, Diane Sheldon, and Angela Townsend-Wilson. All members of the Founding Board were carefully selected so that the Board would be broadly representative of the professional skills and community commitment necessary to effectively govern the organization.

The Founding Board is a self-assembled group and the governing Board of Directors is an elected body. When chartered, the Delaware College Prep Founding Board will transition into the Board of Directors. Because the work of the Founding period will demonstrate those individuals who are the strongest candidates for officer positions, holding elections post-charter will allow for the best-qualified Board members to be named to the following posts: President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer. For purposes of the Founding Board, Anita Roberson has served as the Head. As the proposed Executive Director, Ms. Roberson will serve in an *ex officio* role on the Governing Board. The Governing Board will elect the Head of the Board of Directors.

3. MISSION, GOALS AND EDUCATIONAL OBJECTIVES

- a. *Describe the purpose, mission, goals, and core philosophy of the proposed school. Indicate how the mission, goals, and educational objectives are consistent with the legislative intent of 14 Delaware Code, Section 501, and the restrictions on charter schools set forth in 14 Delaware Code, Section 506.*

"We report to the American people that while we can take justifiable pride in what our schools and colleges have historically accomplished and contributed to the US and the well-being of its people, the educational foundations of our society are presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people." - *A Nation at Risk*⁹

Purpose

We will provide a rigorous academic program to students in grades K-5, open our school with grades K-1 in the first year, and grow one grade per year until we reach full grade capacity. Targeting the most underserved students in the Red Clay community, our goal is to ensure that every elementary school student has the skills, content knowledge, personal characteristics, and determination to succeed in college preparatory middle and high schools on their way to successful matriculation into four-year colleges and universities.

We believe that a strong academic and character foundation in the early elementary school years is necessary for future academic and life success. According to the National Research Council, "Academic success, as defined by high school graduation, can be predicted with reasonable accuracy by knowing someone's reading skill at the end of 3rd grade. A person who is not at least a modestly skilled reader by that time is unlikely to graduate from high school."¹⁰ Research further indicates that early intervention with low-income students and others who may be at risk of academic underperformance is critical and most effective when started in the earliest grades.

Red Clay serves as a model of continuous improvement and innovation through its willingness to implement new instructional techniques, conduct data driven decision-making and proactively use assessments and assessment data to propel student achievement. Delaware College Prep's school design model embraces these approaches. First, our operating philosophy centers on constant feedback and continuous self-reflection so we never lose sight of our purpose and how well we are operating in alignment with our mission. Second, we have an innovative drive to adopt and implement best practice strategies – approaches that have been proven to work in the most successful schools with the most disadvantaged students. Third, we strongly believe that in addition to hiring the best instructional talent, a carefully planned and consistent evaluation of our student's academic achievements is a key distinguishing factor between top performing and bottom performing schools. Lastly, our use of interim assessments and the results of that data will help us to measure what our students are learning and guide us in our instructional practices and use of curriculum. We believe that Delaware College Prep will add tremendous value as our mission and educational approach are directly aligned with Red Clay's ambitious educational goals for all of its students.

⁹ <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/NatAtRisk/risk.html>

¹⁰ National Research Council, 1998 (<http://www.ed.gov/initi/americanreads/ReadDiff/>, accessed on 12/14/04). In addition, in his review of high-performing, high poverty schools, Samuel Casey Carter concludes that a laser focus on basic literacy and math in the early years of schools was a central commonality among high-performing elementary schools (Casey, *Ibid.*, p. 28).

Mission

Delaware College Preparatory Academy ensures that our kindergarten through grade five students are prepared to succeed in the most demanding college preparatory middle and high schools in the nation.

Need

Central to our mission is our commitment to closing the achievement gap for all of our students. The achievement gap has historically impacted two groups – students who are poor and students who are non-Asian minorities. According to the Learning Points Associates article *Achievement Gaps*¹¹, there are two types of achievement gaps:

1. **Social Gap:** The difference in academic performance between wealthier and more economically deprived students.
2. **Racial Gap:** The difference in academic performance between whites and non-Asian minorities.

Of the 7,467 elementary school-aged children that Red Clay serves¹², close to one half are from low-income families (43%), and an almost equal percentage of students are white (49%) and minority (50%). Currently, achievement gaps exist within individual schools (comparisons of achievement across subgroups within the same school) and between schools (comparisons of achievement across subgroups amongst different schools).

The achievement gap begins in elementary school and its impact is long lasting, therefore a college preparatory program based on rigorous academic preparation is needed early. Delaware College Prep is designed to eliminate the achievement gap for Red Clay's most challenged students so that all children have an equal educational footing upon completion of their primary education.

The Red Clay School District has a number of top performing elementary schools that serve as models of student achievement. Among these are North Star Elementary, Brandywine Springs Elementary and Linden Hills Elementary schools, all three of which boast reading and math proficiency levels of 92% or higher on the most recent DSTP exams. Of the remaining eleven elementary schools, four additional schools demonstrated reading or math proficiency levels above 75%. The three lowest performing schools in reading proficiency include Shortlidge Elementary, Warner Elementary, and Anna P. Mote (Mote) Elementary. Thirty five percent (35%) or more of students who attend these schools are unable to read with proficiency. It is precisely this achievement gap that we seek to address.

The following figure depicts the results of the three highest performing and lowest performing elementary schools based on ELA results and corresponding demographics.

¹¹ <http://www.learningpt.org/gaplibrary/text/statesdiffer.php>

¹² All data and statistics pertaining to the Red Clay School District and similar data on overall school performance, race, income, and graduation rates in Delaware have been taken from the Delaware Department of Education website: www.doe.k12.de.us.

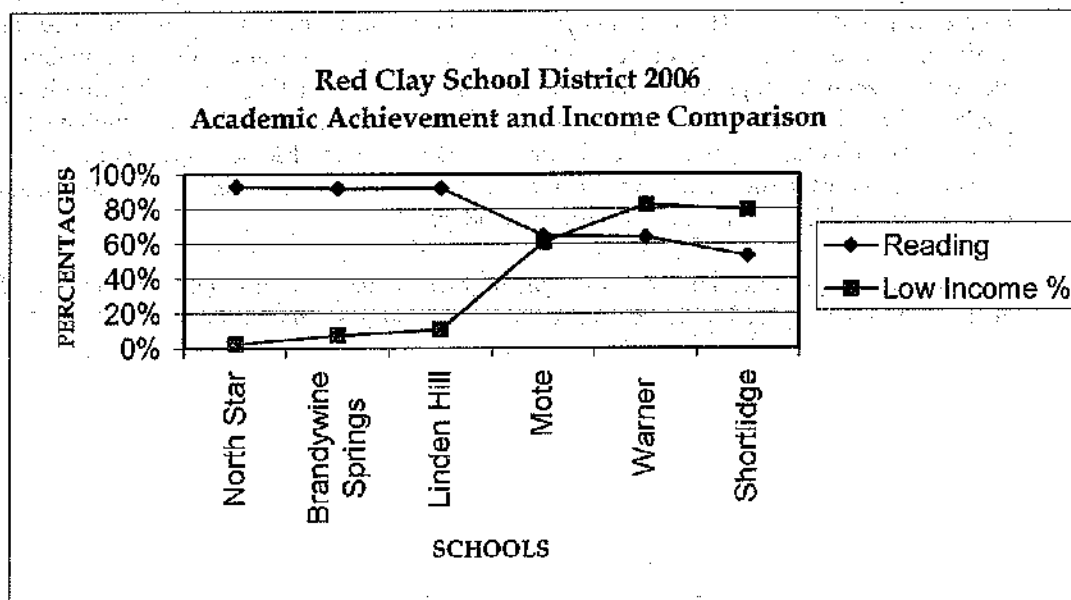
**FIGURE 3.1: RED CLAY DISTRICT ELA
COMPARISON OF TOP AND LOW PERFORMING SCHOOLS**

RANK	SCHOOL	ELA PROFICIENCY ALL STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF LOW INCOME STUDENTS	PERCENTAGE OF NON- ASIAN MINORITY STUDENTS	GAP ACROSS SCHOOLS
#1	North Star	93%	3%	4%	28% gap in ELA proficiency across the highest performing and lowest performing schools
#2	Brandywine Springs	92%	8%	8%	
#3	Linden Hills	92%	11%	12%	
#12	Mote	65%	61%	63%	
#13	Warner	64%	82%	98%	
#14	Shortlidge	63%	80%	100%	

A 28% gap in achievement exists in ELA proficiency when comparing the average scores of North Star, Brandywine Springs and Linden Hills with those of Shortlidge, Warner and Mote. In addition the student composition within each subset is vastly different. North Star, Brandywine Springs and Linden Hills have relatively low percentages of low-income students, especially when compared to Mote, Warner and Shortlidge. In addition, the diversity of each school differs greatly, with the lowest performing schools having the strongest concentrations of minority students.

The next figure illustrates this statistic more concretely. As the percentage of low-income students increases, the percentage of students who achieve ELA proficiency declines.

FIGURE 3.2: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT AND INCOME COMPARISON



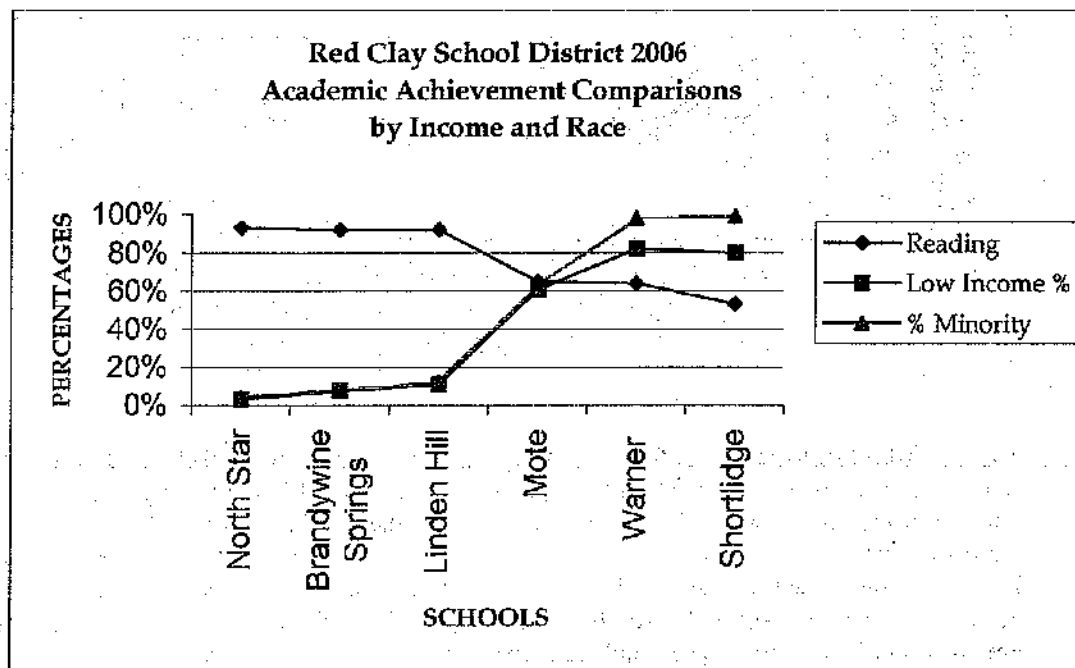
Such data indicates that a social achievement gap exists between elementary schools within the Red Clay School District. Wealthier students are achieving at much higher levels of proficiency in reading than poorer students when comparing results across schools. North Ridge and Linden Hills did not have a significant number of low-income students to see if this disparity in achievement exists within the school. Nor does the data currently report the achievement of wealthy students which would allow you to draw a direct comparison. However, the overall District Report Card shows that a 13% achievement gap exists between the ELA results of all students versus those of low-income students.

The percentage of low-income students and minority students are almost equal amongst schools with significant numbers of children who are not poor and the correlation between the racial composition of the school and academic achievement parallels what you find when comparing the schools by income. Figure 3.3 illustrates this point.

North Star, Brandywine Springs and Linden Hills have very small percentages of minority students vs. Mote, Warner and Shortlidge which have predominantly non-Asian minority student populations. Similar to low income, as the percentage of non-Asian minorities increases, the percentage of students who are able to read with proficiency decreases.

Currently there is a 40% gap in English proficiency between the highest performing school (North Star) and the District's lowest performing school (Shortlidge). There is also a 77% difference in the percentage of poor students between these schools and a 96% difference in African-American and Hispanic enrollment.

FIGURE 3.3: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT COMPARISON BY INCOME AND RACE



The social and racial achievement gap continues throughout middle and high school. Again using ELA as an example, low income and non-Asian minority students continue to perform at lower levels, with gaps further widening in some instances when students reach high school.

FIGURE 3.4: ELA ACHIEVEMENT GAP TRENDS

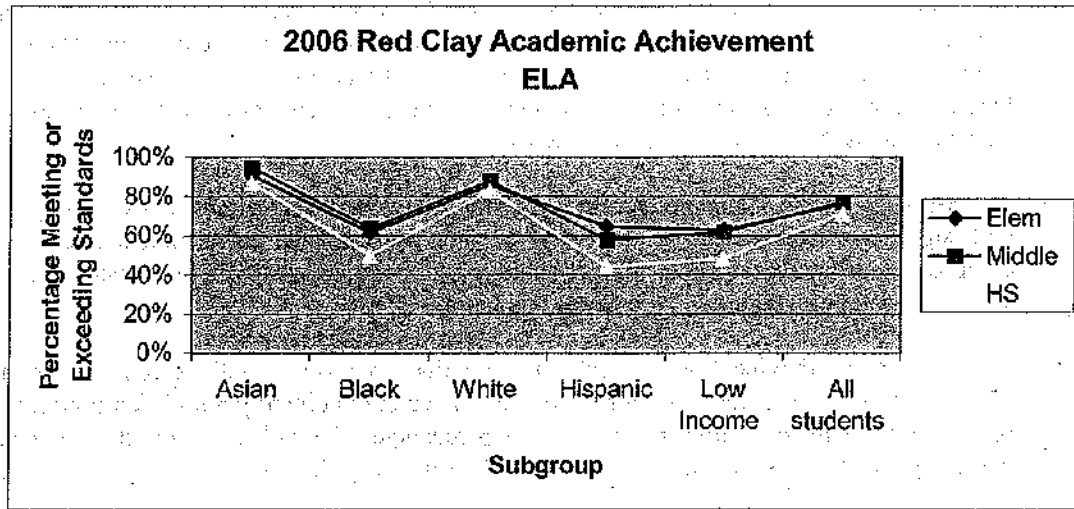
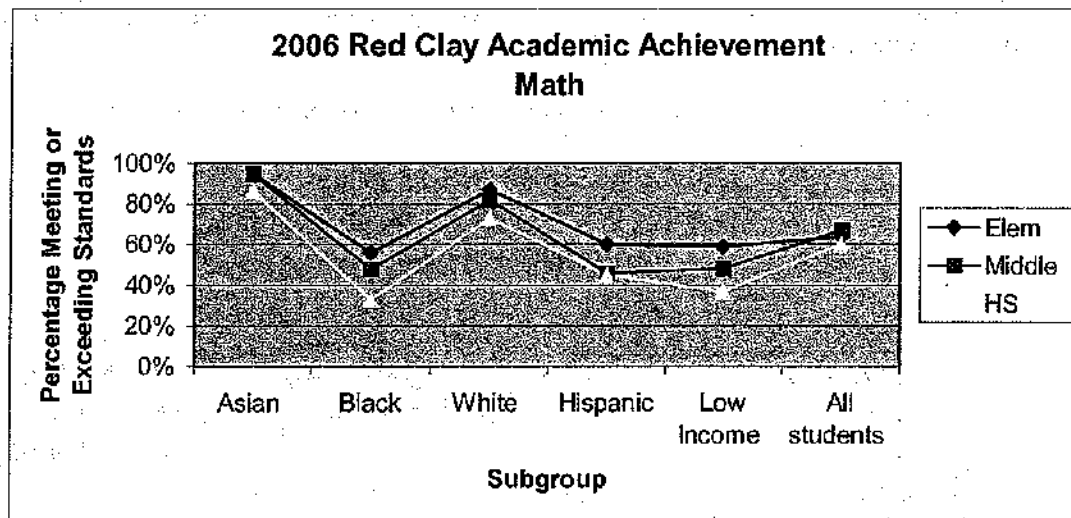


FIGURE 3.5: MATH ACHIEVEMENT GAP TRENDS



Students who fail to reach proficiency in high school are also most likely to drop out of high school and least likely to transition to higher education. In 2005, the average high school drop out rate in the district was 6.1%, slightly higher than the state's rate of 5.3%. The majority of these students were Black and Latino. In Red Clay in 2005, 35% of Black students and 49% of Latino students failed to graduate high school in four years. We believe that the roots of such academic failure are best addressed by intervening in the earliest grades, ensuring that students are proficient in the core subjects and are prepared for success in later grades.

**FIGURE 3.6: JUNE 2005 NCES GRADUATES
(COMPARED TO NINTH GRADE FOUR YEARS AGO)**

	All Students	Asian	Black	White	Hispanic
	%	%	%	%	%
District	74%	79.3%	65%	83%	51%
State	84%	93%	77%	88%	67%

Currently Red Clay's percentage of high school graduates across all categories is lower than the state average. With high school graduation rates lower, college matriculation rates are also lower. According to the Education Trust, in 2002 37% of Delaware's high school freshman enrolled in college four years later. This is 16% lower than the average college matriculation rates at the top five academically performing states in the nation. Of the 37% of Delaware students who attend college, 66% of them complete their BA degree within six years. When you look more closely at college matriculation based on race, only 24% of African American students versus 59% of white students obtain their degree in four years.

The achievement gaps evident among the elementary schools in Red Clay are not unique to the district. This challenge has garnered national attention and in many states, like Delaware, much work is being done to finding effective and innovative solutions to balance the educational playing field for all children. The schools that inform our mission, vision and educational program have successfully addressed the achievement gap in their respective cities. All of these schools – Roxbury Preparatory, Excel Academy, Achievement First Crown Heights, KIPP Tech Valley, KIPP Lynn, Excellence Academy, Academy of the Pacific Rim, and others – are all living examples of college preparatory schools that have succeeded in dramatically raising the academic and behavioral expectations and the achievement of urban students.

Red Clay faces an extraordinary challenge in addressing these pockets of academic underperformance. We will provide a school model designed to address the needs of the most disadvantaged children, all based on the best instructional practices and proven approaches that have worked and continue to work in other cities facing similar challenges. As we share with and fully support the Red Clay School District's belief that all children can learn and a commitment to offer the best educational services, we look forward to building an exceptional, mutually beneficial relationship that satisfies the needs of a broader spectrum of community members.

Goals

The school's guiding mission to prepare every student for college informs our decision to establish and focus relentlessly on the following goals that are directly linked to academic achievement:

- To ensure every student performs on or above grade level in the core subjects;
- To exceed state and national performance expectations in reading, math and writing;
- To prepare students to enter and succeed within the most competitive college preparatory middle and high schools; and
- To develop the unwavering intent in the mind of every student that I *will* graduate from a prestigious college or university.

Our Core Philosophy

In support of these goals, Delaware College Prep's core educational philosophy is based on the following beliefs:

1. All students can and will learn.
2. We must hire, retain and develop exceptional teachers committed to outstanding academic results.
3. We must create a school culture that supports strong academic achievement.
4. Data analysis must drive all curriculum and staffing decisions.
5. We must retain a razor sharp focus on the academic needs of our students.

1. All Students Can and Will Learn

"Academic excellence is not the province of any one group; rather it is a standard, a level of achievement to which students can aspire regardless of race, ethnicity or social class. It is a common ground and therein lies the power." – Rafe Esquith¹³

We believe that all children, regardless of background, can learn to read, write, speak and compute with the expertise needed to succeed in elementary school, proceed successfully into college preparatory middle and high schools, and finally access an outstanding college education. The equal opportunity that a strong public education can provide, even to our most disadvantaged children, is at the core of our American dream. Yet schools often struggle with the multiple challenges students bring with them, and students can fall behind quickly, even in the earliest grades. However, high performing urban schools that serve disadvantaged and otherwise underserved students do exist, and it is upon their model that Delaware College Prep is designed.¹⁴ Like the leaders of these schools, we believe uncompromisingly that all students can learn. Like them, we will provide the structural, programmatic, and curricular elements that enable teachers to bridge their students' academic gaps and demonstrate strong academic achievement at all grade levels - regardless of their socio-economic status or demographic profile. The elements that we believe will allow even the most disadvantaged student to learn include:

- Research-proven curricula
- Extended school day and year
- Intensive focus on literacy
- Character development
- Family involvement
- College focus starting in Kindergarten

We firmly believe that when you raise the bar of academic achievement, within an environment in which learning is paramount, exciting and expected and when each student is supported by a staff that can foster a desire to learn in every child, then all children can and will meet the highest of expectations. It is this unwavering belief in the ability of our students that will set the stage for outstanding student learning and achievement that directly supports the legislative intent of 14 Delaware Code, Section 501.

¹³ Esquith, Rafe. *There Are No Shortcuts*. NY: Random House, 2003.

¹⁴ The BES Fellowship program includes a thorough and intensive review of these schools as well as direct exposure to classrooms, teachers and school leadership within them. For additional information about these schools, please also see Abigail Thernstrom and Stephan Thernstrom, *No Excuses: Closing the Racial Gap in Learning*, 2003, pgs., 43-64.

2. We must hire, retain and develop exceptional teachers committed to outstanding academic results.

"Successful classrooms are run by teachers who have an unshakable belief that the student can accomplish amazing things and who create the expectation that they will."

– Rafe Esquith¹⁵

We believe that exceptional teachers drive exceptional results. Studies consistently indicate that while curriculum choices are important, the most important factor in strong academic achievement lies with the quality of instruction that the student receives from their teacher. One study finds that students with teachers who rank in the top quartile in effectiveness make gains over the school year that nearly quadruple those of the students with the least effective 25% of teachers.¹⁶ Therefore, we will hire the best instructional talent. The best teachers are ones who:

- Believe that all children can learn
- Do whatever it takes for every student to learn
- Are warm and strict regarding all academic and behavioral expectations
- Understand how young students learn - and especially how they learn to read with fluency and comprehension
- Demonstrate teamwork and a strong work ethic
- Seek feedback and continuous professional improvement
- Are committed to executing the school's core mission
- Focus on results

We will hire teachers who believe that all children can and must be academically successful. We will hire teachers whose love for learning is so infectious that they infuse their students with the same passion and joy. We will also invest the time and financial resources necessary to ensure that the talents our teachers possess continue to expand. Professional development will be a frequent and dedicated part of our school calendar, and will be focused on ensuring the strongest instructional practices in the classroom and the most dramatic of student academic outcomes.¹⁷ Teachers will have an opportunity to develop their leadership abilities by leading professional development sessions and participating in frequent peer reviews on effective instructional delivery and classroom management. Teachers will also visit high performing schools to study the implementation of best practice systems, structures, and teaching methodologies. By creating a culture that demonstrates that 'only the best teachers work here' and continually providing opportunities to demonstrate leadership, observe best practices, and participate in specific customized training sessions, teachers will realize that they are valued. This in turn will have a positive impact on staff retention. Delaware College Prep will also maintain a competitive edge with regards to compensation and work diligently to maintain a strong sense of staff pride and morale throughout the school.

3. We must create a school culture that supports strong academic achievement.

"We are fighting a battle involving skills and values. We are not afraid to set social norms. The best schools work hard to instill desire, discipline and dedication."

¹⁵ Esquith, Rafe. *There Are No Shortcuts*. NY: Random House, 2003.

¹⁶ William L. Saunders and June C. Rivers, *Cumulative and Residual Effects of Teachers on Future Student Academic Achievement*, University of Tennessee Value-Added Research and Assessment Center, 1996, p. 6.

¹⁷ The proposed school calendar is located in the Appendix on page F2.1.

- David Levin, founder of KIPP¹⁸

The foundation of a strong, achievement-oriented school is an environment that is both supportive of and conducive to the learning process and in which high academic achievement is paramount. A school's environment is not determined by size or physical locality. Rather, it is the culture that is communicated by the leader to the staff, who in turn communicate it to students, that sets the stage necessary for strong academic and behavioral expectations and performance.

When asked what was most critical to strong student achievement, Principal and co-founder of North Star Academy James Verrelli stated that school culture along with curriculum are the two core components that school leaders must get right *immediately* in order to have a strong, effective, high performing charter school, and that a school in its earliest days must focus on culture *relentlessly*.¹⁹ Based upon the success of schools such as North Star Academy that have demonstrated outstanding student achievement with a disadvantaged population, we will develop a culture of achievement and high expectations upon which all other educational design elements depend. We will:

- Establish a clear set of behavioral expectations, explicitly teach and relentlessly model them, and enforce rules warmly yet strictly, immediately and consistently
- Establish, reinforce and reward high academic achievement
- Develop and reinforce strong character traits in our students
- Sweat the small stuff, such as uniform violations (no belt, failure to tuck in shirt), rules around posture when sitting, materials ready at start of class, hands raised and the expectation of 100% student participation in all classroom learning, and silent hallways
- Require that students demonstrate that they respect themselves and treat their peers and teachers with a high degree of respect and consideration
- Inspire and insist that students prepare and are willing to do whatever it takes to make it to college

At Delaware College Prep, we will provide a safe, structured and disciplined school culture. Our staff will implement strict disciplinary policies with a warm tone that demonstrates tremendous commitment to the academic and character development of each student. With the support of parents, a committed staff, and ongoing feedback on academic and behavioral expectations, an atmosphere that continuously and unapologetically supports academic learning will be created.

In addition to the establishment and enforcement of high academic and behavioral expectations, Delaware College Prep students will have the added benefit of participating in weekly character development classes centered on our core values. In this way, students will be taught that excellence in education and excellence in character go hand in hand. As stated by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus character - that is the goal of true education.²⁰ Inspired by the success of students who have overcome many obstacles in their early lives to go on to prestigious high schools, colleges and careers, we have established a dual set of what we identify as Delaware College Prep's *Be the Dream* core values.²¹ Every Delaware College Prep student is expected to achieve in school, behave well, and head on successfully to college - in other words, every student is expected to *Be the Dream*.

¹⁸ <http://www.thernstrom.com/books/noexcuses.htm>

¹⁹ This statement was made during the Lead Founder's visit at North Star Academy in October 2006 as part of the BES Fellowship program.

²⁰ http://en.thinkexist.com/martin_luther_king_jr_quotes/

²¹ This acronym is inspired by the book entitled *Be the Dream* by Gary Simons.

FIGURE: 3.7: BE THE DREAM CORE VALUES: ACADEMIC AND BEHAVIORAL AIMS

ACADEMIC AIMS		CHARACTER AIMS	
Determination	Work hard and never give up. Stay focused on your goals.	Discipline	Make good choices.
Responsibility	Make no excuses.	Respect	Be honest. Be kind.
Excellence	Don't be good - be great.	Enthusiastic Engagement	Be an active learner.
Ask and Answer Questions	Participate in class. Ask questions to make sure you understand.	Attitude	Be nice.
Mission centered	Go to college.	Manners	Be polite.

Academic Aims

Our academic aims identify core academic expectations for all students at Delaware College Prep. By teaching, reinforcing, and exercising a common set of key academic characteristics that lead to high achievement, we will effectively inspire and instill within our students a set of values and habits that will benefit them throughout their lives:

- **Determination** – Work hard and never give up. Be persevering and relentless in your quest for academic excellence and love of learning.
- **Responsibility** – Make no excuses. You are the person ultimately accountable for your success. Take full responsibility for your homework, grades and assignments.
- **Excellence** – Don't be good - be great. Don't settle for 100%. Go after 110%. Don't let anything limit your true potential.
- **Ask and answer questions** – Be an active participant in the classroom. Strive for continued understanding. Seek help if and when you need it.
- **Mission centered** – Go to college. Your ultimate goal is to gain acceptance into a competitive college or university. Stay focused and *Be the Dream*.

Character Aims

Our character aims outline a set of attitudinal characteristics that are equally important ingredients to our students' success in school and in life. These character aims provide the foundation through which strong academic achievement is fully possible:

- **Discipline** – Make good choices. Choose to do the right thing even when others are not watching. Don't take the easy way out.
- **Respect** - Be honest. Be kind. Demonstrate respect for your school and your community by acting with integrity, being kind, and taking pride in yourself, others, and your school.
- **Enthusiastic Engagement** – Be an active learner. Protect your dreams by following the steps necessary for success. Be a leader.
- **Attitude** – Be nice. Be smart and have a positive attitude.
- **Manners** – Be polite. Be courteous of others' feelings. Say "please," "thank you" and "you're welcome" often. Be humble.

As H. Jackson Browne states, "Our character is what we do when we think that no one is looking."²² At Delaware College Prep, we will continuously work to instill a lasting set of core

²² http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/h/h_jackson_brown_jr.html

academic and character values that our students will apply in their lives long after they have left our school house doors.

4. Data analysis must drive all curriculum and staffing decisions.

"The key to accountability is transparency." – Chester Finn²³

High performing schools recognize the same truths that businesses have known for years: data collection and analysis are vital to understanding the health of an organization. As educators, our business is student learning and academic achievement. In education the best source of data - data that ensures school leaders know exactly how well their students are learning - are standards-based assessments.

Using both external and internal standards-based assessments, we will assess student performance often, analyze data results closely, and convert the results into specific measurable action plans that support strong academic achievement for every student.

Prior to the start of the school year, we will conduct a diagnostic assessment of each student, using an age- and grade-appropriate standardized assessment tool such as Terra Nova or Stanford 10. We will also use such early literacy assessments as the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS). The results from such diagnostics will allow us to have a clear picture of current student mastery, and inform ongoing lesson plan development and individual student academic action plans. These diagnostics will also allow a benchmark against which all future academic growth can be measured.

At all grades in all subjects in which it is administered, we will also use the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) as a critical tool to inform us about the efficacy of our curriculum, teaching methodologies and student supports. For both the national norm-referenced assessment and the DSTP, we will conduct a test-item analysis, and use student results to inform our instructional program. It is our goal to use these tools to effectively manage our school's ability to meet its AYP goals.

To augment the data provided by these annual assessments, and under the guidance of the Executive Director, the Associate Director of Curriculum and Instruction will develop and implement internally created standards-based six-week assessments to ensure that students are meeting or exceeding Delaware and national standards, and adjusting elements of the school program and student supports when they are not. The results of our internal six-week assessments will allow us to make the necessary adjustments as immediately as possible to ensure that our Kindergarten through grade five students are acquiring the skills outlined in the Delaware content standards.

Finally, curricula such as Saxon Math have embedded within them frequent assessments that will provide a clear picture of students' academic growth and academic needs. We will review these results, by grade level cohort, individual class, and individual student, as well as by each test item, as an ongoing part of our weekly staff meetings. This comprehensive approach to data analysis will allow teachers to know what needs to be effectively re-taught or reinforced, school leaders to know the most appropriate professional development supports needed for teachers as a

²³ Chester Finn, Brujo Manno, Gregg Vanourek, *Charter Schools in Action*, 2000, pg. 146.

whole and teachers as individuals, and most importantly, they will allow the entire staff to develop and execute a data-driven action plan to ensure that every child learns and learns well.

5. We must retain a razor sharp focus on the academic needs of our students.

"You have high expectations of the people around you and it results in intrinsic accountability. You know the person next to you expects nothing but the best. That is what it takes to build highly effective schools that will benefit our children." - John Lee, Lead Founder, KIPP LA College Preparatory School²⁴

Delaware College Prep embraces accountability, and believes it is a powerful engine for strong student achievement. Accountability begins by living the school's mission – ensuring that all of our Kindergarten through grade five students are prepared to succeed in the most demanding college preparatory middle and high schools. In the earliest grades, being prepared for such success means that students become proficient and powerful readers. For literacy instruction to have its maximum impact, we must create a school culture in which learning is sacred and time dedicated to instruction is protected. We will do this by providing a highly structured and disciplined learning environment.

Highly Structured and Disciplined Learning Environment

Learning cannot occur in the midst of chaos. Distractions and disruptions prevent children from learning and teachers from teaching. Therefore, we will spend the early days of the school year practicing routines and structures that include homework collection, classroom transitions, the distribution of class work, and classroom participation. Teachers will also be provided with a format for their classroom layout and design. These are all factors that have been proven to cut down dramatically on the amount of wasted non-instructional time.²⁵ We will implement school-wide systems and structures that enable the teacher to focus the majority of their time on teaching, which most importantly creates more opportunities for students to learn, practice and master core skills and concepts in the critical elementary school years.

During the three week summer staff orientation in August, instructional and administrative staff will learn, tweak and practice these routines and structures.²⁶ Throughout the year, these will be monitored and evaluated to determine their effectiveness and changes will be made accordingly to ensure that we continuously maximize instructional time and student learning. All routines and structures will be explicitly related to the school's *Be the Dream* values.²⁷

Commitment to Continuous School Improvement

The most successful companies constantly strive to do better tomorrow than what they did today. Even in the midst of strong performance outcomes, they ask themselves, "What could I have done better?" They remain humble about current results and ambitious for opportunities to improve even further. In *Built to Last*, Jim Collins states that "superb execution and performance naturally come to the visionary companies not so much as an end goal, but as the residual result of a never-

²⁴ <http://www.kipp.org/schoolsinaction.cfm?pageid=nav1>

²⁵ Many of our systems and structures will be modeled after Excel Academy in Boston, MA. www.excelacademy.org

²⁶ Please see page F5.1 in the appendix for a schedule of topics to be covered during the staff orientation session in August.

²⁷ Note that the Achievement First schools, notably Crown Heights Elementary and Elm City Elementary, are examples of college preparatory schools that have successfully implemented systems and routines to maximize instructional time in schools serving the earliest grades. www.achievementfirst.org

ending cycle of self-stimulated improvement and investment for the future. There is no ultimate finish line in a highly visionary company."²⁸

We believe that this type of organizational self-reflection is critical to the execution of our mission. Training and development activities will include visits to top performing charter schools serving a similar population and with similar mission, in-house, highly specialized professional development training led by internal staff or external educators experienced with high performance charter school models, and ongoing feedback via weekly classroom observations, team meetings, mentoring and performance evaluations. There are three central components that underpin our commitment to continuous school improvement.

First, a critical test of how well our curriculum is aligned with state standards and whether or not our students are learning those standards are achievement results as measured on the DSTP and other standards-based assessments. Therefore, we will closely and carefully monitor results of the DSTP, the national norm-referenced assessment, internal six-week assessments and other frequent classroom assessments to evaluate and then improve upon our curriculum, instructional methods, and student supports. Second, our professional development program will facilitate continuous school improvement through a dedicated summer staff orientation, weekly professional development meetings, and dedicated days throughout the year for targeted professional development needs.²⁹ Third, by providing a school leadership team that is committed to candid feedback and action plans driven by student achievement levels, we will ensure that our students' academic needs are the sole driver of what occurs in the classroom.

Full Accountability for Student Outcomes

As stated earlier, a key component in our ability to evaluate and measure our performance is the use of a variety of assessment tools. We will create an environment that champions the use of data as an instructional support and which responds effectively and systematically to the data such assessments provide.

All leaders and administrators will receive job descriptions and a list of performance standards to which they will be held on an on-going basis throughout the year.³⁰ Official meetings will be handled quarterly with the expectation that feedback will be provided weekly or even in some cases daily so that staff members are well aware of not only the expectation but also how they are meeting expectations and so that school leaders can provide the appropriate supports and guidance efficiently and effectively. In addition, formal evaluations will be conducted two times per year, and all organizational decisions and reviews will be consistently linked back to one core question: "How does this impact student achievement?" In this simple way, we will create a culture that lives and breathes its mission in every action it takes.

In conclusion, it is the collective energy, thought, practice and implementation of our mission and educational philosophy that will ensure Delaware College Prep becomes an important and strong educational option for families residing in Red Clay, and particularly for those families who are raising children who are at risk for academic underperformance. In this way, and in accordance with 14 Delaware Code, Section 501, Delaware College Prep will serve as a viable educational alternative for community residents. We are confident that our college preparatory focus and supporting educational philosophy will provide a *proven, innovative alternative* that will increase

²⁸ Collins, James C., Jim Collins, Jerry I. Porraf. *Built to Last*. 2002.

²⁹ Please see page F2.1 in the appendix to see the school calendar which includes all professional development days for the 2008-2009 school year.

³⁰ Please see page I2.1 view the staff job descriptions.

student achievement resulting in the promotion of a *well- educated community*. It is our intention to provide a tuition free and effective public educational alternative to the Red Clay community.

b. Describe the plan (including timetable) to be used for recruiting students. Describe how the school will publicize its program and admissions procedures. Describe how the school will recruit a sufficient number of students to be financially viable.

We will begin accepting applications as early as June 1, 2007 and will continue recruiting through February 2008. Applications will be made available publicly throughout this period at public venues (i.e. day care centers, libraries), online, at community events, and by contacting any member of the Board of Directors. A detailed timetable for our recruiting efforts is as follows:

FIGURE 3.8: RECRUITING TIMETABLE

TIMEFRAME		RECRUITING ACTIVITY
1	Jan 07 – Jul 07	Develop marketing materials, create community calendar, develop partnerships with day care providers, create website, continue strengthening community partnerships.
2	Jun 07 – Feb 08	Open enrollment; attendance at community events, establishment of shared events with community organizations (i.e., Toy Distribution in December), community meetings; press releases; advertising; local interviews; public service announcements.
3	Feb 08 – Mar 08	Open enrollment closes and public lottery occurs if more applications than slots are received. If applications do not exceed number of available slots, then all candidates who applied are enrolled and recruitment continues to fill the remaining slots.
4	April 1 st	The Board will submit a roster, which will reflect at a minimum 80% of the schools enrollment, to the DOE, Red Clay and districts from which enrolled students are being received.
5	May 08 – July 08	Board will submit final roster to DOE, Red Clay and Districts by May 1 st bearing in mind that enrollment may continue for Kindergarteners up until the first day of class. Mandatory parent orientation sessions will be held for parents of all newly enrolled students. If necessary, enrollment for the final 20% of available slots will continue through July.
6	August 1 st – 15 th	Final parent orientation sessions will be held.

The Founding Board understands the challenges of recruiting students within a small local community. We have recruited a Founding Board that has among its membership individuals with marketing and community outreach expertise and with specific experience marketing services to our target population.³¹ We have developed a comprehensive strategy that will use a variety of techniques to effectively spread information about the school to our target population and generate significant community enthusiasm and support.

³¹ Founding Board members Lisa Goodwin, Terry Casson-Watson and Lead Founder Anita Roberson all have experience in this area. For more information please see the Founding Board Member resumes which begin on page B2.1.

School Publicity Campaign

We will employ proven marketing and publicity techniques as part of our recruiting efforts:

FIGURE 3.9: MARKETING AND PUBLICITY TECHNIQUES

	TECHNIQUE	DESCRIPTION
1	Word of Mouth	We will generate local enthusiasm and interest about the school and its program and encourage community members to freely share information to friends, neighbors and associates.
2	Newspaper Advertisements	We will place newspaper ads strategically in the <i>Wilmington News Journal</i> and other local papers that target parents.
3	Public Service Announcements	We will take advantage of television and radio promotion spots geared towards sharing community information to viewers and listeners. PSAs are often included on the radio and television station's website. This will serve as an additional source of marketing.
4	Radio Announcements	We will target local radio programs on A.M. and F.M. stations to feature the school, its program and our interest in serving students in low income communities.
5	TV Interviews	Similar to the radio announcements, we will contact local TV station affiliates to request being featured on local programs (i.e. 101, Visions, Fox) that reach our target populations.
6	Press Releases	We will strategically write press releases to keep our school's name and activities and appearances in the press.
7	Direct Mail	We will generate a list of names of students and/or families with children eligible to be enrolled in Delaware College Prep in grades K-1. Families will receive specific marketing materials including an invitation to a Community Mtg. to learn more about the school.
8	Fliers	One page postcards and/or fliers will be produced and distributed to community members.
9	Organizational Newsletters	We will ask community organizations with periodic newsletters to publish an announcement or article about the school.
10	E-mail Lists and Groups	We will ask friends and community supporters to forward press releases and other strategically worded announcements to members of their e-mail lists and groups.
11	Website	We will develop a website that will provide parents with information about the school, upcoming community meeting and information session dates and events we will host to promote the school.
12	Community Events	We will align our recruitment efforts with pre-established community events that have historically drawn large crowds of community residents. We will also identify monthly meetings of local community groups and Boards that fit the profile of our target group and ask to present information about our school program.
13	Board Member Relationships	We will use the community relationships established by the Board of Directors to spread information about the school, the open enrollment period and to generate community enthusiasm.
14	Community Meetings	Community meetings will be held to provide a forum by which the Board and Executive Director can share information about the school and its innovative features to the interested public. Where possible meetings will be scheduled during or after standing community meetings or events.
15	Postings/Notices	We will post information about the school and the enrollment period and deadlines on the school's website, in public areas, in the newspaper and on news and/or community bulletins.

FIGURE 3.9: MARKETING AND PUBLICITY TECHNIQUES (continued)

	Technique	Description
16	Door to Door Recruitment	We believe after 'word of mouth' door to door recruitment will be one of the most effective strategies. We will target specific neighborhoods and share information with all community members and specifically seek to enroll parents of elementary school aged children who will enroll in Kindergarten and 1 st grade.
17	Monthly Association Meetings	We will present information at monthly member and/or Board meetings of local associations such as the Urban League, Police Athletic League, Boys and Girls Clubs, and YMCA.
18	Open House	We will also host Open House events at the school to generate community support.

We will strategically deploy Board members and supporters to community meetings, events and outreach opportunities to share information about the school. We will utilize creative, resourceful, and market-proven methods to attract and recruit students, with recruitment efforts specifically targeting families in low-income communities. Some of the innovative methods we will use are listed below.

Partnering Events with Established Organizations

We will establish partnering events with established community organizations and businesses. Partnering events are events in which the school and an organization that serves similar demographics, partner in providing information or a service to community members. For example, in December we may partner with Toys for Tots to host a toy distribution at a select location. This will target low income families and provide us with an opportunity to build greater name recognition, reach out to additional parents and reap the added benefits of having our name associated with a community organization and event that was beneficial to community members. During such events, representatives of Delaware College Prep will be able to make an announcement about the school, parents will be able to complete applications for admission to Delaware College Prep and receive all pertinent information pertaining to the admissions and enrollment process.

In addition, during the recruiting period we will also attend community meetings and events held by the organizations identified below:

- Rodel Foundation of Delaware
- JP Morgan Chase
- YMCA
- LACC
- ING Direct
- PAL
- Girls Scouts
- Wilmington College
- Upward Bound
- Day Care Centers
- Gear Up
- ISDC
- Boys and Girls Club
- Children and Families First
- Neighborhood House
- Delaware State University
- DANA
- Boys Scouts
- Bank of America
- University of Delaware
- MWUL
- Libraries
- DCSN
- Local churches and community centers

Lead Generation

Individuals representing Delaware College Prep at community events will be trained on how to generate potential leads in addition to facilitating interest in enrollment. Every person whom we contact will be asked to provide the name and number or e-mail of someone they know who resides in the local area who has a small child or toddler advancing to kindergarten or first grade. Information about the school will be provided to those contacts.

Use of Data Analysis and Conversion Ratios

We will track the effectiveness of our publicity and marketing strategies to determine which approaches result in the strongest outcomes. We will track the number of leads generated from each source as well as the number of enrollments each lead generated. This data will be analyzed continuously throughout the recruiting process and changes will be made accordingly to our overall strategy so that we can best maximize our time, energy, and resources. The use of data will also enable us to create realistic conversion ratios (i.e., the number of leads necessary to generate one enrollment) that may help us to streamline our recruiting strategies in the future.

Unique School Characteristics

Our marketing materials and outreach campaign will focus on highlighting those aspects of our school design that uniquely identify our educational philosophy and approach. We believe by focusing on our program's strengths we will attract the volume of parents we need to successfully fill our rosters in our first year of operations. The unique components we will highlight include:

- College preparatory mission
- Disciplined school culture
- Extended school day and school year
- Intense focus on literacy - three times the standard daily instructional time
- Double periods of math
- Two teacher instructional model in the youngest grades
- Unwavering belief that all children can succeed
- No excuses - all children will learn

Application Availability

The Delaware College Prep Application³² will be available at all marketing venues and community events. The application will also be available at public venues, such as libraries, community organizations and on the school's website. Each application will include information needed to create a student roster (name, address, phone number, previous school attended and district, if applicable) and information regarding the admissions procedures. Delaware College Prep will openly admit any student in accordance with all applicable state law and will grant preferences only as prescribed by state law.

Each application will clearly outline the admissions procedures and deadlines for submitting an application. Parents will receive a copy of parental and student expectations, school hours of operation, transportation information, enrollment deadlines, instructions on how to submit an application and contact information if questions arise. They will also be made aware that we are a public school, that we do not charge tuition, and that we will not discriminate on the basis of

³² A copy of the school enrollment application is located on page G1.1 of the appendix.

race, ethnicity, gender or any other protected class. Parents will also be informed about the lottery process and enrollment preferences.

All applications received will be dated and the time will be stamped or noted by the persons receiving the application. A database will be created to capture all pertinent information electronically. This process will also expedite the development of the student roster. All parents will receive official notification of their child's acceptance into the school via mail.

c. List all admissions preferences authorized by this statute the school will use. If more than one preference will be used, describe how the various preferences will be employed together.

Delaware College Preparatory Academy will abide by all allowable restrictions as stated in 14 Delaware Code, Section 506. Therefore, the following admissions preferences as authorized by state statute will be used:

- **1st Preference** Children of a school's founder
- **2nd Preference** Children of persons employed on a permanent basis for at least 30 hours per week during the school year by the charter school
- **3rd Preference** Siblings of currently enrolled students
- **4th Preference** Students residing within the regular school district in which the school is located
- **5th Preference** Students residing within a 5-mile radius of the school.

In the event that a lottery occurs and a wait list is generated, students will be listed in the order in which their names were drawn from the lottery and then prioritized based on the preferences listed above.

d. If the proposed school will give admissions preference to children of the school's founders, describe how the school will identify the founders and how the preference will be used in the enrollment process.

In accordance with 14 Delaware Code, Section 506.4, Delaware College Prep will grant admissions preference to the children of a school's founder, so long as they constitute no more than 5% of the school's total population. Founders will be defined as individuals who contributed talent and time in the establishment of Delaware College Prep prior to the issuance of its charter through service on the Founding Board. Service is defined as engaging in activities as described in the Founding Board Job Description and Founding Board Member Agreement.³³ In accordance with state law, a founder shall not include anyone whose sole significant contribution to the school was monetary.

In the event that an open lottery occurs and a wait list is generated, children of school founders will be given first preference up until the point at which the number reaches but does not exceed 5% of the school's total population, as outlined in state law. If the cap is reached this preference will no longer remain effective and preferences will shift to: (1) children of persons employed on a permanent basis for at least 30 hours per week during the school year by the charter school, (2) siblings of currently enrolled students, (3) children residing within the regular school district in which the school is located, and (4) students residing within a five-mile radius of the school.

³³ Please see pages B3.1 and B4.1 for a copy of the Founding Board member job description and performance expectations.

- e. Describe the plan for selecting students if more students seek admission than space allows. If a lottery is used, describe how it will be conducted.*

If more students seek admission than space allows, Delaware College Prep will hold an open, public lottery to determine student enrollment. The lottery will be conducted by an independent, third party and will be posted in the local newspaper. Applicants will be notified of the date, time and location; however, attendance will not be mandatory.

In accordance with 14 Delaware Code, Section 506, preference will be given to the groups outlined in section c (see above). Each preference category will be assigned a corresponding color (blue for children of school founders, red for children of employees, etc.). A color-coded dot corresponding to the preference category will be placed on the slip of paper that corresponds to that applicant's name. All applicants' names will be placed in a box, and all names will be drawn and assigned a seat based on order and preference category. Any names drawn after full enrollment has been reached will be placed on a wait list in order of the preferences indicated above except if prohibited by state law. A separate lottery will be conducted for each grade. The first 60 kindergarten applicants will be offered a seat. The first 60 first grade applicants will be offered a seat. A separate waitlist will be developed for each grade.

- f. Describe the internal method of evaluation that will be used by the Board of Directors to ensure that the school is meeting its stated educational mission and objectives.*

The Board of Directors will meet on a regular basis, no less than ten times per year. Four of these meetings will be scheduled strategically to provide the Board with a snapshot of the academic, fiscal and organizational health of the school. During this time the Board will receive and review a quarterly report that includes details in all areas.

The Board will establish an Accountability Committee whose responsibility will be to monitor the academic outcomes as measured by the each assessment tool. The school's Associate Director of Curriculum Instruction will be a non-voting member of the Committee. The Committee will closely monitor student performance, report back to the larger Board, and work closely with school leadership to ensure that adequate resources are in place and effective decision making occurs in support of strong and measurable student achievement.

In addition, Building Excellent Schools will conduct an operational and programmatic audit during Delaware College Prep's initial year of operation and provide feedback and a written report to the Board and the Executive Director. The Board will determine the operational and programmatic auditor and schedule for all subsequent years.

A fiscal audit will be conducted annually in accordance with the timelines, rules and requirements established by the Auditor of Accounts. The Board will carefully review all audit findings and ensure that the Executive Director takes any necessary forms of corrective action expediently.

The Board will also ensure that the school conducts the annual School Safety Audit. The Board will ensure that the Executive Director follows all guidelines as determined by the Department of Education and creates a corrective action plan within 60 days as prescribed. The Board will review the audit findings and corrective action plan, and will ensure that the school meets all safety requirements.

Lastly, members of the Board of Directors will be expected to visit Delaware College Prep during its standard hours of operation at a minimum of once per year. Board members will also be

invited to attend trips to observe the academic and operational procedures occurring at top performing schools in other parts of the country.

- g. Describe the procedures the school will use to ensure compliance with the requirements of 14 Delaware Code, Section 506, related to enrollment.*

The Board of Directors of Delaware College Prep will ensure that the school maintains compliance with all enrollment requirements as stated in 14 Delaware Code, Section 506 by:

- Ensuring that the school establishes policies that are in compliance with the law;
- Reviewing these policies and thoroughly understanding the impact of these policies prior to implementation; and
- Observing these policies in practice to ensure that their execution meets the state's requirements.

The Executive Director will provide a detailed report to the Board of the enrollment outcomes and execution of procedures. Minimally one Board member will be assigned an oversight responsibility to ensure that all enrollment policies are being adhered to in accordance with state statutes.

- h. Describe how the school will ensure that by April 1 each year, it has enrolled at least 80% of the total authorized number of students and that it has notified each school district of information about enrolled students.*

Delaware College Prep will develop an outreach, marketing and recruiting plan that will build name recognition, generate community interest and lead to strong student enrollment. During the first year of operation, Board members will engage in an aggressive and strategic approach to recruitment that relies heavily on community exposure via word of mouth and direct door-to-door canvassing in targeted neighborhoods and attendance at community events. The Board will receive training on how to effectively recruit and market the school's program consistently. We will also advertise and leverage relationships established with local businesses, organizations and other community partners.

The recruitment period will begin immediately post-authorization. The open enrollment period is aligned with the submission and parental notification deadlines established in the school choice program and will therefore end in January. This will allow sufficient time for a lottery to be held and for all of the necessary reporting to occur prior to April 1st.

If a lottery is not conducted, all complete applications will be accepted and additional recruitment will occur. We will analyze our previous recruitment efforts and focus our attention on the marketing and outreach percentages that generated the largest number of enrollments. We will also seek additional advice from Building Excellent Schools, Innovative School Design Corporation and community professionals with recruitment and enrollment expertise. Admissions will occur on a rolling basis and will continue until all slots are filled. By April 1st a report will be prepared and forwarded reflecting the total number of enrolled students. We anticipate that this report will reflect 80% of our total enrollment or more.

In accordance with state law, all reports will contain a written certification that includes an updated roster of all students enrolled at the charter school, their names, addresses and districts of residence. All reports will be forwarded to the Department of Education and the corresponding

district superintendent. A full report will also be forwarded to the superintendent of the Red Clay School District.

Please see section k for a detailed outline of the admissions and enrollment schedule.

- i. *Describe how the school will ensure that parents sign statements that meet requirements of 14 Delaware Code, Section 506(c).*

Each application will contain an 'Intent to Enroll' section that will clearly state the following:

"I understand that my child is required to remain in this charter school, in the absence of any condition constituting good cause, for at least 1 school year."

The parent or guardian of the child will be required to sign and date the form.

In accordance with state law, all signed statements will be kept on file at the school and made available for inspection to officials at the Department of Education or representatives from the public school district in which the student resides. All signed statements will also be made available to the superintendent of Red Clay.

- j. *Describe how the school will establish a student application and admissions process that will enable the school to provide the local districts in which the students reside with a preliminary roster of students for the subsequent year on or before April 1 each year.*

Please see section h.

- k. *Provide the timetable for the school's application process. Demonstrate how it is consistent with the timetable set forth in 14 Delaware Code, Chapter 4, for the public choice program.*

To the greatest extent possible, we will adhere to the timetable set forth in the public choice program. However, we intend to use all of the time afforded to us between the date that we are authorized and May 1st to ensure that we have a concrete list of enrollments. We will create a specific enrollment timeframe and instructions and will clearly communicate them to residents of Wilmington and neighboring cities. Delaware College Prep will initially establish the following timetable:

FIGURE 3.10: APPLICATION TIMETABLE

OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD	TIMEFRAME	CONSISTENT WITH PUBLIC CHOICE
June 2007 - January 2008	Open Enrollment Period begins and ends.	Open enrollment period will end in January.

FIGURE 3.10: APPLICATION TIMETABLE (CONTINUED)

OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD	TIMEFRAME	CONSISTENT WITH PUBLIC CHOICE
February 2008	a. If the number of applicants exceed the number of available slots then an open public lottery for each applicable grade will be held during which parents will receive notification of acceptance in program ³⁴ ; or, b. If the number of applicants does not exceed the number of available slots then students who have applied will be accepted, parents will be notified and additional recruitment will occur to fill available slots. Students will be admitted on a rolling basis up until all slots are filled.	Parents will be notified of acceptance into the school no later than the last day of February.
April 2008	Submit 80% roster to District(s). Continue rolling admissions for any available slots. For students in grades 1-5, parents and districts will be notified no later than five days after a decision is made.	Parents and districts will be notified within five days after the Board makes a decision.
May 2008 – September 2008	Submit preliminary roster to District(s). Continue rolling admissions if necessary. Update and resubmit enrollment roster as needed (five day notification to parents and district after decision). Parents of kindergarten students who submit an application will be notified of a decision no later than June 15 th .	Kindergarten notification by June 15 th . Open enrollment for Kindergarten students through first day of school.
October 2008	Begin open enrollment period for Year 2.	

In year one, we will seek to admit 120 students, 60 students in kindergarten and 60 students in grade 1. In subsequent years of operation, we will seek to enroll students in the 60 open Kindergarten slots and to fill any spaces resulting from student attrition in available first and second grade seats. To preserve the school's culture and to provide every student with a fair opportunity to succeed academically, third, fourth and fifth grade seats will only be filled from returning students that were promoted into these grades.

³⁴ Parents not in attendance in open lottery will receive notice of acceptance immediately following lottery but no later than the end of February.

4. GOALS FOR STUDENT PERFORMANCE

a. *List the specific student performance goals for students for the initial four years of operation and describe the assessment instruments that will be used to measure whether students meet or exceed those goals.*

1. Students will achieve mastery in English Language Arts and will become proficient readers and writers.
2. Students will achieve mastery in Mathematics and will become proficient in mathematical computation and problem solving.
3. Students will achieve mastery in Science and will become proficient in understanding fundamental physical properties, the solar system, the weather and human development.
4. Students will achieve mastery in Social Studies and will demonstrate citizenship learned through cultural contexts and contemporary issues.

The following assessments will be used to measure the degree to which students are meeting or exceeding these goals:

- **DSTP** – state assessment system designed to measure student performance against specific criteria in core content areas according to Delaware state standards. DSTP will be administered in full accordance with and as determined by the Delaware Department of Education.
- **National Norm-Referenced Test** – national test (i.e., Terra Nova, Stanford 10) designed to measure student academic performance against other students within the state and across the country. Nationally norm-referenced test will be administered in the Fall upon enrollment and in the Spring of each year thereafter.
- **Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS)** - individually administered measures designed to evaluate and monitor early literacy development. DIBELS will be administered at least once per trimester.
- **Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT)** - individually administered nationally norm-referenced test designed to measure a person's verbal ability and their receptive vocabulary attainment in the English language. PPVT will be administered at least once per trimester.
- **Interim Assessments (IA)** – internal standards-based system designed to measure student performance at specific points in the academic year as correlated with the scope and sequencing of the curriculum and in alignment with state and national standards in the core subjects. Interim assessments will be administered every six weeks.

Test, quizzes and homework will also be used as informal measurements of academic progress and achievement. For additional information, please see page E1.1 for the Academic Accountability Plan.

b. *Describe how each of the student performance goals relates to the State's content standards.*

Each student performance goal is linked to an annual target that is directly aligned to academic achievement on the DSTP. Since academic achievement on the DSTP is based on Delaware state content standards, our student performance goals are also related to the state's content standards.

Please see the Academic Accountability Plan located on page E1.1 for additional information.

- c. *List the specific measurable performance targets for each student performance goal for each year of the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP) for the initial four years of the charter.*

The effectiveness of our academic program will be best measured after our students have been at our school for at least two years. The specific measurable performance targets for each student performance goal are as follows:

- 70% of students in grade 2, 75% of students in grade 3, 80% of students in grade 4, and 85% of students in grade 5 will meet or exceed proficiency in English Language Arts as measured on the DSTP.
- 70% of students in grade 2, 75% of students in grade 3, 80% of students in grade 4, and 85% of students in grade 5 will meet or exceed proficiency in Mathematics as measured on the DSTP.
- 75% of students in grade 4 will meet or exceed proficiency in Science as measured on the DSTP.³⁵
- 75% of students in grade 4 will meet or exceed proficiency in Social Studies as measured on the DSTP.³⁶

If the state mean of the DSTP in any of the core content areas is greater than the achievement goal listed above, we will change our goals to reflect that mean score.³⁷

- d. *List the assessment tools that will be used including the DSTP, standardized, or performance assessments. Describe why these particular assessment instruments have been selected and provide the timetable indicating when those instruments will be used.*

Please see section a. for the description of assessment tools and the timetable. Please also see the Academic Accountability plan for an explanation of why these tools have been selected.

³⁵ As Delaware may include additional grades for assessment in Science, we will adjust our performance goals accordingly, and in alignment with those as established incrementally for performance in Reading and Math.

³⁶ As Delaware may include additional grades for assessment in Social Studies, we will adjust our performance goals accordingly, and in alignment with those as established incrementally for performance in Reading and Math.

³⁷ Please see page E1.1 to view the Academic Accountability plan.

5. EVALUATING STUDENT PERFORMANCE

a. Describe how student evaluation information will be used to improve student performance.

The results of each assessment will be reported and analyzed by the Executive Director, Associate Director of Curriculum and Instruction, and teachers. The Wednesday weekly staff meeting immediately following the completion of the assessment period will be used to closely review student achievement results and determine the strategies necessary to either accelerate the pace of student achievement, maintain the pace of student achievement or address areas of weakness in instruction or curriculum. The Associate Director of Curriculum and Instruction will generate reports that contain data specific to individual students and their responses to individual questions. This degree of detail will allow us to see areas of content in which individual students, subsets of students or the entire class may be struggling. Such data analysis will provide the critical information needed to strengthen our educational plan and improve student performance.

All teachers and administrators will leave these meetings with specific, measurable action items to be implemented immediately. Action items may include re-teaching certain standards within the core content areas, making modifications to homework assignments and class work, or changing instructional practices. Both the Executive Director and Associate Director of Curriculum Instruction will be responsible for ensuring that these action items are implemented effectively.

Please see page E2.1 to view the assessment matrix – a student data reporting tool teachers and staff will use to measure individual, group and class areas of strength and weakness as it corresponds to Delaware state standards.³⁸

b. Describe the corrective action that will be taken when students do not meet performance expectations.

When students do not meet performance expectations as evidenced by the results of state and national standardized assessments as well as the school's interim assessments, the following corrective action will be taken:

- Content area that 40% or more of students have failed to master will be re-taught in whole class instruction. Prior to re-teaching, an evaluation of curriculum materials and instructional methodologies will be conducted to determine the most effective and efficient re-teaching process.
- Content area that 39% or less of students have not mastered will determine tutoring and enrichment focus for small group instruction.
- Content area that 15% or less of students have not mastered will drive individual tutoring sessions.

Review of results of state and national standardized assessments will be conducted annually, and will inform the development of internally developed interim assessments. Review of interim

³⁸ This matrix is based upon the work of North Star Academy in Newark, NJ. Paul Bambrick-Santoya is considered one of the leading national experts on data analysis and implementing action plans with teachers as a result of such analysis. This matrix is a sample of the type of work we intend to do at Delaware College Prep.

assessments will be conducted immediately after their implementation every six weeks. Most powerfully, interim assessments following the corrective action plan will incorporate standards that have been re-taught and will cumulatively build upon other areas that are required for mastery in accordance with state standards.

Students who are failing to meet performance standards in other ways (i.e. homework completion, poor performance on tests and quizzes) will be placed on an individualized academic performance plan. Parents will meet with the Associate Director of Curriculum and Instruction and teacher to review the plan and support its implementation. The school will monitor the results of the individualized academic performance plan closely and in communication with families, will revise it as needed.

- c. *If the proposed school will be using an enrollment preference for students at risk of academic failure, describe the expected performance of each student on the Delaware Student Testing Program in each grade during the initial four year charter period.*

Not applicable. Delaware College Prep will not exercise an enrollment preference for students at risk of academic failure.

6. EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

- a. *Provide the scope and sequence of the school's curriculum, including the major units of instruction that will be covered in each content area in each grade in which the school will provide instruction. The educational program must include provisions for extra instructional time for at risk students, summer school and other services pursuant to 14 Delaware Code, Section 153. If the applicant is proposing a secondary school, the following must be provided:*

The ability of our students to acquire the knowledge necessary to succeed in all future education begins with mastery in the core content areas of reading, writing and math. Since elementary education serves as the primary foundation on which all other educational achievement rests, we will implement research-proven elementary curricula that have demonstrated strong academic outcomes with similar student populations. In every grade, K-5, we will implement the following curricula appropriate for each grade level and in alignment with Delaware State standards:

FIGURE 6.1: CHOSEN CURRICULUM FOR CORE CONTENT AREAS

SUBJECT	CHOSEN CURRICULUM
English Language Arts	Open Court
Math	Saxon Math
Social Studies	Houghton-Mifflin
Science	FOSS

In addition to the curricula noted above, in grades K-2 English Language Arts instruction will be supplemented with SRA Reading Mastery to enhance phonemic awareness and decoding skills. All students in grades K-2 will also use a literacy-based computer program such as Waterford, to enhance literacy skills.³⁹ Waterford is a proven, researched-based system that provides students with significant amounts of individualized literacy instruction, tailored to the needs of the learner. The program enhances student engagement and immersion in literacy experiences through the use of computer animation, games and visuals. It also supports our aims to provide instructional consistency across the curriculum and intense focus on reading mastery.

Scope and Sequence

Please see appendix section D. Curriculum Mapping for the scope and sequencing for Delaware College Prep's curriculum including the major units of instruction that will be taught in each content area in each grade.

During three weeks of professional development prior to the beginning of the school year, teachers will complete detailed planning for all trimester units and begin work on their weekly teaching plans and daily lesson plans. Such guided planning will ensure that the yearly scope and sequencing of instructional units aligns with and supports year-end achievement goals. This instructional planning will also provide a framework by which modifications to the curriculum can more strategically occur to address the redelivery of content area to students who demonstrate academic deficiencies on interim assessments.

³⁹ Additional information about Waterford is located in the appendix beginning on page D2.1.

Provisions for At-Risk Students

We believe that our educational program, which combines proven curricula with effective instructional strategies and 160 minutes of daily English Language Arts instruction will significantly reduce the number of students who are at risk of academic failure in reading. In addition, our frequent use of internal assessments that are fully aligned with state standards will allow teachers and school administrators to evaluate and address a student's academic challenges throughout the school year, long before the end of year and annual state assessments will be given. Administrators will proactively monitor the academic performance of our lowest achievers in each core content area and within each grade and work with teachers to set realistic and attainable goals to improve student performance. In addition, students will be supported with targeted tutoring and pulled as needed from one of the non-core subjects or enrichment classes in order to strategically support the most at-risk students.⁴⁰

In the event that these efforts do not produce acceptable results in reading, Delaware College Prep will adhere to the provisions as set forth in 14 Delaware Code, Section 153. Students will not be permitted to advance to the next grade unless the student's parent(s) or guardian(s) agrees to an individual performance plan designed to remediate the areas of weakness, or if no individual performance plan is created, attends summer school and subsequently demonstrates improvement as evidenced by the state assessment or other indicators or has previously been retained for two years.

Parents and/or guardians will have the right to appeal as described in this section of the law.

- b. Provide a detailed chart demonstrating the alignment between the school's educational program with the Delaware Content Standards and state program requirements, and in the case of a high school, the state graduation requirements.*

Please see the curriculum mapping in section D of the appendix for detailed charts demonstrating alignment between Delaware College Prep's educational program and Delaware Content standards and state program requirements.

- c. Describe how the instructional strategies are aligned with the school's curriculum and the assessment strategies that will be used. Describe how this alignment will enhance student learning.*

Delaware College Prep firmly believes in using proven, results-driven instructional approaches and strategies. We model our instructional methodologies and data driven practices after approaches utilized at high performing schools and which have consistently and successfully led to strong academic and behavioral outcomes.

Instructional Strategies

Delaware College Prep prescribes to the following set of instructional strategies to drive strong academic outcomes:

- Standards-based curriculum and instruction
- Organized and systemic approach to instructional delivery
- Relentless focus on reading mastery
- Engagement intensive student-teacher interaction techniques
- "I do," "We do," "You do" instructional model

⁴⁰ Please see page F1.1 of the appendix to view the classroom schedule.

Standards-Based Curriculum and Instruction

Delaware College Prep's curriculum will be based on the Delaware State standards. All teachers will analyze state content standards that correspond to their specific grade and content areas. They will then frame their lessons to ensure that they align with the scope and sequence of study and deliver lesson content in the manner best suited to achieve strong student outcomes. The frequent use of standards-driven assessment data will assist teachers and administrators in ensuring that content mastery is occurring at the appropriate pace and in accordance with state standards. Teachers will be responsible for following a consistent format of structuring and implementing all lessons.

Organized and Systemic Approach to Instructional Delivery

Effective classroom organization and management along with strategic instructional planning are cornerstones of a well-run educational program. We will establish a system that sets clear teaching expectations every day and that ensures *all* students learn the same material and receive the same quality of instruction. The following strategies will be used:

- **Instructional consistency.** At any give point of the day, an observer will be able to see the same instruction, in a specific content area, delivered in the same method by all teachers across the same grade and subject. This instructional consistency will also assist school administrators in the daily monitoring of classroom instruction and allow them to identify teacher strengths and areas in need of improvement more efficiently and effectively. It will also provide a common platform for instructional discussions, administrator to teacher and teacher to teacher as all staff will be speaking from a common set of instructional expectations.
- **Strategic, detailed lesson planning.** All teachers will be responsible for submitting detailed, strategic lesson plans on a daily, weekly and trimester basis, all of which will follow the same instructional format and include the same components. Teachers who teach the same content for the same grades will be expected to partner to develop plans jointly to ensure instructional consistency.
- **Black board configuration.** All teachers will use the Blackboard Configuration (BBC). Supported by the work of Dr. Lorraine Monroe, the founder of the Frederick Douglas Academy in Harlem, NY, the BBC is an instructional accountability system that systematizes the manner in which expectations surrounding the scope and content of that day's lesson are shared with students. Delaware College Prep's BBC will minimally consist of the *Aim* or objective, the *Do Now* or class starter, the *Agenda* or main instructional components of the lesson, and the *Homework Assignment*. The BBC will set clear academic expectations of what students will learn during that lesson and will also serve as a visual cue for the teacher to manage his/her instructional pacing more effectively. Administrators will also use the BBC as a tool to identify how well the teacher is following the content, pacing and activities set forth in the lesson plan.
- **School-wide systems and structures.** We believe in implementing practices that maximize the amount of time a student is engaged in learning and that minimize the amount of time spent on non-instructional activities. Non-instructional activities include handing in homework, distributing class work, transitioning between classes, finding and retrieving class materials, hanging coats, etc. During the first three weeks of professional development, teachers will be taught and practice the key school wide systems that they

will commonly implement with students. Throughout the school year, the systems will be refined and new systems and structures will be implemented as needed to achieve the same objective – maximal time spent on student learning.

Relentless Focus on Reading Mastery

Literacy is the most essential academic skill upon which the majority of all future learning is built. Yet literacy is at risk even before a poor child enters school in the youngest grades, since research indicates that economically disadvantaged children are exposed to two-thirds fewer words at home each hour than the offspring of more affluent households. Such research further indicates that between birth and age three, an economically disadvantaged child hears 30 million fewer words than a child who is economically advantaged. This lack of language exposure and early language development has the economically disadvantaged child attending the first day of kindergarten with one half the vocabulary of his/her economically advantaged schoolmates.⁴¹

Schools in which economically disadvantaged students achieve mastery in the core subjects and experience academic success are those schools that maintain an unyielding focus on ensuring students' literacy skills in the earliest grades. A strong concentration on fundamental literacy in the formative years of schools is a critical component of high performing elementary schools.⁴² Practices of these high performing schools align with the findings of the National Reading Panel as they: (1) devote significant time to instructing reading and writing, specifically teaching phonics and comprehension methods; and (2) develop fluency by meticulously practicing reading and writing and by establishing a passion for reading. These practices are evident throughout Delaware College Prep's educational program:

- 160 minutes of literacy instruction daily.
- Research-based, balanced-literacy programs such as Open Court Reading and SRA Reading Mastery which incorporate a significant focus on phonics.
- Classrooms with two teachers in the early literacy-building grades, guaranteeing a low student-to-teacher ratio, allowing more one-on-one and small-group instruction, and giving teachers a deeper understanding of each child's academic needs.
- Development of the "reading habit" by: (a) scheduling Independent Reading Time daily during which students read a book that matches or slightly stretches their current reading level; (b) including independent reading as part of homework each night for all students; (c) making available a well-stocked lending library; (d) providing a Guided Reading time daily during which students listen to a story read by a teacher. In some instances students will also take turns reading story passages aloud to one another; and (e) encouraging students to read during every spare moment of the school day, for example when a student completes an in-class assignment before his/her classmates.

Our intense focus on achieving early literacy for all students will support students with disabilities, those who fit the classification of Language English Proficient, and those at risk of academic failure.

Engagement Intensive Student-Teacher Interaction Techniques

Research indicates that students learn best in a stimulating environment – one that has a steady and consistently brisk pace, a high degree of teacher and student interaction and one that uses

⁴¹ Betty Hart and Todd R. Risely, "The Early Catastrophe: The 30 Million Word Gap by Age 3," *American Educator*, (Spring 2003).

⁴² *Ibid*, p.19.

techniques that support a culture of high academic and behavioral expectations.⁴³ We will implement three components to ensure that teacher and student interaction is high:

- **Rap, Rhythm and Rhyme.** This technique, inspired by legendary educator Harriet Ball, uses chanting and rhyming to create excitement about the learning process and as a skill to help children remember key learning concepts. Most often applied to math and English Language Arts, Rap, Rhythm and Rhyme is a proven approach that leads to increased subject matter comprehension.
- **Kinesthetic Learning.** Kinesthetic learning is an approach that uses physical activity to maintain student engagement and to make the learning process fun. Teachers strategically incorporate its use to teach students a new concept (i.e., count by tens) using hand signals, finger snapping or other gestures or to reward individual or group academic performance while instruction is actively occurring (i.e., two claps for Jimmy for getting the right answer). It serves as a strong mechanism to provide physical movement during extended teaching blocks and extended school hours. Active student involvement also allows teachers to more effectively gauge the degree to which students are grasping the subject matter.
- **Proven Instructional Techniques.** We will also use a variety of academic, behavioral, and advanced instructional techniques that reinforce student expectations. These techniques that have been used by effective teachers in the United States, Japan, and Asia can be categorized in three areas: behavioral, academic, and advanced (the expectation that all students achieve). Delaware College Prep will strategically select 2-3 instructional techniques as a focus in professional development sessions. Teachers will engage in training, simulated role plays and will be observed and provided with feedback on their delivery throughout the school year. Each year new techniques will be added as components of professional development. Listed below are examples of proven instructional techniques:

FIGURE 6.2: INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES

TECHNIQUE	TYPE	DESCRIPTION
100%	Behavioral	Method in which a teacher demands everyone's full participation to complete a task or activity associated with learning and will not continue instruction until all students have complied.
Sweat the Details	Behavioral	Approach that encourages teachers to enforce 100% compliance of every expectation, including aspects that may seem minor.
Do It Again	Behavioral	Technique in which a teacher instructs students to complete a procedure or process that has been practiced and demands that students repeat the process if it is not done well or by all students.
Stretch It	Academic	Technique in which a teacher challenges and strengthens a student's understanding of a concept by asking them to explain how they arrived at an answer or asking them to answer a harder question that builds off that same concept or standard.
Ratio	Academic	Method in which the teacher purposefully minimizes the time spent talking to afford more opportunities for the class to lead instruction by answering questions as a group or individually.

⁴³ This thinking is inspired by training provided by Dr. Doug Lemov, President of School Performance and Founding Principal of the Academy of the Pacific Rim.

FIGURE 6.2: INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES (continued)

TECHNIQUE	TYPE	DESCRIPTION
Right is Right	Academic	Teaching standard in which the teacher refuses to accept partial answers or 'close' answers that may not be technically correct. Instead s/he continues to engage the class, until the absolute correct answer is given.
No Opt Out	Academic	Process in which a student who answers incorrectly is not able to give up on the learning process. Instead the teacher will call on their fellow classmates to assist them and then will asked the same question or be given a similar question to answer correctly.
Warm/Strict	Advanced	Strategy that combines a caring tone with a 'no exceptions' standard of behavioral expectations. Often used by teachers to build culture and set the tone inside their classrooms.
Precise Praise	Advanced	Technique used by teachers to reward students with praise using very specific examples that are meaningful and genuine.

The proven instructional techniques outlined above will help teachers deliver curriculum while maintaining the cultural norms necessary to promote student growth and achievement. The methods will help to stretch and strengthen students' understanding of certain concepts and allow the teacher to purposefully create an instruction-to-practice ratio that actively engages students in more practice and demands excellence. By strengthening a culture of "no excuses," students learn in an environment that is free of distraction and chaos. Students are also challenged to think and perform at higher levels.

"I Do," "We Do," "You Do" Instructional Model

The strategy of teacher led instruction, guided classroom practice, and individual practice for mastery has proven to be a highly effective instructional technique for ensuring all students learn and learn well. When this approach is used the lesson begins with the teacher demonstrating the lesson concept or skill - "I do." After sufficient examples have been taught, s/he then provides opportunities for the class to learn and practice the concept together - the "We do." This may be achieved through the formation of small classroom teams for example, that work on a series of questions together and under the guidance of the teacher. Lastly, students practice the concept independently - the "You do" - to further strengthen their understanding and develop individual mastery of the material being taught.

This approach is effective in teaching reading, math, social studies and science. By modeling problems and providing opportunities to practice problem solving in a variety of contexts, students are able to learn standards more effectively. This approach requires students to become and remain active participants throughout the learning process. Specifically, this technique will enhance student learning by:

- systemically increasing opportunities for students to practice skills in core content areas;
- affording teachers an opportunity to see students' inability to grasp a concept sooner and immediately apply a remedy; and
- allowing teachers to identify an ineffective approach and adjust their instructional practice in real time.

Assessment Strategies

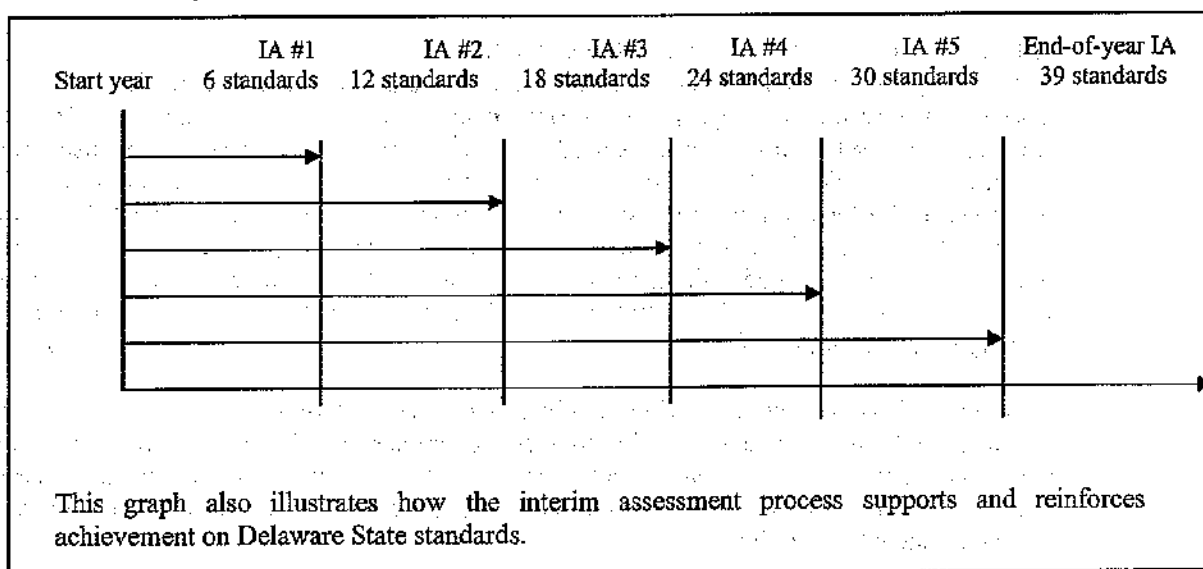
A critical part of our educational model is the use of data to drive instruction and curriculum decisions. Assessment results are meaningful tools to assess *exactly* what students are learning and to what extent they are mastering key skills and concepts.

Within the first weeks of school, all students will receive a baseline assessment of skills in core areas. The baseline assessment will consist of an internally developed assessment that will include specific standards students will be expected to master during that school year. For the youngest grades, assessment such as DIBELS will also be used to gauge student knowledge.

Assessment data will be analyzed and reported to teachers so that they in turn will have an understanding of the knowledge and skills their student possess within each content area. At this point the scope and sequencing, trimester plans, weekly plans and lesson plans created to date will be reevaluated to determine if the design of these plans actually meet or exceed students' readiness level. If necessary, the curriculum will be adjusted in whichever way is most appropriate to meet the academic needs of our students.

Delaware College Prep's school year will be divided into trimesters. Therefore, for each subject, the curriculum and content knowledge requirements will be divided into three segments. Cumulative review will be incorporated throughout the school year through the use of homework assignments, Breakfast for the Brain activities, quizzes, tests and interim assessments. The following graph illustrates how cumulative review will be used during the interim assessment process:

FIGURE 6.3: SAMPLE INTERIM ASSESSMENT SEQUENCE: 3RD GRADE MATH (39 STANDARDS)⁴⁴



Teachers will also link and weave previous learning throughout the curriculum to reinforce previously learned standards. Interim assessments will occur every six weeks. Each trimester will have a minimum of two interim assessments that will measure students' academic progress against baseline expectations and state content standards. The results of the interim assessments will be carefully evaluated and analyzed by the Executive Director and all instructional staff members to identify areas of weakness across grades, across curriculum, and across teachers. A comprehensive plan that may include whole class instruction, small group instruction,

⁴⁴ The approach to interim assessments illustrated is drawn largely from Achievement First www.achievementfirst.org. The grid and sample questions are taken directly from their approach to interim assessments and staff evaluation.

individualized tutoring or varying homework, breakfast or enrichment activities will be incorporated to address the learning gap.

During the data analysis phase, teachers and administrators will consider the following questions:

- 1) What standards has the class mastered that you can immediately incorporate into homework and other ongoing, cumulative review?
- 2) What standards warrant more time for whole-class instruction and review?
- 3) What standards warrant more time for small-group instruction and review? How might you ensure that the small groups of students who need to master these skills have the instruction and practice necessary to master the skills? What will the other students be doing?
- 4) What students need significantly more help and for which specific skills? What strategies might you use to make sure these students master all the skills?
- 5) Do you need any additional materials or instructional strategies to help you work with students to master the standards covered by this IA? The next IA?

In addition to answering these questions teachers will use an Assessment Grid to map out class, group and individual performance results in certain standards. They will also complete a detailed instructional worksheet that serves as the strategic plan to address any student achievement challenges.⁴⁵

In this way interim assessments will play a vital role in ensuring that mastery of core content areas is systematically occurring throughout the school year.

All students will participate in the Delaware Student Testing Program (DSTP). As with interim assessment data, DSTP data will be evaluated to identify areas of weakness within the existing program. Strategies will be incorporated to improve at all levels, including evaluating curriculum systems and structures that worked effectively if all students meet the high standards of achievement predicted. Delaware College Prep will also use a national norm referenced assessment such as the Terra Nova to serve as a comparison point for school achievement against that of a national cohort. Data from this assessment will undergo the same analysis and application as all other assessment tools.

In sum, and as outlined below, Delaware College Prep will use a variety of assessment tools that will ensure that instruction is consistently aligned with Delaware State standards:

FIGURE 6.4: ASSESSMENT TOOL AND STATE ALIGNMENT TEMPLATE

ASSESSMENT TOOL	DESCRIPTION	ALIGNED WITH STATE STANDARDS
Baseline Assessments	Baseline assessments are exams (oral or written) based on Delaware content standards that will be administered in the beginning of the school year. All new students will be required to take an assessment that will provide the instructional staff with vital information about student knowledge as it pertains to Delaware content standards applicable to their grades.	YES

⁴⁵ Please see pages E2.1 and E3.1 to view the Assessment Matrix and the Instructional Plan.

FIGURE 6.4: ASSESSMENT TOOL AND STATE ALIGNMENT TEMPLATE (continued)

ASSESSMENT TOOL	DESCRIPTION	ALIGNED WITH STATE STANDARDS
Quizzes & Tests	Periodic quizzes and tests based on specific lessons or a series of lessons will be used to test student comprehension of a specific learning principle or series.	YES
Frequent interim assessments	Interim assessments will be developed internally and are specifically designed to measure student achievement in key content areas over time.	YES
DSTP	Test based on Delaware Content standards that will allow school leaders to measure student academic achievement across the state and to determine the degree to which students are proficient in core content areas.	YES
Nationally-normed assessment	Nationally normed-reference test that will allow Delaware College Prep's school leaders to measure student achievement nationally	YES

d. *Provide evidence to demonstrate that the school's educational program will improve student performance by identifying:*

- (1) *Any academically independent peer reviewed studies of the proposed educational program conducted by persons or entities without a financial interest in the educational program or in the proposed charter school, or;*
- (2) *Evidence of prior successful implementation of the proposed educational program, or;*
- (3) *Adherence to professionally accepted models of student development.*

The Lead Founder of Delaware College Preparatory Academy, Anita Roberson, is a Fellow in the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship Program⁴⁶. Building Excellent Schools is an established, national, non-profit organization that prepares community leaders to build high performing, locally controlled, community-based charter schools in urban areas. Building Excellent Schools is firmly committed to the following principles:

- a. All students can achieve.
- b. Academic performance drives every element of a school, including design, leadership, culture, decisions and governance.
- c. Academic achievement is the ultimate indicator of a school's success.
- d. All students deserve a quality education.

Fellows are selectively chosen within a very competitive pool of applicants to establish strong academic programs within urban school environments for children at the greatest academic risk.

The Fellowship provides 12 months of intense study and includes over 600 hours of training from the nation's most highly respected educational professionals,⁴⁷ a residency at a top performing

⁴⁶ For additional information about Building Excellent Schools and the Fellowship program please see www.buildingexcellentschools.org or section C of the appendix.

⁴⁷ Trainers and presenters include Dr. Doug Lemov, President of School Performance and former Principal of the Academy of the Pacific Rim, Dr. Lorraine Monroe, founder of the Frederick Douglass Academy in Harlem and nationally

charter school, and direct access to many of the most well recognized charter schools across the nation. Building Excellent Schools also provides comprehensive Follow-On services during the planning year immediately post-charter and during the first years of the school's operation. In addition, the network of Building Excellent Schools' Fellow-founded schools serves as an ongoing network of best practice sharing, support, continued learning and discussion.

Components of Building Excellent Schools Fellowship training program include the following components:

- Educational Purpose
- Fiscal Management
- Human Resources
- School Operations
- Governance
- Data and Technology
- School Culture
- Outreach & Recruiting
- Leadership
- Facilities Planning & Management
- Assessments
- Charter School History and Need

Additional information about Building Excellent Schools, the Fellowship program, staff and schools is located in section C of the appendix.

In addition, to its ten years of work in charter schools, Building Excellent Schools has worked closely with many of the most academically rigorous and academically successful urban charter schools in the nation. Through these strategic and supportive relationships, Fellows are exposed to school leadership, school design, curriculum, assessment strategies, assessment tools and instructional methods and tools that few external to the Fellowship program can access. As a result, Fellows are well prepared for the rigorous and demanding roles that they will play in designing, implementing and leading their schools to success. The following grid provides a listing of schools visited and studied and during the Building Excellent Schools Fellowship:

FIGURE 6.5: SAMPLE OF SCHOOLS VISITED DURING BES FELLOWSHIP

SCHOOL NAME	GRADES SERVED	SCHOOL NAME	GRADES SERVED
Elm City Elementary, New Haven, CT	K-8	Williamsburg Collegiate, NY	5-8
Excellence Charter School, Brooklyn, NY	K-8	KIPP Academy Lynn Lynn, MA	5-8
Amistad New Haven, CT	K-8	Roxbury Preparatory Boston, MA	5-8
KIPP TEAM Newark, NJ	K-8	KIPP Tech Valley, Albany, NY	5-12
North Star Academy - North Campus, NJ	K-8	Boston Collegiate, Boston, MA	5-12
Crown Heights Elementary, NY	K-8	North Star Academy Newark, NJ	6-12
KIPP Academy Bronx, NY	5-8	Boston Preparatory Boston, MA	6-12
Excel Academy Boston, MA	5-8	Academy of the Pacific Rim Boston, MA	6-12

recognized educational leader, Dr. Howard Fuller, Dr. Vivian Chan and other experienced experts from KIPP, Uncommon Schools, and Achievement First, and BES.

All components of Delaware College Prep's educational philosophy, educational program, and instructional strategies are based on proven practices. The following chart outlines the components of Delaware College Prep's program that are based on best practices shared by leading urban charting schools across the nation:

FIGURE 6.6: ELEMENTS OF HIGH PERFORMANCE INCORPORATED INTO DELAWARE COLLEGE PREP

SCHOOL DESIGN ELEMENT	SCHOOL VISITED	BEST PRACTICES
Academic Accountability	Roxbury Prep	Frequent interim assessments w/data-driven curricular strategy
Academic Accountability	Crown Heights	Proven instructional practices and curriculum
Academic Accountability	North Star Academy	Assessment analysis and follow through
College Preparation	Excellence Charter School	Elementary College Prep
College Preparation	Crown Heights	Elementary College Prep
College Preparation	Elm City Elementary	Elementary College Prep
Character Development	Boston Collegiate	Strong ethics based character education
Character Development	KIPP Academy Lynn	Leadership development for older students
Community Service	Democracy Prep	Community service is integral component of school mission
Curriculum	Crown Heights	Open Court, SRA Mastery, Saxon Math, Core Knowledge; Two-teacher model
Curriculum	Roxbury Prep	Top performing middle school in MA.
Curriculum	Excellence Academy	Open Court, SRA Mastery, Saxon Math, Core Knowledge; Two-teacher model
Facilities	KIPP Tech Valley	Effective use of space in commercial building; good use of hallway space for director offices
Facilities	KIPP Bronx	Effective use of shared space within existing school
Governance	Excel Academy	Strong philosophical alignment
Hiring	KIPP Lynn	Strategies to identify mission fit and instructional strength
Hiring	Roxbury Prep	Evaluation of practice teaching
Hiring	Crown Heights	Effective hiring of elementary school teachers with mission fit
Professional Development	Roxbury Prep	Strong focus on standards analysis, assessment review and detailed backwards planning

FIGURE 6.6: ELEMENTS OF HIGH PERFORMANCE INCORPORATED INTO DELAWARE COLLEGE PREP (continued)

School Design Element	School Visited	Best Practices
Professional Development	KIPP Tech Valley	Use of backwards planning; Effective use of time training on systems and structures prior to school year
Professional Development	Excellence Charter School	Shortened school day to provide more opportunities for professional development
School Culture	Crown Heights	Strong culture within an elementary school model
School Culture	KIPP Lynn	Joy factor
School Culture	KIPP Tech Valley	Prevalent culture of achievement and high behavioral expectations
SPED	Excellence Charter School	Inclusion model with structured individualized instruction
Student Support	KIPP Tech Valley	Dean of 'Solutions' whose office is positioned in hall
Student Support	Roxbury Prep	Strong relationship with parents
Systems and Structures	Excel Academy	Uniform and consistent systems and structures
Systems and Structures	KIPP Tech Valley	Uniform and consistent systems and structures
Systems and Structures	Crown Heights	Successful application of systems and structures to elementary school model

Ms. Roberson is completing her school residency at Crown Heights Elementary School in Brooklyn, NY - the highest performing elementary school in the city, and one that serves a low income, minority community.

- e. *Describe the school calendar and hours of operation. Provide the calendar for the first year of school operation.*

Delaware College Prep will have an extended school year and an extended school day. The extra hours of instruction afforded by this model will allow us to provide 160 minutes of literacy instruction and 80 minutes of math instruction daily while still providing classes in art, music, physical education, science and social studies.

The 2008-2009 school year will begin with student orientation on August 25, 2008 and will end on June 26, 2009. The school year will last 198 days. The school calendar is located on page F2.1 of the Appendix.

On Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, the school's hours of operation are 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Students may begin arriving at the school as early as 7:15 a.m. Students who arrive after 7:30 a.m. will be considered late. Breakfast will be from 7:30 a.m. – 8:00 a.m. followed by the daily community meeting. Community meetings are daily achievement rallies in which teachers, administrators and students chant and provide positive praise for academic accomplishments and demonstrations of *Be the Dream* behaviors. Students will repeat a daily affirmation about

attending college and their ability to be whatever they desire. Instruction in core content areas begins at 8:00 a.m. and daily instruction ends at 4:00 p.m.

On Wednesday, students will follow an abbreviated school schedule. Students will be dismissed at 12:30 p.m. and parents will be required to make arrangements for the appropriate care for their children. We will also establish partnerships with local organizations to provide alternatives to parents who are unable to care for their children between the hours of 12:30 – 4:00 p.m. Wednesday afternoons will provide the staff with dedicated time to engage in ongoing professional development and strong review of curriculum planning and student achievement.

Delaware College Prep will adhere to all of the state holidays and testing dates as reflected in the Delaware Department of Education calendar.

- f. *Describe any other features of the school's educational plan (including special materials or focus on technology) that will aid the reviewers in understanding the unique nature of the school.*

College Preparatory Focus

We believe that all students deserve the opportunity to be prepared to succeed academically in college. This success should not be predicated on receiving a private school education, nor should it be limited to public schools within affluent neighborhoods. All public schools, *especially* those that serve the most disadvantaged students, must prepare students to compete academically in a world in which college completion is an increasing necessity and not a luxury.

The reality is that disadvantaged children are often left out of the college education picture. Attempts to bring them back in often occur much later, in middle and high school programs, when it becomes far more difficult to convince students that college is possible and to close the achievement gap that makes that reality attainable.

All students will have a clear and convincing understanding that they are college bound. This expectation will be infused in the school's culture and supported by the culture present within the classroom, teacher-student interactions and teacher-parent interactions. Visual aids will support this culture such as college banners and bulletin boards displaying pictures of college campuses. Through the use of chants and common language students will also reinforce this expectation within themselves. Listed below are additional ways in which the expectation that our students will attend college will be set:

- Classes will be addressed by their year of college graduation
- Rooms will bear the names of colleges and universities
- Classrooms will adopt the mascots of colleges and universities
- Students will attend trips to colleges and universities
- Parents will be strongly encouraged to begin investing early for their child's college education, even if minimally and will receive information on steps they can take
- Money and donations will be solicited for college savings bonds
- School chants and expressions will reflect college matriculation and graduation expectations
- All students and parents will know and understand the mission of Delaware College Prep
- All staff will consistently reinforce and link college expectations to lessons and interactions in scripted and casual conversations

We believe that college preparation should start on a child's first day of primary education. Elementary school aged children should be able to readily identify the link between strong academic outcomes *now* and later success facilitated with a college education in the *future*. As one student from Crown Heights, a college preparatory elementary school program in Brooklyn states, "I'm a Crown Heights Scholar. I'm going off to college." The concept is clear for more advantaged students, and one we must instill in all students as early as possible. To prepare our youngest Delawarians for college, our program will: (1) Be academically intensive and (2) provide a strong character development program.

Academically Intensive

Delaware College Prep students will receive the most intense instruction in reading and math available. They will learn effective study, organization and time management habits that will aid them in all aspects of their lives. They will learn the importance of discipline and focus and the rewards that these values can bring. Thus, not only will students *believe* that they can be successful, but they will also receive the preparation required to *be* successful.

To further illustrate the strength and intensity of the academic program, please note the following:

- Extended school day providing an additional 3.5 hours of instruction daily
- Extended school year providing an additional 2-3 weeks of instruction annually
- Extended literacy instruction with 160 minutes daily
- Extended math instruction with 80 minutes daily
- Immediate academic challenges each morning with "Breakfast for the Brain"⁴⁸ activities
- Exciting activities for math automaticity via "Math Madness"⁴⁹ activities
- Daily homework and required reading
- Daily tutoring opportunities and enrichment four days per week

Character Development

Character education will be an important component of Delaware College Prep's educational program. In order to succeed in college and in life, students must be well rounded and capable of handling life's obstacles and challenges in ways that are constructive. This is most powerfully true for the most disadvantaged students, as they will have to overcome multiple challenges on their way to college. Students must learn and understand that there are certain behavioral expectations that exist in larger society and how to effectively engage individuals within them. Lastly character education also lays the foundation for school culture that prescribes acceptable behavioral practices. In the absence of a strong school culture, high standards of academic rigor, fast paced learning and quiet work environments - critical components of strong school-wide academic achievement - are very difficult to establish and maintain.

Delaware College Prep's *Be the Dream* character building system will be the key mechanism used to teach students the academic and behavioral expectations that will help to secure their success. Students will participate in a *Be the Dream* session four days per week. In addition, the school's reward and incentive systems will be designed around this concept (for example, fifth grade students can receive Dream Dollars for demonstrating *Be the Dream* behaviors.).⁵⁰ For additional information on *Be the Dream* please see page 18 of the application.

⁴⁸ "Breakfast for the Brain" is a concept inspired by KIPP Tech Valley and Achievement First Crown Heights in which students complete scholastic activity while eating breakfast.

⁴⁹ "Math Madness" is a concept inspired by Excel Academy and KIPP Lynn in which students complete mathematical drills within a specific period of time to practice basic math functions such as adding, subtraction, or multiplication.

⁵⁰ The incentive and reward system will be developed internally by staff when hired.

Additional features that are part of our unique academic program also include:

Data Driven Decision Making

A significant part of our school's success lay in our ability to carefully manage, monitor and utilize student achievement data. The use of this data, which includes reporting and analyzing interim assessment data at a very detailed individual and class achievement level will allow our instructional team to quickly identify areas that need to be reviewed.⁵¹ This becomes a critical success factor considering that much of the learning needs are cumulative – many phases of literacy and math instruction need to build upon prior learning. Our attention to assessment data and analysis and the action plans that will result from such analysis will enable us to intervene at the quickest speed to address concepts that the entire class may have missed, areas of instruction that have been missed by smaller groups as well as the individual needs of our students.

This approach will also allow us to provide stronger and more timely feedback to our teachers and identify gaps in their teaching practice. We will be able to quickly identify that Mr. Clark's class, for example, needs to be re-taught multiplication with two digit numbers or Sam Smith needs Tuesday and Wednesday tutoring during enrichment to focus on the parts of speech with which he continues to struggle. This intensive intervention through the use of data will be a key force in improving the academic achievement of our children.

More Time on Task

The instructional strategies that we described in Figure 6.2 on page 41 are tools that not only increase student engagement, but also enable our teachers to maximize the amount of time students spend learning. Using best practice strategies, we will develop internal systems and structures that allow teachers and students to spend more time on task.

During the planning year the Executive Director and Associate Director of Curriculum Instruction will develop a consistent classroom layout, teacher tools (i.e., consistent instructional classroom supply stations), and standard school processes (i.e., school wide homework collection during breakfast) that will minimize time on non-instructional activities. The Executive Director, Associate Director of Curriculum Instruction and the Associate Director of Student Solutions will devise strategies that will be used by teachers to establish and uphold a culture of high academic and behavioral expectations. Systems will include procedures for walking in the hallways, using the restrooms, and entering class.

By having systems and approaches that are consistent across the organization and providing training on how to implement them effectively, both teachers and students can spend more time focusing on the area that is most important – learning.

Professional Development

We believe in hiring the best teachers. The best teachers in our minds are those who uncompromisingly believe that our students will be successful, have the instructional strength to lead them towards that objective, and embrace a spirit of continuous improvement of their craft. They are therefore thirsty for feedback, opportunities to learn and grow, and tools that will allow them to do their job more effectively.

As an organization we intend to meet their needs. Our class schedule is organized to provide an abbreviated day of instruction on Wednesday so that teachers and administrators can meet to discuss individual instructor and team needs as well as the performance successes and challenges

⁵¹ Please see the Assessment Matrix and Instructional Plan on page E1.2 in the appendix.

of our students. The Wednesday following each interim assessment period will be used specifically to analyze individual teacher, class, and student results. We will use the data to review and reinforce the approaches that are working and devise new strategies for those that are not. We will also be able to identify the unique strengths of teachers and use this knowledge to create opportunities for those instructors to serve as mentors to teachers who need to increase their ability to perform that skill. Teachers will also be afforded opportunities to visit top performing schools that have demonstrated strength in a certain area to learn their approach and implement it within our school. Every year all teachers will participate in three weeks of orientation and staff development that will occur prior to the beginning of the school year.

In total, and including three weeks of summer orientation, all Wednesday professional development activities, and additional dedicated days within the school calendar, Delaware College Prep teachers and staff will have over 56 days of professional development.

Prep-Parent Partnership

We believe that the entire community plays an important role in shaping the academic development of children – especially our students' families. We view families as partners, and therefore intend to establish a strong bond and commitment to parents, beginning with the student recruitment process and continuing throughout the student's time at Delaware College Prep.

We will conduct detailed information sessions at which we will review the school's programs, gather family concerns, and provide clear guidelines outlining our expectations of families and what they should expect from us as educators. Parents will sign a parental commitment letter known as the *Be the Dream* contract that will indicate a willingness to abide by the principles and expectations set forth.⁵² Key components of the parental agreement include the following:

- Attendance at all parent-teacher conferences
- Commitment to strong student attendance
- Commitment to the required summer reading program and nightly reading requirements
- Commitment to daily mandatory homework review and sign off
- Commitment to school volunteer activity during the school year (i.e., attending assemblies, participation in enrichment, attending parent-teacher conferences, leading field trips).

Parents whose children have perfect attendance, perfect homework completion and make honor roll will receive credits to commitment hours. At the most basic and fundamental level we believe that parents need be actively involved in their child's education.

We intend to uphold our commitment to ensure that their students master reading, writing, and math. We also intend to expose their child to college and college careers. We will do everything possible to ensure that students are able to access the most competitive local middle and high schools that will lead to success in college and later in life. We also promise to communicate with parents frequently via school newsletters, school announcements, calls home and during parent-teacher meetings. Our Associate Director of Student Solutions will play a vital role in establishing strong norms of communication between the school and parents.

During the recruitment process parents will receive information that contains clear expectations regarding student performance, parent involvement and what they can expect from the staff of

⁵² Please see page F3.1 for a sample of the Parent-Student-School contract.

Delaware College Prep. Prior to enrollment, parents will receive the student handbook and the commitment letter that will explain expectations.⁵³

Positive Reinforcement Approach to Discipline

Delaware College Prep will set clear and consistent behavioral expectations from the first day of student orientation. We believe in an approach which some in education categorize as warm/strict. One way that we will strike that balance is in our approach to administering discipline. The word 'strict' is often associated with the word punitive. We often envision strict schools as being ones that are cold and unfriendly; ones in which teachers hand down harsh discipline for the smallest infraction. We have a completely different vision of behavioral enforcement and discipline – one that balances the needs of the child and the needs of the school, one that is developmentally appropriate for a young child who by nature will make mistakes, and one that has been proven to work in similar school cultures that believe that maintaining classroom discipline is a key component of their educational program.

This occurs by having an approach to discipline that centers on positive reinforcement and the constructive use of student peer pressure. Instead of focusing on verbally identifying students who are not behaving in ways that meet our expectations, we will instead positively identify students who are. This allows us to better show to others the desired behavior and does not inadvertently reward students who are not emulating our values with teacher attention. We will also use rewards systems that create positive incentives for the class to monitor each other and help each other meet school expectations. For example, Kindergarten students in Mr. Clark's math class have an opportunity to win Dream Dollars by demonstrating strong class participation. From orientation, students are already aware that Dream Dollars are valuable and can be used for fun prizes and rewards such as after school ice cream parties and college logo pencils. Teachers will be able to use this rewards system as a tool to reinforce appropriate behavior and encourage other students to monitor their peers' behavior.

A key role in facilitating this strategy lies within the role of the Associate Director of Student Solutions. S/he will monitor the classes and proactively identify students who may need early intervention before a more significant behavioral problem develops. S/he will also work closely with the parents to address any reoccurring behavioral issues that surface.

g. Describe the teacher/student ratio of the school.

The teacher/student ratio will vary by subject and grade. Our core instructional focus is on literacy and math instruction. As a result, a dual teacher instructional model will be used in the earliest grades, K-2. This model affords us an opportunity to offer three classes of literacy instruction and two classes of math instruction daily. Most importantly, this will afford us an opportunity to provide smaller sized instructional groups in the core content areas more effectively than a more traditional 1 to 21 ratio. In literacy instruction specifically we will have three small learning groups rotating within the same class, between two teachers and will use a computer based literacy program that aligns with Delaware state content standards.⁵⁴ This will ensure that no reading group in grades K-2 will have teacher/student ratio no larger than 1 to 10. The following figure illustrates the teacher/student ratio by subject for grades K-2.

⁵³ Where possible we intend to adopt the policies and procedures listed in Red Clay School District's student handbook.

⁵⁴ Please see section 6 Educational Philosophy, page 35 and page D2.1 for additional information about Waterford.

FIGURE 6.7: K-3 TWO TEACHER MODEL⁵⁵

GRADE	SUBJECT	TEACHER/STUDENT RATIO
K-2	Literacy w/Waterford	1 to 10
K-2	Math	1 to 15
K-2	Writing	1 to 15
K-2	Social Studies	1 to 15
K-2	Science	1 to 15

In grades 4-5, students will have one teacher per class. Since a strong foundation in literacy has been established and the behavioral norms have been set, such a change in teacher/student ratio will not impact student achievement.

- h. Describe the professional development activities/opportunities that will be made available to teachers and other staff.*

The ability to ensure that our students are capable of reaching the high academic expectations we set for them lies with our ability to deliver best practice instructional approaches with consistency within every classroom and the establishment of effective systems and structures that support teachers. Professional development therefore will be a critical method used to train teachers on instructional techniques, how to best use school wide systems and supports, and expectations surrounding their consistent use.

- **Annually.** All teachers will participate in three weeks of teacher orientation. This will occur during the first three weeks in August, immediately proceeding student orientation.
- **Weekly.** Every Wednesday students will be dismissed at 12:30 p.m. Following student dismissal, teachers will attend all staff meetings and grade level and/or content area grade meetings. Teachers will receive a minimum of 30-45 minutes of professional development during these sessions that will strengthen teacher effectiveness.
- **Frequently.** Each Wednesday following interim assessments will be dedicated exclusively to the analysis of student assessment results and the development of strategies and approaches to address students who are performing below proficiency.
- **Regularly.** The day following each major break and some holidays will be also be used for professional development activities. Teachers will attend professional development sessions created internally as well as smaller sessions that correspond to a specific grade level issue or content area.

All professional development sessions will be customized to meet the specific needs of Delaware College Prep's instructional staff and the specific systems and strategies used within. The majority of sessions will be created in-house by Delaware College Prep staff. Our main focus will be to provide time for staff to learn and practice the proven, instructional strategies whose implementation will be critical to our students' ability to meet and exceed Delaware State content standards.

⁵⁵ This approach is modeled after Achievement First's Crown Heights Elementary, Elm City Elementary and Uncommon School's Excellence Academy, three college prep elementary schools with phenomenal student achievement rates in ELA.

7. STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The application must include the plan for each of the following:

- a. *Ensuring that the school will be in full compliance with current federal and state statutes relating to the education of students with disabilities, including but not limited to: evaluation, re-evaluation, accommodations, and employment of certified special education teachers prior to the admission of students. The plan must provide for a free appropriate public education to students with disabilities and include a continuum of educational placements for students with disabilities.*

In serving students who have been identified as having disabilities under the law or who we suspect may have such disabilities, Delaware College Prep will comply with all applicable state and federal statutes, including Title II of the American with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1974. We will educate students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment and with their non-disabled peers to the extent appropriate and allowed by each student's Individualized Education Plan (IEP). All special education services will be provided by appropriately trained, certified, and licensed providers. Delaware College Prep will not discriminate in its admission and enrollment practices against students having or suspected to have disabilities.⁵⁶

Figure 7.1: Steps to identify, evaluate, accommodate and reevaluate students with special needs

NO.	STEPS
1.	Teacher notices that a student is significantly falling behind academically.
2.	During the weekly staff meeting, the teacher brings to the attention of instructional staff his/her concern about the student.
3.	Teacher along with the Associate Director of Student Solutions or Curriculum and Instruction contacts the parent to discuss their concerns, strategies that will be beneficial and how they can help at home.
4.	Teacher implements techniques and strategies and informally monitors the student to identify if additional strategies are needed.
5.	If student achievement is improved, Associate Director of Student Solutions or Curriculum and Instruction contacts teachers and consistently provides parents with additional tools to use at home to continually reinforce the positive progression.
6.	If student achievement is not improved, then additional strategies are tried. If not results incur then at next staff meeting, teacher will with the advice of the ADCI and special needs specialist determine the appropriate next steps in light of strategies and challenges implemented to date. <i>Note that this step is done after every other measure has been exhausted and should not occur in fewer than 45 days.</i>
7.	Teacher, ADCI, and special education specialist meet with parents to review the academic challenges the student is facing. At this time the school will offer to the parent to have their child tested by a school psychologist to identify whether their child needs special education services. The parent will be informed of the following: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Parent must sign a "Permission to Evaluate" form. And be provided with the procedural safeguards. b. Parent will be advised that it may take 60 school days for the evaluation to be completed. c. As a result of this evaluation the student may be eligible for specially designed instruction.

⁵⁶ For a sample of special education forms, including IEP and "Permission to Evaluate" form, please see appendix H. Student Support beginning on page H1.1.

FIGURE 7.1: STEPS TO IDENTIFY, EVALUATE, ACCOMMODATE AND REEVALUATE STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (continued)

No.	Steps
8.	If parent signs the permission to evaluate, then child is scheduled and then meets with psychologist for evaluation.
9.	Psychologist will submit report and multi disciplinary team will meet to discuss the reports findings.
10.	If team determines that special education is not needed, student will be placed on 504 plan. A meeting will be held with the parents and appropriate members of Delaware College Prep's instructional team.
11.	If team determines that special education is needed the student will be placed on an IEP. A meeting will be held with the parents and appropriate members of Delaware College Prep's instructional team.
12.	The student will be provided with all necessary <i>accommodations</i> to place them on a path of strong academic achievement.
13.	The student's progress and IEP will be <i>reevaluated</i> accordingly and will be adjusted to reflect any changes in the student's progress.

b. Complying with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990.

As required under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and in full compliance with the ADA of 1990, Delaware College Prep will provide a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to each qualified person with a disability, regardless of the nature or severity of the person's disability. An appropriate education will include but is not limited to education in regular classes, education in regular classes with the use of supplementary services or special education and related services in separate classrooms for a portion of the day.

Delaware College Prep believes that a universally designed curriculum is the most efficient and effective way to provide access for diverse student needs, including those who may be on IEPs and 504 plans. This approach guides the full inclusion of students with disabilities, from the facilities, to the differentiated curriculum, to the routines and rituals of daily school life. This approach is proven to help students with disabilities and their non-disabled peers to achieve greater academic success. Specifically, this approach will include a design of materials and activities that are attainable by individuals with wide differences in their abilities to see, hear, speak, move, read, write, understand, organize, engage, and remember.

Delaware College Prep students will have 160 minutes of literacy instruction daily (includes reading and writing), and our Literacy program focuses on phonics from the start, providing services for students who struggle with decoding or fluency. Blocks of time will be set aside for tutoring or for provision of special education services without requiring pull-outs from core subjects.

An essential aspect of universal design at Delaware College Prep is the creation of a structured, disciplined, and predictable school culture, as chaotic environments are especially detrimental to those students with disabilities. The creation of uniform behavioral expectations across the entire school, in every classroom, hallway, bathroom, and office means that students will know exactly what to expect and what is expected of them at all times.

c. Complying with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

In accordance with Title VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Delaware College Prep will not discriminate in assigning students to classes on the basis of race, color, national origin or subject any of our students to discriminatory practices.

In addition we will also ensure that our students are not misclassified or mislabeled as having special needs and then placed in inappropriate special education classes. We fully support an environment of full inclusion to the greatest extent possible and will look for ways to include all students in the general classroom setting as much as possible and in accordance with the IEP.

ELL students will also be provided with equal access and full participation in school activities. ELL students will not be mistakenly assigned to special education classes. ELL students will be fully expected to participate in the college preparatory curriculum and reach the same standards of academic excellence in reading, math and literacy instruction as all other students. ELL students will be taught English language skills in a timely and efficient manner.

Delaware College Prep wholeheartedly encourages an atmosphere of diversity, tolerance and acceptance within our classrooms.

d. Complying with Title IX of the Education amendments of 1972.

Delaware College Prep will adhere with Title IX of the Education amendments of 1972 and will not discriminate against students on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity, national origin or any other protected class. All students are welcome to participate fully in all school activities.

e. Having certified special education teacher(s) providing services for students with disabilities.

Delaware College Prep is committed to hiring the most qualified staff to meet the academic needs of our students. This commitment extends fully to our students with special needs. We will ensure that we hire an adequate number of certified special education teachers to service the needs of our special education population and students with disabilities.

f. Response to Intervention Requirements effective January 2008

In full accordance with The Response to Intervention requirements under IDEA, to take effect in January 2008, Delaware College Prep provides an educational model that includes scientifically based early reading programs, positive behavioral interventions and supports, and early intervening services to reduce the need to label children and to address the learning and behavioral needs of all students. Our interventions are based on student's performance on and patterns of achievement on grade-level and state standard assessments.

Scientifically based early reading programs include:

- 160 minutes of literacy instruction daily.
- Research-based, balanced-literacy programs such as Open Court Reading and SRA Reading Mastery that incorporate a significant focus on phonics.
- Classrooms with two teachers in the early literacy-building grades, guaranteeing a low student-to-teacher ratio, allowing more one-on-one and small-group instruction, and giving teachers a deeper understanding of each child's academic needs.
- Development of the "reading habit" by: (a) scheduling Independent Reading Time daily during which students read a book that matches or slightly stretches their current reading level; (b) including independent reading as part of homework each night for all students; (c) making available a well-stocked lending library; (d) providing a Guided Reading time daily during which students listen to a story read by a teacher. In some instances students will also take turns reading story passages aloud to one another; and (e) encouraging students to read during every spare moment of the school day, for example when a student completes an in-class assignment before his/her classmates.

Positive behavioral interventions and supports include:

- Positive reinforcement - an approach to discipline that centers on the constructive use of student peer pressure.
- Positive praise - instead of focusing on verbally identifying students who are not behaving in ways that meet our expectations, we will instead positively identify students who are - this allows us to better show to others the desired behavior and does not inadvertently reward students who are not emulating our values with teacher attention.
- Rewards systems that create positive incentives for the class to monitor each other and help each other meet school expectations - for example, Kindergarten students in Mr. Clark's math class have an opportunity to win Dream Dollars by demonstrating strong class participation. From orientation, students are already aware that Dream Dollars are valuable and can be used for fun prizes and rewards such as after school ice cream parties and college logo pencils. Teachers will be able to use this rewards system as a tool to reinforce appropriate behavior and encourage other students to monitor their peers' behavior.

Early intervention services are based on student's performance on and patterns of achievement and include the following assessments:

- **DSTP** - state assessment system designed to measure student performance against specific criteria in core content areas according to Delaware state standards. DSTP will be administered in full accordance with and as determined by the Delaware Department of Education.
- **National Norm-Referenced Test** - national test (i.e., Terra Nova, Stanford 10) designed to measure student academic performance against other students within the state and across the country. Nationally norm-referenced test will be administered in the Fall upon enrollment and in the Spring of each year thereafter.
- **Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS)** - individually administered measures designed to evaluate and monitor early literacy development. DIBELS will be administered at least once per trimester.
- **Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT)** - individually administered nationally norm-referenced test designed to measure a person's verbal ability and their receptive vocabulary attainment in the English language. PPVT will be administered at least once per trimester.

- **Interim Assessments (IA)** – internal standards-based system designed to measure student performance at specific points in the academic year as correlated with the scope and sequencing of the curriculum and in alignment with state and national standards in the core subjects. Interim assessments will be administered every six weeks.

8. ECONOMIC VIABILITY

- a. *List the staff positions and indicate the full-time equivalence for each position for the first four years of school operation. Include position descriptions for each job title.*

FIGURE 8.1: STAFF POSITIONS AND FTE'S FOR THE FIRST FOUR YEARS OF OPERATION

POSITION	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3	YEAR 4
Executive Director	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Associate Director of Curriculum and Instruction	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Associate Director of Student Solutions	-	1.0	1.0	1.0
Teachers (Includes Student Support Coordinator)	5.0	7.0	9.0	12.0
Teacher Fellow	4.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
Office Manager	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Nurse	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Clerical	-	1.0	1.0	1.0
Custodian	-	-	-	1.0
Total Staff Positions	13.0	19.0	21.0	25.0

Listed below is a summary for each exempt staff position. Full job descriptions are located in the appendix beginning on page I2.1.

Executive Director. The Executive Director of Delaware College Preparatory Academy will be directly accountable to the Board of Directors for the school's academic success, rigorous culture, mission advancement, financial stability and organizational viability. This person will be the Academy's leader with complete administrative oversight.

Associate Director of Curriculum Instruction. The Associate/Director of Curriculum Instruction will be primarily responsible for the articulation and implementation of the Delaware College Preparatory Academy curriculum, instructional, and assessment programs. Under the leadership of the Executive Director, the Associate/Director of Curriculum Instruction will work to recruit and develop a team of educators who believe that every child deserves the academic foundation to access college and professional careers. The Associate/Director of Curriculum Instruction will be directly accountable to the Executive Director for academic excellence and teacher performance.

Associate Director of Student Solutions. The primary role of the Associate/Director of Student Solutions is to support the Academy's students and families through effective and constant communication, dissemination of information, and fair enforcement of school policies and procedures.

Teachers/Teacher Fellows. Delaware Certified Teachers who are certified to teach elementary education. Teachers are classified as individuals who have two or more years of experience. Teacher Fellows are individuals with less than 2 years of experience. In our two teacher model Teachers and Teacher Fellows are paired in each Kindergarten through 2nd grade classroom to deliver instruction.

Student Support Coordinator. The Student Support Coordinator will focus primarily on meeting the needs of special education students through the use of integrated comprehensive services.

Office Manager. The Office Manager is responsible for the daily operations of the front office, under the general supervision of the Executive Director.

- b. *List all positions NOT employed by the Board of Directors. Where there is intent to hold a contract, provide a contract or template of intended contractual relationships.*

At present all positions will be employed by Delaware College Prep's Board of Directors. However we intend to enter into relationships with Building Excellent Schools to provide Follow-on Support, a variety of consultative options to be used as needed in the areas of recruitment, school design, finance, governance and school operations and design. A copy of the 'BES Follow-on Services' contract is located in section L of the appendix.

- c. *Describe the plan for facilities to accommodate all the students for the total enrollment for the initial four years of the charter.*

Delaware College Prep intends to identify and lease a facility that is located within the geographic boundaries of the Red Clay School District. If suitable space is not available, then we will identify space that is located within a section of Wilmington that is easily accessible to Red Clay students. The project plan to enable this to occur prior to the school's opening in August 2008 is as follows:

FIGURE 8.2: FACILITIES PROJECT PLAN

TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITY	OWNER
DEC. 06 - MAY 07	• Begin preliminary search of suitable locations with the assistance of a local real estate organization.	• Facilities Committee
JUN 07 - DEC 07	• Identify location for Delaware College Prep suitable for first three years of operation (at minimum).	• Facilities Committee
JAN 08 - APR 08	• Execute lease agreement and complete renovations.	• Board Chairman • Executive Director

FIGURE 8.2: FACILITIES PROJECT PLAN (continued)

TIMEFRAME	ACTIVITY	OWNER
APR 08 – JUNE 15TH	• Apply and submit Certificate of Occupancy	• Board President • Executive Director

The goal is to identify space that can accommodate the growth of students through grade 5. At minimum the space must allow us to grow through the first three years of operation. If the initial space executed cannot accommodate growth of students beyond year three, the Facilities Committee will immediately begin searching for space that can meet the needs of the school at full capacity. The Facilities Committee will present its options to the Board for approval no later than six (6) months prior to the commencement of the fourth year of operation. A lease will be executed no later than three (3) months prior to the beginning of Year 4 of operation. Monies will be budgeted to accommodate the additional expenses that will be incurred.

- d. Identify where the school will be located (include county location and any other location specifics). Describe the site and how it will be suitable for the proposed school. Indicate whether the site will be purchased or leased. Identify the date by which the school's Board of Directors will have direct control of the site either through a signed lease agreement or a signed purchase agreement.*

Delaware College Prep will be located in a city in Delaware that falls within the geographic boundaries of the Red Clay School District. The Board will ensure that the site meets all of the requirements as specified in state law for an elementary school. The Board intends to lease the space, but reserves the right to purchase a suitable location if proven to be more cost effective. The Board intends to have direct control of the site via an executed lease, purchase or lease-purchase agreement no later than March 2008.

- e. Describe how the facility is in full compliance with all applicable building codes for public schools and is accessible for individuals with disabilities. Describe any renovations of the facility and provide a schedule for that renovation.*

Prior to the execution of the lease agreement, the Board intends to utilize a city/licensed inspector to provide guidance pertaining to the sites suitability for an elementary school and a list of modifications that would need to occur. The Board will request bids from contractors that identify the cost to bring the building in compliance with all applicable codes and to ensure the space can accommodate students and staff with special needs. Renovations will be completed in a suitable timeframe that allows us to meet the June 15th Certificate of Occupancy requirement.

- f. Identify the amount and source of funds that will be needed to acquire (purchase or lease) the facilities and ready them for school opening. Describe the plan for obtaining these funds.*

Based on current market data for square footage rates for commercial space in Wilmington, Delaware College Prep estimates that the total cost to lease space in our first year of operation will be \$162,000.⁵⁷ Deposit funds will come from grants and similar funds solicited after charter authorization. Funds for monthly rent payments will come from the state and local revenue allocations. During the planning year, the majority of funds allocated for rent and renovations will come from Federal Charter Start up funds. The Development Committee will also launch a

⁵⁷ Please see the school's full budget, located on page J1.1 of the appendix.

campaign for facilities finance and contact local businesses, colleges, and schools for donations that may include furniture, blinds, paint, bathroom fixtures and other items.

In May 2007, after charter approval, the Board will hire an Executive Director. The Executive Director will complete the paperwork necessary to obtain federal funds.

g. Identify who will own the school facilities. In the event that the school closes or (if applicable) the management agreement with any contractor terminates, describe what will become of the facilities and any debt owed on those facilities.

Delaware College Prep intends to lease space for the initial five years of operation (including the planning year). The school facilities will therefore be owned by an independent Leasor and not by any party representing Delaware College Prep.

The Board of Directors will work with an experienced commercial real estate agent or use the expertise of a qualified Board member to negotiate the terms and conditions of all leases. Efforts will be made to negotiate a contingency clause that would minimize monies due in the event that the lease could not be maintained due to the school's closing. If necessary contingency funds will be used to manage any debt owed.

If possible we prefer to rent available space from the Red Clay School District. We are open and willing to share space with an existing school.

Our goal is to secure space no later than January 2008 which will give us adequate time to request a Certificate of Occupancy from the state and submit it to the Red Clay School District prior to the June 15, 2008 deadline. We understand that failure to meet this deadline will likely result in a delay of the school opening for a period of one year and the charter shall be placed on probation subject to the terms and conditions imposed by the authorizer.

h. Describe how students will be transported to the school. Provide intended contract language for the transportation methods chosen (whether the school will provide its own transportation, contract out for transportation, request that a district provide transportation, or a combination thereof).

Delaware College Prep intends to contract out for transportation services. The Executive Director will solicit bids from transportation vendors. Prior to the acceptance of a bid, the Executive Director will ensure that the contractor has vehicles that meet state safety requirements and can adequately staff bus driver positions with qualified applicants who meet criminal background check and drug and alcohol screening requirements. The contractor will also be required to agree to the following stipulations regarding drivers and driver's aides:

1. To allow the Executive Director or an assigned staff member to participate in hiring decisions of school bus drivers and drivers' aides as requested.
2. To send all assigned drivers to a mandatory twelve-hour school bus drivers' class, regardless of previous work history and experience.
3. To send drivers and drivers' aides to a school approved location for drug and alcohol screening prior to employment.
4. To mandate that all drivers and drivers' aides uphold the standards of behavioral conduct expected of all students while being transported, to abide by the disciplinary procedures

that Delaware College Prep supports and deems appropriate and to report all incidences of student misconduct and/or discipline regardless of how minor.

5. All new applicants being considered after the contract is executed must meet all of the above requirements.

The contractor will also be required to provide a list of all buses to be used including the bus number, model, year, license and the vehicle identification number (VIN). All information pertaining to buses that will be used must be submitted by May 1st of the preceding school year to allow Delaware College Prep sufficient time to forward this information to the DOE Transportation Supervisor by August 1st. If the contract is written for a term longer than one year, it will state that the above requirement is due annually at the same dates specified.

The contractor will be recommended to use school buses. They will also be required to agree to all state mandated inspections and to participate in bi-annual bus evacuation drills.

The contractor will also be required to agree to all of the routes specified by the contract terms and will agree that the contract may be breached if any driver picks up or delivers a child from a route that is not approved, regardless of whether or not the driver was acting upon his own free will.

Delaware College Prep will offer transportation services to all students eligible. Parents of eligible students who choose not to use the school's transportation system will be required to sign a waiver. Parents will be notified that they can select to use the school's transportation system at a later date. Based on student enrollment data, routes will be determined that are safe and meet state requirements.

A clause will be added to all contracts that allows the school to breach the contract if state requirements are not met or general underperformance of contract specifications are not upheld.

Delaware College Prep will provide an appropriate amount of collision and liability insurance.

- i. *Describe how students who reside outside the district in which the school will be located will be transported to the school.*

All eligible students who are enrolled in the school will be provided with a list of available bus stops from which they can receive transportation to the school. Students will be encouraged to use one of the designated bus stops. Students enrolled in the Federal Free Lunch program and are eligible for transportation will receive information pertaining to their eligibility to receive a transportation stipend if they choose not to use the school's transportation system.

- j. *Describe how special needs students will be transported if specialized transportation is required by the IEP.*

Special needs students will be transported in accordance to the provisions stated in their IEP.

- k. *Provide the plan for oversight of school transportation operations, e.g., route planning, bus stop selection, drivers/aides, coordination with contractors if used, school bus discipline.*

The oversight of school transportation rests with the Executive Director. S/he will have overall responsibility for managing the services provided including but not limited to ensuring the safety of all students who elect to use the transportation system, ensuring all drives meet state requirements, monitoring school bus discipline and coordinating all contractual services with the vendor.

The Executive Director will utilize the Associate Director of Student Solutions⁵⁸ to manage these responsibilities.

Delegated oversight for school transportation will be divided into two components:

- Transportation Operations
- School Bus Discipline and Drivers

Transportation operations involves the negotiation of bus transportation contracts (fees, routes, scheduled pick up and drop off times, criminal background checks, DMV records, etc.), payment of all monies in accordance to contract terms, school compliance with the contract agreement and vendors compliance with all contractual agreements. The Executive Director will manage oversight of these aspects of the student transportation provisions.

The Associate Director of Student Solutions will manage school bus discipline. Delaware College Prep students will be required to adhere to the same standards of conduct while on the school bus as they would be required to adhere to in the school halls. Each day the Associate Director will greet every bus at the curb. Bus drivers will report directly to the Associate Director any events that occurred. If any violations of the code of conduct are reported, the Associate Director will immediately address with the students before they enter the building and follow up with students and/or parents later that day as required.

The Associate Director of Student Solutions will address any issues from parents regarding school pick-up and drop-off times, any reports from parents or the public regarding a school bus driver conduct, and any concerns about bus routes. The Associate Director of Student Solutions will discuss these issues with the Executive Director to devise a strategy to correct an issue if needed.

Because of the cooperative relationship that is needed to ensure that school bus discipline is enforced, the Associate Director of Student Solutions will also be involved in the selection of school bus drivers and aids.

1. *Describe the plan for providing meals to students, including students eligible for free and reduced lunch. If the school participates in the National School Lunch/Breakfast programs and it intends to contract for meals, identify the contractor and describe the services to be provided. List the estimated annual costs per student for food services.*

Delaware College Prep intends to hire a contractor to provide meals to all students, including students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch. The Board of Directors has chosen to defer this responsibility to the Executive Director once hired. S/he will evaluate contractors who are currently providing satisfactory meal services to schools located within the surrounding school districts and select one to provide services meet all requirements of the Federal Free and Reduced

⁵⁸ If we are unable to hire an Associate Director of Student Solutions for our first year, these duties will be divided amongst the Executive Director, Associate Director of Curriculum Instruction and Officer Manager.

Lunch program and fall within our projected cost parameters. The estimated annual cost per student is approximately \$3900. Please see the budget in section J of the appendix for additional information.

- m. Describe how the school will comply with the requirements of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program for eligible students, if the school participates in the program.*

Delaware College Prep intends to participate and fully comply with the requirements of the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch program. The Executive Director will ensure that the required report is provided to the Delaware Department of Education. The report will include names, state IDs, birth dates and codes indicating whether the student is eligible to participate in the Free and Reduced Lunch program. The copy of the report will be provided to the Board and to the Red Clay School District if requested.

Prospective parents will be made aware that Delaware College Prep intends to participate in this program during the recruitment process. Parents will be informed of their eligibility to participate during enrollment.

- n. List in detail the administrative tasks that will be undertaken between approval of the charter and school opening. Describe the tasks, how they will be accomplished, who will accomplish them, and the timetable by which they will be accomplished.*

The project plan outlining the administrative tasks that will occur during the planning year, the timeframe for task completion and the individual responsible is listed below:

FIGURE 8.3: PLANNING YEAR ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS

TIMEFRAME	TASK	ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITY
JUNE 2007	• Hire Executive Director	• Board of Directors
	• Fully execute facilities identification plan	• Facilities Committee • Executive Director
	• Fully execute plan to recruit and hire Associate Director of Curriculum Instruction	• Executive Director

FIGURE 8.3: PLANNING YEAR ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS (continued)

TIMEFRAME	TASK	ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITY
	• Transition Founding Board to Governing Board of Trustees	• Board of Directors
	• Formalize Board terms, committees and officers	• Governance Committee
JULY 2007	• Finalize all Board policies	• Chairman of Board
	• Finalize student policies	• Board of Directors
	• Finalize Student and Family Manual	• Executive Director with Board Approval
	• Finalize HR Policy	• Board of Directors
	• Finalize HR Manual	• Executive Director with Board Approval
	• Prepare and release public relations statement regarding school approval and anticipated opening	• Chairman
	• Obtain insurance coverages (D&O, Errors & Omissions and General Liability) and submit copies of certificates to Authorizer	• Executive Director with Board Approval
	• Finalize recruitment plan and review budgetary limits for all staff positions	• Executive Director with Board Approval
	• Finalize recruitment plan and review budgetary limits for student recruitment	• Executive Director with Board Approval
AUGUST 2007	• Begin community outreach and pre recruitment	• Executive Director
	• Launch development campaign for library and extracurricular activities	• Development Committee
	• Academic Accountability Training	• Academic Accountability Committee
	• School Finance & GAAP Training	• Facilities Committee
	• Finalize community partnerships for student recruitment plan	• Executive Director
	• Review and present facilities search outcomes to Board	• Facilities Committee, Executive Director
SEPTEMBER 2007	• Student Recruitment and Information Sessions	• Executive Director & Board
OCTOBER 2007	• Student Recruitment and Information Sessions	• Executive Director & Board
NOVEMBER 2007	• Student Recruitment and Information Session	• Executive Director & Board
DECEMBER 2007	• Student Recruitment and Information Sessions	• Executive Director & Board
	• Present facility to Board for vote	• Facilities Committee Chair
JANUARY 2008	• Student Recruitment and Information Sessions	• Executive Director & Board
	• Finalize student enrollment or announce lottery dates.	• Executive Director with Board approval
	• Hire Director of Curriculum Instruction	• Executive Director

FIGURE 8.3: PLANNING YEAR ADMINISTRATIVE TASKS (continued)

TIMEFRAME	TASK	ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITY
FEBRUARY 2008	• Hold open lottery.	• Executive Director and Board
	• Begin property renovations (if applicable)	• Facilities Committee, Executive Director
	• Begin aggressive staff & teacher recruitment.	• Executive Director and Associate Director of Curriculum Instruction
	• Develop student baseline, comprehensive and interim assessments.	• Associate Director of Curriculum Instruction with Executive Director approval
MARCH 2008	• Hold new parent orientation sessions.	• Executive Director
	• Create enrollment roster & submit to Board.	• Executive Director
	• Solicit transportation bids.	• Executive director.
	• Request Certificate of Occupancy.	• Executive Director
	• Create trimester content maps in core content areas and correlate to assessments.	• Associate Director of Curriculum Instruction with Executive Director approval
APRIL 2008	• Submit required enrollment lists (final deadline).	• Executive Director with Board oversight
	• Finalize transportation contract, including scheduled routes.	• Executive Director with Board approval.
	• Finalize food services contract.	• Executive Director with Board Approval.
MAY 2008	• Finalize Internal Finance and Accounting Manual	• Board and Executive Director
JUNE 2008	• Submit copy of transportation and food services contracts to Authorizer.	• Executive Director with Board approval
	• Submit certificate of occupancy to DOE and Authorizer.	• Executive Director with Board approval
	• Order textbooks, school supplies.	• Associate Director of Curriculum Instruction
	• Order/execute donations for school furniture and supplies	• Executive Director
JULY 2008	• Finalize kindergarten enrollments, if applicable.	• Executive Director with Board approval
	• Finalize Y1 staff and teacher positions.	• Executive Director and Associate Director of Curriculum Instruction
	• Finalize staff and student orientation.	• Executive Director and Associate Director of Curriculum Instruction
AUGUST 2008	• Orientation begins for teachers, staff and students.	• Executive Director
SEPTEMBER 2008	• First day of class.	

- o. *List each contract necessary for the school to open and the specific dates on which those contracts will be finalized and signed. Contracts include: equipment, bus and food services, related services such as speech therapy or occupational therapy for special education, leases of real and personal property, the purchase of real property, the construction and/or renovation to real property, and insurance. THESE CONTRACT AMOUNTS MUST ALSO BE ITEMIZED IN THE BUDGET SHEETS.*

Delaware College Prep will secure contracts for the following:

FIGURE 8.4: CONTRACT PROJECT PLAN

CONTRACT	FINALIZED AND SIGNED AGREEMENT
Property Lease & Insurance	March 2008 but no later than April, 2008.
Bus Transportation & Insurance	By May 1, 2008 date but no later than August 1, 2008.
Food Services	By May 1, 2008 date but no later than August 1, 2008.

Delaware College Prep intends to notify Red Clay School District when the signed agreements on these contracts have been executed. The Executive Director and/or Board Chair will also notify the authorizer if any issues or concerns arise during contract negotiation or execution that may impact the school's ability to open as scheduled.

- p. *List all start-up costs projected for the twelve-month period prior to school opening. List the source(s) of funds to cover these costs and include details on amounts provided by each source.*

The start up cost projected for the planning period is \$298,766. These costs include fees associated with the following expenses:

FIGURE 8.5: PROJECTED PLANNING YEAR COSTS

EXPENSE CATEGORY	COST
Personnel Cost	\$128,066
Student Support Cost	\$37,500
Facilities Cost	\$98,000
Administrative/Operations Cost	\$23,000
Contingency	\$7,200
Total	298,766

The start up costs will be covered from grants and Federal Start up funds as follows:

- Charter School Federal Funds - \$125,000
- Walton Grant - \$230,000
- Board Donations - \$5,000
- Total Revenue PY - \$360,000

A detailed listing of projected costs and revenues is included in the budget located in section J page J1.1.

- q. *List other intended sources of revenue in addition to the state and local funds. Should loans be included, list the source and terms of the intended loan(s). Should fundraising be included, explain activities in detail to also include collection and deposit methods. Describe the process by which funds will be deposited into the school's state account. If a state account is not used, describe where the funds will be deposited to ensure that all school funds are available for audit by the State Auditor's Office upon request.*

Delaware College Prep will also receive revenue from Federal Entitlement dollars. Loans will not be secured. The budget provided is a very conservative estimate and includes minimal fundraising efforts implemented by the Board. All monies will be deposited into the state account once that account is made available.

- r. *Describe the school's intended contingency finance plan if enrollment falls below the projections as presented in this application. Include details of cost determination. List the minimum number of students the school can enroll each year to remain economically viable.*

The Board of Directors of Delaware College Prep will carefully track and manage all outreach, marketing and student recruitment efforts so that at any point in the enrollment cycle we are aware of whether or not our efforts are reaching our target market and how on track we are to reach the desired outcomes by April 1st. With such a small number of slots for our first year (60 Kindergarteners and 60 1st graders), we fully expect that our lengthy enrollment period and strategic outreach efforts will generate the number of applicants we need to fill all 120 slots as well as provide a healthy wait list from which we can draw as needed. In the event that this does not occur, the Board will consider the following options to maintain economic viability:

- reducing or eliminating administrative and teaching staff positions
- reducing the projected salaries for projected administrative or teaching positions
- identifying an effective yet less expensive computer-based literacy alternative
- reducing non-instructional expenses such as office supplies
- partnering with other charter schools to cost share or staff share in certain positions

The minimum enrollment numbers are as follows:

FIGURE 8.6: MINIMUM ENROLLMENT PROJECTION

YEAR	MINIMUM NUMBER OF ENROLLMENTS
1	100
2	150
3	200
4	250

To preserve the school's culture, we will not enroll new students in 3rd, 4th and 5th grades. To see the contingency budget, please see section j in the appendix.

- s. *Describe the school's intent concerning contracting with a management company or becoming a party to a "partnership agreement." If the school intends to enter such a contract or partnership agreement, provide details of the terms of the contract and/or partnership agreement to include management and or partnership fees and other ancillary services.*

The Board of Directors of Delaware College Prep does not intend to enter into a contract with a management company nor become a party to a 'partnership agreement.'

- t. *Describe the source and disposition of remaining funds at each year's end.*

We intend to fully utilize any public funds that are allocated. If public funds have not been disbursed by year-end, they will be rolled over to the next fiscal year or managed as required by state law. Private funds will be rolled over to the next fiscal year.

9. ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

- a. *Provide the plan for managing the financial operations of the school in accordance with the State Budget and Accounting Manual and Title 29, Chapter 69 (in the areas of accounting, payroll, purchasing, compensation, retirement, and benefits management). Specify which individuals will have direct responsibility in each of these operations to also include internal controls for budgeting and financial management. Additional website references: www.state.de.us/budget/accounting-manual/account-manual.shtml*

As stated in the Technical Assistance Manual, the Board of Directors will assume responsibility for ensuring that the fiduciary duties associated with the receipt and disbursement of public funds and the responsibilities associated with state employment are faithfully undertaken. They will therefore establish sound and fiscally prudent policies pertaining to fiscal management and create and review controls that minimize the chance for unethical and unsound practices to occur.

Whereas the Board will have financial oversight, the Executive Director will have primary responsibility for *managing* the financial operations of the school and ensuring that all internal financial controls are established and upheld. S/he will work closely with the Board Treasurer to ensure that all monies are being properly allocated and recorded. The Board intends to use state systems for payroll will likely hire an administrator to oversee this functions.

Delaware College Prep will establish effective financial policies and procedures in accordance to the provisions listed in the State Budget and Accounting Manual and Title 29, Chapter 69 of Delaware State Code. The Executive Director will ensure that all staff having responsibilities in these areas are properly trained. We intend to use the Delaware Financial Management Systems (DFMS). All staff with responsibility for oversight or use of this system will be required to attend training.

Internal controls and provisions pertaining to administrative and financial operations are as follows:

Financial Management and Accounting

- **Annual Budgeting.** Delaware College Prep's fiscal year will run from July 1 through June 30. The Executive Director will have responsibility for planning a detailed budget and cash flow statement each year. The initial drafts of the budget and cash flow statements will be reviewed by the Board's Finance Committee and the President before being presented to the full Board for approval. The Board will review and approve the budget at least one full month before the beginning of the new fiscal year.
- **Internal Controls.** The Board of Directors is intent on establishing a system of internal control policies that when executed will ensure the practice of sound fiscal management practices. These controls will comply with generally accepted accounting principles for non-profit organizations. We also want to ensure that the reports and data generated from these controls are accurate and useful in effectively managing the financial needs of the organization. The following areas have been identified as ones requiring specific internal controls:

Cash Receipts

All deposits received for Delaware College Prep will be properly received, deposited, and recorded by an individual delegated by the Executive Director. All records will be promptly reconciled. All monies will be kept under the strictest security provisions we can provide.

Cash Disbursements

Delaware College Prep will ensure that all monies paid or withdrawn are authorized, used exclusively for business purposes, and are properly recorded and reconciled. These controls include purchase orders and use of the school's credit cards and other credit accounts.

Petty Cash

The use of Petty Cash and the availability to these funds will be restricted and limited. The use of petty cash will not be a standard practice – instead employees will be encouraged to complete a reimbursement sheet and attach receipts for minimal purchases. When used petty cash will be properly recorded, and reconciled, will require a signature from the receiver and permission for an authorized administrator. Receipts will also be required to be submitted within a specific timeframe or the monies will be expected to be returned.

Payroll

Delaware College Prep will ensure that all payroll monies paid will be accurate and with proper authorization disbursed to the parties intended. All payroll disbursements will be properly recorded, comply with all laws and applicable tax regulations and be properly reconciled.

Grants, Gifts and Bequeaths

Delaware College Prep will ensure that all grants, gifts and bequeaths are monitored, properly recorded and comply with all legal requirements and related restrictions.

Fixed Assets

We will ensure that all fixed assets are properly acquired, that their value is properly recorded and that provisions will be set to ensure that these assets are safeguarded. Furthermore we will mandate that no asset be disposed of without proper authorization.

Check Signatures

We will ensure that all checks issued by the school be signed and therefore authorized by the Executive Director. All check registers will be maintained so that cash flow projections can be properly maintained. Checks over \$5000 will require an additional signature.

Deposits

Delaware College Prep will ensure that all deposits are properly recorded, safeguarded, and reconciled.

Personnel Policies

Delaware College Prep will develop and approve all personnel policies including but not limited to salary levels, vacation, overtime, paid time off, grievance procedures, severance pay, merit increases, bonuses, and other personnel matters. These policies

will be developed by the Executive Director with Board approval and will be reviewed annually.

Plans and Commitments

Delaware College Prep will ensure that monies are not spent on plans and commitments that are not reflected in the budget. In the event that an unexpected expense arises, the Executive Director and Financial Operations Manager will review the budget and make a recommendation to the Treasurer and Finance Committee on how to address. Modifications of the budget must be approved by the Board. Provisions will be developed for emergency situations.

Bank Statement Reconciliation

Each month bank statements will be reconciled by the Executive Director and Treasurer. A system of controls will be established to prevent the embezzlement, corruption, and mismanagement of funds.

The above is not intended to be a fully inclusive list. Additional systems will be developed as directed by the Board. A Financial Management and Accounting Procedures manual will be developed internally to fully outline controls, levels of authority and overall expectations of staff, teachers, accountants, and the Executive Director. These procedures will be fully outlined and developed in greater detail during the planning year by the Board in collaboration with the Executive Director. This manual will be reviewed annually. Any interim changes will be submitted to the Finance committee and presented to the full Board for approval.

Applicable sections will be included in the Staff Handbook.

Maintaining Effective Controls

The Executive Director will have primary responsibility for overseeing the school's day-to-day fiscal operations. The Executive Director and Board Treasurer will closely monitor cashflow and all regulations and compliance issues pertaining to school funding.

- **Fiscal Accountability.** All Board members and administrators of Delaware College Prep who have delegated authority over financial management issues will be required to attend training on finance management. The President of the Board and the Executive Director will work together to find a qualified resource to deliver training. The classes will include basic principles of accounting and information pertaining to financial controls, reading balance sheets, income statements and cashflow statements. Although our Board Treasurer will have finance and accounting experience, we recognize that it is everyone's responsibility on the Board to know and understand basic fundamental fiscal management and accounting practices.

All Board members will have the right to review the school's financial records at all times. We are committed to establishing systems of internal controls and maintain properly functioning systems that can protect the economic health of the school and increase its ability to sustain itself year after year.

Cash Flow Management Plan

The Board of Delaware College Prep intends to develop cash flow systems that will enable the organization to more effectively manage and predict unexpected shortages and windfalls in cash allocations and disbursements. We recognize that although our budget may reflect the necessary revenues to cover all expenses relying on the budget alone is not enough. We must also accurately track monthly expenditures, track specifically when revenues will be received and ensure that we have enough fluid cash to cover the day-to-day expenses. We will explore the use of software as well as best practice cash management systems to ensure that monthly cashflow estimates are extremely accurate. Careful attention to cashflow will also help to prevent errors in planning and monetary allocations throughout the fiscal year, will allow us to more accurately anticipate problems, opportunities to improve fiscal allocations and will serve as the basis from which we can negotiate short and long term funding if needed.

Insurance

Delaware College Prep intends to ensure that all adequate insurance coverage is maintained. Please see Section 10 for additional information about coverage and coverage amounts.

Annual Audits

Delaware College Prep intends to hire a third party to conduct an annual audit. The auditor will be a certified public accountant who will audit the financial records in accordance with generally established accounting principles.

Use of State Administrative and Financial Systems

To the extent possible, the Board of Delaware College Prep intends to use the state's administrative and financial systems.

Further Assurances

The Board will ensure that Delaware College Prep adheres to the highest standards of integrity and ethical conduct.

- b. Describe the roles and responsibilities of the Board of Directors including how the Board of Directors will ensure oversight of the school.*

The Board of Directors bears ultimate responsibility for the fiscal, regulatory, and academic oversight of Delaware College Prep. They will approve all school policies and ensure their effective implementation by the Executive Director.

To formalize how governance is carried out, and to ensure consistent oversight of the school, The Board will elect four officers – President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary – who will hold specific responsibilities. The Board will also develop at least four standing committees – Governance, Finance, Academic Accountability, and Development – focusing on specific areas of Board responsibility and school operations, and make recommendations for action and improvement.

All Board members will receive a job description outlining their individual duties and responsibilities. Each elected officer will also receive a description that details the nature of their responsibilities as it pertains to their expanded duties. Members of committees will also receive additional information detailing the roles and responsibilities of their respective committees.

The Board of Directors will be encouraged to make frequent visits to the school during normal hours of operation. All Board members will have to approve policies, the budget and any changes to established policies and/or financial controls. Board members will also receive training in certain areas to strengthen their ability to effectively oversee school operations. The Executive Director will prepare periodic reports on academic outcomes, cash flow, and other areas as determined or requested by members of the Board.

c. Describe how new Board members will be recruited and prepared to fulfill their responsibilities.

Delaware College Prep will establish and maintain a Board of Directors consisting, but not limited to, community members, Delaware certified teachers and parents.

The Board will include a Governance Committee whose responsibility it will be to nominate prospective members. To ensure effective governance of the school, the composition of the Board should consist of individuals with skills that are broadly representative in expertise including, but not limited to, education, community outreach, finance and accounting, human resources, marketing, law, and real estate. In accordance with the Bylaws, Board members will be elected to serve on the Board for two years and will serve a staggered term not to extend 3 terms. The Board shall consist of no more than fourteen and no less than six members⁵⁹. Prospective Board members may be nominated by a Board member and elected to serve on the Board at any time.⁶⁰

All new Board members will receive a Board member job description and will be required to read and sign a Board member agreement. Both documents explain in detail the key responsibilities associated with this role.

The Bylaws of Delaware College Prep can be found beginning on page B6.1 in the Appendix.

d. Describe the internal form of management to be implemented at the school, including any plans to contract with an outside group to manage any portion of the educational, administrative, and/or financial operations of the school.

The Board of Directors intends to hire the Lead Founder as the Executive Director post charter approval. The Executive Director will be responsible for managing all internal school functions, including but not limited to, education, financial management, human resource management, execution and compliance with all state and authorizer requirements, and the overall business management of the school program. The Executive Director will hire highly qualified members to the school's staff with expertise in elementary education, finance and accounting, and development to assist in the execution of the Delaware College Prep's strategic plan.

No outside groups will be contracted to *manage* any of the educational, administrative and/or financial operations of the school. Delaware College Prep will however contract with Building Excellent Schools to provide Follow-on Services to the school during its first initial years of development. Please see section L. Contracts in the appendix for additional information.

⁵⁹ Note that an even number of board members have been selected due to the number of non-voting members of the board (1). This will ensure that we consistently maintain an odd number of voting members.

⁶⁰ For additional information about the terms of office please see the Bylaws on page B6.1.

- e. *Describe how teachers and parents will be involved in decision-making at the school.*

Teachers and parents will be involved in the decision-making at the school in the following ways:

Teachers

- **Weekly meetings with school administrators.** Staff meetings will be held every Wednesday to review school successes, challenges, Board updates or Executive Director updates. During this time administrators will specifically ask for feedback on key action items. Teachers will also be asked to discuss any challenges that may impact their ability to meet their student academic targets.
- **Open door policy.** Teachers will have the ability to access the Executive Director during the school day and to address any issues or concern they have pertaining to school operations of the educational programs.
- **Board seat.** The Board shall elect to reserve a minimum of one seat on the Board for a teacher. Teacher nominations will be made by the Executive Director based on nominations from teachers employed at the school. This seat will be a voting member of the Board.
- **Informal communication systems.** The Executive Director will create a variety of informal communication systems that will be used to keep teachers informed and updated on things occurring within the school.

Parents

- **PTA meetings.** PTA meetings will be held minimally once a trimester. These meetings will serve in part as opportunities to solicit parent feedback on school considerations and to inform parents on Board decisions.
- **Open access to school administrators.** Parents will also have open and frequent access to school administrators.
- **Board seat.** The Board shall reserve a minimum of one seat on the Board for a parent. Parent nominations will be made by the Executive Director based on nominations from parents and teachers employed at the school. This seat will be a voting member of the Board.
- **Newsletters.** Parents will receive periodic newsletters that will inform them of school events, changes, occurrences and opportunities increased involvement. Other forms of communication such as letters, e-mails, websites and phone calls will be utilized as needed.

- f. *List the criteria and timeline to be used in the hiring of teachers, administrators, and other school staff.*

Immediately following charter approval, the Board of Directors will hire the Executive Director. The Board intends to hire the Lead Founder, Anita Roberson, in this role. The Executive Director will serve as an *ex-officio* member of the Board.

The Executive Director will hire all staff members, including teachers. The following chart includes the projected timeframes:

FIGURE 9.1: HIRING TIMELINE

POSITION	TIMEFRAME
Associate Director of Curriculum and Instruction	April 2008
Associate Director of Student Solutions ⁶¹	July 2008
Business Manager	July 2008
Office Manager	July 2008
Teachers, Teacher Fellows and Student Support Coordinator	February 2008-July 2008
Nurse	July 2008
Office Assistant	July 2008
Custodian	August 2008

The Associate Director of Curriculum and Instruction will assist in the recruiting and selection of Teachers, Teacher Fellows and the Student Support Coordinator. The Office Manager will assist in the recruitment and selection of the Office Assistant and Custodian.

The job duties and qualifications of each position are outlined in section I of the appendix.

- g. *Describe how the school will recruit Delaware certified teachers. If the school hires any non-certified teachers describe how the school will meet the teacher certification requirements of the Delaware charter law. Describe the procedures that will be used to ensure that any non-certified teachers that are hired are participating in an alternative certification program, if available.*

Delaware College Prep will aggressively pursue the recruitment of Delaware certified teachers through the use of a comprehensive marketing and advertising campaign, word of mouth referrals and building effective and lasting relationships with local and national groups with access to qualified teachers. We will tap into resources such as Teach for America, area graduate schools and alumni associations to source instructional talent. We will be open to considering candidates for some positions who have not yet met requirements. However, those teachers will be strongly encouraged to participate in an alternative certification program if available.

The Executive Director and Associate Director of Curriculum Instruction will carefully monitor all teacher qualifications to ensure that the ratio of certified to non-certified teacher remains small. Certified teachers will be required to produce copies of their certification which will be verified. Non-certified teachers who are enrolled in an alternative certification program will be required to provide proof of enrollment. Upon receipt of their certification they will also be required to submit a copy of their student records. We will also utilize the Delaware Educator Data System (DEEDS) to verify teacher credentials.

- h. *Describe the human resource policies governing: salaries, contracts, hiring, and dismissal that will be in place for all positions at the school.*

Delaware College Prep intends to use best practice methodologies and strategies in the development and implementation of human resources policies and systems. The Board of Directors will develop a staff handbook which will include all of the human resources policies, including salaries, contract terms, performance evaluations, grievance procedures and basic employee expectations.

⁶¹ This position will be hired pending the receipt of additional grants and donations prior to the first year of operation.

We intend to pay teachers and administrators as competitively as we can. Minimum and maximum salary ranges will be determined to establish an objective system for establishing baseline salaries. However, performance will determine annual merit increases and bonuses when applicable, not tenure, seniority or degrees. Performance expectations will be clearly defined and communicated in the beginning of the school year. Frequent informal and formal feedback will be provided.

Where and when appropriate, employees experiencing performance difficulties will be provided with a corrective action plan to increase performance. However, at no time will the academic achievement of our students be jeopardized by ineffective staff. Nor will illegal, unethical or inappropriate behaviors be tolerated.

The Executive Director will have the authority to hire and dismiss employees in accordance to the policies established by the Board.

- i. *Describe how the school will incorporate the Delaware Performance Appraisal System into its teachers and staff evaluations.*

Delaware College Prep intends to provide more frequent evaluation to teachers than the state system currently prescribes. The very nature of our school design requires more frequent feedback and communication. Therefore, Delaware College Prep will develop its own internal system and norms regarding teacher feedback and evaluation and communicate these procedures to staff during orientation. In addition to daily and monthly feedback, teachers will receive a formal mid-year and end-of-year evaluation. The lowest performing teachers regardless of performance levels will be placed on an improvement plan. Our goal is to continuously improve the lowest performing teachers so that we can offer the very best instructional staff to our students.

Where possible, consistency between Delaware College Prep's system and DPAS will be maintained, i.e., the use of the same performance categories, six elements of effective teaching, etc.

- j. *Describe how the school will be held accountable to the parents of children at the school.*

Delaware College Prep will be held accountable to the parents and students of the school through evidence of strong academic performance on the DSTP and national norm-referenced assessment(s), by adhering to the commitments set forth in the school's *Be the Dream* contract to students and families, and through feedback generated from parent surveys, the results of which will be compiled and analyzed for presentation to the Board.

- k. *If the Board of Directors is contracting a portion of the operation of the school to an outside group, identify the group, describe the relationship between the group and the Board of Directors, and list the services the outside group will be providing. A copy of the management agreement between the Board of Directors and that group must be included with the application. The management agreement must be consistent with the requirements of 14 Delaware Code, Chapter 5.*

The Board of Directors will not contract a portion of the school's accounting, fiscal reporting and state reporting responsibilities to an outside group. All functions will be managed internally.

1. *If an outside group will be used to manage a portion of the school's educational, administrative and/or financial operations, the applicant must also provide:*
 - 1) *Verification the outside group is authorized to do business in the State of Delaware.*
 - 2) *A complete list of all other schools (regardless of location) with which the outside group has contracted and the locations of those schools. The list must include all schools with which the outside group contracted but is no longer managing.*
 - 3) *A summary of student performance on the appropriate state assessment of each school the outside group has managed.*
 - 4) *A complete list of all past and any pending litigation against that group or submit a statement that there has been none and that none is pending.*

N/A

10. INSURANCE

Describe the types and limits of insurance coverage that the school plans to obtain and when it plans to have them in effect. If the school is contracting with an outside company to manage the school, the application must include a description of the insurance for the school and the Board of Directors, including the source of funds to purchase the insurance. The proposed costs for the coverage must be reflected in the budget worksheets. The applicant should contact the Insurance Coverage Office at (302) 739-3651 for further information on liability protection for public schools in Delaware.

NOTE: If a charter is granted to the applicant, a copy of the Certificate of Insurance

Delaware College Prep intends to secure the following insurance coverage amounts in the following timeframes:

INSURANCE TYPE	AMOUNT	TIMEFRAME
Directors and Officers Insurance	\$1 million	May 2007
Errors & Omissions Insurance	\$1 million	May 2007
General Liability Insurance	\$1 million	May 2007
Property Insurance	\$500,000	Upon occupancy

11. STUDENT DISCIPLINE AND ATTENDANCE

The application must include a draft "Student Rights and Responsibilities Manual" that includes the school rules and guidelines governing student behavior. The manual must describe student rights and responsibilities and the plan the school will follow to discipline students.

A copy of the school's student handbook is located in section F of the appendix.

- a. *Describe how the manual will be distributed to parents and students prior to students applying for enrollment at the school.*

The student handbook will be made available during the recruitment process in the following ways:

- **By contacting Delaware College Prep.** Manuals will be available via pick-up and can be sent electronically or by mail upon request.
- **During parent orientation sessions.** Student expectations, both academic and behavioral, and parental expectations will be clearly outlined at all orientation sessions.
- **During any individual enrollment meetings.** Manuals will be reviewed and provided with interested parents.

In addition, prior to submission of the intent to enroll forms parents will be required to submit a signed copy of the *Be the Dream* contract.⁶² Both documents reiterate key points of understanding surrounding student and parental expectations.

- b. *Describe how discipline will be handled with students with disabilities. Describe how the school will report inappropriate behavior to affected parents, the Department, and when necessary, to law enforcement agencies.*

All Delaware College Prep students will be required to adhere to the same academic and behavioral expectations. Delaware College Prep's philosophy regarding discipline is one that is predicated on reinforcing and encouraging positive behaviors versus using punitive measures. In situations in which a student's disability may impact their ability to meet certain expectations as explained in the IEP, special consideration will be made. Prior to any disciplinary action being administered, the student's IEP team will meet to discuss the situation and devise a recommendation that maintains the respect and dignity of the student, takes into account their special need, and aligns with the school's culture and *Be the Dream* values. The student's parents will be notified using the method requested in the student's file. If a situation escalates to one in which the authorities need to be notified, the parents will be contacted immediately.

Depending on the severity of the event and the items described above appropriate disciplinary action will be administered.

⁶² To view a sample of this the Parent-Student-School contract please see page F5.1 in the appendix.

- c. *Describe the plan the school will follow to ensure compliance with 14 Delaware Code, Section 4112, regarding the reporting of school crimes.*

The Executive Director of Delaware College Prep will ensure that all staff, students, and parents are fully aware of their responsibility to report any incidences that they witness directly or reasonably believe to be true, to the Executive Director immediately. Staff will receive comprehensive training on the definition of 'school crimes' under the statutes, the various types of criminal violations that may occur and require mandatory reporting and the process for immediately notifying the Executive Director if an incident occurs. For instances that they do not directly witness, staff will be instructed to err on the side of school safety and report anything that may be told to them by a third party, that they overhear and/or otherwise receive information about that may require action under this statute. Our ultimate concern and responsibility is to protect the health, safety and well being of our students and staff. Staff members who fail to adhere to the policies set by Delaware College Prep will be notified of the consequences which may include, but is not limited to, immediate termination of employment.

Parents and students will receive a copy of the student handbook. The handbook will contain information pertaining to how the school will manage these instances as determined by Delaware Code and policy specific to Delaware College Prep. It will also describe the responsibility that they have as parents and their children have as students, to inform the Executive Director or Associate Director of Student Solutions of school crime incidences. Lastly, it will include the potential actions taken if they or their child knows of a school crime incident and fails to report it.

Students will also be taught in orientation the importance of reporting any incidences. In the most sensitive and developmentally appropriate way, we will inform students of our expectations regarding reporting these incidences, where appropriate provide examples, and explain the steps to take if they or a fellow student is an unfortunate victim of an incident. Students will also be informed that they are not to engage in inappropriate behaviors and the consequences of such actions.

Depending on the circumstances of the crime, the type of offense and the parties that are involved, the Executive Director will notify all parties as stated in Delaware code within the timeframe specified. No member of the Board of Directors will interfere with the reporting of a serious crime or other incident as mandated by the law to the police or any other appropriate agency such as the Red Clay School District or the Department of Education.

The Executive Director will ensure that once reliable information concerning a school crime is brought to her attention, the police and the Chairman of the Board are notified immediately. If a child is involved in the incident, the parents of the juvenile victim will also be notified immediately. The reporting will be made by telephone or in person, whichever is most expedient, and written documentation will be forwarded to the police within three business days.

- d. *Describe the attendance policies of the school. Describe the level of attendance that will be required of the students each year. Describe the actions that will be taken to ensure that students meet those levels of attendance. Describe how the attendance policies will be distributed to each student at the beginning of each school year.*

Strong attendance is a critical factor in the academic success of our students. By requiring strong attendance we are also establishing strong practices that will help students to achieve success later in college and later in life. Students will be expected to adhere to the following attendance guidelines:

Absences

1. Students who are never absent during the school year will be congratulated for demonstrating strong leadership and upholding the *Be the Dream* values.
2. Students are expected to be at school every day. Due to the intensity and pace of our academic program, missing a day significantly jeopardizes the student's achievement. Parents are expected to reinforce this principle and only allow their child to miss a day in the event of a serious illness.
3. Any day missed, regardless if the day missed was a result of an excused reason (i.e., Doctor's note) will be considered an absence. A student's file will reflect the type of absence – excused or unexcused – but will still show an absence. All absences impact a student's ability to be acknowledged for perfect attendance.
4. Parents should make every attempt to schedule appointments for their child outside of school hours such as Wednesday afternoon after 12:30 p.m., in evenings after 5 p.m. or on the weekend.
5. Students who miss three days or more out of any trimester period are considered excessively absent. A mandatory meeting will be scheduled between the parent(s) of the student and the Associate Director of Student Solutions to discuss the absences, the impact they are having or will have on the student's academic performance, and potential solutions.
6. Students who miss five days or more out of the school year are considered excessively absent. A mandatory meeting will be scheduled between the parent(s) of the student and the Associate Director of Student Solutions to discuss the absences, the impact they are having or will have on the student's academic performance, and potential solutions.
7. Students who miss more than nine days out of the school year will be at jeopardy of being retained in their grade in the subsequent school year. The Executive Director reserves the right to retain any student. A mandatory meeting will be scheduled between the parent(s) of the student and the Associate Director of Student Solutions to discuss the absences, the impact they are having or will have on the student's academic performance, and potential solutions.
8. If a student is absent for more than ten consecutive days, a representative from the school will visit the child's home. Any parent of a child who is absent for three or more consecutive days will receive notification from the school and a meeting will be

requested. If we are unable to reach the child's parent, guardian and emergency contact, the Associate Director of Student Solutions will continue to attempt to reach the parent or legal guardian up until the tenth day in which a visit to the child's home is mandated.

9. Students who miss 12 days or more out of the school year will be considered truant. This is a severe breach of the school-parent and school-student commitment. Absences of this nature may require us to contact the Department of Services for Children, Youth and their Families. The Executive Director will make this determination.

According to state law a parent or legal guardian may be referred to prosecution for allowing a child to be absent from school for 30 consecutive days or more.

Due to the nature of our program, our standards for attendance are more stringent than the minimum required by state law. Therefore, all provisions will be met, in most cases much sooner than stated. Because of the close and supportive relationship we will establish with our parents, we anticipate that these changes will enhance the quality of our program and hence the academic attainment of our students.

12. HEALTH AND SAFETY

- a. *Describe the procedures that will be implemented to ensure the health and safety of the school's students, staff, and guests. List the staff (i.e. nurse) who will be hired or contracted to ensure that the following responsibilities will be handled in a satisfactory manner:*

- 1) *Ensuring that students have physical examinations prior to enrollment.*
- 2) *Ensuring that required immunizations and screenings (lead, TB) are in compliance.*
- 3) *Administering medications and medical treatments, including first aid.*
- 4) *Screening for health problems (vision, hearing, postural/gait, etc.)*
- 5) *Monitoring student health and maintaining health records*
- 6) *Ensuring emergency care for known and unknown life-threatening health conditions.*
- 7) *Ensuring health representation on IEP teams when student's needs require such.*

Delaware College Prep will hire a nurse with a minimum licensure of RN to assist with the administration of all medications, medical treatments and the collection and filing of all required health information. *The nurse will be the only staff member permitted to make health assessments, health interventions and administer and supervise medications.* The nurse will also coordinate all vision, hearing and health screenings and any appropriate follow up services. S/he will also serve as a health representative for students requiring this assistance on IEP teams. The school nurse will also be expected to read and understand the School Nurse: Technical Assistance Manual. The school nurse may also be required to attend school nurse orientation depending upon their years of experience in a school nurse role.

The Office Manager will assist the nurse in the proper handling and filing of student health information. S/he will also participate in scheduling health screenings and will assist the nurse in the monitoring and maintenance of student health records.

The following provisions regarding health documentation will be adhered to:

- Appropriate documentation will be maintained on health care provided.
- Health records will be maintained in a confidential manner.
- Screenings will be recorded.
- Immunizations records will be maintained and reported to Division of Public Health.
- Emergency information will be current and easily accessible.
- Each student will have a physical exam on file.
- *Annual Summary of School Health Services* will be submitted to the Department of Education by June 30th of each school year.

All teachers will be trained in CPR and First Aid.

During parent orientation, parents will receive information pertaining to all required physical examinations, immunizations and screenings. They will also receive the specific deadlines by which that information must be submitted in order to ensure that their children will be allowed to attend school.

Parents will be asked to provide all necessary documentation to the school no later than June 30, 2008. Any parents who do not provide the required documentation prior to this deadline will be contacted. Delaware College Prep administrators will work with any parents requiring support to meet this deadline.

The Executive Director will report to the Board of Directors the status of any outstanding health documentation for potential enrollees no later than the first week of August 2008 with an update on the status of all students whose paperwork is not complete.

- b. *Describe the plan the school will use to ensure that criminal background checks will be made on the school's employees prior to hire.*

All prospective school employees will be required to complete an employment application. The employment application will contain a section in which the applicant grants Delaware College Prep permission to run a criminal background check. Once a candidate has reached the final stages of consideration, a criminal background check will be completed. All employment offers made prior to the beginning of the school year will be contingent upon receipt of a clear criminal background check. No prospective employees, including those hired to fill open positions while the school year is in session, will be permitted to start their employment until a clear criminal background check is received. Criminal background check results will be placed in the employee's file.

13. STUDENT AND SCHOOL DATA

- a. *Describe the process and procedures the school will follow to comply with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and implementing federal and Department of Education regulations regarding disclosure of student records.*

All personnel of Delaware College Prep will fully protect the privacy of student records under the provisions set forth in the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). All employees will receive the *Forum Guide to the Privacy of Student Information* and will be required to have read and understood its contents and sign and submit a statement acknowledging this for their first day of employment. During orientation, all staff will receive comprehensive training developed internally, which will review key compliance components.

The Office Manager and School Nurse will have responsibility for managing, monitoring and securing student records. The Office Manager will have responsibility for overall oversight and the nurse will be primarily responsible for ensuring that all health records are properly managed. Employees in these two roles will receive additional compliance training given the nature of their job duties.

Internal procedures, which will restrict access to school records based on the employee's role and need to acquire such information, will be disclosed during the FERPA training session.

All external requests for student information will be forwarded to the Executive Director who in turn will delegate all appropriate requests to the Office Manager or other appropriate personnel. All external requests must meet the acceptable provisions for releasing such data and where required, the permission of the parent will be required before student data is released.

As a general rule of practice, Delaware College Prep will make parents aware of planned instances in which student data will be released, such as scheduled audits, annual reporting, analysis being conducted by a third party on behalf of the school, etc.

- b. *Describe the plan for the timely transfers of student and school data to the Department of Education.*

The Office Manager will have primary responsibility for managing, monitoring and maintaining all school records. Requests for the transfer of student and school data will be managed by the Office Manager. If a time parameter is given by the state, the Office Manager will ensure that all data is transferred as expediently as possible. Delaware College Prep intends to participate in the use of any statewide data management systems to facilitate the transferring of data to the Department of Education.

ASSURANCES

The Board of Directors of this charter school assures that the school will:

- 1) Be in full compliance with the requirements of 14 Delaware Code, Chapter 5 and 14 Admin Code, Section 275 in the Regulations of the Department of Education at all times.
- 2) Not discriminate against any student in the admissions process because of race, creed, color, sex, disability, or national origin or because a student's school district of residence has a per student local expenditure lower than another student seeking admission.
- 3) Not operate in a sectarian manner or include religious practices in its educational program.
- 4) Participate in the Delaware Student Testing Program and meet the requirements for school accountability as described in state law.
- 5) Manage the school within all state administrative and financial systems including accounting, payroll, purchasing, retirement, and benefits. All school funds will be managed through the school's accounts set up in the Delaware Financial Management System (DFMS).
- 6) Initiate and maintain direct communication with other public and nonpublic schools to assure efficient notification and transfer and exchange of records.
- 7) Update the application to incorporate any modifications and/or conditions identified as pre-conditions to final approval by the Secretary of Education and State Board of Education as set forth in its written decisions; and operate the program in accordance with the content of the updated and approved charter granted by the Department of Education and State Board of Education. The school's board of directors will not implement any additional modifications to the charter school program or operation without the express written consent of the Department of Education.
- 8) Notify the Department of Education in writing when the school administrative head or any member of the board of directors changes.
- 9) Provide the Department of Education with copies of all policies and by-laws of the school and inform the Department in a timely manner when by-laws change.
- 10) Ensure that accurate information on all staff employed at the school is provided to the PHRST and DEEDS systems prior to September 1 each year the school is in operation.
- 11) Employ only staff who has complied with the requirement of having a successful criminal background check.
- 12) Cooperate fully with Department of Education requests for reporting information and activities related to monitoring the school's compliance with the charter and applicable state and federal laws and regulations.
- 13) Submit a proposed Performance Agreement for review and approval as required by the Secretary of Education.

- 14) Distribute copies of the Department's Frequently Asked Questions to all parents seeking to enroll their child(ren) as well as to parents of enrolled children.
- 15) Conduct all meetings of the board of directors in a manner consistent with the Freedom of Information Act, especially the legal requirements of 29 Delaware Code, Sections 10002, 10003 and 10004.
- 16) Include a representative of the teachers employed by the school and parents of students enrolled at the school on the board of directors, consistent with 14 Delaware Code, Section 511(a) prior to opening the school. Each year of operation, ensure that representatives of the teachers employed at the school and parents of children enrolled at the school are on the board of directors.
- 17) Comply with the requirements for reporting school crimes as described in 14 Delaware Code, Section 4112.
- 18) Advise any person or entity offering a loan to the school that debts of the school are not debts of the State of Delaware and that neither the State nor any other agency nor instrumentality of the State is responsible for the repayment of any indebtedness.
- 19) Annually certify to the Department, on a form to be provided by the Department, that prior to the payment of any fees or other sums to a management company employed by the board, the board will ensure that sufficient revenues of the school are devoted to adequately support the school's proposed educational program.
- 20) Participate in all training offered by the Department of Education to charter schools prior to the opening of the school.

As members of the Board of Directors of this Charter School, we agree to these assurances as conditions of approval of the charter.

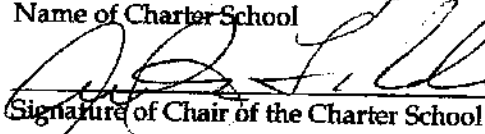
We have reviewed both the Delaware Charter Law (14 Delaware Code, Chapter 5) and 14 Admin Code, Section 275 in the Regulations of the Department of Education (DOE Regulation 275), and have based the responses in this application on the review of these documents.

We understand the requirements of the Delaware Financial Management System (DFMS) and the state payroll system.

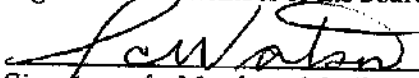
We understand that when submitted to the Department of Education, this application will be deemed to be a "public document" subject to disclosure pursuant to the provisions of the Delaware Freedom of Information Act.

We understand that if a charter is granted for this school, all future members of the school's board of directors will be bound by the terms of the charter unless the approved charter is formally modified with the written approval of the Secretary of Education.

DELAWARE COLLEGE PREPARATORY ACADEMY 12/2/02
Name of Charter School Date of Signatures


Signature of Chair of the Charter School Board of Directors

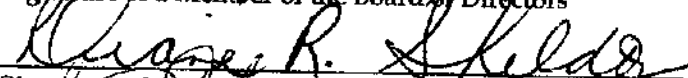
Signature of a Member of the Board of Directors



Signature of a Member of the Board of Directors



Signature of a Member of the Board of Directors



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Delaware College Preparatory Academy 12/13/06
Name of Charter School Date of Signatures

Signature of Chair of the Charter School Board of Directors

James R. M. Faria
Signature of a Member of the Board of Directors

Signature of a Member of the Board of Directors

Signature of a Member of the Board of Directors

Signature of a Member of the Board of Directors

Signature of a Member of the Board of Directors