

DELAWARE CHARTER SCHOOL
RENEWAL APPLICATION
October 1, 2018



DESIGN THINKING ACADEMY

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Newark, DE 19702

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<http://www.ddlhs.org/>

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CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL APPLICATION QUESTIONS

Please indicate below if the school is applying for a 5-year or 10-year charter:

- ✓ 5-year charter
- 10-year charter

Note: To be eligible for a 10-year charter, the school must be entering at least its fourth renewal term and earned overall ratings of Meets or Exceeds every year in all performance frameworks.

Please provide clear, complete, and accurate information in response to each question.

I. OVERVIEW

1.1 Basic Information: Please review the following table for accuracy. Please fill in “Current Enrollment” at time of application submission.

BASIC INFORMATION	
Name of School	Design Thinking Academy ^a
Year School Opened	2015
Current Enrollment	304
Approved Enrollment	350 (SY 2018-19)
School Address	179 Stanton Christiana Rd, Newark, DE 19702 302-292-5450 (phone) 302-292-5457 (fax)
District(s) of Residence	Colonial School District
Website Address	http://www.ddlhs.org/
Name of School Leader	Melissa Siwiec
School Leader Email and Phone Number	Melissa.Siwiec@design-lab.k12.de.us (302) 292-5450
Name of Board President	Paul Miller
Board President Email	paulmiller155@comcast.net

^a At various points throughout its charter, the school has been known as Delaware Design-Lab High School, DDLHS, and Design Thinking Academy. The school has not modified its comments from prior years to reflect its new name in this Renewal Application. Similarly, the school has referred to itself as Design Thinking Academy/DTA in this Renewal Application even when discussing performance from SY 17/18. Accordingly, references to any of the aforementioned names or abbreviations therefore shall refer equally to the school throughout this Renewal Application.

Mission Statement: Our mission is to empower all scholars to be tomorrow's innovators and lifelong learners who question, imagine, create and share every day.

1.2 Enrollment and Demographics: Please review the following table.

	2014-2015 ¹	2015-2016 ¹	2016-2017 ¹	2017-2018 ¹	2018-2019 ¹
Total Enrollment		233	272	298	304
Gender					
% Male		55.79%	59.19%	62.08%	62.84%
% Female		44.21%	40.81%	37.92%	38.16%
Ethnicity/Race					
% African American		49.36%	48.90%	44.30%	43.09%
% American Indian					0.66%
% Asian		4.29%	2.21%	2.35%	0.99%
% Hispanic/Latino		12.88%	11.76%	9.73%	11.84%
% White		32.19%	36.76%	42.62%	42.43%
% Multiracial		0.86%	0.37%	0.67%	0.33%
Special Populations					
% Special Education ³		20.60%	25.00%	20.81%	19.08%
% English Language Learners		1.72%	2.21%	3.02%	2.63%
% Low-Income		38.20%	38.97%	29.87%	35.53%

School Comments 2016-2017	This data element was added in the SY 16/17. The school was not required to provide a response to this information
School Comments 2015-2016	This data element was added in the SY 16/17. The school was not required to provide a response a response to this information

Schools are invited but not required to comment on any aspect of the demographic data above in table 1.2.

Design Thinking Academy (hereinafter, “DTA” or the “School”) serves an incredibly diverse set of scholars both racially, socio-economically, and academically. DTA has a vibrant campus community that reflects who we are and what we want to become. We are home to a fabulous group of scholars, educators, and support staff who believe deeply in our unique pedagogical approach and its ability to impact the future of each scholar, and therefore of the world.

1.3 Approved Minor and Major Modifications: The table lists any approved minor and/or major modifications over the course of the school’s current charter term.

Date	Modification Requested	Outcome
February 2015	Minor - decrease enrollment	Not approved (submitted after deadline)
March 2015	Major - relocate school site	Approved
December 2015	Minor - Add modular unit	Approved
December 2015	Major - Decrease enrollment from 475-350 (effective 2016-17)	Approved
April 2017	Minor - • Update organizational structure • Align language throughout charter for consistency • Clarify and explain governance and management structures and the school’s historical relationship with Design Lab Schools LLC.	Approved
April 2018	Major – Decrease Enrollment	Approved
August 2018	Minor – Name Change	Approved

School Comments 2016-2017	This data element was added in the SY 16/17. The school was not required to provide a response to this information
School Comments 2015-2016	This data element was added in the SY 16/17. The school was not required to provide a response to this information

Schools are invited but not required to comment on any aspect of the modification data above in table 1.3.

Since the opening of the School in 2015, DTA has made substantial strides in its organizational, management, academic, and financial structures. The modifications from 2017-2018 are indicative of DTA’s continued commitment to ensuring its structures and systems are clear, consistent, and transparent to all constituencies.

enrollment by 65 scholars. In summary, they have not been able to keep up with their authorized enrollment. While Delaware Design-Lab High School has shown consistent growth it has not met its projected enrollment. The school recently submitted a modification to revise their enrollment for reasons including space limitations and realistic enrollment projections. This modification was approved in April, 2018.

School Comments 2016-2017	This data element was added in the SY 16/17. The school was not required to provide a response to this information
School Comments 2015-2016	This data element was added in the SY 16/17. The school was not required to provide a response to this information

Schools are invited but not required to comment on any aspect of the demographic data above in table 1.4.

DTA has shown consistent, incremental enrollment growth during its first three years of operation. As set forth in the minor modification to adjust enrollment, approved in April 2018, the original enrollment projections created for the school were neither feasible nor advisable. Now that DTA has stabilized its enrollment projections and its administrative structure, it has exceeded its internal target of 80% enrollment for the 2018-2019 school year and has implemented a strategic plan to create a wait-list for enrollment within the next three years. For SY 18/19, DTA’s enrollment by grade is as follows:

Enrollment by Grade Level 2018-2019	
Grade Level	Enrollment
9	80
10	66
11	55
12	103
Total:	304

1.5 Reenrollment Trends : Please review the following table with the school’s reenrollment trends during the current term of the charter.

School Reenrollment Trends								
	2014-2015		2015-2016		2016-2017		2017-2018	
	Number of Scholars Reenrolled Count	Percentage of Scholars Reenrolled %	Number of Scholars Reenrolled Count	30-Sep Enrollment Count	Number of Scholars Reenrolled Count	Percentage of Scholars Reenrolled %	Number of Scholars Reenrolled Count	Percentage of Scholars Reenrolled %
Total/Avg					170	72.96%	209	76.84%

DOE Summary:

The charter was originally approved to enroll 300 scholars in SY15-16. In SY16/17 their total enrollment was 272 scholars and the approved enrollment was for 350 scholars. The charter was approved for 350 enrollment. Overall, the school’s actual enrollment has not aligned to its projected enrollment.

**School Comments
2016-2017**

Describe the school’s plans to monitor and minimize attrition rates. Provide information about why students are choosing to enroll in different schools.

DDLHS does not believe the data presented above is accurate. As of September 30, 2016, the following table represents the number of students grades 10, 11, and 12, who had been continuously enrolled at DDLHS since the prior year.

School Reenrollment Trends		
Delaware Design Lab		
	Number of Students Reenrolled Count	Percentage of Students Reenrolled %
K		
Grade 1		
Grade 2		
Grade 3		
Grade 4		
Grade 5		
Grade 6		
Grade 7		
Grade 8		
Grade 9**		
Grade 10	112	82.35%
Grade 11	58	60.41%
Grade 12		

Total/Avg	170	72.96%
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**** School entry grade level. Reenrollment data not collected for this grade level.**

The data above reflects retention rates for students who enrolled at DDLHS during its first year of operation. DDLHS believes two major factors contributed to the retention rates listed. First, as a charter school that had not yet opened, all students reflected in this data enrolled in DDLHS based solely upon the explanation of school representatives regarding the school's culture, philosophy, and pedagogical approach. At the time of enrollment, DDLHS did not yet have a reputation in the community upon which students could determine fit, both culturally and academically. Because DDLHS utilizes an innovative model centered on student-voice and design thinking, students accustomed to more traditional learning environments may have experienced some discomfort or confusion during DDLHS's first year in operation and elected to enroll in a more traditional setting the following year. Additionally, the data shows that retention rates for those who entered DDLHS in the 9th grade far exceed the rate of those who entered DDLHS in the 10th grade (i.e., who already completed one year of high school at a different school). Given this discrepancy, DDLHS submits that students who entered in the 10th grade already had switched schools once (having transferred from a different high school) and may have been more apt to exercise the option to switch schools again for whatever reason.

DDLHS intends to minimize attrition rates by minimizing changes at the administrative level, continuing its academic and cultural successes, and working to ensure students who enroll understand the pedagogical approach utilized within the school. DDLHS anticipates retention rates for the 2016-2017 school year may still be lower than desired, but following its 3rd full year of operation (data taken in the fall of 2018) attrition rates will be significantly reduced.

**School Comments
2015-2016**

This data element was added in the SY 16/17. The school was not required to provide a response to this information

Describe the school's plans to monitor and minimize attrition rates. Provide information about why scholars are choosing to enroll in different schools.

The rationale for DTA's attrition rates in prior years is set forth at length in the School's 2017 annual report. In that report, DTA indicated that it expected attrition for SY 17/18 to increase, but that rates would significantly decline by SY 18/19. To the contrary, however, DTA's attrition rates for SY 17/18 actually *declined*, rather than increased as anticipated. DTA attributes this decline in attrition to an overall increased enrollment count, improved programming and college and career readiness strategies, and targeted retention efforts by administration and teachers. Furthermore, as anticipated, attrition rates continue to decline substantially for SY18/19 (from 77% retention in SY 17/18 to 85% retention for SY 18/19). As of September 28, 2018, re-enrollment data for the current school year is as follows:

2017-2018 Grade	Reenrolled Count				
	Yes #	No #	Total#	Yes %	No %
9 th	52	17	69	75%	25%
10 th	47	12	59	80%	20%
11 th	110	9	119	92%	8%
Total	209	38	247	85%	15%

These rates far exceed the average attrition rate at other charter high schools in the area,^b and have not negatively affected DTA's academic, financial, or organizational performance. DTA has always recognized scholar voice and choice as part of the educational experience and, therefore, respects any scholar's decision to attend a different school. To assess why scholars leave, DTA analyzes data provided through informal exit interviews. Over the years, scholars have left DTA for reasons ranging from the appearance of instability to a preference for vocational or other programming options.

Each year, DTA's rates of retention increase. We attribute this to multiple factors, including better branding and knowledge of our pedagogy within the community, the ongoing development of our 9th-12th grade programming (including arts, athletics, core classes, elective classes, and college and career readiness offerings), and leadership stability. As these factors continue to influence school choice decisions, DTA anticipates that more scholars will choose to stay at DTA for their entire high school career.

^b Data taken from the 2017 annual reports of non-renewing schools serving high school grades (MOT Charter, Newark Charter, DAPPS, First State Military, Positive Outcomes Charter School, Newark Charter School) show that the average high school attrition rate at these schools is 78%.

II. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

2.1 Delaware School Success Framework

Changes in the Academic Framework

From School Year (SY) 2014-15 through SY 2016-17, the academic performance of all charter schools was evaluated using the Delaware School Success Framework that were publishing annually. In December 2015, Congress reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the main federal law governing public education. The Every Scholar Succeeds Act (ESSA) replaced the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). ESSA implementation began in 2017-18 school year. Because the data compared is not the same, the frameworks are reported separately below.

Overall Academic Ratings

Metrics	Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)		
	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017
Academic Achievement	**	**	2 Stars (31/125pts) Needs Improvement
Growth	**	**	3 Stars (99/225pts) Approaching
On Track to Graduation	**	**	4 Stars (61/100pts) Meets Standard
College and Career Preparation	**	**	0 Stars (-1/50pts)

Note: Please utilize the hyperlinks in this sentence for more information about the [Delaware School Success Framework \(DSSF\)](#) or the [Revised Delaware School Success Framework \(DSSF\)](#)

a. Based on the table above discuss the school’s academic achievement results, major challenges and accomplishments over the course of the charter term. Evidence should reflect performance during the course of the charter term.

As set forth in the DOE’s introduction to this section, the data contained in DTA’s SY 16/17 report and the data contained for SY 17/18 cannot be compared. Under the new DSSF Academic Performance Framework (implemented in SY 17/18), DTA is deemed to be “well below standard” overall under DSSF, whereas in SY 16/17 DTA was deemed to be “Approaching Standard.” DTA’s overall rating is a function of an adjustment in the business rules to the DSSF calculations, rather than a true reflection of DTA’s overall performance. Absent these adjustments, as set forth in Attachment A hereto, DTA would rate “Approaching Standard (3 stars)” in Academic Achievement, “Meets Standard (4 Stars)” in Growth, and “Exceeds Standards (5 stars)” in On-Track to Graduation. This shows growth in all areas of the Academic Framework for which DTA was rated.

Because the data in the two tables above cannot be compared, DTA refers the reader to the detailed discussions below regarding the school’s overall academic (i) achievement results, (ii) major challenges, and (iii) accomplishments.

Performance Agreement

Academic Performance Expectations

By 2017, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of “Meets” or “Exceeds” standard as measured by the Academic Performance Framework. Each year, we will show growth within our overall rating putting us on track to achieve our academic performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

DOE Summary:

In SY2014-15, DDLHS was not in operation. In SY15/16 the school did not have tested grades. In SY16/17 DDLHS had its first eleventh grade class. While the school met on track to graduation rates, it did not meet attendance in academic achievement and growth. The school was approaching standards in growth and needs improvement in academic achievement.

DDLHS does not have State assessment data for SY2015-16 because the school did not include scholars in any tested grade levels during its first two years of operation. In SY2014-15, the school was not opened. In SY15/16 the school opened with ninth grade and added a new grade each year thereafter. Currently, the school serves grades 9-11. This school year, SY2017-18, will be the first year that State results will be available since this is the first year the school has eleventh grade scholars.

School Comments:

DDLHS did not have State assessment data for SY2015-2016 because there were no students in any tested grade levels during the school's first year of operation. In SY2015-2016, DDLHS opened with 9th and 10th grade, and added a new grade each year thereafter. DDLHS currently serves grades 9-12, and this school year (SY2016-2017) was the first year that State results will be available since this is the first year the school had 11th grade students.

Although there is no state-reported data from SY2015-2016, DDLHS does have several measures that have been used to guide academic growth, with NWEA's Measures of Academic Performance ("MAP") scores being the most instructive.

MAP scores have served as a benchmark for students and have helped to institute changes for academics. Data shows that in the first year of operation, DDLHS was not particularly successful at increasing academic performance across a variety of subject matters.

School Year 2015-2016 (1st Year of Operation)

9th Grade SY15-16

	Mean	DDLHS	Expected Growth	Actual Growth	Did Growth Exceed Target	Points deficient
Math			3.1	1.5	NO	
Fall	230.3	220.8				-9.5
Spring	233.4	222.3				-11.1
Reading			1.7	-3.7	NO	
Fall	220.2	220.6				0.4
Spring	221.9	216.9				-5
Language Usage			2	0.1	NO	
Fall	218.4	215.1				-3.3
Spring	220.4	215.2				-5.2

10th Grade SY15-16

	Mean	DDLHS	Expected Growth	Actual Growth	Did Growth Exceed Target	Points Deficient
Math			2.3	-2.1	NO	
Fall	230.1	222.4				-7.7
Spring	232.4	220.3				-12.1
Reading			0.7	-3.1	NO	
Fall	220.4	219.8				-0.6
Spring	221.2	216.7				-4.5
Language Usage			1.2	-2.4	NO	
Fall	218.9	216				-2.9
Spring	220.1	213.6				-6.5

By its second year of operation, however, DDLHS students were significantly exceeding normative achievement goals in Math and Language Usage. If these growth trends continue in Math and Language

Usage, DDLHS students should collectively reach or exceed academic norms in these areas within 3 years of enrollment at DDLHS.

School Year 2016-2017 (2nd Year of Operation)

9th Grade SY16-17

	Mean	DDLHS	Expected Growth	Actual Growth	Did Growth Exceed Target	Points deficient
Math			3.1	3.7	YES	
Fall	230.3	221				-9.3
Spring	233.4	224.7				-8.7
Reading			1.7	1.1	NO	
Fall	220.2	216.5				-3.7
Spring	221.9	217.6				-4.3
Language Usage			2	2.8	YES	
Fall	218.4	214.8				-3.6
Spring	220.4	217.6				-2.8

10th Grade SY16-17

	Mean	DDLHS	Expected Growth	Actual Growth	Did Growth Exceed Target	Points Deficient	Growth over same time last year
Math			2.3	6.1	YES		
Fall	230.1	220.2				-9.9	-0.4
Spring	232.4	226.3				-6.1	5
Reading			0.7	-2.1	NO		
Fall	220.4	217.4				-3	-3.4
Spring	221.2	215.3				-5.9	-0.9
Language Usage			1.2	1.2	YES		
Fall	218.9	214.9				-4	-0.7
Spring	220.1	216.1				-4	1.2

**Data not adjusted for student by student enrollment changes.

11th Grade SY16-17

	Mean	DDLHS	Expected Growth	Actual Growth	Did Growth Exceed Target	Points Deficient	Cohort Growth over same time last year**
Math			1.7	1.9	YES		
Fall	233.3	225.3				-8	-0.3
Spring	235	227.2				-7.8	4.3
Reading			-0.3	-4.6	NO		
Fall	222.6	219.7				-2.9	-2.3
Spring	222.3	215.1				-7.2	-2.7
Language Usage			0.6	2.4	YES		
Fall	221.5	215.3				-6.2	-3.3
Spring	222.1	217.7				-4.4	2.1

**Data not adjusted for student by student enrollment changes.

Based on this data, DDLHS recognizes that it needs the most school-wide improvement in Reading and is establishing systems and instructional techniques aimed at increasing student achievement in this area. Specifically, DDLHS operates on a block schedule, allowing students currently in 12th grade to earn more than one credit of English in a year, thus allowing certain students to obtain two years' worth of English credits in a single year. DDLHS also has segregated an hour, 3 times per week, for guided instruction in areas of student need as identified by their individual test scores. DDLHS anticipates that these collective efforts will improve the MAP scores in reading, while the school continues to reach its growth targets in Math and Language Usage.

Note: This data element was included in SY 16/17 for direct school reporting. School information regarding the performance agreement for SY 14/15 and SY 15/16 can be found in their overall annual report at <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654>

b. Discuss the school’s academic performance based on its approved Performance Agreement (see above).

DTA’s Performance Agreement states that “by 2017 our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of “Meets” or “Exceeds” standard as measured by the Academic Performance Framework.” While DTA did not earn a “Meets” or “Exceeds” standard rating on its Academic Performance Framework in 2017 or 2018, the school has shown consistent growth in academic performance over the charter term, leading to exceptional results in post-secondary outcomes, as detailed elsewhere in this application. Moreover, absent an adjustment to the business rules regarding the calculation of scores under DSSF, DTA would have met or exceeded standard in 2 of the 3 areas for which it would have received a rating in SY 17/18.

Since the school’s opening, DTA’s board members, administrators, faculty, and staff have worked relentlessly to ensure they meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of each individual scholar in their care. DTA has a strong focus on excellence in teaching and learning, as evidenced by its retention of DASL, PDCE, Better Lesson, and other highly qualified professional development providers, as well as its focus on increased teacher planning time and coordinated PLC. DTA also boasts a robust guidance department that employs climate and culture experts, guidance counselors, college and career counselors, and a school psychologist, all of whom work to ensure our scholars’ social and emotional needs are met so that they may focus on achieving their goals. DTA offers innumerable out of school opportunities, including internships, on campus dual enrollment, summer programming, after school programming, and more, all designed to help scholars gain practical experience that will serve them well after high school. Finally, DTA not only aligns its academic and socio-emotional programs to the State of Delaware’s standards, but overlays them with XQ’s Learner Goals, which are designed to ensure scholars are prepared to face the challenges of the 21st century by being holders of foundational knowledge, masters of fundamental literacies, original thinkers, generous collaborators, and learners for life.^c

^c Information regarding the XQ Learner Goals, XQ Learner Outcomes, XQ Design Principles, and other matters may be found at xqsuperschool.org.

2.2 Academic Achievement/Proficiency Data

Academic Achievement	Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)			
	2015-2016		2016-2017	
Rating	**		2 Stars (31/125pts) Needs Improvement	
	School	State	School	State
ELA	**	54.91%	36.36 %	56.63%
Math	**	42.87%	12.73%	45.13%
Science	**	60.41%	24.51%	47.45%
Social Studies	**	76.82%	n/a	n/a

SY 2017-2018:

High School (grades 9-12)

Measures	Weight	Points	Points Earned
Academic Achievement	30%	150	30 Well Below Expectations
Proficiency ELA	15%	75	23
Proficiency Math	15%	75	7

*** Science and Social Studies Achievement Data is now measured and included in section 2.5.

Note: Please utilize the hyperlinks in this sentence for more information about the [Academic Performance Framework](#) or the [Delaware School Success Framework \(DSSF\)](#).

DOE Summary:

In SY2014-15, DDLHS was not in operation. In SY15/16 the school did not have tested grades. In SY16/17 DDLHS had its first eleventh grade class. While the school met on track to graduation rates, it did not meet attendance in academic achievement and growth. The school was approaching standards in growth and needs improvement in academic achievement. In 2016/17 they achieved 2 stars, being below the state average.

a) Academic Achievement ratings over the course of the charter term

<p>School Comments 2016-2017</p>	<p>Based on a statistical analysis of this data, DDLHS believes that one root cause of the failure to meet standard in this area is the combination of (i) the number of tested scholars who enrolled at DDLHS well below state-proficiency levels and (ii) the short period of time (less than 2 years at the time of testing) these scholars were at DDLHS. Specifically, each of the scholars tested had been enrolled in other educational settings for the majority, if not all, of his or her formal education. Raising proficiency scores from well-below standard to above benchmark in 1 or 2 years for these scholars, especially in the first years of a school's operation, is not realistic. Given this information, DDLHS believes that the growth measures identified in Section 2.3 hereof are a more appropriate measure of the success of its educational program. Nevertheless, DDLHS presents an analysis of the data as it stands, below.</p> <p>Proficiency in ELA: The data utilized to create the Academic Achievement rating for the 2016-2017 school year incorporates data from a single cohort of scholars. Of the 45 scholars tested both in 10th (PSAT) and 11th (SAT) grade, 39 of the scholars (87%) were in their second year of enrollment at DDLHS (Cohort A). Based upon previous year's data, 69% of Cohort A increased their ELA Score. On average, a scholar from Cohort A increased their ELA score by 86 points, which is three times more than the expected yearly growth on the SAT as projected by the College Board. At this rate of growth, 64% of scholars tested will reach the ELA benchmark score by their graduation date, which is 7% higher than the state average, despite only 42% of scholars scoring at the proficient level or higher when they entered DDLHS.</p> <p>Proficiency in Math: The data utilized to create the Academic Achievement rating for the 2016-2017 school year incorporates data from a single cohort of scholars. Of the 45 scholars tested both in 10th (PSAT) and 11th (SAT) grade, 39 of the scholars (87%) were in their second year of enrollment at DDLHS (Cohort A). Based upon previous year's data, 56% of Cohort A increased their Math Score. On average, a scholar from Cohort A increased their Math score by 88 points, which is three times more than the expected yearly growth on the SAT as projected by the College Board. If this rate continues, 41% of scholars will reach the Math benchmark score by their graduation date, which is only 4% less than the state average. This is due to the large percentage of scholars who entered the school scoring below proficient in Math (greater than 85%).</p> <p>Proficiency in Science: The data utilized to create the Academic Achievement rating for the 2016-2017 school year also incorporates data from a single cohort of scholars. 100% of the scholars tested were in their first year of enrollment at DDLHS. DDLHS does not have data showing the proficiency rates of the scholars at the point of enrollment, so it is unable to calculate growth. Based on the data presented for ELA and Math, however, DDLHS submits that the scores likely reflect substantial growth from a below-proficiency entry point and that DDLHS will be able to prove an increase science proficiency in this, and future, cohorts of scholars correlated to length of enrollment at DDLHS.</p>
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b) Expected outcomes for Academic Achievement

School Comments 2016-2017	Given the above findings regarding growth in Math, Language Usage, and Reading, DDLHS expect to see a significant growth in proficiency among 11th and 12th grade scholars by the end of FY 2018. To accomplish these goals, DDLHS will continue utilizing its pedagogical approach of learning through design thinking. We also have implemented the use of personalized instruction in Math through Kahn Academy, and in English and Science through block scheduling, small group instruction, and individual tutoring during Design Lab Hour and club time.
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c) Progress measures to track expected Academic Achievement outcomes

School Comments 2016-2017	DDLHS will utilize a tiered approach to assessment and intervention, beginning with initial assessment through MAP in the fall and winter before administration of the DCAS Alt-1 assessments in the Spring. Upon receipt of the assessment data in the fall, DDLHS will identify Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 level scholars in each of the tested content areas. DDLHS will re-evaluate this data, in conjunction with classroom data, regularly throughout each semester to identify scholars who may be struggling with their course work. DDLHS incorporates scheduled time each day for scholars at all levels to receive specific instruction and/or remediation in areas of need, or for scholars to pursue personal educational goals if all basic proficiencies are met. During this dedicated hour, DDLHS will utilize its internal RTI approaches (Khan Academy, small group learning, peer coaching, etc.) to increase proficiency in the tested areas. DDLHS will reassess the success of its RTI program in the winter with a second administration of the MAP test and adjust as appropriate to ensure increased proficiency on the DCAS Alt-1 assessment.
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Note: School comments for SY 15/16 and SY 14/15 can be found at:

<https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654>

The table above lists the school's available DSSF Academic Achievement ratings. Respond to the following questions.

a. Based on the school's Academic Achievement ratings over the course of the charter term, discuss the school's current performance and provide explanations/root causes (positive and negative) for the results.

DTA refers the reader to its 2017-2018 annual report, filed contemporaneously herewith, for additional discussion of its academic achievement ratings for SY 17/18.

We believe that the following factors must be considered when discussing DTA's academic performance data over the course of the charter term:

- 1) The scholars reflected in DTA's academic data for ELA and Math have spent the majority of their formal education elsewhere. Indeed, in the first cohort of scholars for whom DTA has ELA and Math data (SY 16/17), 13% of the scholars had been enrolled in the school for less than one year at the time of testing and no scholar had been enrolled more than two years. Based

on internal assessment data, on average these scholars (who enrolled at DTA as 10th graders) performed at a 6th grade proficiency level in Mathematics and an 8th grade proficiency level for Reading and Language Usage at the time of enrollment.^d Although it is DTA's objective to make all scholars proficient in ELA and Math by the time they are tested in the early Spring of 11th grade, raising proficiency scores five grade levels in Mathematics and three grade levels in ELA in less than 17 months, especially in the first years of a school's operation, is not realistic.

- 2) Similarly, the data utilized to create the Academic Achievement rating in science for the 2016-2017 school year incorporates data from a single cohort of scholars, 100% of whom were in their first year of enrollment at DTA. DTA does not have data showing the scholars' proficiency rates in science at the point of enrollment, but submits that the scores likely reflect substantial growth from a below-proficiency entry point.
- 3) At best, DTA has data representing two years for ELA and Math, one year for science, and no years for social studies. Given the youth of the school, as well as other mitigating factors discussed throughout this report, the data collected to date is not sufficient, standing alone, to determine the effectiveness of DTA's unique educational program.
- 4) DTA's design-focused approach to education naturally attracts scholars who may not be motivated by performance on a standardized test. Indeed, DTA's educational program prioritizes 21st century skills, such as original thought, collaboration, and entrepreneurial spirit, as highly as test taking strategies. DTA believes that these skills will be most beneficial to our scholars as they leave high school and prepare to solve the world's challenges and has had significant success educating scholars to be self-motivated, self-directed leaders.
- 5) DTA has a disproportionately high level of scholars with psychological, social, and/or emotional needs. In its first several years of operation, DTA did not have adequate resources to address these needs school-wide, causing teachers and school leaders to spend increased classroom time attending to these areas. It is well known that socio-emotional needs and academic performance are closely related.
- 6) Although DTA's proficiency scores were below the State average, DTA's scores for 2016-2017 are comparable to the average academic performance score for similarly situated schools.^e Moreover, DTA's score of 30 points in 2016-2017 places it at the median for performance among similarly situated high schools for that year.

^d DTA's MAP data from Fall 2015 shows this cohort of scholars had an average mathematics score of 223, and an average Reading and Language usage score of 217 at the time of enrollment. See NWEA Comparative Data to Inform Instructional Decisions, <https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2015/08/MAP-2015-Comparative-Data-to-Inform-Instructional-Decisions-One-Sheet-DEC15.pdf> (September 21, 2018).

^e DTA defines "similarly situated schools" as (i) stand-alone high schools, (ii) authorized by the Charter School Office, (iii) in New Castle County, and (iv) serving grades 9-12. For purposes of this analysis, DTA also considered the four district high schools in Christina and Colonial School Districts as "similarly situated schools." See data taken from the 2017 Academic Framework Reports of DAPSS (11 pts), DMA (68 pts), and the four district high schools referenced above (Christiana HS 21 pts; Glasgow HS 25 pts; Newark HS 49 pts; William Penn HS 32 pts). The average academic performance score for these schools is 34.3 pts.

For these reasons and many others, DTA believes that growth, rather than static measurement at a single point in time, is the most appropriate measure of the academic success of its program. Accordingly, DTA refers the reader to §2.3(a) of this Renewal Report, for a detailed discussion of DTA's growth over the course of the charter term. DTA believes that its comments from SY 16/17 and SY 17/18 explain and provide root causes for its academic proficiency results.

b. Looking ahead, what are the school's expected outcomes for Academic Achievement and what steps will the school take to achieve them?

The school's expected outcomes for academic achievement are ambitious yet achievable. A comprehensive academic program that offers tailored and personalized support and interventions will assure that scholars who are not at grade level are intercepted early on and monitored closely. Once identified, scholars requiring additional academic support will receive targeting assistance during Block 5 (our final block of the academic day). Our goal for Academic Achievement is for our scholars to meet and exceed state standards. We will also continue to track data on our graduates' college matriculation and college outcomes. We will be phasing in additional Advanced Placement offerings to our program to provide advanced sequences of study and to strengthen our overall academic rigor.

Our Academic Department Chairs group (which meets bi-weekly) will review individual scholar, grade level, and school-wide performance data to assess our overall academic program on a quarterly basis (at each marking period). Specifically, we will work together to use the data to identify how effectively we are meeting the needs of our scholar population. We will take the scholar performance data into consideration when making curricular modifications and will use it to guide decisions regarding curriculum breadth and depth, course offerings, and supports in individual classrooms, departments and school-wide.

We have implemented several new layers of academic support as of fall 2019. Our primary diagnostic tool for RTI is IXL, an interactive diagnostic tool that accurately captures academic performance and provides targeted interventions for specific content and subject areas.

In addition, our new Advisory Program pairs each scholar with an adult in the community, with whom they will meet for a programmed Advisory morning session and also return to at the close of the day. This adult is also responsible for monitoring each of their advisees' academic progress, and functions as the primary liaison to the scholar's family regarding progress. We also have implemented a Student Support Committee ("SCC" or the "Committee"), which meets weekly. In addition to a focus on social-emotional concerns (which we know often overlap with academic performance), this Committee focuses on specific scholars who may be struggling academically and require additional supports. See §§ 2.2(c) and 3.4(b) for further discussion regarding the SCC.

DTA added six new members to its Guidance and Learning Support Team this year, all of whom are in place to support our academic program, ensure personalized interventions, and collaborate with the administration to identify additional resources and develop individual scholar learning support plans if needed.

It should be noted that in addition to offering a comprehensive, standards-aligned academic program, our school is also distinctive in our one-of-a-kind emphasis on learning experiences in PBL (project-based learning) and design thinking. While we adhere to the high expectations for scholar and teacher performance set forth by the Delaware Department of Education, many of the skills and consequent successes of DTA scholars cannot be measured according to the metrics used for academic performance. For example, our Pathway programs and some of our signature programs in design offer learning experiences, acquisition of cognitive skills, and a range of outcomes that resist measurement by standardized rubrics and metrics. While we are committed to ensuring an excellent academic program for all scholars, as one of ten original XQ Super School Grant Winners, we are also interested in “Rethinking the High School Experience,” and including additional layers of design thinking and creative problem solving that fall outside of the state standards (but of course do not supplant them).

We expect to see steady, measurable growth in our scholars as our school now offers a complete 9-12 academic program (the class of 2019 is our first graduating class of scholars who have attended all four years at DTA). Consequently, we will be admitting most of our scholars in the ninth grade, as opposed to our startup years when we did not offer all four years of high school. Oversight during the entire 4-year continuity of our scholars’ high school experience will be an advantage for DTA in setting high academic expectations and establishing a pervasive culture of academic excellence, particularly given what we know about the implications for performance in ninth grade for the following three years.

Of course, exceptional and qualified teachers are the most critical and essential piece of the academic program. Consistent and comprehensive support and training for staff, in addition to multi-level observations evaluations and supports in conjunction with the implementation of the Delaware Performance Appraisal System II Framework, will ensure that teachers show continued measurable professional growth and that each classroom in our school has a qualified and effective teacher. Additional professional development experiences offered through PDMS as well as specific targeted instruction in design thinking (offered through a collaboration with Cooper Hewitt, the Design museum affiliate of the Smithsonian) combined will improve instructional practice and teacher effectiveness.

c. Describe how the school will measure progress to determine whether the school is on track to meet the school’s expected Academic Achievement outcomes.

Every week the SSC meets to discuss individual scholars and their progress towards the academic achievement outcomes. This committee is comprised of the Dean of College and Career Readiness, the Director of Exceptional Children, the School Counselor, the School Psychologist, the Director of Climate and Culture, and the School Principal.

At the beginning of the week, teachers are asked to talk to the Committee members about scholars that are of concern emotionally and/or academically. For each scholar that is brought to the Committee’s attention, a detailed action plan is put in place. Additionally, the Committee regularly utilizes data on EdInsight to track scholar attendance, behavior incidents, and course grades.

At the end of each marking period, DTA’s data analyst will provide an update to the Leadership

Team^f on the measures included in the School's Academic, Organizational, and Financial Framework. The Leadership Team will then meet to discuss strategies for improving the measures that are below standard.

^f The School's Leadership Team is defined as the Executive Director, the Principal, the Dean of College and Career Readiness, the Director of External Operations, the Director of Internal Operations, the Director of Exceptional Children, the School Counselor, and the Director of Information Technology.

2.3 Growth Data

Growth	Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)			
	2015-2016		2016-2017	
Rating	**		3 Stars (99/225pts) Approaching	
	School	State	School	State
ELA	**	50.00 %	46.83 %	50.00 %
Math	**	50.00 %	41.17 %	50.00 %

SY 2017-2018:

***Academic Progress is not measured for 9th- 12 Grade High Schools**

Note: Please utilize the hyperlinks in this sentence for more information about the [Academic Performance Framework](#) or the [Delaware School Success Framework \(DSSF\)](#).

DOE Summary:

DDLHS has shown growth in SY 2016/17 in ELA by 47% and in Math by 41%. The State Metric Value for growth for SY16/17 is 50% for LEA metric value, 46.83% and points earned is 52.69.

School's Response to DOE's Summary

DSSF no longer considers growth a valid measure of success for stand-alone high schools and, accordingly, DTA did not receive a growth rating this year. Under the business rules in effect at the time DTA's charter was granted, however, DTA's growth rating for SY 17/18 would be "**Meets Standard**," which shows continued improvement in the area of growth.

a) School's Growth ratings for all scholars over the course of the charter term

**School
Comments
2016-2017**

School Comments:

As stated above, DDLHS did not have any data to report in the 2015-16 school years. The achievement data in SY16-17 in the areas of ELA and Math was determined by the SAT data of a single cohort of students, 100% of whom had been enrolled at DDLHS for less than 2 years at the time of testing. Unfortunately, DDLHS is unable to clearly identify the source of the data used to assess this measure.

DDLHS has used internal assessment data, however, to show that in SY16-17 students significantly exceeded normative growth goals in Math and Language Usage

9th Grade SY16-17 – CHART A

	Mean	DDLHS	Expected Growth	Actual Growth	Did Growth Exceed Target	Points deficient
Math			3.1	3.7	YES	
Fall	230.3	221				-9.3
Spring	233.4	224.7				-8.7
Reading			1.7	1.1	NO	
Fall	220.2	216.5				-3.7
Spring	221.9	217.6				-4.3
Language Usage			2	2.8	YES	
Fall	218.4	214.8				-3.6
Spring	220.4	217.6				-2.8

10th Grade SY16-17 – CHART B

	Mean	DDLHS	Expected Growth	Actual Growth	Did Growth Exceed Target	Points Deficient	Growth over same time last year
Math			2.3	6.1	YES		
Fall	230.1	220.2				-9.9	-0.4
Spring	232.4	226.3				-6.1	5
Reading			0.7	-2.1	NO		
Fall	220.4	217.4				-3	-3.4
Spring	221.2	215.3				-5.9	-0.9
Language Usage			1.2	1.2	YES		
Fall	218.9	214.9				-4	-0.7
Spring	220.1	216.1				-4	1.2

**Data not adjusted for student by student enrollment changes.

11th Grade SY16-17 – CHART C

	Mean	DDLHS	Expected Growth	Actual Growth	Did Growth Exceed Target	Points Deficient	Cohort Growth over same time last year**
Math			1.7	1.9	YES		
Fall	233.3	225.3				-8	-0.3
Spring	235	227.2				-7.8	4.3
Reading			-0.3	-4.6	NO		
Fall	222.6	219.7				-2.9	-2.3
Spring	222.3	215.1				-7.2	-2.7
Language Usage			0.6	2.4	YES		
Fall	221.5	215.3				-6.2	-3.3
Spring	222.1	217.7				-4.4	2.1

**Data not adjusted for student by student enrollment changes.

Explanations:

- 1) DDLHS believes the failure to achieve growth targets in SY2015-2016 relates directly to the fact that it was the school's first year of operation. In addition to focusing on academic achievement, a thinly staffed leadership team focused on all the mandates required to run a newly formed school including (i) teacher onboarding and training in the design thinking process, (ii) facilities issues, (iii) compliance with Federal, State, and local mandates, and (iv) operational matters such as the creation of human resources, financial, reporting, and other systems. Additionally, all students reflected in this data enrolled in DDLHS based solely upon the explanation of school representatives regarding the school's culture, philosophy, and pedagogical approach. At the time of enrollment, DDLHS did not yet have a reputation in the community upon which students could determine fit, both culturally and academically. Because DDLHS utilizes an innovative model centered on student-voice and design thinking, students accustomed to more traditional learning environments may have experienced some discomfort or confusion during DDLHS's first year in operation and may not have absorbed content in a manner that reflected positively on standardized tests.
- 2) DDLHS attributes its success in Math and Language Usage growth in its second year of operation to two factors. First, having operated one full year, leadership was more fully able to focus on academic growth instead of operational concerns. The school was able to institute more targeted professional development, RTI programs, and other systems designed to improve student achievement. Additionally, from exit surveys conducted at the end of SY15-16, the leadership team determined that a primary driver of student retention was the quality of teachers in the math department. Accordingly, in SY16-17, DDLHS focused intently on highly qualified math teachers with strong teaching skills and a solid understanding of the design thinking process. The success of these instructors is evident in the student growth seen in math during SY16-17.

3) The last column in Charts B and C shows the decrease or increase in total points from one year to the next in the fall and spring testing windows. DDLHS attributes decreases in this metric across all grades during the fall testing window to "summer slide." The substantial increases in year over year growth by Spring, however, are notable. DDLHS attributes this success to the unique, hands-on way content is taught at the school.

b) Expected outcomes for Growth for all scholars

School Comments 2016-2017	<p>As set forth above, DDLHS scholars far exceeded expected growth targets in Math and Language Usage based on MAP testing. This information is consistent with the data provided in Section 2.2(a) hereof regarding growth in SAT scores. If these growth trends continue, DDLHS believes that its academic program provides the proper scaffolding to allow scholars to achieve academic norms and/or proficiency in core subject areas within 3 years of enrollment at DDLHS.</p> <p>DDLHS expects the growth trajectories identified in Math and Language Usage, and as seen in the SAT data, to continue in the current school year at the same, or increased, rates. DDLHS expects the downward growth trajectory in Reading identified on the school’s MAP scores to reverse as a result of multiple factors, including increased length of enrollment of the cohort tested, increased RTIs and other resources provided to scholars in need, and increased teacher development in content and design thinking.</p>
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c) Progress measures to track Growth for all scholars

School Comments 2016-2017	<p>DDLHS measures classroom performance four times per year and utilizes the data to identify scholars in need of additional assistance. DDLHS also formally assesses its scholars in the winter with a second administration of the MAP test and adjusts instructional goals as appropriate to ensure increased proficiency on the DCAS Alt-1 assessments.</p>
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Note: School comments for SY 15/16 and SY 14/15 can be found at: <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654>

The table above lists the school’s available DSSF Growth ratings. Respond to the following questions.

- a. Based on the school’s Growth ratings for all scholars over the course of the charter term, discuss the school’s current performance and provide at least three explanations/root causes (positive and negative) for the results. (Note: We invite the school to provide information about all scholars including those below, at and above proficiency.)**

DTA believes that growth is one of the most important measures of academic success for a stand-alone high school in areas where DTA scholars enroll far below proficiency. Given that upon enrollment <1% of DTA 9th graders perform on grade level in Mathematics,^g it is not realistic to expect

^g Only 3 of DTA’s incoming 9th graders were at an 8th grade or higher level in Mathematics when enrolled.

DTA to increase proficiency rates to 37%^h in no more than 3 years, and often a shorter time frame given that DTA accepts scholars in their 10th and 11th grade years from other schools.

Internal Assessment Analysis: SY 16/17 was the first year DTA was able to measure year over year growth in its scholars. As identified in the SY 16/17 Annual Report, DTA scholars far exceeded the normative growth goals of our internal assessments (Measure of Academic Performance (MAP) Test) in both Math and Language Usage.

In its SY 16/17 Annual Report, DTA predicted that a scholar's length of enrollment at DTA would directly correlate to the rate of growth on assessments such as MAP and SAT. Based on the data analyzed in SY 17/18, this prediction remains valid. Analysis of MAP data from SY 17/18 shows that in all subject areas (reading, math, language usage) on average scholars who attended DTA for at least two years saw more growth on their MAP scores than those who only attended for one year. DTA believes it makes the largest growth impact in a scholar's second year because, after one full year of enrollment, our scholars better understand and are able to learn through our design-thinking pedagogy. Scholars still grow dramatically in their third year of enrollment, but the rate of growth levels. DTA attributes this leveling to the fact that after two years scholar have come closer to grade level.

The following chart shows the average growth based upon the number of years a scholar has been enrolled at DTA:

# of Years @ DTA	Average Growth Mathematics	Average Growth Reading	Average Growth Language Usage
1	7	6	7
2	10	13	8
3	10	8	10

Overall, DTA scholars show 4.5 times the expected rate of grow in Math and Reading, and 4 times the expected rate of growth in Language Usage, when compared to the NWEA normative growth data charts.

External Assessment Analysis: SY 17/18 is the second year DTA is able to assess growth to proficiency in ELA and Math on a State mandated assessment. After analyzing the scholar-level data, 65% of scholars enrolled at DTA saw growth in their overall SAT scores (when compared to the prior year's PSAT scores). Even more impressive, of those who saw growth, the average growth was **99 points**, which is almost **double** the expected growth per year, according to SAT Benchmarks. This data is consistent with DTA's internal MAP data, which showed our scholars exceeding growth goals in Math and Language Usage.

As set forth in the analysis above, DTA has significantly exceeded the expected growth targets in all areas and across all assessments (internal and State mandated) throughout the course of its charter term. Under last year's DSSF business rules, DTA would have received 4 stars for its growth measurements, which would have accounted for 45% of the School's overall rating. See Appendix 13.

^h In order to achieve a ranking of Meets Expectation, stand-alone high schools must achieve a combined proficiency score of at least 53 points.

b. Looking ahead, what are the school’s expected outcomes for Growth for all scholars and what steps will the school take to achieve them?

Because growth no longer is calculated under DSSF, DTA does not believe a material answer to this question is called for. Nevertheless, DTA believes that its growth measurements will continue to exceed norms and will continue educating its students as set forth in this Renewal Application in order to achieve those goals.

c. Describe how the school will measure progress to determine whether the school is on track to meet expected Growth outcomes for all scholars.

Because growth no longer is calculated under DSSF, DTA does not believe a material answer to this question is called for. Nevertheless, DTA will continue to use internal and external assessment data to measure growth in its students and will use the data to guide instruction.

2.4 On Track Graduation Data

**The new DSSF does not measure this metric in a similar fashion. This new DSSF data for School Quality and Student Success is included after College and Career Preparation Data in Section 2.5.

On Track to Graduation	Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)			
	2015-2016		2016-2017	
Rating	**		4 Stars (61/100pts) Meets Standard	
	School	State	School	State
On-Track in the 9th grade	**	84.80 %	61.41 %	89.45 %
4-year Cohort Graduation Rate ²	**	84.35 %	0.00 %	84.66 %
5-year Cohort Graduation Rate	**	85.84 %	**	85.60 %
6-year Cohort Graduation Rate	**		**	*Not calculated at the state level

Note: Please utilize the hyperlinks in this sentence for more information about the [Academic Performance Framework](#) or the [Delaware School Success Framework \(DSSF\)](#).

DOE Summary:

Currently, the school serves grades 9-12, this school year, SY2017-18, will be the first year that the school as a graduating class. DDLHS scored below the state average in on track to graduation in SY16/17.

a) On Track to Graduation ratings over the course of the charter term

School Comments 2016-2017	A fundamental component of DDLHS is that it provides a valuable high school education to any eligible scholar. Many scholars enroll at DDLHS after having a negative 9th-grade experience at another high school. A large portion of these scholars have failed two or more key freshman courses at their originating high school: ELA, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, and/or Foreign Language. DDLHS provides these at-risk scholars with the personalized instructional environment and rigorous curriculum they need to succeed and graduate on-time. This explains our low score in the “On-Track in the 9th Grade” category (61% versus the State average of 89%).
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	<p>DDLHS accepts scholars who are not on-track to graduate after 9th grade from other high schools. We work with each scholar to identify barriers to on-time graduation (e.g., failed 9th-grade mathematics). We then develop individualized course pathways for the remaining high school years that allow the scholar to graduate on-time. Scholars may be required to “double up” on a certain subject in a given year. We are exploring flexible delivery methods that help scholars take ownership of their educations by selecting the format/timing that works best for them. In addition to normal courses offered during the school year, some targeted courses may be offered over the summer and/or on-line.</p> <p>Guidance will review each scholar’s progress in the critical courses each marking period to immediately address problem areas and drive on-time graduation.</p>
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b) Expected outcomes for On Track to Graduation

<p>School Comments 2016-2017</p>	<p>“On-Track in the 9th grade” is an important metric. It highlights the percentage of scholars who are at-risk for dropping out of high school. DDLHS recognizes that our score of 61.41% is well below the State average. Since many of our scholars arrive after 9th grade, we do not have complete control over the data point. However, we use it as an alarm and as a rallying point for our staff. We are working with a population of scholars who (statistically) would not graduate from a traditional high school. Compared to other high schools in the State, DDLHS has almost 30% more at-risk scholars. We provide a space for these scholars to exhibit their strengths and develop proficiencies in a way that allows them to graduate from high school.</p> <p>DDLHS expects over 90% of DDLHS 9th-graders to be on-track for graduation after their freshman year. We will do this through careful observance of marking period grades in the measured subject areas and frequent data-based conversations with 9th-grade instructional staff. Personalized interventions will be incorporated, as appropriate.</p>
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c) Progress measures to monitor On Track to Graduation outcomes

<p>School Comments 2016-2017</p>	<p>Scholars begin their DDLHS experience at various entry points in their high school careers. Whether they enroll at DDLHS in 9th, 10th, 11th, or 12th grade, guidance spends time with the scholars during the enrollment process to review transcripts and credits. This collaboration allows the scholars to understand what is required to graduate on-time and the scheduling options that will allow this.</p> <p>To ensure that these important enrollment meetings occur, DDLHS will measure the percentage of incoming scholars who have a graduation course schedule by their fifth school day. Guidance will work in collaboration with scholars and staff to create this schedule for every semester.</p> <p>DDLHS will measure the percentage of scholars who fail a course in ELA, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, and Foreign Language each semester. This</p>
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will help us identify where additional supports are required for scholars and staff. DDLHS will create and manage the list of scholars who are not on-track to graduate on-time. This list will exist for all grades. All staff members will be aware of the list and will provide relevant updates to administrators (e.g., a scholar is in danger of failing a class).

Note: School comments for SY 15/16 and SY 14/15 can be found at:
<https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654>

The table above lists the school's available DSSF On Track to Graduation ratings. Respond to the following questions.

a. Based on the school's On Track to Graduation ratings over the course of the charter term, discuss the school's current performance and provide explanations/root causes (positive and negative) for the results.

DTA recognizes that success in 9th grade is a strong indicator for overall high school success and graduation. Statistically speaking, freshmen must have great attendance and high pass rates in order to graduate on time.

DTA only has data for this metric for two years of its charter term. In SY 16/17, DTA's On-Track percentage was 61.41%. The explanations and underlying causes for this percentage are discussed in the School's 16/17 Annual Report. For SY 17/18, DTA's On-Track percentage increased to 72%. The rationale for DTA's On-Track data for SY 17/18 is substantially similar to that for SY 16/17. Specifically, a fundamental component of DDLHS is that it provides a valuable high school education to any eligible scholar. Many scholars enroll at DDLHS after having a negative 9th-grade experience at another high school. A large portion of these scholars have failed two or more key freshman courses at their originating high school: ELA, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, and/or Foreign Language. Additionally, for SY 17/18, DTA suffered mid-year teacher turnover in its 9th grade courses and increased expectations for academic proficiency in order to be promoted. Notwithstanding these challenges, DTA increased its On-Track percentage in SY 17/18 and expects to continue this trend in the future. DTA attributes its ability to increase its percentage, notwithstanding its inherent challenges, to the hiring of a full-time Dean of College and Career Readiness, as well as sustained efforts to improve this metric within the School's Guidance and Learning Support teams.

b. Looking ahead, what are the school's expected outcomes for On Track to Graduation and what steps will the school take to achieve them?

DTA expects to meet the State average on-track to graduation rate in 2018-19 and to exceed the State average in subsequent years. Moving forward, DTA's goal is 95% on-track to graduation at each grade level.

In order to achieve these goals, DTA has developed several programs and structures to help support 9th grade students. Specifically, DTA works with teachers in the areas of ELA, mathematics, science,

social studies, and world language to drive 9th grade scholar success. While increasing rigor across all classrooms, our teachers and administrators keep an extra eye on 9th graders who are at-risk of not earning a credit in any of these courses. It is worth noting that, at this time, scholars have to earn a C (77%) or better to earn credit for a particular course.ⁱ Once at-risk scholars are identified, the DTA team collaborates to determine individualized supports that would work best in each case. Examples of supports include: extra instructional time, varied instructional styles, additional time to complete assignments and prove competency, and supplemental on-line instruction. If scheduling allows, scholars also may be given a second opportunity to earn credit (during the 9th grade year) after unsuccessfully taking a course the first time.

DTA teachers also reach out to parents at mid-term and mid-semester whenever a scholar is at-risk for not earning credit in a course. Teacher communications occur by e-mail, hard copy letter, and/or phone calls. DTA is looking to make this a more robust parent communication process moving forward by adding new communication methods (e.g., text-based) and working to confirm receipts of messages from teachers

DTA has added school-day RTI classes for scholars who are below grade level in reading and/or mathematics. Much of this RTI will incorporate IXL as a learning tool. IXL has also been added as an optional resource to ELA/mathematics teachers for in-class, targeted support. By more precisely identifying weak areas and applying immediate resources to address the areas, DTA will improve scholar ability while driving on-track to graduation rates.

Every DTA scholar has an Advisor. A key role of each Advisor is to help ensure that scholars are on-track to graduate. Advisors can provide guidance on scheduling, raise concerns about at-risk situations, set up meetings with school counselors or teachers, and help arrange for instructional supports.

DTA is building a schedule that includes a focus on promotion and graduation every year. All scholars are expected to take at least one ELA, science, social studies, mathematics, and world language course each year. Some scholars may be encouraged to take more than one course in a certain subject area (e.g., mathematics) at a strategic time in order to maximize options after high school. DTA will provide some summer options for scholars to earn key credits and stay on-track for graduation.

DTA will continue to build stronger relationships with scholars and parents to improve communication, to better share expectations related to high school graduation, and to increase the levels of collaboration between all parties to drive success. Parents and scholars will receive on going training opportunities related to accessing academic information (e.g., HAC, Schoology, school website). DTA intends to grow all parent engagement programs, including parent-teacher conferences. We will use the conferences to reinforce the importance of on-track through all grades for all scholars.

ⁱ DTA has requested an adjustment to its current grading scale because (i) it is significantly misaligned with other schools and college grading structures and (ii) does not accurately capture our scholars' academic performance.

c. Describe how the school will measure progress to determine whether the school is on track to meet the school's expected On Track to Graduation outcomes.

Before each academic year, DTA will schedule every scholar for an ELA, mathematics, social studies, science, and world language class. Once schedules are complete, we will audit the schedules and measure the percent of schedules that comply with the objective.

During Advisory, scholars will be asked to review their grades each week. During certain times of the year, scholars will also use this time to review their earned credits versus graduation requirements. This will help inform schedule requests for the next year. School counselors will proactively meet with class-sized groups and hold one-on-one discussions with scholars throughout the year to ensure on-track to graduation is a priority. Scholar success plans will be incorporated into the conversations and actions.

All scholar grades will be calculated and shared at mid-term, end of marking period, and end of semester. Anytime a scholar has earned less than a C at any of these stages, the scholar will be personally notified, and a parent/guardian will be contacted. Administration will work with scholars and teachers to determine the most appropriate, scholar-centered supports to ensure that all credits are earned.

DTA will utilize the resources of its Guidance Department and the SSC to carefully monitor 9th grade performance.

2.5 College & Career Preparation Data

College & Career Preparation	Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)			
	2015-2016		2016-2017	
Rating	**		0 Stars (-1/50pts)	
	School	State	School	State
Growth to Proficiency ELA	**	57.10 %	n/a	59.19 %
Growth to Proficiency Math	**	34.42 %	n/a	35.41 %
College & Career Preparation	**	46.41 %	n/a	49.64 %

SY 2017-2018:

High School (Grades 9-12)

Measures	Weight	Points	Points Earned
<i>School Quality/Student Success</i>	40%	150	72 Approaching Expectations
Chronic Absenteeism (K-12)	5%	25	18
Proficiency Science (Grade 10)	5%	n/a	n/a
Proficiency Social Studies (HS)	5%	n/a	n/a
College and/or Career Preparedness (9-12)	15%	75	18
On Track in 9th Grade (Grade 9)	10%	50	36

High School (grades 9-12)

Measures	Weight	Points	Points Earned
Graduation Rate	20%	n/a	n/a
4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	15%	n/a	n/a
5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	3%	n/a	n/a
6-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	2%	n/a	n/a

Note: Please utilize the hyperlinks in this sentence for more information about the [Academic Performance Framework](#) or the [Delaware School Success Framework \(DSSF\)](#).

DOE Summary:
<p>The school does not have State assessment data for SY2014-15 because the school was not open until August, 2015 or SY2015-16 because the school did not include scholars in any tested grade levels until 2016/17. In SY2015-16, the school opened with ninth grade and added a new grade each year thereafter. In SY2016-17, the school only served grades 9-11. This school year, the school will serve grades 9-12.</p> <p>The school has been requested to provide additional data to support college and career preparation.</p>

School's Response to DOE's Summary
<p>DTA graduated its first class of seniors in 2018. Because this data is calculated on a 1-year lag, DTA has no data to present for the current charter term. In response to DOE's request for additional data to support college and career preparation, DTA states as follows:</p> <p>In order to best serve its scholars, in SY 17/18 DTA hired a full-time Dean of College and Career Readiness to head the school's guidance department. With the addition of this position, DTA expanded its CCR programming to include dual enrollment, internships, online study, and multiple Career and Technical Education pathways.</p> <p>DTA's first graduating class set a college and career preparedness baseline that we will use to build upon and grow year-over-year. Ninety-six percent (47/49) of the Class of 2018 graduated on-time. The remaining two scholars continue to take courses at our high school and intend to graduate in 2019.</p> <p>For the Class of 2018:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Of those seniors who graduated, 100% completed a State approved or LEA approved Career and Technical Education Pathway.

- Four seniors took ON-CAMPUS dual enrollment at Wilmington University (Discrete Math).
- Three seniors took ON-CAMPUS dual enrollment at the University of Delaware (Department of Art and Design).
- DTA paid 100% of the costs for scholar's participation in dual enrollment courses, including supplies and transportation. Given that 30% of DTA's scholars are designated as "low-income," it is unlikely that many of these scholars would have had the opportunity to earn college credit absent this financial support.
- Several seniors successfully completed AP Computer Science Principles, the capstone course of the State approved CTE pathway.

Class of 2018 post-secondary outcomes:

- 57% enrolled at four-year college/university (28 scholars)
- 16% enrolled at two-year college/university (8 scholars)
- 4% enrolled at a trade school (2 scholars)
- 14% who are employed (7 scholars)
- 4% with undetermined plans (2 scholars)
- 4% did not yet graduate (2 scholars)

DTA has a layered approach to college and career readiness that includes proven programming, on-site initiatives, and dedicated partners. The overall objective is to maximize options after high school while increasing expectations.

Programming:

All 9th and 10th graders take the PSAT, and all 11th graders take the SAT. Eligible scholars are invited to take the NMSQT. Seniors may take the SAT in December. All of these tests are at no cost to the scholars. Scholars receive coaching and are encouraged to use Khan Academy, in connection with their P/SAT scores, to improve future performance.

All seniors participate in College Application Month ("CAM"). DTA has dedicated three weeks (four days per week) to help seniors apply to colleges. All seniors will be required to apply to one reach, two target, and one safety college. Seniors will be *encouraged* to apply to three reach, three target, and three safety colleges. Scholars are encouraged to set high expectations and get rejected by at least one college. The three weeks coincide with Delaware's CAM, so all in-state application fees will be waived. Even scholars who plan to enter the workforce or enlist in the military will be asked to complete four college applications as an experience to open doors.

On-Site Initiatives:

Curriculum

DTA has implemented the Foundations of College English and Foundations of College Mathematics courses. Successful completion of these courses exempts a student from taking remedial coursework as a freshman at any Delaware college or university. Remedial coursework at the college level dramatically decreases graduation rates, so this is an integral part of our high school offering. DTA also has added AP Computer Science A and AP Calculus AB. DTA now offers the complete state-approved CTE Computer Science program of study. The school has also implemented the Architectural Engineering Technology program of study.

School Day Supports

DTA school counselors will coach scholars at the classroom, small group, and individual levels to help make informed decisions about the future that relate to colleges and careers. All graduates will be adept at using the College Scorecard to identify top colleges that meet the interests and desires of the scholars. Scholars will know all about colleges that “meet full need,” the importance of seeking colleges with higher than average graduation rates, and the importance of not shying away from certain colleges just because they have a high price tag.

DTA will host numerous colleges and allow scholars to interact with admissions representatives on-site. DTA will also visit colleges that align with scholar interests and the DTA mission.

After seniors graduate, DTA stays in close contact with the college-going scholars to ensure that they address all transitional barriers and end up on the college campus of their dreams. Summer melt prevention efforts begin before graduation and remain in full force through the fall.

Partnerships:

DTA has partnered with the University of Delaware to allow our scholars to take on-campus, college-level courses for credit alongside college scholars. This complete experience breaks down many of the college barriers and fears carried by our scholars. Coursework aligns with our career pathways (e.g., media, design, and entrepreneurship) and mathematics. We plan to add UD’s freshman English course and a science course with lab in the near future.

DTA has partnered with \$tandByMe to offer ten FAFSA workshops in 2018-19. The expectation is that 80% of the senior class will complete the FAFSA. \$tandByMe will also offer Colleges, Careers, and Cash to all sophomores at DTA. This weeklong program helps scholars understand the connections between education, employment, and finances.

DTA hosted a Design Thinking summer camp that partnered scholars with faculty and parents to solve important school-level concerns. We are also partnering with local

	<p>organizations (e.g., Brandywine Zoo) so that scholars may use Design Thinking to solve important problems that impact society.</p> <p>DTA scholars take full advantage of local college and career preparatory partners and programs. We realize that scholars need instruction from multiple sources to succeed and can more easily build their social capital outside of the school building. DTA actively promotes these programs, encourages scholars to apply, and removes barriers to participation.</p>
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a) College and Career Preparation ratings over the course of the charter term

School Comments 2016-2017	<p>DDLHS will graduate its first class of seniors in the Spring of 2018. Accordingly, DDLHS does not have sufficient data at this time to respond to this area of the DSSF.</p>
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b) Expected outcomes for College and Career Preparation

School Comments 2016-2017	<p>DDLHS is prototyping a variety of college and career readiness (“CC&R”) programming in SY17-18 in preparation for SY18-19. Examples of DDLHS’s initiatives include, without limitation, dual enrollment, internships, self-guided online study, IDEO’s Purpose Project, and development of multiple new Career and Technical Education Pathways.</p>
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c) Progress measures to track College and Career Preparation outcomes

School Comments 2016-2017	<p>DDLHS will use multiple measures to track C&CR. Data points will include grades, attendance, behavior, academic assessments, teacher recommendations, and C&CR course enrollment numbers and successful completions.</p>
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Note: School comments for SY 15/16 and SY 14/15 can be found at: <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654>

The table above lists the school’s available DSSF College and Career Preparation ratings. Respond to the following questions.

a. Based on the school’s College and Career Preparation ratings over the course of the charter term, discuss the school’s current performance and provide explanations/root causes (positive and negative) for the results. (Note: We invite the school to provide information about all scholars including those below, at and above proficiency.)

SY 17/18 is the first year for which DTA has data to populate this metric. Based on its performance for SY 17/18, DTA is “approaching standard” for College and Career Preparation, which is measured by data in six metrics. DTA believes that the hiring of a full-time Dean of College and Career Readiness to lead the School’s Guidance and Learning Support Department has been the driving factor in its success, and anticipates that in years to come it consistently will “meet standard” in this area.

A discussion of each metric is set forth below:

Chronic Absenteeism - Based on the data provided by the Department of Education, 72% of DTA's students attend school regularly for the full-day. DTA does not believe this number accurately represents its school attendance rates, and submits this percentage is a function of LEA level attendance taking policies. Specifically, during SY 17/18, DTA's policy indicated that a student's attendance for the entire day was calculated solely upon whether the student was present in second period. Naturally, this methodology causes inaccurate calculations by excluding students who arrive later in the day or for some reason miss only their second period class. DTA has revised its LEA level attendance policy for SY 18/19 to accurately include only students who have full-day absences in this calculation. Going forward, DTA expects to "meet expectations" in this area.

Proficiency in Science – no data except that provided by a single cohort of students who had been enrolled at DTA for less than 1 year at the time of testing. See §2.2(a) SY 16/17 Comments.

Proficiency in Social Studies – no data.

College and Career Preparedness – See School's Response to DOE's Summary, above. DTA notes that SY 17/18 was the first year it had a substantial and comprehensive College and Career Preparedness program. Many of the dual enrollment courses and State approved CTE pathway programming, which drives ratings in this metric, were primarily available to last year's 11th graders. Indeed, 16% of DTA's 11th graders took dual enrollment courses during SY 17/18 with many more expected to participate as seniors during SY 18/19. DTA believes that the fact that these courses were primarily offered to last year's 11th graders (but the metric only includes data from last year's 12th graders) is the primary factor underlying its rating in this area for SY 17/18.

On-Track in 9th Grade – See comprehensive discussion in §2.4, above.

Graduation Rates – no data. DTA notes that its Graduation Rate for SY 17/18 was 96%, which far exceeds the State average of 85%.

b. Looking ahead, what are the school's expected outcomes for College and Career Preparation and what steps will the school take to achieve them?

DTA intends to continuously increase the percent of graduates who are College and Career Ready. In order to achieve this objective, DTA will:

- increase the number of scholars who participate in the dual enrollment program;
 - increase classroom rigor and ELA/Mathematics course options to increase SAT scores and academic readiness;
 - maximally implement Foundations of College English and Foundations of College Mathematics to increase college readiness and decrease the need for college remediation;
 - ensure that all scholars complete one of our career pathways;
 - encourage scholars to participate in our State-approved Computer Science or Architectural Engineering Technology program of study;
 - actively participate in the Work-Based Learning initiative as part of the State's CTE program;
 - and
-

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- actively participate in all of DHEO's and CTE's efforts.

DTA will take advantage of national, programs, State programs, local programs, and school-based initiatives to drive college and career-based outcomes. All of our work will be built upon equity, care, and personalized goal achievement. We will combat the decades of institutional -isms that keep scholars of color away from the highest-achieving colleges, that keep females away from the most lucrative STEM majors, and that keep scholars from low-income homes away from the richest universities. We will be transparent in our communications and instruction with parents and scholars to diminish barriers. One ultimate goal is to allow each DTA graduate to make perfectly informed decisions about their futures.

First generation college-goers will benefit from the multitude of resources available to help them navigate the pathways to post-secondary opportunities. DTA partners with colleges who have established specific on-campus programs to help first generation scholars, especially those colleges with very high graduation rates. DTA prepares scholars to deal with stereotype threat, imposter syndrome, their first F at college, and being away from home. We work with each scholar to complete the Career Compass, the FAFSA, the Common App, and all relevant work associated with the Delaware Scholarship Compendium.

c. Describe how the school will measure progress to determine whether the school is on track to meet the school's expected College and Career Preparation outcomes.

Several measures will be employed to monitor progress and adjust the school's approach to College and Career Preparation.

1. PSAT Scores: IXL and Khan Academy will be used to increase scores.
 2. SAT Scores: IXL and Khan Academy will be used to increase scores.
 3. # of AP and dual enrollment courses offered by DTA: courses will be offered in core areas and as extensions to career pathways.
 4. # of scholars who earn dual enrollment credit: scholars will be selected in an equitable fashion and adequate supports will be provided to drive successful outcomes.
 5. # of scholars who take an AP course: scholars will be counseled and encouraged to take the most rigorous courses.
 6. # of scholars who earn a 3 or better on an AP course: DTA will remove barriers to AP testing and aim to increase year-over-year participation rates.
 7. Perkins Indicators to increase CTE course concentrators and completers: DTA will measure and share these data to drive our career pathway program and increase concentrators/completers.
 8. # of scholars who participate in a college prep program (e.g., TeenSHARP, Upward Bound): DTA will measure application rates, admission rates, and enrollment rates of all college prep programs.
 9. Demographics: at all times, we will ensure that enrollment in college/career prep programs mirrors the overall demographics of the school population.
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Section 2.6 * New

Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, every school was measured on scholar “Progress toward English language proficiency (ELP)” This metric is an index calculation that measures the percentage of all current ELs who make annual progress toward ELP as measured by the statewide ELP assessment. ELP is defined as scoring a PL of 5.0 on the statewide ELP assessment. Attainment has been defined in Delaware as a PL of 5.0 and a level in which a scholar is considered to have met a proficiency level comparable to their native English speaking peers. [Therefore, a PL of 5.0 is considered a scholar’s Attainment Target \(AT\).](#)

Measures	Weight	Points	Points Earned
<i>Progress toward English Language Proficiency</i>	10%	<i>n/a</i>	n/a

School Comments 2016-2017	This metric did not exist in SY 16/17.
School Comments 2015-2016	This metric did not exist in SY 15/16.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The Organizational Performance Framework reflects expectations the charter school is required to meet through state and federal law and the charter performance agreement, and seeks to provide information regarding these key questions:

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

3.1 Mission Specific Goal(s)

Is the school faithful to its mission as defined in its current charter, including approved mission-specific academic goals if applicable?

Essential Question Indicator 1a... Is the school faithful to its mission as defined in its current charter, including approved mission-specific academic goals if applicable				
Star				
Measure	Definition of Rating	Data Source	Data Collection Process	Measure
	<p>Meets Standard:</p> <p>In the 2015-2016 opening school year, school leadership, faculty, and DDLHS co-founders Dr. Cristina Alvarez and Dr. Martin Rayala, worked collaboratively to establish the mission specific components of the academic program. Design-Lab Schools LLC provided educational support services and targeted resources to support DDLHS to implement the design thinking-based innovations approved in the charter in the areas of teacher and staff development and curriculum and pedagogy.</p> <p>Specific design thinking professional development was provided to all faculty members throughout the school year. Subject coaches supported the professional development of mathematics, science, English language arts and technology education teachers. Teachers and students practiced how to use the design thinking processes in all classes, and in several clubs, to deepen their learning.</p>	<p>Budget</p> <p>Professional Development Calendar</p> <p>Agenda</p> <p>Lesson Plans</p> <p>Unit Plans</p> <p>Google Docs</p> <p>DPASS II Teacher Evaluations</p>	<p>PDF Upload and entry into system by DOE.</p>	1a1
	<p>The design thinking process used by teachers and students in all subjects begins with identifying the problem (practicing empathy for another); researching (to learn more about it); developing criteria (What does a good solution need?); generating ideas (What are some possibilities?); selecting the best possibilities (What fits the criteria best?); producing the design (rapid prototype, model, layout); implementing (See if it works.); evaluating the solution (How is it used?) and then iterating to refine the solution.</p> <p>100% of DDLHS students in grades 9 and 10 were enrolled in the mission specific courses of Technology Education or Media Design, in which they demonstrated visual note taking and visual communication skills by sketching, creating posters, animations, videos, websites, graphic designs, exhibits, and projects. Students demonstrated growth in visual literacy (the ability to interpret, negotiate and make meaning from information presented in visual form) as measured by work products produced in class work, portfolios, and projects.</p> <p>100% of DDLHS students in grades 9 and 10 completed 60-hours of participation in collaborative or service learning which was tracked by the guidance counselor and incorporated into each Student Success Plan. Since a core purpose of design is to make the world a better place for everyone, students used design thinking to demonstrate increased civic responsibility.</p>	<p>Student Schedules</p> <p>Transcripts</p> <p>Student Work</p> <p>Portfolios</p> <p>Projects</p> <p>Guidance Files</p> <p>Career Cruising</p> <p>Student Success Plans</p>		

DOE Summary:

DDLHS met the criteria for a "Meets Standard" rating for its mission specific goal.

a) 2016-2017 mission specific goal(s).

School Comments 2016-2017	The table above reflects the school's mission specific goals for the SY15-16, rather than the current report year. In this report, DDLHS will respond to the mission specific goal data provided to the Department of Education for SY16-17.
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In the 2016-2017, our second year of operation, school leadership and faculty continued to work collaboratively to establish the mission specific components of the academic program. Design-Lab Schools, LLC provided educational support services and targeted resources to support DDLHS in its efforts to implement the design thinking- based innovations approved in the charter in the areas of teacher and staff development and curriculum and pedagogy.

In support of this statement, DDLHS presents in Appendix 1:
2017 Mission Driven Budget showing expenditures for Design Thinking Services
Design Thinking Unit Plan Template
Sample Design Thinking Unit Plan

Subject matter coaches provided by DASL and ARTC supported the professional development of mathematics, science, English language arts and technology education teachers, as well. Teachers and scholars practiced how to use the design thinking processes in all classes, and in several clubs, to deepen their learning.

In support of this statement, DDLHS presents in Appendix 1:
Scholar Work evidencing Design Thinking Processes

The design thinking process used by teachers and scholars in all subjects begins with identifying the problem (practicing empathy for another); researching (to learn more about it); developing criteria (What does a good solution need?); generating ideas (What are some possibilities?); selecting the best possibilities (What fits the criteria best?); producing the design (rapid prototype, model, layout) implementing (See if it works.); evaluating the solution (How is it used?) and then iterating to refine the solution. The design thinking process was posted in classrooms throughout the building and utilized by scholars daily.

In support of this statement, DDLHS present in Appendix 1:
Photograph of the Design Thinking Process as posted in classroom

100% of DDLHS scholars in grades 9, 10 and 11 were enrolled in the mission specific courses of Technology Education, Media Design and/or Design, in which they demonstrated visual note taking and visual communication skills by sketching, creating posters, animations, videos, websites, graphic designs, exhibits, and projects. Scholars demonstrated growth in visual literacy (the ability to interpret, negotiate and make meaning from information presented in visual form) as measured by work products produced in class work, portfolios, and projects.

In support of this statement, DDLHS presents in Appendix 1:
Scholar schedules and transcripts – available in eSchool
Samples of scholar work – photographic and written

DDLHS scholars in grades 9, 10 and 11 are required to participate in collaborative or service learning tracked by the guidance counselor. Because a core purpose of

design is to make the world a better place for everyone, scholars used design thinking to demonstrate increased civic responsibility and empathy.

In support of this statement, DDLHS presents in Appendix 1: Samples of scholar community service/volunteer hour commitments.

Note: This data element was added in the SY 16/17. The school was not required to provide a response to this information.

a. Rate the school's performance according to the criteria established by the school for its mission specific goal(s).

DTA has met standard in this area for all years in which it has been assessed. For SY 17/18, DTA provided the DOE with the following:

“Specific design-thinking professional development was provided to all faculty members throughout the school year.”

In support of this mission specific goal, DDLHS attaches evidence of its partnership with PDCE at the University of Delaware for the 2017-2018 school year. PDCE provided 8 full days of design-thinking professional development for DDLHS teachers this school year. A sample agenda for these professional development days are attached, and the full collection of agendas is available upon request.

In addition, DDLHS teachers participated in excess of 500 hours of additional, optional design thinking professional development between September 1, 2017 and June 30, 2018.

“Subject coaches supported the professional development of mathematics, science, English language arts, and technology education teachers.”

In support of this mission specific goal, DDLHS attaches evidence of its partnership with PDCE and redacted coaching logs (complete collection of coaching logs available upon request) created by PDCE for the subject matter teachers identified above. PDCE coaching logs were then utilized by DDLHS administration to support struggling teachers and improve instruction throughout the year.

“Teachers and students practiced how to use the design thinking process in all classes, and in several clubs, to deepen their learning.”

In support of this mission specific goal regarding school courses, DDLHS attaches design-thinking Unit and Lesson plans created and utilized this year.

In support of clubs, DDLHS states that, among other activities:

Seven DDLHS scholars participate in Dual School, a competitive design-thinking and project-based learning experience. DDLHS had the highest number of participants accepted into the program from any Delaware school or district. More information on dual school can be found here:

<http://dualschool.com>. After serving as an advisory board member for two DDLHS Dual School scholars, one teacher stated: “[Teacher] and I were very IMPRESSED with [the students’] level of professionalism. These are students we can be very proud to call Design Lab Students. They were using the Design Process. They held a meeting with two others from the school last week and used that as their prototype and came back with a much improved process for collecting their information. As they go to work in local school districts, they will reflect very positively on what a Design-Lab Student is and how such a student presents themselves. Well done.”

Ten DDLHS scholars participated in Mad About Mattering, a design-thinking app-development program in which students created phone applications designed to address social concerns. Students worked in global teams (with other students from across America, as well as outside the U.S.). Information on Mad About Mattering can be found here: <http://www.madaboutmattering.com/>

“100% of DDLHS students in 9th and 10th grade were enrolled in the mission specific courses of Technology Education or Media Design, in which...[s]tudents demonstrated growth in visual literacy...as measured by work products produced in class work, portfolios, and projects.”

In support of this mission specific goal, DDLHS presents samples of student work product from the media design courses. (Please note it is impossible to remove identifying information in videos). These projects were created utilizing the design-thinking process identified in the mission-specific goals:

<https://youtu.be/xM4iNpEdcAI>

<https://youtu.be/0IPWgIDN24c>

<https://youtu.be/9hrY0eoJojA>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CGQ-5svHWcs>

“100% of DDLHS students in grades 9 and 10 completed 60-hours of participation in collaborative or service learning which was tracked by the guidance counselor and incorporated into each Student Success plan.”

In support of this mission specific goal, DDLHS attached samples of collaborative and service-learning tracking sheets maintained by the guidance department.

b. Provide as Appendix 1 the results (data source) of the school’s mission specific goal(s). Remember not to include any personally identifiable information (PII).

3.2 Organizational Performance

Note: Please utilize the hyperlink in this sentence for more information about the [Organizational Performance Framework](#).

Year	Education Program		Fi nancial	Governance and Reporting			Scholars and Employees				School Environment		Additional Obligations	OVERALL RATING
	1a	1b	2*	3a	3b	3c	4a	4b	4c	4d	5a	5b	6	
	Charter Terms	Scholars with Disabilities	Financial Management and Oversight	Governance	Management Accountability	Reporting Requirements	Protecting Scholar Rights	Attendance Goal	Staff Credentialing	Employee Rights	Facility and Transportation	Health and Safety Requirements	Additional Obligations	
2014-2015	N/R	N/R	*	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
2015-2016	M	M	*	M	M	M	M	D	M	N/R	M	M	M	Meets Standard

* Data for this measure is now included in the Financial Performance Framework

Year	Education Program				Governance & Reporting			Scholars & Staff		Facilities, Transportation, Health & Safety	OVERALL RATING
	Mission Fidelity	Applicable State & Federal Requirements	Scholars with Disabilities	English learners	Governance & Public Stewardship	Oversight of School Management	Reporting Requirements	Scholars Rights	Req. on Teacher Certification & Hiring Staff		
	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	3a	3b		
2016-2017	M	M	M	M	AS	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard
2017-2018	M	M	M	M	D	M	M	M	M	M	Approaching Standard

Accountability Committee that inspects management’s compliance with Board policies on a quarterly basis.

c) Indicator measure where school did not meet standard or is approaching standard

School Comments 2016-2017	<p>As reported to CSAC in the Spring of 2017, all members of the DDLHS CBOC and Board of Directors are scheduled to complete the training referenced herein. However, the necessary training sessions were not offered until after the June 30, 2017 deadline. As of the date of this report, all but 2 members of the DDLHS Board have completed the required training. Now that the training is available on a self-paced schedule, all members are on track to complete such training prior to the end of December, 2017.</p> <p>DDLHS Board Members also underwent Performance Framework Training (DOE Provided) in February 2017.</p>
School Comments 2015-2016	<p>School comments for SY 15/16 can be found at: https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654</p>
School Comments 2014-2015	<p>Not Applicable</p>

a. Describe the school’s organizational performance over the current charter term. (This section is for the school to address any overall rating where the school has not met standards. The school will be able to address individual metrics in the sections below.)

The school has met the overall standard in the area of Organizational Framework for each year that it has been assessed, except for FY 18, where DTA is “approaching standard” due to a single factor that has been resolved.^j This means that DTA is materially fulfilling applicable state and federal requirements related to educational programming, governance and reporting, scholars and staff, and facilities and transportation. Notwithstanding multiple “bumps in the road,” DTA continues to be an organizationally sound, well-run school that complies with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of its charter.

^j In 2017, the Organizational Framework rules were amended to state that a school could not “Meet Standard” in any area if it fell “Far Below” standard in any one of the ten available metrics. Notwithstanding DTA’s 100% compliance with 9 of the 10 metrics in the Organizational Framework, DTA is categorically prohibited from receiving an overall rating of “Meets Standard” for FY 18 because it falls one point below “Approaching Standard” in metric 2a.

b. Identify changes to organizational practices that the school has implemented to improve the school's organizational outcomes.

Over the course of the charter term, DTA has made multiple improvements and adjustments to its organizational structure in an effort to ensure 100% compliance with the Organizational Framework. Please see the notes in DTA's annual reports for SY 15/16, 16/17, and 17/18 for further detail.

c. Address any measure where school did not meet standard or is approaching standard.

DDLHS has achieved scores of 100% in all areas of the Organizational Framework in all but one area, where it achieved a score one point below "Approaching Standard." DTA can attribute the rating to a single factor – Board and CBOC members who did not complete mandatory financial training provided by the DOE. In its SY 16/17 Annual Report, DTA indicated that this training would be completed by December 31, 2017 (the training was not available for self-paced participation until October 2017). DTA's Board and CBOC members complied with this obligation and, at this time, all Board and CBOC members have been trained. DTA now requires this mandatory training as part of its Board/CBOC onboarding program, which will help avoid this issue in the future.

Performance Agreement

Organizational Performance Expectations

By 2017, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of “Meets”, as measured by the Organizational Performance Framework.” Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate performance aligned with this organizational performance expectation. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

DOE Summary:

DDLHS has met organizational standards for the last two school years.

School Comments 2016-2017

The school has complied with its performance agreement.

Note: This data element was included in SY 16/17 for direct school reporting. School information regarding the performance agreement for SY 14/15 and SY 15/16 can be found in their overall annual report at <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654>

d. Discuss the school’s organizational performance based on its approved Performance Agreement.

DTA has complied with its approved Performance Agreement in the area of Organizational Performance Expectations for each year the school has been in operation, except that DTA is deemed to be “Approaching Standard” for FY 18. As set forth above, the Organizational Framework rules were amended in 2017 to state that a school could not “Meet Standard” in any area if it fell “Far Below” standard in any one of the ten available metrics. Notwithstanding DTA’s 100% compliance with 9 of the 10 metrics in the Organizational Framework, therefore, DTA is categorically prohibited from receiving an overall rating of “Meets Standard” for FY 18 because it falls one point below “Approaching Standard” in metric 2a.

3.3 Educational Program

a. Describe any changes to the education program or curricula the Board plans to make prior to the renewal.

DTA proposes the following changes to its original charter, together with the revised core content area scope and sequence documents annexed hereto:^k

Section	Page	Proposed Change
Global	Global	Delete all references to Box City and Spanish Village
1	1	<p>Revised Mission Statement: Our mission is to empower all students to be tomorrow’s innovators and lifelong learners who question, imagine, create, and share every day</p> <p>Revised Vision Statement: Design Thinking Academy develops generations of innovators who create solutions to the world’s problems through design thinking.</p>
3	8	Curriculum and Instructional Design, Section 1 – Instructional Design Framework, Paragraph 2 – Replace entire paragraph with “DTA will use modified block scheduling, with extended class periods where appropriate and flexible scheduling for scholars participating in off-campus activities such as dual enrollment, internships, and experiential learning initiatives. DTA utilizes semester-long and year-long course schedules, depending upon the subject matter, to ensure scholars have adequate time devoted to core academic subjects.”
3	9	<p>Curriculum and Instructional Design, Section 2 – Required Courses - Replace the required course table with the following:</p> <p><u>9th Grade Required (7 credits):</u> English 9 IM 1 (Math) Physical Science Civics Geography & Global Studies World Language 1 (or higher, as appropriate) Design Thinking Seminar Health</p> <p><u>10th Grade Required (7 credits):**</u> English 10</p>

^k DTA hereby requests that the DOE consider this Renewal Application as its completed request for a Major and/or Minor Modification, where necessary or appropriate to effect these changes. DTA requests that all changes be made effective for SY 18/19, if possible. DTA does not believe the requested changes will have any measurable impact on operations or finances going forward. All other questions required for modifications are addressed elsewhere in this Renewal Application.

IM 2 (Math)
Biology
World Language 2 (or higher, as appropriate)
Gym (full semester)
Health (1 MP)
Pathway Course Credit 1
Driver's Education (1 MP)

11th Grade Required (7 credits):**

English 11
IM 3 or appropriate Math elective
Chemistry or appropriate science elective
US History
Pathway Course Credit 2
Elective 1.5 Credits (may include off-site options/Internships)

12th Grade Required (7 credits):**

English 12 or English Elective
Pre-Calculus or appropriate Math elective
World History
Pathway Course Credit 3
Senior Capstone
Elective 2 Credits (must include a science credit, and may include off-site options/Internships)

**Beginning in 10th grade, scholars will be given the option to build their schedules for the balance of their high school career to meet their personal goals. For example, a scholar in 10th grade may take "Pathway Course Credit 1" first semester and "Pathway Course Credit 2" second semester, while deferring World Language 2 to the 11th grade year. Similarly, an 11th grade scholar may take IMP 3 first semester and Pre-Calculus second semester to prepare for dual enrollment in the 12th grade year.

Courses in blue may not be deferred or advanced.
Courses in green may be deferred, but not advanced.
Courses in red may not be deferred, but may be advanced.
Courses in black may be deferred or advanced to accommodate scholar needs.

In all instances, scholar must satisfy pre-requisite courses before enrolling in an advanced option.

State of Delaware Requirements (24 Total Credits):

English – 4 credits (one each year)
Math – 4 credits (one each year)
Science – 3 credits
Social Studies – 3 Credits

		<p>World Language – 2 Credits Gym – 1 Credit Health - .5 Credit Pathway – 3 Credits Elective – 3.5 Credits</p>
3	10	<p>Curriculum and Instructional Design, Section 3 – Instructional Strategies – Replace the entire section with the following:</p> <p>Design-learning process instructional strategies for teachers at DTA are based on the design-thinking process, and include:</p> <p>Discovering – scholars identify and clarify the question, goal, intent, challenge or problem to be solved using research techniques, empathy, and investigation.</p> <p>Visualizing – scholars generate a variety of potential solutions to the problem and share ideas to enable collaboration and elaboration by others.</p> <p>Prototyping – scholars test out ideas by creating prototypes using quick and inexpensive materials to determine workability.</p> <p>Presenting – scholars present the culmination of their work to others, including teachers, peers, and industry experts, and receive feedback.</p> <p>Iterating – scholars refine and revise their statement and understanding of the problem, their potential solutions, and their prototypes and projects to reflect feedback received and to improve the end design.</p> <p>Inherent in the design-thinking process is the concept of Universal Design. Universal Design refers to a broad-spectrum of ideas meant to produce buildings, products, and environments that are inherently accessible to people with and without disabilities. In the context of instructional strategies, Universal Design is represented by the Universal Design for Learning (“UDL”) framework, which allows for flexible learning environments that can accommodate individual learning differences through multiple representations of content, means of expression, and forms of assessment. The design-thinking process allows natural implementation of UDL by, <i>inter alia</i>, allowing scholars to (i) learn material through self-discovery, (ii) utilize unlimited platforms for expressing knowledge and solutions, and (iii) select real-world problems to solve based on personal interests, abilities, and motivations.</p>
3	11	<p>Curriculum and Instructional Design, Section 4 – Performance Standards – Performance Standard 1: Academic Achievement – Replace with the following:</p>

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. DTA scholars will demonstrate consistent growth in academic achievement in ELA and Mathematics as measured by the appropriate Delaware state assessments, internal assessments, and course evaluations. 2. DTA scholars will demonstrate growth in academic achievement in Science and Social Studies as measured by the appropriate Delaware state assessments, internal assessments, and course evaluations.
3	11-12	<p>Curriculum and Instructional Design, Section 4 – Performance Standards – Performance Standard 6: Grade Level Specific Performance Standards – Replace with the following:</p> <p>DTA scholars will demonstrate achievement at each grade level by:</p> <p>9th Grade: Successful completion of a Design Thinking Seminar Studio introducing students to the framework for creative problem solving, designing and planning an independent or collaborative design-thinking based culminating creative project; earning a PSAT-9 score that accurately indicates proficiency levels; demonstrating growth and continued improvement of core foundational knowledges; earning credit in at least four of the five key subject areas (English, mathematics, science, social studies, and world language); completing twenty-five community service hours; initiating a Student Success Plan</p> <p>10th Grade: Earning a PSAT-10 score that accurately indicates proficiency levels and shows growth towards college readiness; successfully completing Driver's Education; demonstrating growth and continued improvement of core foundational knowledges; earning credit in at least four of the five key subject areas (English, mathematics, science, social studies, and world language) ;completing fifty cumulative community service hours; earning a career pathway credit; maintaining and updating the Student Success Plan</p> <p>11th Grade: Documenting, curating and organizing physical and/or digital portfolios of work samples from 9th-11th grade for college admissions process and career applications; completing seventy-five cumulative community service hours; participating in a college essay writing workshop, and preparing a resume (listing academic achievements, clubs and extracurricular involvement, leadership experiences, and job/work experiences) to create a competitive profile for college applications and/or career pathway; earning an SAT score that accurately indicates proficiency levels and shows growth towards college readiness; demonstrating growth and continued improvement of core foundational knowledges; earning credit in at least four of</p>

the five key subject areas (English, mathematics, science, social studies, and world language); earning a career pathway credit; maintaining and updating the Student Success Plan

12th Grade: Planning, designing, and completing a Senior Capstone Project (i) consisting of a sustained and complete exploration of a student-identified creative problem or challenge and (ii) requiring a synthesis of interdisciplinary learning, higher order thinking, and independent research, in addition to time management and personal and professional goal setting; applyign to at least four colleges; submitting the FAFSA; completing one hundred hours of community service cumulative prior to graduation; completing a full career pathway; completing all State graduation requirements; completing and implementing a Student Success Plan.

DTA graduates will have a solid foundation in the fundamental literacies necessary to succeed in college, career, and life. Graduates will activate and harness the power of their creative and critical capacities, develop agile and imaginative thinking, and clarify their sense of personal purpose through empathetic problem solving.

DTA Graduates Are:

- Creative Visionaries
- Transformational Leaders
- Change Agents/Change Makers
- Empathetic Problem Solvers
- Global Citizens
- Community Contributors
- Continuous Lifelong Learners
- Fueled by a sense of personal purpose

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Curriculum and Instructional Design, Section 5 – High School Graduation Requirements, Grading Scale – Delete what is presented and replace with the following:

Letter Grade	Percent Grade	4.0 Scale Points
A+	97-100	4.0
A	93-96	4.0
A-	90-92	3.7
B+	87-89	3.3
B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.7
C+	77-79	2.3
C	73-76	2.0
C-	70-72	1.7
D+	67-69	1.3

		D	65-66	1.0
		F	Below 65	0.0
3	14	<p>Curriculum and Instructional Design, Section 5 – High School Graduation Requirements – Revise as follows:</p> <p>Mathematics – delete “Algebra II or Integrated Mathematics III course is required as one of the Mathematics credits.”</p> <p>English Language Arts – delete “English II is required as one of the English Language Arts credits.”</p> <p>Career Pathway – Delete the second paragraph and replace with:</p> <p>Options for Career Pathways at DTA will include a variety of concentrations media and design, such as Visual Design, Media Design, and Art and Design, as well as State approved CTE pathways relating to design, such as Computer Science, Architecture and Engineering, and others.”</p>		
3	19	<p>School Culture, Question 3 – Scientifically Research Based Practices – Delete the entire question and replace with the following:</p> <p>DTA defines school culture as the norms, values and beliefs, symbols and stories that are foundational to professional satisfaction, morale, and effectiveness. Effective and powerful culture leads to student learning, fulfillment, and well-being.</p> <p>DTA is committed to empowering staff, students, parents and other stakeholders by including them in the design and implementation a trauma informed social, emotional, character building Design Thinking Academy.</p> <p>To that end, DTA employs multiple scientifically-based practices to create a positive school culture. These practices include:</p> <p>a) Building the School’s culture requires a system that actively assesses current and future practices to ensure effectiveness. DTA will be employing the SHAPE System to improve collaborative planning and communication among its multidisciplinary school support team. The SHAPE System will allow DTA to invite any school-based, community- or school-employed team members to coordinate, collaborate, assess, document, and plan for School culture and climate related quality and sustainability. The system will allow DTA to measure the School’s climate, the student, parent and school staffs’ experience related to the School’s cultural norms.</p> <p>https://theshapesystem.com</p>		

		<p>b) Recognizing the impact of trauma and toxic stress on students and the community DTA will be supplementing the Responsive Classroom approach with the <i>Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS)</i>. The CBITS program is a school-based, group and individual intervention. It is designed to reduce symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), depression, and behavioral problems, and to improve functioning, grades and attendance, peer and parent support, and coping skills. http://cbitsprogram.org</p> <p>c) DTA has committed to further building the School’s culture by adopting the <i>Character and Leadership</i> character education and leadership curriculum. The curriculum which employs online and “real world” participatory learning guides staff and students through activities that build a shared sense of purpose. http://www.CharacterandLeadership.com</p> <p>d) The <i>Student Climate and Culture Panel</i> is a group of student leaders in the building that take a “village” approach to ensuring all students are successful. Each panel member is responsible for supporting and mentoring a grade level. For that grade, the panel member assists with positive reinforcement, mentoring, and providing peer-to-peer guidance. Panel members help establish the positive culture in the building by creating healthy grade level competitions and keeping track of results. <u>Under the supervision of the Director of Climate and Culture</u>, panel members also help to resolve minor offenses when a student violates the code of conduct, implement restorative practices, help to de-escalate incidents according to social emotional development, and remain role models for the rest of the student population.</p> <p>e) In the event that students misbehave and do not abide by the principles outlined in Code of Conduct, DTA will endeavor, where possible, to use the “<i>restorative practices</i>” approach to discipline, pioneered by Ted Wachtel at the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP). Restorative practices are grounded in “restorative justice,” a new way of looking at wrongdoing that focuses on repairing the harm done to people and the relationships rather than on punishing offenders. Restorative practices are based on the belief that human beings are happier, more cooperative and productive, and more likely to make positive changes in their behavior when those in positions of authority do things with them, rather than to them or for them. The most critical function of restorative practices is restoring and building relationships. Students, Staff, and Faculty must meet with</p>
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		<p>those they have wronged, explore what happened, and make necessary amends.</p> <p>f) DTA’s Advisory Program offers emotional support for students during adolescence. The social networks that are so important at this age can be disrupted by the transfer to high school. Advisory offers support in two forms. First, it supplies built-in peer groups for all students in a high school, including new students. Second, it gives students an adult who knows them well and who can offer advocacy and support in difficult social and academic situations. This is especially true for students who have few close adult relationships outside school or are at risk of dropping out. Ideally, the advisory teacher is someone the student knows he or she can trust and talk to about his or her progress and standing in the school. Advocates of advisory programs see a direct link between a student’s emotional and social experience and academic achievement. Advisory promotes self-esteem. It provides peer recognition in an accepting environment, offsetting peer pressure and negative responses from peers in other areas. Students in advisory programs are less likely to drop out and have a lower incidence of substance abuse. The advisor also becomes the primary contact person for parents, increasing their involvement, which has been linked to student achievement at all levels of schooling. By having a more in-depth relationship with teachers, parents are more informed about their child’s academic needs and successes and can better support them. Having the advisor as the contact person also increases the overall level of accountability in the school: each teacher is directly responsible for certain students, and each student is directly responsible to a particular teacher. Additionally, DTA’s Advisory serves as a place for students to explicitly develop the character and leadership traits necessary to become life-long learners and leaders. http://www.CharacterandLeadership.com</p> <p>g) The “silent bully box” is a way for students to report bullying in a more personal fashion. In order to report bullying, students will go on the DTA website and select resources. Students will select “silent bully box” and fill out the questionnaire. The student will then hit “submit” and the information will go directly to the Director of Climate and Culture. This process will keep all information strictly confidential.</p>
3	21	School Culture, Supplemental Programming, Section 4 – Scholar-focused Program Integral to Scholar Development – Delete “DDLHS will implement a Check and Connect school-based

		mentoring program (Sprague & Walker, 2005)” and replace with “DTA will implement a structured mentoring and advisory program as described in Section 3 (Educational Plan), School Culture, Question 3(f).”
4	Global	Revise as needed to comply with the new Performance Agreement.
5	41-44	Revise the section headed “Professional Development [14 Del C. s 512(6)]” to align with the professional development plan as described in Section 3.7(c) hereof, as needed.

b. As appendices, provide the following documents as evidence of curriculum alignment to the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards:

Appendix 2 Provide an electronic copy of curricula including scope and sequence documents, units, assessments and content covered per core content area (Mathematics, English Language Arts, Social Studies and Science) for each grade level the school serves (**Note: Curricula is only required if it has changed since it was last approved**). The documents should demonstrate clear alignment with the Delaware Content Standards (including Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics, and Next Generation Science Standards) in core content areas. If the school plans to join the Science Coalition, then a signed MOU would replace the scope and sequence requirement for Science. If the school plans to join the Social Studies Coalition, then a signed MOU would replace the scope and sequence requirement for Social Studies.

3.4 At-risk scholars, Scholars with Disabilities, and English Language Learners

Year	Education Program
	1b
	Scholars with Disabilities
2014-2015	N/R
2015-2016	M

Year	Education Program		
	Applicable State & Federal Requirements	Scholars with Disabilities	English learners
	1b	1c	1d
2016-2017	M	M	M
2017-2018	M	M	M

**Data is an excerpt from the overall Organizational Performance Framework data included in section 3.2.*

Note: Each item below must be addressed separately.

- a. If applicable, describe any changes or enhancements the school has made based on findings from audits, investigations, or other administrative proceedings related to at-risk scholars, scholars with disabilities, or English Language Learners.

During the 2016-2017 school year the Department of Exceptional Students was audited by the State. The audit findings revealed that DTA was out of compliance with certain IDEA regulations. In response to the audit findings, the Department of Education created and worked with DTA to implement an intervention plan to correct the compliance issues. As part of the intervention plan, DTA brought all files into compliance, participated in professional development, and created new systems to ensure that the department could maintain compliance going forward. The Department of Exceptional Students worked diligently to review and correct every relevant student file in order to bring all files into compliance. DTA's staff participated in professional development, which included training through the University of Delaware's ACCESS program. The training taught teachers how to implement UDL (universal design of learning) into the classroom. Staff within the Department of

Exceptional Students attended extensive professional development trainings and meetings to expand their knowledge on how to serve students who were at-risk or students who have disabilities. DTA completed the intervention plan effective June 8, 2018.

DTA has not received any findings, audits, investigations, or other administrative proceedings related to English Language Learners.

b. Describe any changes or enhancements to the process by which at-risk scholars are identified and the evidence that the school was able to provide the right resources and services for these scholars.

Design Thinking Academy utilizes multiple methods for identifying at-risk students.

Student Support Committee

DTA has a Student Support Committee comprised of the school counselor, school psychologist, Director of Exceptional Students, Director of Climate and Culture, Dean of College and Career Readiness, and the Principal. One purpose of the SSC is to identify and support students who are at-risk for various reasons. Teachers are able to fill out a private Google form to identify students who they believe are struggling in school for any given reason.

The SSC meets weekly to review the teachers' concerns. If a student is identified as at-risk for any scenario, a plan of action is created for that student, which includes the SSC's recommendations based on what is most appropriate for that student. Recommendations for emotionally at-risk students might include outside resources for therapy, meeting with the school counselor, or other appropriate agencies. Recommendations for academically at-risk students may include peer tutoring, staff tutoring, RTI programs, and, if needed, a recommendation for evaluation to determine if special education services are appropriate. The recommendations are followed up by the Committee.

Internal Assessment Data

DTA also utilizes internal assessments, such as IXL and grade reports, to help identify students who may have deficits in Language Arts and Mathematics. Students complete an IXL Diagnostic test to show where they are academically in Language Arts and Mathematics upon matriculation at DTA. Once teachers know where students are academically, they tailor the IXL program to allow students to practice areas in which they require additional support.

IXL is also used to place students in RTI. Every student is in Tier I of RTI, which means they use IXL weekly in class for practice. Tier II RTI and Tier III RTI are also based on IXL Scores. Based on IXL scores or teacher recommendations, students may be placed in either English or Math RTI to focus on certain skills that they need to be successful in the classroom. Both Tier II and Tier III occur during the fifth block of the school day.

If Tier III RTI results in students not showing growth, students will be recommended for evaluation to determine if there is need for special education support.

The Department of Exceptional Students has an expanded staff that includes a director, a school psychologist, two certified special education teachers, and two instructional paraprofessionals. The Department of Exceptional Students utilizes its staff effectively by placing special education certified Math and Language Arts teachers, as well as instructional para-professionals, in classrooms with students. DTA also offers one-on-one tutoring to students, as needed.

c. Describe any changes or enhancements to the process by which English Language Learners are identified and the evidence that the school was able to provide the right resources and services for these scholars.

While our current ESL population is not large (12 scholars were identified last year through WIDA Access testing,) we are dedicated to improving outcomes of scholars that speak a language other than English at home. Exciting new resources are now available that allow us to use data to identify scholars that need targeted language intervention. The general intervention plan for ESL scholars at DTA is below.

Phase 1: ESL Scholar Identification

Upon deciding to attend DTA, all scholars are required to fill out a registration packet. One of the documents included in this packet is the Home Language Survey, or HLS. This form is required by all scholars and must be filled out before a prospecting scholar can attend our institution. If a scholar indicates that they speak a language other than English at home, the scholar is flagged. This scholar has now been identified as an ESL scholar, and an ESL certified staff member will be informed that they will be attending.

Phase 2: Assessing Current English Levels

Once a scholar is flagged as an ESL scholar and the proper staff member has been informed, the next step is to determine the scholar's current English ability. Many ESL learners appear to have no problems communicating when you have a casual conversation with them. Many do not have any accent or other evidence that there is a linguistic struggle, but a formal assessment must be completed to define if the scholar has a grasp of CALP language (academic language) or just BICS abilities (conversational language.) DTA uses the WAPT online test to determine ESL scholars' initial English level. If they receive a 5 or lower on this assessment, they qualify for ESL services and targeted interventions to develop their English skills.

Phase 3: Intervention

Several new programs are available to help develop English language proficiency at DTA. When scholars enroll, they take the IXL diagnostic test. IXL is an adaptive self-paced curriculum that provides practice and lessons personalized to each scholar's unique educational needs. The [curriculum](#) covers standards from kindergarten to grade 12, so no matter the level of ESL learner, there is an appropriate intervention available.

Scholars are encouraged to "graduate" from the program. The requirement to graduate from IXL is that scholars perform at grade level on the [continual diagnostic](#). Once scholars achieve this, they are

allowed to choose a fun, scholar-led club to attend instead of a language intervention study group. This adds a motivating incentive to the task of language learning.

Para professionals also have a role to play in the success of English language learners at DTA. Para professionals are informed of ESL scholars in each class, and it is an expectation that they should help the teacher scaffold each lesson to ensure it is accessible to ESL scholars in the classroom.

Phase 4: Tracking Growth:

Objective data is used to track the growth of English acquisition at our school. We track growth through IXL's continuous diagnostic data, but we also compare WIDA scores. As explained in phase one, scholars are required to take the WAPT online test if they indicate that they speak a language other than English in the home. Usually this assessment has been completed at another school, but if no record of WAPT data exists (as is the case if a scholar is attending school in the US for the first time,) the assessment will be proctored at DTA by a staff member trained to administer the WAPT. If this assessment is necessary, it will be completed at the beginning of the year. It gives us a baseline for where the scholar started with their English abilities. Each year the scholar will be continuously monitored, and growth tracked by taking the WIDA Access assessment mid-year. The test coordinator will then look at the WAPT scores and the WIDA Access scores and compare them. Is the scholar growing? Has the scholar plateaued? What interventions could be implemented to help the scholar graduate from the program?

Graduation from Program:

There are three requirements for graduating from the ESL intervention program at DTA. First, scholars must earn a 5 or higher on their mid-year WIDA Access Assessment. Second, scholars must perform on grade level in their IXL continual diagnostic for English language arts. Third, the scholar must express a desire to leave the program. If a scholar still does not feel confident in their English skills, they can opt to continue their interventions, but they will not be allowed to take the WIDA Access.

ESL Intervention Calendar:

August:

- Scholars fill out Home Language Survey.
- ESL certified staff member is informed of new ESL scholars at the school.

September:

- ESL certified staff member checks WAPT data. If there is no data for a scholar, she will administer the WAPT test and get a baseline for English ability.

October- December:

- Scholars identified as ESL and who do not have a 5 on either the WAPT or WIDA Access participate in an English intervention study group using IXL curriculum.

December- January:

- Scholars complete the WIDA Access test.
- Scores are compared from the WAPT.
- WAPT scores are shared with staff members during a staff meeting.
- New plans for interventions are drafted to help scholars with their language acquisition.

January- June:

-
- ❑ With collaboration of ESL certified staff members, intervention study groups, RTI trained teachers, and paraprofessionals, scholars should continue to make progress with their English abilities.
-

d. Describe any changes or enhancements to the process by which scholars with disabilities are identified and the evidence that the school was able to provide the right resources and services for these scholars.

Students either arrive at DTA with Individualized Education Programs or they are later identified as needing services. Students who are referred for evaluation are referred by either a parent requesting evaluation or through academic data, such as Tier III RTI without showing growth, grades, assessments, and teacher feedback.

Design Thinking Academy has enhanced its process for identifying students with disabilities by bringing on a school psychologist full time. The school psychologist will conduct initial evaluations on referred students promptly. Once the evaluation is complete there is a team meeting with the parent/guardian of the student to determine if there is a disability. If a disability is present, the team recommends various services for each individual student. Design Thinking Academy also has a list of community resources that is available to families to utilize if outside resources are necessary.

In addition to classroom teachers, DTA employs the following staff who regularly provide resources and services for at-risk students and students with disabilities:

Dean of College and Career Readiness
Director of Exceptional Students
Director of Climate and Culture
School Counselor
Certified Language Arts Learning Support Teacher
Certified Math Learning Support Teacher
Instructional Paraprofessional (2)

3.5 Financial Management and Oversight, Governance and Reporting Requirements

Year	Financial Management	Governance and Reporting		
	2*	3a	3b	3c
	Financial Management and Oversight	Governance	Management Accountability	Reporting Requirements
2014-	*	N/R	N/R	N/R
2015-2016	*	M	M	M

Year	Governance & Reporting		
	Governance & Public Stewardship	Oversight of School Management	Reporting Requirements
	2a	2b	2c
2016-2017	AS	M	M
2017-2018	D	M	M

Note: Data is an excerpt from the overall Organizational Performance Framework data included in section 3.2.

* Measure 2: Financial Management and Oversight was moved to the Financial Performance Framework beginning in school year 2016-17.

a. Provide information regarding how the Board of Trustees effectively evaluates the School Leader(s), including any policies or procedures related to such evaluation(s).

According to DTA’s by-laws, the Board Chair is responsible for evaluating the Head of School on an annual basis. For this formal evaluation, the Board Chair uses an internal evaluation form aligned to the DOE’s Academic, Organizational, and Financial Framework, as well as success measured against the school’s Strategic Plan.

Informally, the Board Chair and the Head of School consult on a regular basis to discuss strategic issues and direction, and to trouble shoot problems as they arise. This leads to a continual and effective feedback loop that ensures the Head of School and the Board remain aligned on goals, both academic, financial, and organizational.

b. Provide information regarding how the Board of Trustees effectively evaluates its own success. Include examples of any corrective actions, if applicable, the Board of Trustees implemented as a result of its evaluation.

Until SY 17/18, the Board evaluated its success through annual reviews of academic, financial, and organizational framework ratings, as well as anecdotal observations on the successes and failures of the school. The Board has spent much of its time in its first three years of operations addressing underlying management and organizational concerns, the resolution of which have been the primary indicator of success.

The Board believes that the school now is on solid financial, organizational, and academic footing. Accordingly, for the first time in its development as an organization, the Board adopted a Strategic Plan in May of 2018. One of the goals of the plan is that “[a]n accountability dashboard will be created to accompany the strategic plan and will be reviewed monthly by the Board (alignment with the Scholar Success 2025).” Each staff member who is responsible for a goal within the Strategic Plan has identified their achievement targets for the next five years. These staff members then developed personalized, quarterly work plans for the current school year designed to ensure progress toward their annual achievement target. These work plans will be compiled to create the accountability dashboard and will be monitored by the Board monthly as a standing agenda item. Achievement will be discussed, and plans modified, as needed to accommodate the workflow of the school year.

c. Identify the school’s plan to ensure the effectiveness of its Board of Trustees, including governance training and new member induction.

The Strategic Plan identifies “A Board orientation and training program will be implemented, ensuring compliance with the DOE” as a goal. Currently all Board and CBOC members have complied with DOE regulations to receive Governance Training and the Financial Compliance Training. However, the Board recognizes the need to provide members with orientation, ongoing training, and support in order to remain effective. To that end, the Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement (DANA) provided governance training in August 2018 and evaluated the current functioning of the Board. The report findings will be used to identify training opportunities and support structures for this year. Similarly, a formal Board orientation has been developed and will be delivered to new members when they join the organization by the Head of School and the Board Chair. Membership onto the Board is vetted through volunteerism activities and committee service at the school.

d. Describe the school’s process for succession planning including identification, development and retention of school leaders.

Succession planning is critical to any organization’s success. Proper planning includes identification of current talent, cross training, staff development, and written plans. At this point in our school’s development, retention of current leadership is critical. School leaders, as with all faculty and staff, will be properly supported this year with supervision, adequate resources to achieve outcomes, and professional development opportunities. By way of example, some members of DTA’s staff already have identified a desire to progress into school administrative positions, should they become available. As part of its succession training plan, those staff are being provided with additional training opportunities such as DPAS II training, grant writing experience, and Teach for America’s leadership program in the hopes that if such openings become available at DTA, we will have internal staff prepared to fill them. In addition to ensuring adequate support for their personal goals, each administrative and staff member will be asked to identify someone else on staff who is their “immediate back up,” and will be required to provide cross training on critical job tasks in the event of an unexpected loss. Additionally, administration and staff will be asked to identify someone at DTA who could take over position in the future with proper training. School personnel will be required to document their succession planning efforts with immediate back up names, training logs, secondary back up names, and training plans. The Head of School will ensure that the budget aligns with these goals so that the succession can be realized if required.

e. Share how the Board supports the school. Speak to the Board’s involvement in events, operations, and fundraising activities.

DTA’s Board has been significantly involved in events, operations, and fundraising related to the school since its inception.

Regarding school events, Board members participate actively in through planning and attendance. For example, Board members planned, attended, and financially supported the School’s XQ Live Viewing Party. Board members also attend the School’s Spring Recruitment Fair and Fall Back to School Bash. Board members are encouraged to, and do regularly, visit the school during operating hours.

The Board has been intimately involved in the operations of the School since inception. DTA has had a complicated trajectory relating to school leadership and management, and the Board has successfully led the charge to resolve any problems and ensure the School’s success in these areas. The Board’s involvement has ranged from legal negotiations to operational realignment to DOE and XQ interface, depending upon the requirements of the School. With a new Head of School, Principal, and highly effective organizational structure, during SY 18/19 the Board can take a more traditional role regarding operations. For example, each Board Member now serves on at least two Board committees, continuing the forward momentum of the school. Board committees include finance, facilities, academic, XQ, and others. Each Board member lends his or her personal expertise to the operations of the school through active and engaged committee participation.

DTA’s Board actively participates in fundraising both personally and within their communities. In its first year of operation, DTA created an Annual Fund and had 100% participation at the Board level. DTA Board members also actively participated in the successful obtainment of the XQ Award. Board

members are engaged participants in stakeholder meetings with potential funders, school partners, and XQ. Finally, Board members continually act as ambassadors for the School by sharing the great work DTA does in their communities.

DTA’s Board members are parents of DTA scholars, teachers at DTA, and members of the community with significant experience in areas ranging from finance and law to education. Accordingly, all DTA Board members utilize their personal connections and funds of knowledge to assist DTA as and when needed.

f. Appendix 3: Current Organizational Chart

g. Please complete the Board Financial and Governance table below with the necessary information. In accordance with Del. 14 §512 (15), the school shall have a satisfactory plan to ensure the effectiveness of its board of trustees, including governance trainings conducted for any new board members and at a minimum of once every 3 years;

h. Please complete the Citizen Budget Oversight Committee Membership and Training table below.

i. Please include:

Appendix 4 Board Governance Training Certificates and/or Documentation.

Board Financial and Governance Members and Training

In accordance with Del. 14 §512 (15), the school shall have a satisfactory plan to ensure the effectiveness of its board of trustees, including governance trainings conducted for any new board members and at a minimum of once every 3 years.

Please see the Board/CBOC Membership and Training Table annexed hereto as part of Appendix 4.

DOE Summary:
At the current time, there is one member who is untrained but her term expired. As a part of the renewal process, DDLHS was notified that it was to provide their governance training as part of their renewal process. The CSO has put additional systems in place, the financial training is online so as to give everyone access to these programs and to ensure that these trainings have been met.

School Response to DOE Comments DTA did not have any Board members who were untrained at the time the Renewal Report was generated in the Spring of 2018. All of DTA's Board and CBOC members received financial training prior to December 31, 2017, and the Board member referenced above resigned as of that date. All Board members are current in their trainings regardless of the school's renewal status.

School Comments 2016-2017

School Comments:

As of June 30, 2017, neither Don France nor Melissa Siwiec were members of the Board of Directors. Rebecca Girtten, however, was a member of the Board of Directors. DDLHS presents the following chart showing the appropriate Board members, positions, and trainings as of June 30, 2017.

First Name	Last Name	Term Begin Date	Term End Date	Role/Title	Financial Training Date	Board Governance Training Date
Rebecca	Collins	5/1/2016	Resigned	Vice Chair	10/24/2017	Fall 2017*
Mary	Diamond	12/8/2015	12/8/2018	At large	TBD	Fall 2017*
Rebecca	Girtten	1/1/2016	Resigned	At large	7/25/2017	Fall 2015
Joe	LoPorto	5/1/2016	5/1/2019	Parent Representative	10/24/2017	Fall 2017*
Paul	Miller	1/1/2015	1/1/2018	President	7/25/2017	Fall 2015
Aileen	Murray	1/1/2017	1/1/2020	Teacher Representative	7/25/2017	Fall 2017*
Matt	Urban	1/1/2015	1/1/2018	Immediate Past President	TBD	Fall 2015

*Informal training is provided throughout the year at various Board meetings by the Department of Education and/ or the Delaware Charter School Network. Additional information training was provided at the annual Board retreat held on August 27, 2017 from 8:30 am to 1:00 pm. The agenda for the Board retreat is attached.

Note: This data element was included in SY 16/17 for direct school reporting. School information regarding the performance agreement for SY 14/15 and SY 15/16 can be found in their overall annual report at <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654>

Citizen Budget Oversight Committee Membership & Trainings

Pursuant to [14 Del. Admin. Code 736.6.1](#) Each member of a Citizen Budget Oversight Committee shall attend and receive a Certificate of Completion for the Citizen Budget Oversight Committee training within the allotted timeframe of his/her appointment to a Citizen Budget Oversight Committee. Provided further, additional training may be required from time to time as determined by the Department.

Please see the Board/CBOC Membership and Training Table annexed hereto as part of Appendix 4.

DOE Summary:

At the time of this report, this school meets standard.
Two members who have not had the training have been notified to complete their training by March

31, 2018 on March 12 via an email.

School Comments 2016-2017 The Board is unable to complete the chart above due to inadequate records. We are researching the term dates for the CBOC members. At this time, we do not believe either of the members above have completed financial training. Both members are scheduled to do so before year end, however.

Note: This data element was included in SY 16/17 for direct school reporting. School information regarding the performance agreement for SY 14/15 and SY 15/16 can be found in their overall annual report at <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654>

3.6 Scholars, Employees and School Environment

Year	Scholars and Employees				School Environment		Additional Obligations
	4a	4b	4c	4d	5a	5b	6
	Protecting Scholar Rights	Attendance Goal	Staff Credentialing	Employee Rights	Facility and Transportation Requirements	Health and Safety Requirements	Additional Obligations
2014-2015	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
2015-2016	M	D	M	N/R	M	M	M

Year	Scholars & Staff		Facilities, Transportation, Health & Safety
	Scholars Rights	Req. on Teacher Certification & Hiring Staff	
	3a	3b	
2016-2017	M	M	M
2017-2018	M	M	M

Note: Data is an excerpt from the overall Organizational Performance Framework data included in section 3.2.

a. Provide information about any metric where the school did not meet standards including how the school addressed this deficiency.

DTA has met standard in these areas of the Organizational Framework for the entire course of the charter, except for Attendance Goal (4b) in its first year of operation. This measure was removed from the Organizational Framework beginning in SY 17/18.

b. Provide information about the best practices the school uses to meet standards in the above noted areas.

DTA has an Internal Operations department that takes primary responsibility for matters pertaining to student admissions, FERPA, FOIA, teacher certification, employee background checks, and compliance with mandatory staff, Board, and CBOC member training. Similarly, DTA has an External Operations department that takes primary responsibility for facilities, transportation, health, and safety. By employing staff members dedicated to statutory compliance in these areas, DTA minimizes the risk that it will fall short of expectations in these areas. The heads of these departments report to the Head of School, providing a direct line of communication to the senior administrative team. DTA refers the reader to the Organizational Chart annexed hereto as Appendix 3.

c. Include the following documents as appendices:

Appendix 5 Up-to-date Certificate of Occupancy

Appendix 6 Up-to-date Fire Inspection Certificate

Appendix 7 Up-to date Insurance Certificate(s)

Appendix 8 ERIP Reporting SY16/17 and SY17/18

3.6 Teacher Retention: Is the school monitoring and minimizing teacher attrition rates and maintaining a stable teaching staff?

2016-2017			2017-2018*		
% of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers ELIGIBLE	% of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers ELIGIBLE
50%	10	20	69%	9	13 ¹

Note: Teacher retention is defined as the number of teachers who remained employed from the previous year divided by the total number of teachers employed in that year. For example, if a school employed 100 teachers in SY 16/17 and 90 teachers remained employed in SY 17/18, the school's teacher retention rate would be 90%.

DOE Summary:

The CSO continues to monitor this process. As a part of the renewal process, teacher retention needs to be addressed. The CSO will continue to monitor this and would like to understand what the school is doing to increase teacher retention. If the school is working with or will the school seek out a partner to make more informed hiring decisions. The CSO would like to understand the vetting process for new hires and what that encompasses.

School's Response to DOE's Summary	<p><u>Teacher Retention</u></p> <p>In response to the DOE's request for information regarding DTA's efforts to increase teacher retention, DTA notes that the school did not lose ANY teachers during the summer of 2018. Indeed, all teachers who were employed by DTA at the end of SY 16/17 and were offered positions for SY 18/19 accepted and have returned. To effectuate this change, for SY 18/19 DTA normalized its pay scale to ensure all teachers and staff are compensated fairly and adequately. DTA also adjusted its school day schedule to afford all teachers an 80-minute planning period each day, in addition to a duty-free lunch 4 days per week. Teachers in core subject matters have common planning, as well. Finally, DTA asked its returning teachers what courses they would like to teach and worked diligently to ensure that teacher's course loads aligned to their personal interests. In so doing, DTA was able to add interesting and varied courses for its scholars while providing personally satisfying teaching opportunities to faculty.</p>
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¹ This number excludes three DTA teachers whose contracts were not renewed by DTA for the 2018-2019 school year. Should those teachers be included in those eligible for retention, DTA's percentage of teachers retained would be 53%.

Hiring Process

In response to the DOE’s request for information regarding the vetting process for new hires, DTA notes that for SY 18/19 it implemented a new hiring process and has had substantial success hiring exceptional staff. The hiring process began with the positing of open positions as early as March of 2017. In addition to JoinDelawareSchools.org, DTA posted its positions with private sites such as Selected.com, Teach for America, and Indeed.com. All applicants went through a two-step initial review process that included primary review by the Principal and secondary review by individual department heads. In these reviews, candidates were vetted for credentialing, experience, and base of knowledge. On average, DTA advanced 35% of candidates to the next round of interviews following this initial screen.

DTA implemented a unique in-person interview process during SY 18/19 by requiring all candidates to teach a mock lesson, preferably during the school day to an existing class of scholars, prior to receiving a formal interview with the hiring committee. By requiring candidates to teach mock lessons first, DTA was able to receive scholar feedback and assess instructional ability early in the hiring process. Of the teachers of advanced to this stage of the interview process, DTA estimates it advanced approximately 30% of teachers to the next round of interviews.

During the final round of interviews, DTA’s interviewing committee (consisting of teachers, administrators, and scholars) did a traditional interview with each teacher to review feedback received on the mock lesson and assess for flexibility, resiliency, and cultural fit. Following this interview, teachers were either offered a position, asked to teach a second mock lesson, or advised that DTA could not offer them a position for SY 18/19.

Through this process, DTA was able to hire 7 exceptionally talented and committed teachers for SY 18/19.

a) School’s plans to monitor and minimize teacher attrition rates

**School Comments
2016-2017**

Of the teachers who were not retained in 2016, two left for personal reasons unrelated to the school. Specifically, one teacher left due a death in the family and chose not to return to teaching and another teacher retired at year-end.

Additionally, three teachers were unfortunately furloughed mid-year due to budgetary constraints. For the remaining teachers, DDLHS conducted exit interviews with each to determine the underlying causes for teacher attrition. Three teachers stated increased pay as the primary reason for leaving DDLHS, and two teachers took jobs at district high schools in the area. DDLHS has reason to believe that the third teacher moved out of the area and is employed at a district school in Pennsylvania. One teacher stated a desire to teach a different course than the one he currently was teaching, and is now employed teaching his preferred subject matter at a local district middle school. Finally, one teacher

cited climate and culture as the primary cause of her departure, but has since returned to DDLHS in a non-teaching, volunteer capacity to assist with data collection and analysis activities.

Given this data, DDLHS has budgeted appropriately for FY17-18 to ensure job security for all teachers and staff. DDLHS also intends to continue to promote teacher satisfaction through development of a professional environment where teachers feel fulfilled in their professions and are given the opportunity to achieve personal and professional goals.

Note: This data element was included in SY 16/17 for direct school reporting. School information regarding the performance agreement for SY 14/15 and SY 15/16 can be found in their overall annual report at <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654>

b) School's professional development plans support teachers and leadership.

**School Comments
2016-2017**

DDLHS has a very strong professional development program led primarily by the DASL and PDCE teams at the University of Delaware. DASL provides ongoing leadership coaching for DDLHS's school administrators, as well as DPAS-II evaluation support and ongoing coaching for teachers who do not meet standards on their DPAS-II evaluations. PDCE provides substantial training in design thinking and project based learning, as well as content coaching for ARTC teachers. All initial license teachers have an internal school mentor and participate in the State of Delaware's Comprehensive Induction Program. DDLHS also provides internal professional development regularly in the area of climate and culture, scholar support, and instructional/classroom best practices.

Note: This data element was included in SY 16/17 for direct school reporting. School information regarding the performance agreement for SY 14/15 and SY 15/16 can be found in their overall annual report.

a. Review the table above with the school's teacher retention trends.

Please see School's Comments SY 16/17, above.

Regarding SY 17/18, of the teachers who were not retained:

- Four teachers resigned mid-year and took positions at other schools in Delaware. Three of these teachers returned to district schools, citing opportunity and compensation. One teacher transferred to a different charter school better aligned to her personal goals as a military veteran.
- Four teachers had contracts that were not renewed by DTA based on the needs of the students.

DTA notes that the school did not lose ANY teachers during the summer of 2018. Indeed, all teachers who were employed by DTA at the end of SY 17/18 and were offered positions for SY 18/19 accepted and have returned.

b. Describe the school's plans to monitor and minimize teacher attrition rates. Provide information about why teachers leave the school.

Please see School's Response to DOE's Comments and School's Comments SY 17/18 and 16/17, above.

While DTA seeks to minimize attrition rates, DTA does not wish to retain teachers who are pedagogically weak or not a good "fit" for the culture of the school. In the past, DTA teachers have left for (i) financial reasons, both the School's and their own, (ii) contract nonrenewal, and (iii) personal reasons.

c. Describe how the school's professional development plans have evolved over the course of the charter term to support teachers and leadership.

Professional development will be thoughtfully interwoven into the school year for all instructional and non-instructional staff and administration. PD will be designed not only to expand the knowledge base and skill sets of each team member but, more importantly, to build institutional coherence around a shared vision and understanding of design thinking. Only one external PD provider will be utilized to maintain consistency in one singular design thinking model and its language. At the time of this renewal application Design Thinking Academy has established a strategic partnership with Cooper Hewitt, the Design Museum affiliate of the Smithsonian. Teachers and administrators will participate in a full-day onsite PD session at Cooper Hewitt led by their expert team of design thinking educators who specifically tailor their instructional practices, resources and PD experiences so that educators from each discipline and subject area can successfully utilize design thinking pedagogy in their classroom and as an entry point for learning and student engagement.

A series of PD workshops will take place before the official start of school (an entire week in August), and design-thinking workshops will also take place throughout the school year (4-6). Faculty regularly will share their work within individual departments, and with the full faculty at regular bi-weekly faculty PD sessions and "curriculum showcase presentations" to establish a culture of in-house expertise and resources and to ensure that all faculty and staff are learning continuously from each

other and recognizing potential cross-curricular connections. In addition, staff will be encouraged to visit other innovative schools. The School's administrative team invites faculty proposals for school visits through mid-October of each year, with teams of up to 4 people visiting innovative schools and/or other XQ Super Schools to observe different instructional models, ascertain success, share ideas, and learn from other non-traditional approaches to public education. Teachers will also be encouraged to continue with their professional development over the summer months, and teacher grants and travel stipends will ensue that our faculty is able to access the best regional and national conferences on design education (The National Conference on the Beginning Design Student, the National Art Education Association National Convention, and others).

In addition to comprehensive training, support and professional development in design thinking, teacher and staff induction will ensure that the staff is adequately trained to properly implement state and federal law related to the identification, evaluation and education of students with disabilities. Topics will include: RTI, ADA/IDEA, Curriculum Modifications/IEP's and IEP's at a Glance, testing accommodations/adaptations, 504 eligibility, Learning Support Team resources, and more.

Our Dean of Climate & Culture/Assistant Principal will also provide comprehensive training in restorative practices, social emotional learning, and trauma responsiveness. A comprehensive, custom Advisory Curriculum will augment our initiatives to establish personal relationships and rapport with students and teachers and to maintain a positive climate and culture.

Personal and professional goal setting will also occur as part of the DPAS II Appraisal system, and the Principal will conduct individual goal-setting conferences with each teacher and department chair.

3.8 Closure Requirements

- a) Describe the school’s plan for procedures it will follow in the event of the closure or dissolution of the school. The plan should, at a minimum, address each of the following areas:
- * Current balance of contingency reserve funds to be used to cover accrued expenses including summer pay obligations (identify estimated amount for the 2018-2019 school year), final audit (identify estimated cost), and other expenses typically incurred by June but paid in July or thereafter.
 - * If the current contingency reserve balance is insufficient to cover the estimated costs identified above, discuss the school’s plan for ensuring the required funds are set aside, including the timeframe for meeting this requirement.
 - * Identification of the individuals responsible for handling the school’s final closeout activities after closure or dissolution (i.e., who will process any final payments, coordinate the final audit, etc.).

Financial Planning and Management:

Estimated Summer Pay Obligation 2019	\$300,000 (est.)
Estimated Carry Over Expenses	\$50,000 (est.)
Final Audit Cost Estimate	\$20,000
Total	\$370,000

Summer Pay Reserved Funds (will equal actual summer pay obligations)	\$300,000
FY 2019 Public Funds Operating Contingency	\$90,888
Total	\$398,999

Wind Down Plan

1. The Board’s Executive Committee (Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer), together with those members of administration selected to perform the School’s wind-down, will ensure that all families and students are transitioned to a new school and that all statutory, financial, programmatic, legal, and other matters are properly managed and resolved. The Board will rely upon the assistance of the Delaware Charter School Network, the Charter School Office, and Board members and personal contacts with legal and financial expertise to successfully wind down the School’s operations.

2. DTA’s approved 2019 budget accounts for all summer pay obligations plus \$90,888 in operating reserve for the year. If, for any reason, DTA’s charter is not renewed, it will segregate and reserve the full, actual amount of its summer pay obligations and its operating reserve to ensure sufficient funds to wind down operations at the end of the school year. As a result, DTA will have adequate cash on hand to pay any outstanding financial obligations of the School that may exist as of June 30, 2019.

IV. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

4.1 Financial Performance

Note: Please utilize the hyperlink in this sentence for more information about the [Financial Performance Framework](#).

Financial Framework Ratings	Near Term Indicators				Sustainability Indicators				Financial Management and Oversight	Overall Rating	
	Current Ratio	Days Cash	Enrollment Variance	Default, Loan Covenants, & Debt Service Payments	Total Margin	Debt Asset Ratio	Cash Flow	Debt Service Coverage Ratio			
Year	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	2d	3		
2014-2015	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R	N/R
2015-2016	F	M	F	M	N/R	F	N/R	N/R	D	Falls Far Below Standard	
2016-2017	F	AS	F	M	N/R	F	N/R	N/R	M	Falls Far Below Standard	
2017-2018	F	M	F	M	M	M	M	N/A	M	Approaching Standard	

DOE Summary:

In SY 15/16 1a, Delaware Design Lab High School failed to meet the current ratio which is a standard of 1.0 and the school achieved a rating of .55.

It was in its first year of operations. The ratio was impacted by the one-time startup costs. These expenses were incurred related to facilities renovations and technology purchases.

In SY 15/16 1c, Delaware Design-Lab High School failed to meet enrollment variance 1c, it achieved a score of 78% where the preferred result is 95%.

The school failed to meet debt to asset ratio. The debt to asset ratio compares the school's liabilities to its assets, or what a school owes against what it owns. The preferred result is less than 0.90, DDLHS's was 1.65.

The school did not meet its overall financial ratios, which is not abnormal in its first year.

In SY16/17, Measure 1b, the current ratio measures a school's ability to pay its obligations over the

next twelve months. The preferred result is more than 1.0, which indicates that the school's current assets exceed its current liabilities.

In SY16/17, for Measure 1c, the enrollment variance depicts actual versus authorized enrollment. A school budgets based on projected enrollment but is funded based on actual enrollment; therefore, a school that fails to meet its enrollment targets may not be able to meet its budgeted expenses. The preferred result is more than 95%. DDLHS has no loans or other debt service obligations.

a) School's financial performance over the current charter term

School Comments 2016-2017	For indicators 1a and 2b, DDLHS's framework is affected by the existence of a legally disputed liability that must be reported for accounting purposes, but which DDLHS does not believe is owed. Absent that liability, DDLHS would meet standard in both of these areas. DDLHS recognizes its enrollment variance is unfavorable, but asserts that this measure is not indicative of actual financial performance because DDLHS ended its year in a positive cash flow position. DDLHS approaches or meets standard in all other areas.
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b) Financial practices that the school has implemented to improve the school's financial outcomes

School Comments 2016-2017	In FY16-17, DDLHS made budgeting errors that led to the furlough of three teachers mid-year, as well as year-end cash flow concerns. In order to rectify these problems, DDLHS was careful to create a highly conservative budget for FY17-18 in order to ensure proper staffing levels and adequate cash flow. DDLHS also put into place multiple fiscal policies – both at the Board level and the School level - designed to ensure adequate controls over expenditures, including multi-level review and approvals for all expenditures. DDLHS's enrollment variance is affected, in part, by scholar attrition related to instability of the school's leadership. DDLHS believes that it has stabilized its administrative team, which will lead to increased scholar retention and, therefore, increased enrollment following its 3rd year of operation. Finally, DDLHS has substantially decreased its operational expenses in FY17-18 by replacing its provider of design thinking professional development with an exceptionally qualified, yet much more cost effective, alternative.
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c) Indicator measure where school did not meet standard or is approaching standard

School Comments
2016-2017

1. NEAR TERM INDICATORS

Measure 1a. Current Ratio:

Current Assets divided by Current Liabilities

2016-2017
0.34

The current ratio measures a school's ability to pay its obligations over the next twelve months. The preferred result is more than 1.0, which indicates that the school's current assets exceed its current liabilities.

School Response To Rating:

The school's ratio is based upon numbers that include a disputed liability of \$768,081. The school disputes the liability for legal reasons and anticipates that this liability will be removed from its books before the end of the next fiscal year. Absent the disputed liability, the schools Measure 1a ratio is 1.00, which "meets standard."

Measure 1b. Days Cash:

Cash divided by (Total Expenses / 365)

2016-2017
17

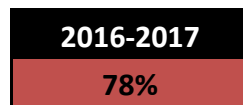
The days cash on hand ratio indicates how many days a school can pay its expenses without another inflow of cash. The preferred result is more than 60 days cash.

School Response To Rating:

DDLHS recognized its cash position was dwindling at the end of calendar year 2016. To prevent further deterioration in this area, DDLHS implemented substantial financial controls in the first quarter of 2017 aimed at retaining cash on hand. With new controls in place, DDLHS anticipates that available cash at the end of this fiscal year will meet or exceed standard.

Measure 1c. Enrollment Variance:

Actual Enrollment as of September 30 divided by Authorized Enrollment



The enrollment variance depicts actual versus authorized enrollment. A school budgets based on projected enrollment but is funded based on actual enrollment; therefore, a school that fails to meet its enrollment targets may not be able to meet its budgeted expenses. The preferred result is more than 95%.

School Response To Rating:

DDLHS finished the 2016-2017 school year in a positive cash flow position. While the enrollment variance data shows that DDLHS did not meet the preferred result, the variance did not materially affect the operations of the school. For the upcoming fiscal year, DDLHS planned for a substantial enrollment variance to ensure adequate funds to support budgeted expenses.

2. SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS

Measure 2b. Debt to Asset Ratio:

Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets



The debt to asset ratio compares the school’s liabilities to its assets, or what a school owes against what it owns. The preferred result is less than 0.90.

School Response To Rating:

The school’s ratio is based upon numbers that include a disputed liability of \$768,081. The school disputes the liability for legal reasons and anticipates that this liability will be removed from its books before the end of the next fiscal year. Absent the disputed liability, the schools Measure 2b ratio is .39, which “meets standard.”

3. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT

2016-2017
M

This measure assesses the timeliness of reporting , the implementation of the Citizen Budget Oversight Committee, and the adherence to the policies and procedures of the First State Financial Management System.

DOE Rating Information:

The FY17 independent audit disclosed related party transactions in the notes to the financial statements (Note F).

School Response To Rating:

DDLHS “meets standard” in this area. DDLHS complies with best practices when entering into related party transactions and complies with all legal disclosure requirements associated therewith.

School Comments 2015-2016	School comments for SY 15/16 can be found at: https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654
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a. Describe the school’s Financial performance over the current charter term (This section is for the school to address any overall rating where the school has not met standards. The school will be able to address individual metrics in the sections below.)

DTA’s financial performance during the first three years of its operation is defined by substantial growth, sustainability efforts, and sound fiscal management. Although DTA’s comprehensive rating for FY 18 is “Approaching Standard,” a close look at DTA’s financial performance indicates that the School is financially sound in all near term and sustainability metrics.

Throughout the course of its charter, DTA’s financial framework has been affected by the existence of a legally disputed liability (the “Liability”) that must be reported for accounting purposes, but which DTA did not believe was owed. Prior to June 30, 2018, DTA was able to resolve the Liability. However, due to a timing issue, the Liability remains on DTA’s books for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2018. As of the date of this Renewal Application, the Liability has been satisfied and should not be considered in DTA’s financial reporting as indicated in Note G to DTA’s audited financial statements. Going forward, the removal of the Liability from the School’s financial framework will allow the School to “Meet Standard” in Current Ratio (1a) and Debt to Asset Ratio (2b). DTA notes that for FY 18, its Debt to Asset ratio is .76, which meets the standards required by the Financial Framework even including the Liability. Once the Liability has been removed, DTA’s Debt to Asset Ratio is .21.

DTA’s financial framework also been consistently affected by the overly aggressive enrollment projections contained in its original charter. As set forth in §4.1(c), below, DTA has modified its charter to correct these projections and does not believe it will struggle with enrollment variances long-term.

DTA is one of only 18 schools nationwide to receive an XQ Superschool Award. This award ensures DTA an additional \$2 million in income over the 5-year term of the award. These funds allow DTA to provide ground-breaking, innovative programming and opportunities to its students. The XQ Award funds are earmarked for specific programming and pre-identified employee salaries. It is important to note that, even absent the XQ Award funds, DTA would be on solid financial footing and the School would continue to operate successfully.

b. Identify changes to Financial practices that the school has implemented to improve the school’s financial outcomes.

Over the course of the charter term, DTA has implemented many practices that have improved the School’s financial outcomes. First, following budgeting errors in its first year, DTA learned to consistently create highly conservative budgets based upon actual enrollment from the prior year, rather than anticipated enrollment. This has allowed DTA to ensure proper staffing levels and adequate cash flow for the past two years. Additionally, DTA has implemented multiple fiscal policies – both at the Board level and the School level - designed to ensure adequate controls over financial

decisions, including multi-level review and approvals for all expenditures. These changes helped DTA overcome a cash flow problem in SY 16/17 and have served the School well ever since their implementation. DTA also has worked diligently (and successfully) to decrease its operational expenses over the course of the charter term by streamlining organizational practices, replacing high-cost providers with equally effective, lower cost alternatives, and monitoring revenue and expenditures carefully and regularly to ensure efficiency and appropriateness. These changes have allowed DTA to create a budgetary surplus of \$311,387 during this fiscal year. Finally, DTA has created a long-term fundraising plan, and has hired an experienced fund developer to implement the plan. This will allow DTA to withstand and overcome any financial “bumps in the road” that may impact it in the future.

c. Address any measure where school did not meet standard or is approaching standard

DTA has failed to meet standard throughout the charter term in Current Ratio (1a) due exclusively to the existence of the Liability, which has now been resolved. Absent the Liability, DTA’s current ratio would be 2.66, which shows that DTA has more than sufficient cash on hand to satisfy its existing liabilities and which far exceeds required ratio of .9. DTA fully expects to receive a rating of “Meets Standard” in this area for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2019.

DTA has failed to meet standard throughout the charter term in Enrollment Variance 1(c) primarily due to misaligned enrollment projections. As set forth in DTA’s Application to Modify an Approved Charter, approved April 29, 2018, the enrollment waterfall contained in the School’s original charter was overly aggressive, did not align to the facilities available to the school under its current lease, and was not required for financial success. The School therefore modified its enrollment waterfall to reflect its actual and appropriately anticipated enrollment for future years. DTA’s enrollment variance for the current school year (2018-2019) is 87%, and DTA anticipates meeting the 95% target by the 2020-2021 school year, as set forth §6.1 of this Renewal Application. Notwithstanding the unfavorable enrollment variance, DTA finished the 2017-2018 school year in a positive cash flow position, and with an overall financial picture that shows growth and sustainability in the School’s financial practices. The School’s enrollment variances have not materially affected its operations in the past 2 years because DTA has anticipated a negative variance (see Annual Report FY 17) and budgeted accordingly. DTA takes a very conservative approach to budgeting and continually accounts, where appropriate, for enrollment variances to ensure adequate funds to support budgeted expenses.

Performance Agreement

Financial Performance Expectations

By 2017, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of “Meets” standard as measured by the Financial Performance Framework. Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate economic viability and achieve our financial performance expectation. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

DOE Summary:

The school did not meet its overall financial performance measures, which is not abnormal for a school in its first year.

The CSO continues to have concerns about scholar enrollment, which drives a schools finances.

The CSO is excited to learn about recruitment and retention processes of scholars and examine the school’s enrollment for SY18/19.

School Comments 2016-2017

In FY16-17, DDLHS made budgeting errors that led to the furlough of three teachers mid-year, as well as year-end cash flow concerns. In order to rectify these problems, DDLHS was careful to create a highly conservative budget for FY17-18 in order to ensure proper staffing levels and adequate cash flow. DDLHS also put into place multiple fiscal policies – both at the Board level and the School level - designed to ensure adequate controls over expenditures, including multi-level review and approvals for all expenditures. DDLHS’s enrollment variance is affected, in part, by scholar attrition related to instability of the school’s leadership. DDLHS believes that it has stabilized its administrative team, which will lead to increased scholar retention and, therefore, increased enrollment following its 3rd year of operation. Finally, DDLHS has substantially decreased its operational expenses in FY17-18 by replacing its provider of design thinking professional development with an exceptionally qualified, yet much more cost effective, alternative.

Note: This data element was included in SY 16/17 for direct school reporting. School information regarding the performance agreement for SY 14/15 and SY 15/16 can be found in their overall annual report at <https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654>

How the school developed and implemented a corrective action plan in response to audit findings (if applicable)

DOE Summary:
In SY15/16, The FY17 independent audit disclosed related party transactions in the notes to the financial statements (Note F). It was noted but not found to be material or significant.

School Comments 2016-2017	DDLHS's 2017 Audit was "unqualified" and did not require a corrective action plan.
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School Comments 2015-2016	School information can be found in their overall annual report, available at: https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654
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d. Discuss the school's financial performance based on its approved Performance Agreement.

DTA's Performance Agreement states that "by 2017 our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of "Meets" standard as measured by the Financial Framework." DTA consistently has met standard in all areas other than Current Ratio (1a), Debt to Asset Ratio (2b), and Enrollment Variance (1c). Failure to meet standard in Current Ratio (1a) and Debt to Asset Ratio (2b) is the direct result of the Liability, which has now been resolved. Failure to meet standard in Enrollment Variance (1c), is directly related to the overly aggressive projections in DTA's original charter, which have been revised. DTA believes that it will have no problem achieving the rating of "Meets" standard for its Financial Framework in future years.

e. Describe how the school developed and implemented a corrective action plan in response to audit findings (if applicable).

In SY 15/16 the School's audit revealed one material weakness in its financial controls. Once identified, DTA promptly implemented a system to correct the concern. DTA has received unmodified audit reports for each year since this correction.

f. As appendices, please provide the following documents:

Appendix 9 Summary of Findings from Independent Audits (if applicable)

Appendix 10 Final Fiscal Year 2018 Revenue & Expenditure Budget Report in the prescribed Department format

Appendix 11 Approved preliminary Fiscal Year 2019 Budget in the prescribed Department format

Appendix 12 Fiscal Year 2018 Audited Financial Statements (if final report is not available, a draft version is acceptable until final version is completed)

Appendix 13 Five-year revenue estimates, budget projections sheets and budget narrative. If the projected enrollment is increasing or decreasing by 5% or more over the term of the charter, please include a separate written justification for the modification request as well as budget documents reflecting the new enrollment figures.

V. INNOVATION

School’s innovative practice(s) that could be replicated at other schools in Delaware

<p>School Comments 2016-2017</p>	<p>DDLHS utilizes multiple innovative practices that could be replicated at other schools in Delaware. Because DDLHS has only been in operation for two years, and many of these programs are new this year, we do not have adequate data to support their success. However, a brief summary of some of our innovative practices are mentioned below:</p> <p>1) DDLHS takes scholar voice very seriously and encourages scholars to take control of their own education. To that end, DDLHS offers scholars multiple opportunities to use their voices to influence decisions at an administrative level. For example, DDLHS offers scholars the opportunity to participate in scholar-created, scholar-selected, scholar-run clubs during the school day. Allowing scholars to identify the types of clubs they wish to create drives interest, while guiding scholars to lead their own clubs teaches scholars leadership skills, independence, and responsibility. Promoting club participation during school hours encourages all scholars to engage in extra-curricular activities while overcoming barriers to participation (i.e., transportation) that may be associated with after-school clubs. DDLHS also hosts a scholar-led “Making Change” committee whose responsibility it is to advise administration regarding issues of scholar concern and methods for improvement. DDLHS further bases its course offerings, in part, upon the interests of its scholars. For example, DDLHS boasts a strong entrepreneurship program in which scholars have requested a third level course be added. DDLHS is working to adjust its existing course offerings for second semester to accommodate this request.</p> <p>2) DDLHS uses an innovative approach to education because it utilizes the “design-thinking” process across all curriculum. For every problem, from math to technology, scholars are asked to “IDENTIFY [the problem], VISUALIZE [the solutions], PROTOTYPE [the best solution], and PRESENT [their findings]. Our scholars are taught to utilize this approach outside of school, thus furthering their readiness to solve real-world problems through this unique lens.</p> <p>3) DDLHS encourages scholars to get real world experience across all grade levels by offering flexible scheduling for scholars who hold paid and unpaid internships and offering in-house internships across all subject matters. Current scholars earn credit for internships providing services ranging from car maintenance to technology and IT support.</p> <p>4) DDLHS also offers scholars at all levels of proficiencies the opportunity to engage in “a la carte” learning geared toward their personal educational goals. Scholars are able to utilize school time and resources to enroll in online courses</p>
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	they either need for graduation but are not offered at a time that is available in their schedule, or electives that pique their interest. Scholars participate in teacher-guided learning circles to discuss their courses and deepen their understanding at least once per week.
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School Comments 2015-2016	School comments for SY 15/16 can be found at: https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654
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School Comments 2014-2015	Not Applicable
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a. Describe the school’s innovative practice(s) that could be replicated at other schools in Delaware. Please include the data that supports the success of these practice(s).

The innovative practices employed at DTA are intrinsically embedded in the mission, vision, and daily delivery of our school’s pedagogy, which is grounded in the Design Thinking Process as a means of making contextualizing course content via real-world problems. Our students’ learning is thereby more authentic, enduring, and transferable. Offering students choice and agency in how they demonstrate their understanding of content through a variety of means (all within clearly identified instructor parameters) necessarily results in multiple viable outcomes and divergent thinking. Student projects and creative output is relevant, personal, meaningful, and more authentic when students self-direct their own learning and discovery within a resource-rich, stimulating learning environment of high expectations with high support. Though we fully understand the necessity for foundational knowledge in core subjects and the importance of data and test scores, we also allow our students to demonstrate their understanding of content in new and innovative ways.

Project-based learning and design thinking makes learning experiential, and working with physical, tangible materials or through communication media and design, allows students to synthesize and create work products that showcase a complex and deep understanding of concepts, content, and connections that may otherwise not be captured in a traditional data-driven measure. Our deliberate and thoughtful infusion of design thinking and project-based learning into all that we do will, in time, have implications for improved performance in all core subject areas as connections are strengthened and knowledge bases deepened. We educate the whole student at Design Thinking Academy and recognize our student diversity as our school’s greatest asset. The Design Thinking Process also develops habits of mind and learning dispositions (such as ambition, resilience, risk-taking, persistence, and confidence to embark on something new and uncharted) that might not be possible in a high-stakes testing scenario with only one right answer. We embrace the multiplicity of outcomes for a given problem, and instead of insisting on one correct answer we seek and encourage a wide range of outcomes that are reflective of diverse student population.

Many students who come to our school find success and a personal sense of confidence and validation that they did not experience in other more traditional school settings. Our collaborative culture thoughtfully incorporates student voice and choice and consequently results in a learning environment where students feel connected, safe, supported, challenged and engaged. Though certainly challenging to measure, our students’ level of engagement and scope of achievements in design and our 5 Creative Career Pathway Programs are evident and undeniable.

Our many community partnerships both within and outside of the school (with museums, cultural institutions, artists, musicians, businesses and corporations, and universities) offer authentic experiential learning and valuable transferable life skills. Classroom content immediately has a purpose, function and applicability when working on a 'real' problem or design challenge which requires application and synthesis of course content to solve a design challenge at hand. Collaborative inter-disciplinary creative learning experiences also help students to develop necessary social skills to succeed in college, career and in life.

VI. Five-Year Planning

6.1 Projected Enrollment

- a. Provide a five-year enrollment chart by grade level, in the prescribed format below. Ensure that the chart allows for the natural progression of scholars from year-to-year.

Note: This will become the school's authorized enrollment for the new charter term.

Projected Enrollment						
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
K						
Grade 1						
Grade 2						
Grade 3						
Grade 4						
Grade 5						
Grade 6						
Grade 7						
Grade 8						
Grade 9	69	80	90	100	100	100
Grade 10	59	66	90	85	90	90
Grade 11	122	55	65	85	85	85
Grade 12	48	103	55	65	80	80
Total	298	304	300	335	350	355

Note: An increase or decrease in enrollment exceeding 5%, but less than 15%, is considered a minor modification of the school's charter. 14 Del. Admin. C. § 275.9.9.1.4. An increase or decrease in enrollment exceeding 15% is considered a major modification of the school's charter, which requires a review by the Charter School Accountability Committee and the assent of the State Board of Education. See 14 Del. C. § 511(b)(2); 14 Del. Admin. C. § 275.9.8.1.3. As such, **if the projected enrollment is increasing or decreasing by 5% or more over the term of the charter, the school is required to submit, as Appendix 15, revenue projections, budget sheets, and budget narrative reflecting the new enrollment figures, as well as a separate written justification for the modification request.**

6.2 The school's plans for the next five years of the charter.

(Note: The school's responses to this 1.a, b, and c of this section will be used to populate the Academic Performance section of the school's new Performance Agreement.)

1. Explain how the school's Board and School Leadership Team will measure and evaluate the academic progress of individual scholars, scholar cohorts, and the school as a whole throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the charter contract.

There are multiple metrics and systems in place to measure and evaluate the academic progress of individual scholars, scholar cohorts, and the school as a whole, as well as regular and consistent temporal check points throughout the year and at the conclusion of each academic year. We take a very proactive and "whole child" approach to academic performance and offer many layers of support and intervention to optimize academic performance and success:

- The Advisory Program (a component of our Guidance and Learning Support program) bookends the school day (students meet with their Advisor at the start of each day for homeroom, and return to the Advisor before dismissal). In addition, more comprehensive curricular programming occurs once a week on Mondays for 70 minutes. The Advisor functions as the primary adult point of contact for students, and functions as their advocate, academic Advisor, and as the family's primary point of contact with the school. The Advisor directly communicated any academic concerns to the appropriate Learning Support or Guidance Team member for potential interventions or planning meetings if academic performance (or even a social-emotional concern is impacting academic progress).
 - The Student Support Committee meets on a weekly basis to focus on students who have been flagged for academic, behavioral or social-emotional issues, which of course we know impact academic performance. Consisting of the Principal, Director of Guidance, College & Career Readiness, Director of Exceptional Students, School Counselor, and School Psychologist, the SSC collaboratively and proactively plans and recommends specific, targeted interventions to intercept any concerning decline in academic resources and communicates the plans to the student, Advisor and family.
 - The Principal, Assistant Principal, Director of Guidance, College & Career Readiness, Data Analyst and School Counselor also review grades each interim and each quarterly marking period for a total of 8 reporting checkpoints per year. In conjunction with the school's Data Analyst, performance trends are monitored, measured, and evaluated to determine overall academic performance trends and to determine potential responsive shifts in curriculum, program and instruction.
 - The trends, data and overall academic performance of individual scholars, scholar cohorts, and the school as a whole will be reported quarterly to the Board of Directors to maintain transparency regarding academic progress and to inform decision making for staffing, support, and curriculum and programmatic revision or augmentation.
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a. Outline the clearly measurable annual performance status and growth goals that the school will set over the course of the next charter term in order to monitor and evaluate its progress accelerating scholar achievement. Include information about proposed school’s scholar performance goals and the DSSF.

Academic Performance Standards

Design Thinking Academy scholars will demonstrate consistent, measurable growth in academic achievement in English Language Arts and Mathematics with the goal of having students score at or above proficiency levels on PSAT and SAT exams. DTA will measure the academic success of its program through analysis of its DSSF scores, as well as compliance with the School’s Mission Specific Goals.

DSSF Academic Goals

Indicators	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target	FY 2021 Target	FY 2022 Target	FY 2023 Target
<i>Academic Achievement (150 points)</i>	<i>Well Below Standard</i>	<i>Approaching Standard</i>	<i>Approaching Standard</i>	<i>Meets Standard</i>	<i>Meets Standard</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standard</i>
<i>School Quality/Scholar Success (200 points)</i>	<i>Meets Standard</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standard</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standard</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standard</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standard</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standard</i>
<i>Graduation Rate (100 points)</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standard</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standard</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standard</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standard</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standard</i>
<i>Progress toward English Language Proficiency (50 points)</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>n/a</i>
<i>Mission Specific Goals (undefined)</i>	<i>Meets Standard</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standards</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standards</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standards</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standards</i>	<i>Meets or Exceeds Standards</i>

Our student-centered, innovative approaches to project and problem-based curriculum design will create optimal conditions for our scholars to build interdisciplinary connections and directly apply content knowledge and complex cognitive skills.

Mission Specific Performance Standards:

Performance Standard 1: Mission-Specific Achievement in Design Thinking as a Framework for Creative Problem Solving and personalized Learning

The innovative practices employed at Design Thinking Academy of course are intrinsically embedded in the mission, vision and daily delivery of our school’s pedagogy, which is grounded in the Design Thinking Process as a means of making contextualizing course content via real-world problems. Our students’ learning is thereby more authentic, enduring and transferable. Offering students choice and agency in how they approach a demonstration of their understanding go content through a variety of means (all within clearly identified instructor parameters) necessarily results in multiple viable outcomes and divergent thinking. Student projects and creative output is relevant, personal, meaningful, and more authentic when students self-direct their own

learning and discovery. Our 5 Creative Career Pathways (Computer Science, Entrepreneurship, Art & Design, Architectural Engineering, and Media) provide opportunities for students to contextualize design thinking projects in a choice-based comprehensive track of focused learning and portfolio development, while of course offering a variety of outcomes for success based on student interest, passion and choice.

Performance Standard 2: Social Emotional Learning

Our academic and achievement goals and outcomes would not be possible without a comprehensive and thoughtfully-embedded social-emotional learning approach to secondary education. An Advisory Program, Students Support Committee, an expert Learning Support Team, and programs such as quarterly SEL workshops, speaker series combine to provide the necessary framework for ensuring and optimizing Social Emotional Learning as a key component of our scholar performance goals.

Performance Standard 3: Co-Creation of School Culture & Learning Environment

We will directly engage our students in helping to co-create a school learning environment and culture that optimizes their academic and social achievement and development. A resource-rich, stimulating learning environment embedded with high expectations and high support creates a context for success for each scholar. A variety of student panels and organizations will ensure two-way communication and collaborative, informed decision making between student leaders and administration. The goal of the co-creation model of school environment and school culture creates a context and condition to develop student autonomy, agency, voice and choice.

Performance Standard 4: Community Contributions, Collaborations, and Experiential Learning

Our many community partnerships both within and outside of the school offer authentic experiential learning and valuable transferable life skills. Classroom content immediately has a purpose, function and applicability when working on a 'real' problem or design challenge which requires application and synthesis of course content to a design challenge at hand. Collaborative inter-disciplinary creative learning experiences also help students to develop necessary social skills to succeed in college, career and in life. Community partnerships help students develop networking skills and also envision more potential paths for college, career and beyond.

Performance Standard 5: Use of Technology for Learning, Communication, and Original Content Creation

Technology will be integrated as a support and medium for instructional and content delivery, and will be used to support best practices and innovative approaches to curriculum design, teaching and learning, and preparation of our scholars for a rapidly changing and unknown future landscape. Based on the 2018 International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards, through the use of the latest technology, software and digital media, our students will be:

- Digital Citizens
- Knowledge Constructors
- Innovative Designers
- Computational Thinkers
- Creative Communicators
- Global Collaborators

b. Describe the student performance standards for the school as a whole.

Upon graduation, DTA scholars will have a solid foundation in the fundamental literacies necessary to succeed in college, career, and life. Graduates will activate and harness the power of their creative and critical capacities, develop agile and imaginative thinking, and clarify their sense of personal purpose through empathetic problem solving.

DTA Graduates Are:

- Creative Visionaries
- Transformational Leaders
- Change Agents/Change Makers
- Empathetic Problem Solvers
- Global Citizens
- Community Contributors
- Continuous Lifelong Learners
- Fueled by a sense of personal purpose

At each grade and stage of enrollment at DTA, students are expected to be working toward the graduate profile goals, above, by becoming holders of foundational knowledge, masters of fundamental literacies, original thinkers, generous collaborators, and learners for life.

c. In addition to the State's mandatory assessments, identify the primary interim assessments that the school will use to assess scholar learning needs and demonstrate academic progress throughout the year. Explain how these interim assessments align with the school's curriculum, performance goals, and Delaware Content Standards (Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Next Generation Science Standards).

DTA uses the IXL program as its primary interim assessment. At the beginning of each year every scholar takes IXL's Continuous Diagnostic, which identifies the grade level the scholar is performing at in both Math and English. It also provides the grade level for every subcategory within each subject (e.g. Geometry, Algebra, Vocabulary, etc.). This program is aligned with the Common Core State Standards for both Math and English.

In addition to providing individualized recommendations for each scholar, it also provides practice problems and explanations for each skill. In each Math and English classroom, scholars are required to complete at least 90 minutes of activity per week on the website. At the end of the year, scholars will take the Diagnostic again to measure the growth over the school year. Additionally, the school uses this program to identify scholars for RTI courses.

IXL is aligned with our school's goal to provide scholars and their parents transparency in terms of their performance levels. The scores provided to scholars make sense to them (e.g. 850 translates to a scholar knowing 50% of 8th grade) and gives them an accurate assessment of their current levels.

IXL is also aligned with our goal of having scholars create goals and plans to complete them. After taking the Diagnostic, scholars are asked to fill out a goal setting sheet in which they state which grade level they are performing at and what grade level they would like to be at by the end of the year. At the end of the year scholars reflect on the progress they have made and state what adjustments they will make in the future.

Additionally, IXL also aligns with our goal of providing an individualized education. Because the program is Common Core aligned and provides individual and small group recommendations, teachers of all subject areas can use the Diagnostic as a form of Pre-Assessment for their content and tailor their instruction to the needs of the scholar.

2. Explain how the school will collect and analyze scholar academic achievement data, use the data to refine and improve instruction, and report the data to the school community. Identify the person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will be responsible and involved in the collection and analysis of assessment data.

DTA employs a full-time data analyst, who is responsible for collecting, analyzing, and distributing data to our school community. With regards to academic achievement, the school collects this data in two ways: IXL and the College Board Suite.

IXL is a program the school has contracted which provides individualized K-12 recommendations to scholars in both Math and English. The school uses the data from IXL's Continuous Diagnostic to place scholars in RTI and requires its Math and English Teachers to use this program at minimum 90 minutes per week in their classes. Teachers can view groupings of scholars by skill and can provide targeted instruction based on scholar need.

The school also uses the College Board Suite of assessments to gauge College and Career Readiness. Seniors within a certain SAT Score range are placed in "Foundations of College English" and/or "Foundations of College Math," which are University of Delaware courses designed to prevent scholars from being placed in remedial level courses in college. Additionally, PSAT scores are used to determine eligibility for the NMSQT exam. Through the XQ Grant, all of our 9th graders are required to take the PSAT 9 in the Fall School Day Administration. The school uses these scores to determine, in part, placements into Honors and CP level courses.

3. Describe the corrective actions the school will take, pursuant to 14 *Del. C.* § 512(5), if it falls short of scholar academic achievement expectations or goals at the school-wide, classroom, or individual scholar level. Explain what would trigger such corrective actions and who would be responsible for implementing them.

The DTA Leadership Team and SSC will work together to identify and address any areas where academic goals are not on-track for achieving targets. The Principal has ultimate accountability, while the teams/individuals noted below have responsibility for implementing action plans.

- Students who are identified as below grade level for reading and/or mathematics will be given supplemental instructional time in the respective subject(s). Students may be identified by an assessment (e.g., IXL) or teacher recommendation. DTA's data analyst will work with the school counselor to schedule the supplemental instruction with a specific teacher.
 - Students who are at-risk for not passing a core academic course will be given several warnings and several opportunities to correct their performance in the course. Proactive
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communication between the teachers and scholars/parents is paramount; DTA utilizes parent-teacher conferences, emails, and phone calls to alert scholars/parents when scholars are at-risk for failing a class. Teachers are responsible for these communications. Teachers will also provide ways for students to catch up on class material and work hard to earn the credit in question.

- Students who do not pass a core course will be given several options to subsequently learn the material and claim the credit. The school counseling office will be responsible for this program.
- Students who are not showing college-level scores on their PSAT or SAT will be offered optional, supplemental time and tools to improve their scores. The school counseling office and data analyst will be responsible for this work stream.
- College-intending juniors who do not achieve the SAT benchmark for "college ready" in Reading will be offered the option to take Foundations of College English as a senior. College-intending juniors who meet specific eligibility requirements related to the SAT-Math score will be offered the option to take Foundations of College Mathematics. The counseling office and data analyst will work together to identify these scholars, share the options, and schedule the appropriate courses.
- The Student Support Committee will review students with attendance and/or disciplinary issues that are impacting academic performance. A personalized action plan will be put in place (working in tandem with parent/guardian) by a designated member of the Student Support Committee.
- When class-level academic performance is not adequate, the respective teacher(s) will receive coaching/PD and will work with other department teachers to remedy the situation. If classroom instruction does not improve, administration will continue to support the teacher in a constructive manner while seeking alternatives to ensure that access to a world-class education is not compromised.
- Scholars who do not meet proficiency in Science and/or Social Studies as defined by DeSSA will receive counseling and options to strengthen their abilities in these areas. The counseling office will administer these sessions.
- The school data analyst will work with all AP teachers to review AP Exam scores. AP teachers will work to improve outcomes associated with the AP Exams.
- For school-wide concerns, the Leadership Team will review relevant data, design action plans, and engage appropriate teachers (e.g., grade level, department) to implement the plans.
- For classroom-level concerns, the Principal will meet with the department PLC to identify issues related to curriculum, pedagogy, and/or assessment. The PLC will design an action plan and the appropriate teacher(s) will implement the plan.
- Student-level concerns will be managed by the Student Support Committee. The SSC will design the action plans, which will often involve a parent meeting with the addition of supports and expectations. Responsible parties will vary based upon individual needs, but could include administrators, counselors, teachers, and/or IEP/504 team members.
- The Leadership Team will be mindful of all possible demographic trends associated with the data described above to ensure equity across the school and across each classroom. Specifically, DTA will analyze all areas where targets are not reached to determine if a certain sub-group (e.g., male, African-American, sophomores, IEP) of scholars needs additional supports to achieve the goals.

4. Describe how state data systems will be used and monitored to support informed decision-making in the areas of academic performance, organizational management, and financial viability. Include any coordinated professional development intended to sustain these processes.

DTA utilizes numerous State data systems to support informed decision making. For example, DTA utilizes DSARA, DeSSA/DCAS, and Smarter Analytics (Performance Plus) as factors when deciding instructional grouping, intervention strategies, and other matters. DTA also uses eSchool+ to gather and organize multiple data points on a scholar-by-scholar basis. DTA utilizes this data, combined with academic data, to identify trends in our scholar’s academic performance related to attendance, conduct referrals, feeder schools, etc. This information guides how DTA allocates its financial resources and human capital to best serve our scholars.

DTA teachers also use IEP Plus and eSchool+ regularly to inform classroom level decisions. Similarly, all DTA courses are managed through Schoology, which allows scholars and teachers and online platform to communicate and access course information and materials.

Regarding organizational management, DTA utilizes DEEDS and PDMS to inform decisions regarding hiring, credentialing, and professional development.

5. Describe how the School Leadership Team will oversee and monitor compliance with statutory requirements as measured by the Organizational Framework. Include any additional organizational goals and targets that the school will have. State the goals clearly in terms of the measures or assessments that the school plans to use.

DTA has a multi-tiered system for overseeing and monitoring compliance with statutory requirements as measured by the Organizational Framework. Compliance with statutory requirements is preliminarily assigned to an individual within the appropriate department. That individual reports to the department head regarding compliance items on a regular basis. Each compliance item is then assigned to a secondary department head, who oversees and confirms compliance with the primary department head on a periodic basis (annually, quarterly, monthly, or as needed, depending upon the compliance item). Finally, the Department of Education has safeguards in place to alert a school if a situation arises where compliance has not been met, providing yet a third layer of assurance. At DTH, the departments responsible for compliance are as follows:

Primary Department	Secondary Department	Compliance Item	Primary Compliance Lead	Compliance Check
Internal Operations	Teaching and Learning	Instructional Minutes/Days per Year	C. Hembree	Annually
Guidance/Teaching and Learning	Head of School	Graduation and Promotion Requirements	D. Burke/S. Silverman	Annually
Teaching and Learning	Head of School	Mandatory Assessments	S. Sirajee/S. Silverman	Quarterly

Exceptional Children/Guidance	Teaching and Learning	RTI Programming (compliance with IDEA and 504)	A.Bystricky/ T. Fletcher	Quarterly
Head of School	Head of School	Compliance with State grants	M. Siwec	Quarterly
Exceptional Children/Guidance	Teaching and Learning	IDEA/504	A. Bystricky/ T. Fletcher	Monthly
World Language Chair	Teaching and Learning	ELL	A. Yonkers	Quarterly
Internal Operations	Head of School	Board membership and training	C. Hembree	Annually
Internal Operations	Head of School	CBOC membership and training	C. Hembree	Annually
Internal Operations	Head of School	Open meeting laws	C. Hembree	As needed, but no less than monthly
Internal Operations	Head of School	Conflicts of interest	C. Hembree	Annually
Internal Operations	Head of School	State and Federal reporting	C. Hembree	As needed, but no less than annually
Internal Operations	Head of School	Admissions systems	C. Hembree	Annually
Internal Operations	Head of School	FERPA	C. Hembree	As needed, but no less than quarterly
Internal Operations	Head of School	FOIA	C. Hembree	As needed, but no less than quarterly
Internal Operations	Head of School	Transfers of Scholar Data	C. Hembree	Monthly
Teaching and Learning	Head of School	Scholar conduct and expulsion hearings	D. Harris	As needed
Teaching and Learning/Internal Operations/Guidance/External Operations	Head of School	Mandatory staff trainings	S. Silverman/C. Hembree/D.	Annually

			Burke/M. Talmo	
Internal Operations	Teaching and Learning	Staff certification requirements	C. Hembree	Annually
Internal Operations	Head of School	Criminal background checks/TB test	C. Hembree	As needed, but no less than annually
External Operations	Head of School	ERIP Compliance	M. Talmo	Annually
External Operations	Head of School	Transportation and Facilities	M. Talmo	Quarterly

6. Provide detailed information on the school’s plan for any changes or improvements to its facility for the five years of the next charter renewal term. The plan should include an adequate and detailed financial arrangement and timeline for the proposed facility improvements.

Design Thinking Academy currently is housed at 179 Stanton Christiana Road in Newark, Delaware. The 33,000 square foot building, along with a 4,000 square foot modular Annex, is leased. Currently, DTA’s enrollment stands at close to 300 students. DTA’s current facility arrangement will support 300 students to include curriculum, athletics, dining, and transportation. The current location is effectively managed by DTA in all facets of External Operations/Facilities Management.

DTA has two options for the future of its facilities. Its current lease contains a five-year renewal provision. If exercised, this will allow DTA to stay in its current location, with a similar cost profile as in previous years, for the remainder of the renewed charter term.

Alternatively, DTA may choose to relocate to another property upon expiration of its lease in 2020. There are several mitigating factors leading to this decision to include the following:

- DTA intends to increase enrollment to 350 students.
- DTA must relocate to a new location to effectively accommodate this enrollment.
- DTA wishes to expand its curriculum, and to also improve upon the delivery of such by providing state of the art equipment in a new location.
- State of the art HVAC equipment in a newer building will lend itself to ASHRAE standard indoor air quality.
- An improved facility built or renovated with sustainable, recyclable, or eco- friendly building materials affords DTA the opportunity to provide the facility required with design and LEED efficiency in mind.
- The athletic programs, and the in-school health and fitness curriculum can be expanded in a building which contains a gymnasium. Leasing or owning a property which contains an athletic field would also be advantageous to host athletic contests or events on site.
- Parents and students would be better served with newer or improved facilities, thus responding to the continual requests for improved programs and a larger building.

-
- Events of all types would be hosted in the newer facility to include faculty training, student training during summer, and of course school events throughout the course of the year.

DTA has formed a new Facilities Committee whose primary mission is twofold: (i) interview and hire an architecture firm to provide preliminary fit out for properties/buildings which would be advantageous to the school's mission and (ii) search for a new property/building in conjunction with DTA's commercial realtor. A total of ten (10) properties were reviewed and then toured by the Facilities Committee in the last 6 months. Two finalist properties were considered, and the commercial realtor negotiated on DTA's behalf with the owners of each property. The financial review of those two properties has been completed, and now a third property is under review and will be considered after a walk-through. The financial and practical considerations pertaining to these facilities will be considered by the Facilities Committee and the Board of Directors prior to determining whether DTA will relocate or remain on its current campus.

If relocation is chosen, the timeline has been determined. If a suitable, affordable building can be obtained under lease contract and then renovated as per DTA's design, the school will relocate at the conclusion of June 2020, when the current occupied building lease expires. DTA does have an option to terminate its current lease one year early and may utilize this option if the Facilities Committee and Board of Directors determine it is in the School's best interest. If DTA opts to relocate, once the new building has been renovated as per design and as per programmatic requirements, little else will need to be improved in the three or four years beyond that point other than customary maintenance.

The amenities that would be afforded DTA after procurement/upgrade/renovation of a new facility include:

- 45,000-60,000 rentable square feet for classrooms, labs, offices, baths, gymnasium, athletics, dining, and storage.
- It is possible that a portion of the square footage can be subdivided.
- State of the art facilities to include ASHRAE standard HVAC systems.
- LED lighting to reduce heat output, reduce maintenance cost, improve visibility and appearance, and to reduce energy consumption for lighting by 60 percent.
- Flooring, wall surface, and ceiling materials that are easily maintained.
- Low consumption plumbing fixtures.
- Furniture, fixtures, and equipment that suggest our design thinking approach.
- Eco-friendly paint and surface finishes with bright, suggestive design approach colors.
- Mechanical systems which are affordably maintained with a minimum of labor cost.
- Landscaped property with athletic field.

The financial model of an undertaking of this magnitude, for 350 students, suggests a lease term of 15 years upon acceptance, renovation, and occupancy. The financial model is as follows:

*-PROPERTY #1-

44,487 Rentable Square Feet
Starting base rate 21.00/RSF/Year
\$27,127,325 total undiscounted cash flows
\$1,808,488 undiscounted cash flows/year
\$40.65 undiscounted cash flows/RSF/year
\$150,707 undiscounted cash flows/Month

\$20,488,326 Net Present Value
127 Average RSF per seat
\$5,167 average annual cost per seat
Lease commencement date 07/01/2019 or 2020
Lease expiration date 6/30/2034 or 2035
1-month free rent
TI allowance \$50.00
\$235.05 expected construction costs/RSF
\$185.05 net construction costs funded by DTA
\$8,232,319 total net improvement costs
Total Seats 350

*-PROPERTY #2-

41,530 Rentable Square Feet
Starting base rate 22.00/RSF/Year
\$25,996,613 total undiscounted cash flows
\$1,733,108 undiscounted cash flows/year
\$41.73 undiscounted cash flows/RSF/year
\$144,426 undiscounted cash flows/Month
\$19,615,088 Net Present Value
119 Average RSF per seat
\$4,952 average annual cost per seat
Lease commencement date 07/01/2019 or 2020
Lease expiration date 6/30/2034 or 2035
0-month free rent
TI allowance \$60.00
\$239.04 expected construction costs/RSF
\$179.04 net construction costs funded by DTA
\$7,435,531 total net improvement costs
Total Seats 350

*-PROPERTY #3-

68,406 Rentable Square Feet
Situated on 14.8 acres with additional 7.88 with athletic fields
Located in proximity to other Charter Schools with waiting lists
Large indoor gymnasium
Excellent campus setting
Reduced construction scope of work as compared to Properties 1 and 2
Property allows for more than adequate City of Newark and New Castle County-required parking spaces per classroom

DTA intends to utilize private funding or other acceptable long-term lending solutions to finance a relocation, if appropriate.

VII. Compliance certification statement

The Board of Directors of this charter school certifies that it will materially comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter relating to the education of all scholars enrolled at the school.

October 1, 2018
Date of Signature

Design Thinking Academy
Name of the Charter School

We have reviewed the Delaware Charter Law (14 *Del. C.* Ch. 5) and 14 DE Admin. Code § 275 in Department of Education regulations (Regulation 275), and have based the responses in this renewal application on the review of these documents.

/s/ Paul L. Miller
Signature of the Chairperson of the Board of Directors

Print/Type Name:	Paul L. Miller
Title (if designated):	Chairman of the Board of Directors

IX. PERFORMANCE Agreement Template

To be completed by the school in conjunction with the Department of Education should the school be renewed by the Secretary with the assent of the State Board of Education.

Because the School does not have Financial Framework data from the DOE as of the date of this Renewal Application, the Charter School Office has indicated that this template should be submitted as a supplement to the Renewal Application.

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHARTER SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT – Renewing Charter School
Design Thinking Academy

This Performance Agreement (“Agreement” is entered into this _____ day of _____, 20__ by and between the Delaware Department of Education (hereinafter referred to as “DDOE”) and Design Thinking Academy, a public charter school of the State of Delaware (hereinafter referred to as “School”), authorized by the Department of Education with the assent of the Delaware State Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as “DSBE”).

1. **Effective Date.** Notwithstanding the date set forth above this Agreement shall become effective on the date upon which the DSBE shall assent to the terms and conditions of this Agreement.

2. **Term of the Agreement.** This agreement shall continue in full force and effect during the term of the school’s charter and any subsequent renewal term thereof; provided, nevertheless, that in the sole discretion of the DDOE, with the assent of the DSBE, this agreement may be amended at such time as the school’s charter may be renewed under the provisions of 14 *Del. C.* §514A or subjected to review under 14 *Del. C.* §515 (b). This agreement may also be amended to comply with subsequent changes in state or federal law and/or regulations relating to charter schools or the Performance Framework (“Framework”) as deemed necessary by the DDOE, with the assent of the DSBE. This Agreement may also be modified:

(a) At anytime by mutual consent of the DDOE and the School, provided, nevertheless that the DSBE shall assent to such modification; or

(b) If the DDOE shall determine, with the assent of the DSBE, that it is necessary or appropriate to modify this Agreement to reflect subsequent changes in the Performance Framework.

3. **Obligations of School.** While this agreement remains in effect, the School shall:

(a) Comply with all state and federal laws and regulations imposed on Delaware public charter schools, and otherwise comply with the terms of the School’s charter, including any conditions now or subsequently imposed upon its charter by the DDOE with the assent of the DSBE; and

(b) Make satisfactory annual progress toward the indicators and performance targets in the Academic, Financial and Organizational Expectations set forth in this Agreement as measured by the Framework. An annual performance review will be conducted by the Department of Education Charter School Office using the Framework to evaluate such progress. The Framework is incorporated into and

made a part of this agreement. If the DDOE finds that the school is not making satisfactory progress toward its performance targets, the DDOE, with the assent of the DSBE, may place the school's charter on formal review pursuant to 14 Del. C. §515 (b).

Background Information (Characteristics of school, current location, summary of scholar population and grades served by the school, etc.)

Design Thinking Academy DTA is a dynamic, tuition-free public charter school located in Newark, Delaware. At DTA, students from all backgrounds use an innovative design-thinking pedagogy to imagine, design, and create successful futures in college, careers, and lifelong learning. In every subject, students are asked to IDENTIFY problems requiring solutions or improvement, VISUALIZE multiple solutions to the problem, PROTOTYPE the best solution, and PRESENT their findings. Throughout the process, students are taught to empathize with the end user (who might be the reader of a novel in ELA or the driver of a new type of automobile in Driver's Education) and design solutions that serve their needs. Our students are taught to utilize this approach not only in the classroom, but in daily life, resulting in DTA students who are entrepreneurial in spirit and have the skill set to succeed in the 21st century. DTA serves students in grades 9-12 residing in the State of Delaware.

Mission Statement

The mission of Design Thinking Academy is to empower all students to be tomorrow's innovators and lifelong learners who question, imagine, create, and share every day.

Vision Statement

The vision of Design Thinking Academy is to develop generations of innovators who create solutions to the world's problems through design thinking.

Academic Performance Expectations

Design Thinking Academy's DSSF ratings for FY 18 are:

Indicators	FY 2018 Actual
Academic Achievement (150 points)	Well Below Standard
School Quality/Scholar Success (200 points)	Approaching Standard
Graduation Rate (100 points)	n/a
Progress toward English Language Proficiency (50 points)	n/a

By 2021 our expectation is to achieve "Meets" or "Exceeds" ratings on each metric area of the Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF). Each year, we will show growth within each metric area, putting us on track to achieve our academic performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

Mission Specific Goal(s):

6.2.1(a)

Design Thinking Academy scholars will demonstrate consistent, measurable growth in academic achievement in English Language Arts and Mathematics with the goal of having students score at or above proficiency levels on PSAT and SAT exams. DTA will measure the academic success of its program through analysis of its DSSF scores, as well as compliance with the School's Mission Specific Goals.

Indicators	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Target	FY 2020 Target	FY 2021 Target	FY 2022 Target	FY 2023 Target
Academic Achievement (150 points)	Well Below Standard	Approaching Standard	Approaching Standard	Meets Standard	Meets Standard	Meets or Exceeds Standard
School Quality/Scholar Success (200 points)	Approaching Standard	Meets or Exceeds Standard	Meets or Exceeds Standard	Meets or Exceeds Standard	Meets or Exceeds Standard	Meets or Exceeds Standard
Graduation Rate (100 points)	n/a	Meets or Exceeds Standard	Meets or Exceeds Standard	Meets or Exceeds Standard	Meets or Exceeds Standard	Meets or Exceeds Standard
Progress toward English Language Proficiency (50 points)	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

Mission Specific Goals (undefined)	Meets Standard	Meets or Exceeds Standards	Meets or Exceeds Standards	Meets or Exceeds Standards	Meets or Exceeds Standards	Meets or Exceeds Standards
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Our student-centered, innovative approaches to project and problem-based curriculum design will create optimal conditions for our scholars to build interdisciplinary connections and directly apply content knowledge and complex cognitive skills.

Mission Specific Performance Standards:

Performance Standard 1: Mission-Specific Achievement in Design Thinking as a Framework for Creative Problem Solving and personalized Learning

The innovative practices employed at Design Thinking Academy of course are intrinsically embedded in the mission, vision and daily delivery of our school’s pedagogy, which is grounded in the Design Thinking Process as a means of making contextualizing course content via real-world problems. Our students’ learning is thereby more authentic, enduring and transferable. Offering students choice and agency in how they approach a demonstration of their understanding go content through a variety of means (all within clearly identified instructor parameters) necessarily results in multiple viable outcomes and divergent thinking. Student projects and creative output is relevant, personal, meaningful, and more authentic when students self-direct their own learning and discovery. Our 5 Creative Career Pathways (Computer Science, Entrepreneurship, Art & Design, Architectural Engineering, and Media) provide opportunities for students to contextualize design thinking projects in a choice-based comprehensive track of focused learning and portfolio development, while of course offering a variety of possible outcomes for success based on student interest, passion and choice.

Performance Standard 2: Social Emotional Learning

Our academic and achievement goals and outcomes would not be possible without a comprehensive and thoughtfully-embedded social-emotional learning approach to secondary education. An Advisory Program, Students Support Committee, an expert Learning Support Team, and programs such as quarterly SEL workshops, speaker series combine to provide the necessary framework for ensuring and optimizing Social Emotional Learning as a key component of our scholar performance goals.

Performance Standard 3: Co-Creation of School Culture & Learning Environment

We will directly engage our students in helping to co-create a school learning environment and culture that optimizes their academic and social achievement and development. A resource-rich, stimulating learning environment embedded with high expectations and high support creates a context for success for each scholar. A variety of student panels and organizations will ensure two-way communication and collaborative, informed decision making between student leaders and administration. The goal of the co-creation model of school environment and school culture creates a context and condition to develop student autonomy, agency, voice and choice.

Performance Standard 4: Community Contributions, Collaborations, and Experiential Learning

Our many community partnerships both within and outside of the school offer authentic experiential learning and valuable transferable life skills. Classroom content immediately has a purpose, function and applicability when working on a ‘real’ problem or design challenge which requires application and synthesis of course content to a design challenge at hand. Collaborative inter-disciplinary creative learning experiences also help students to develop necessary social skills to succeed in college, career and in life. Community partnerships help students develop networking skills and also envision more potential paths for college, career and beyond.

Performance Standard 5: Use of Technology for Learning, Communication, and Original Content Creation

Technology will be integrated as a support and medium for instructional and content delivery, and will be used to support best practices and innovative approaches to curriculum design, teaching and learning, and preparation of our scholars for a rapidly changing and unknown future landscape. Based on the 2018 International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) Standards, through the use of the latest technology, software and digital media, our students will be:

- Digital Citizens
- Knowledge Constructors
- Innovative Designers
- Computational Thinkers
- Creative Communicators
- Global Collaborator

6.2.1(b)

Upon graduation, DTA scholars will have a solid foundation in the fundamental literacies necessary to succeed in college, career, and life. Graduates will activate and harness the power of their creative and critical capacities, develop agile and imaginative thinking, and clarify their sense of personal purpose through empathetic problem solving.

DTA Graduates Are:

- Creative Visionaries
- Transformational Leaders
- Change Agents/Change Makers
- Empathetic Problem Solvers
- Global Citizens
- Community Contributors
- Continuous Lifelong Learners
- Fueled by a sense of personal purpose

At each grade and stage of enrollment at DTA, students are expected to be working toward the graduate profile goals, above, by becoming holders of foundational knowledge, masters of fundamental literacies, original thinkers, generous collaborators, and learners for life

6.2.1(c)

DTA uses the IXL program as its primary interim assessment. At the beginning of each year every scholar takes IXL's Continuous Diagnostic, which identifies the grade level the scholar is performing at in both Math and English. It also provides the grade level for every subcategory within each subject (e.g. Geometry, Algebra, Vocabulary, etc.). This program is aligned with the Common Core State Standards for both Math and English.

In addition to providing individualized recommendations for each scholar, it also provides practice problems and explanations for each skill. In each Math and English classroom, scholars are required to complete at least 90 minutes of activity per week on the website. At the end of the year, scholars will take the Diagnostic again to measure the growth over the school year. Additionally, the school uses

this program to identify scholars for RTI courses.

IXL is aligned with our school's goal to provide scholars and their parents transparency in terms of their performance levels. The scores provided to scholars make sense to them (e.g. 850 translates to a scholar knowing 50% of 8th grade) and gives them an accurate assessment of their current levels.

IXL is also aligned with our goal of having scholars create goals and plans for completing them. After taking the Diagnostic, scholars are asked to fill out a goal setting sheet in which they state which grade level they are performing at and what grade level they would like to be at by the end of the year. At the end of the year scholars reflect on the progress they have made and state what adjustments they will make in the future.

Additionally, IXL also aligns with our goal of providing an individualized education. Because the program is Common Core aligned and provides individual and small group recommendations, teachers of all subject areas can use the Diagnostic as a form of Pre-Assessment for their content and tailor their instruction to the needs of the scholar.

Financial Performance Expectations

Design Thinking Academy's overall financial rating for FY 18 is Approaching Standard. By 2024, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of "Meets" standard as measured by the Financial Performance Framework. Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate economic viability and achieve our financial performance expectation. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

Organizational Performance Expectations

Design Thinking Academy's overall organizational rating for FY 18 is Approaching Standard. By 2024, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of "Meets," as measured by the Organizational Performance Framework. Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate performance aligned with those organizational performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have hereunto set their Hand and Seals the day and year first above-written.

DESIGN THINKING ACADEMY

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**BY: _____
Chair, Board of Director**

**BY: _____
Secretary of Education**

Assented to by resolution of the Delaware State Board of Education on the _____ day of _____, 20__.

References:

¹Based on September 30th Unit Count

²Graduation rate data is lag data by one school year to include all scholars that have completed their high school diplomas during that year including summer graduates.