

**FIRST STATE MILITARY ACADEMY**  
**Narrative**

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**SCHOOL PROPOSAL OVERVIEW & ENROLLMENT PROJECTION***(Not included in narrative page limit)*

Please provide information for the **primary point of contact** for your team. This individual will serve as the contact for all communications, interviews, and notices regarding the submitted application. *Note: Names and contact information may be shared with external groups by the Delaware Department of Education.*

**Name of proposed school:** First State Military Academy (FSMA)

**Primary contact person:** C. Scott Kidner

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City State Zip

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**Name of applicant group or entity applying:** FSMA Founding Board

**Names, roles in the applicant group, and current employment of all persons on applicant team:**

Name	Role	Current Employment
C. Scott Kidner	School Development; Governance	Kidner Associates/Capitol Strategies; President
Christopher Weeks	School Development; Governance	Becker-Morgan Group; Business Development Manager
Manuel Cuesta	School Development; Governance	DE Dept. of Transportation; Telecommunications Network Tech
Karen DeLissio	School Development; Governance	Boeing Company, Mobility Division; Systems Engineering Support Analyst
Michael Bennetti	School Development; Governance	Bennetti-Holmes Insurance; Business Owner/Insurance Agent
Andrea Davis	School Development; Governance	Delaware New Tech Academy; DE Certified Teacher
Dennis Dinger	School Development; Governance	George & Lynch, Inc.; President and CEO
Kevin Donnelly	School Development; Governance	NCC Conservation District; District Coordinator
Lauren Garcia	School Development; Governance	WSFS Bank; Retail Office Manager
Antonio Janario	School Development; Governance	Dover Housing Authority; Director, Maintenance & Construction

**First State Military Academy**

David McGuigan	School Development; Governance	George & Lynch, Inc.; VP, Business Development
Jerome Ridgeway	School Development; Governance	Dover Housing Authority; Maintenance Supervisor, Site Manager; Housing Specialist III
Charles Taylor	School Development; Governance	Providence Creek Academy; Business and Facilities Advisor
Innovative Schools	Management	Essential Partner

**Provide the name and desired opening year for the proposed school.**

Proposed School Name	Opening Year	*Geographic Community
<b>First State Military Academy</b>	<b>2014</b>	<b>Kent County</b>

\*Identification of Geographic Community may be as specific as a neighborhood or as general as the school district targeted for school location.

**Model or Focus of Proposed School** (e.g., Arts, College Prep, Dual-Language, etc.):

Army JROTC Military Academy with New Tech Network Instructional Design

**Does the applicant have previous experience operating one or more charter schools? \*** Yes No ☒ **v**

If yes, explain the nature of your prior experience.

**Does the school expect to contract or partner with a Charter Management Company or other organization for school management/operation?\*** Yes ☒ **v** No

If yes, identify the Charter Management Company or other partner organization: **Innovative Schools**

**Proposed Principal/School Leader Information:**

Name of proposed Principal/School Leader Candidate: N/A

**School Enrollment Projection**

Academic Year	Planned Number of Students	Maximum Number of Students	Grade Levels
Year 1 (specify) <i>Planning</i>			
Year 2	200	200	125 9 <sup>th</sup> graders, 75 10 <sup>th</sup> graders
Year 3	325	325	125 9 <sup>th</sup> grade, 125 10 <sup>th</sup> grade, 75 11 <sup>th</sup> grade
Year 4	450	450	125 9 <sup>th</sup> , 125 10 <sup>th</sup> , 125 11 <sup>th</sup> , 75 12 <sup>th</sup>
Year 5	500	500	125 9 <sup>th</sup> , 125 10 <sup>th</sup> , 125 11 <sup>th</sup> , 125 12 <sup>th</sup>
At Capacity	500	500	9-12



**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***14 Del. C. §§ 512 (1), (2), (3), (5) and (6)***Mission and Vision**

The Mission of the First State Military Academy is to provide an educational experience that focuses on developing the intellectual, physical and emotional growth of our Cadets. Through an environment of academic rigor, military discipline, citizenship, leadership and the application of strong moral values, Graduates will develop respect for themselves, those on whom they depend, and those that depend on them, ensuring successful entry into adult life.

FSMA proposes to be a charter high school located in Kent County that will be modeled after the highly successful Delaware Military Academy (DMA) in New Castle County. While the school is not connected to DMA in any way, it will be grounded in the same values and principles of the JROTC program throughout grades 9-12. A number of high schools in the state of Delaware currently offer JROTC programs as elective courses within the regular high school program. Cadets at FSMA, however, will benefit from a comprehensive, school-wide JROTC experience in grades 9-12 as a core component of the entire school culture and operations.

The academic rigor of FSMA will be enhanced with the incorporation of the New Tech Network (NTN) instructional design (Appendix A-1) for the academic components of the school. The combination of the NTN instructional design with the precision, values, and principles of the JROTC school model will offer a unique and exceptional high school option for students in Kent County.

The mission and goals of the JROTC and NTN programs are aligned and complementary, and reinforce the common threads of rigor, respect, leadership, and discipline. An 'Alignment of Mission and Goals to Academic and Cultural Programming' for FSMA is found in Appendix A-2.

Following approval of the school's charter, the FSMA board intends to submit an application to Army JROTC. The focus of Army JROTC is reflected in its mission, *"To motivate young people to be better citizens."* JROTC accomplishes this mission by providing exceptional educational opportunities and lifelong skills to America's youth. The Army JROTC program builds character through supporting less violence; higher self-esteem; less absenteeism; higher achievement scores and stronger academic performance; and more connectedness to school, engagement in lessons, and commitment to success.

To that end, the Board's vision for the school is to provide each cadet with:

- Engaging learning experiences and activities that will result in improved academic performance;
- A safe, disciplined, orderly, and structured environment conducive to academic excellence;
- An environment that emphasizes the understanding that honor is the keystone of all worthy endeavors and fosters the development of self-respect, integrity and trust;

- Additional meaningful educational experiences through field trips and other events that will maximize community involvement and support;
- A program designed to develop leadership qualities;
- Parent involvement that will enhance the educational experience;
- A full range of extra-curricular opportunities; and
- A successful entry into adult life after graduation.

### **Educational Need and Target Population**

The target population for FSMA is students who are interested in, and/or would benefit from, a military school environment, where the rigors of academics, citizenship, discipline, moral values, and leadership will help them to advance toward successful high school graduation, and will ensure each cadet is well prepared for the transition into post high school life.

The goal is to enroll a diverse cadet population in Kent County that has a balanced male-to-female ratio and is reflective of surrounding high schools.

The NTN instructional design has been chosen based upon its substantial record of results of high academic performance and superior graduation rates (Appendix A-9). The Army JROTC program, as noted by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS), “serves to reinforce the competencies taught in the other academic subjects in which cadets are enrolled.” FSMA’s combination of an Army JROTC program with the NTN instructional design will offer an exceptional educational experience.

Over four years, FSMA will expand to serve 500 cadets in grades 9-12, beginning with 125 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 75 10<sup>th</sup> graders in year 1, and then expanding to 125 in each grade level by year 4 of operation. The preferred location for the FSMA facility is in the greater Smyrna/Clayton area in Kent County. This area is centrally situated between the two densely populated areas of Middletown and Dover and would provide an attractive locality for cadets/families in both Kent County and southern New Castle County. Given the known high demand for DMA in New Castle County, along with information about expected demand for this new school revealed by our Feasibility Study, the data clearly show a high level of interest for a military school available to cadets in Kent County. The full Feasibility Study may be found in Appendix A-15.

### **Community Engagement**

The Board has hosted a number of information sessions over the past two years designed to inform and involve stakeholders in planning for the proposed high school. Special efforts have been made to get feedback from parents and cadets through the use of a survey tool as part of the school’s Feasibility Study. Information about the school and survey were advertised in local newspapers, non-profit newsletters, online newsletters, and local libraries. Additional information about community engagement and feasibility during the planning can be found in Appendix A-15. The FSMA Board will continue to engage the community after approval to ensure broad support for the school and that the school meets enrollment targets. The Board will also connect with local businesses to support the development and evaluation of classroom projects and internship opportunities for FSMA cadets.

**Education Plan**

FSMA will combine the strong school culture of a military academy with the rigorous and dynamic learning environment offered by the New Tech Network model, a school design that will guide the academic program with “teaching that engages, technology that enables, and culture that empowers.” The New Tech instructional design emphasizes deeper learning that fundamentally re-imagines teaching and learning through using project-based learning, 1:1 technology, and integrated coursework. In their junior and senior years, cadets will have the opportunity to volunteer in their community through internships. Cadets will also work toward senior capstone projects that are based around their interests and require them to complete in-depth research projects.

The New Tech Network’s school design is in alignment with the JROTC program mission and goals. Both emphasize leadership development, service learning, technology skills, citizenship, emotional intelligence, communication skills, life skills, and career skills. Pending the approval of its charter application, the FSMA board will begin the readiness process to join the New Tech Network and become the second New Tech High School in Delaware. Joining this national network of public schools will give the cadets additional resources that will help them gain the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in life, college, and the careers of tomorrow.

**Leadership and Governance**

FSMA will be effectively governed by a Board composed of qualified and competent professionals, parents, and community members who bring a range of skills and talents to the effort, as well as great passion for ensuring a superior learning environment for cadets. A highly qualified Commandant (school leader) will provide leadership and management for the school.

During the planning year and the first four years of operation, the Board intends to contract with Innovative Schools to serve as its Charter Management Organization (CMO) to manage the business and academic services of the school. Collectively, the leadership team will ensure stable and effective governance and leadership and superior cadet performance and school operations in order to achieve the school’s mission and vision.

**FOUNDING GROUP & SCHOOL LEADERSHIP***14 Del. C. § 512 (1)***Founding Group Membership [14 Del. C. § 512 (1)]****1. Identify the key members of the Founding Group for the proposed school.**

Please see Attachment 1-D for full resumes and professional biographies for the Founding Board. Summary information of the key members of the Founding Group for the First State Military Academy (FSMA) may be found below; who have had or will have a substantial ongoing role in school development, governance, and/or management, and will share in responsibility for the school. A comprehensive list of current board members, their intended roles and the constituencies they represent may be found in Attachment 1-Z-2.

**C. Scott Kidner, Board Chair:** Having worked in a number of non-profit organizations, Mr. Kidner has expertise in developing and executing executive staffing and contracting. He owns and operates a full-service government relations firm representing clients in the commercial and industrial real estate development community. (Parent; Community Member)

**Christopher Weeks, Board Vice-Chair:** Mr. Weeks is a business development manager with expertise in architecture, civil engineering, and interior design. Over his 25-year professional career, Mr. Weeks has worked both at the entry level and as management in the construction, retail, hospitality, and professional service industries. Both human resource and fiscal management duties were performed in these positions. (Parent; Community Member)

**Karen DiLissio, Board Treasurer:** Ms. DeLissio was one of the groundbreaking female cadets at West Point and brings awareness that the discipline and opportunities presented by FSMA should be available to all interested young women. She is committed to reaching out in both the professional community and her alumni association to support recruitment and outreach. As a Systems Engineer at Boeing, Ms. DeLissio is a team lead on multi-million dollar projects, requiring on-time and on-budget performance. (Community Member)

**Manuel Cuesta, Board Secretary:** Manuel Cuesta is currently responsible for the overall management of the Delaware Department of Motor Vehicles computers and network system. His diverse experiences range from working with troubled youth in the school system to high profile criminal individual. Mr. Cuesta is bilingual and will be ensuring that all communications from the school are presented in both English and Spanish, and will be supporting outreach into the county's Hispanic community more generally. (Former DMA Parent; Community Member)

**Michael Bennetti:** As a business leader, Mr. Bennetti has expertise in business management, community outreach and marketing. Mr. Bennetti is an Insurance Agent and Financial Services professional with expertise in property and casual insurance, risk management, personal and professional coverage, and health and employee benefits; and, has served individuals, businesses and their employees for more than 25 years. (Parent; Community Member)



**Andrea Davis:** As a DE certified teacher currently employed at the DNTA (Delaware New Tech Academy), Mrs. Davis has a strong background in curriculum and Instruction, and also brings critical hands-on experience teaching and using the New Tech model. (DE Certified Teacher)

**Dennis Dinger:** As President/CEO of George and Lynch, Mr. Dinger has been instrumental in growing the Company to the largest heavy highway construction contractor on the Delmarva Peninsula. Mr. Dinger has the responsibility for all aspects of client contracting requirements, including coordinating manpower, equipment, resource planning and scheduling; and, provides direction, control and communication for all quality, safety, estimating. Cost control and scheduling needs. (Parent; Community Member)

**Kevin Donnelly:** Mr. Donnelly's expertise in finance and government service arises from his work under three Delaware administrations, eventually serving as the director of DNREC's division of water resources, where he was responsible for budgeting and planning for the state's water supply. (Community Member)

**Lauren Garcia:** Ms. Garcia is a sales and service professional with over 13 years' experience in 2 industries. In her 13-year professional career, Lauren has worked primarily at the management level in the retail clothing and banking industries. Both human resource and fiscal management duties were performed in those positions. (Parent; Community Member)

**Antonio Janairo:** As a facilities director in higher education, Mr. Janairo has a keen awareness of the expectations of students in higher education and drives the committee to develop academics and learning around ensuring those expectations are met. Mr. Janairo has a decorated history of serving in the military and believes in the importance of diversity in creating a strong school community. (Community Member)

**David McGuigan:** Mr. McGuigan directs and coordinates activities as they relate to business development for George & Lynch. He aids the President and senior management in formulating and administering company plans and programs. Duties include long and short term planning, marketing research, advertising, public relations, community and government relations, and customer database management. (Former DMA Parent; Community Member)

**Jerome Ridgeway:** Mr. Ridgeway is a maintenance manager with expertise in property management, public housing management, project management, and electronic communications. Over his 36-year professional career, Mr. Ridgeway has worked both at the entry level and as a maintenance superintendent with the U.S. Air Force, at a major communications corporation (MCI World Com), and at the Dover Housing Authority. (Community Member)

**Charles Taylor:** Mr. Taylor is a Business and Facilities Advisor with experience in vocational education, charter school education, and small businesses in Delaware. For the past decade, he has devoted his time to the development and growth of Providence Creek Academy Charter

School and has participated in the planning of charter renewals, curriculum development, teacher retention activities, financial planning and strengthening parent-community relationships for the school. (Community Member)

It is important to note that in addition to the key members of the Founding Group, there were 16 additional advisors who regularly served in 2011 and 2012 on committees directly related to the development of the school and content of the application. A number of these individuals are Delaware certified teachers with extensive experiences as leaders and teachers in Delaware's public schools. The extended committee list may be found in Attachment 1-Z-3.

The Founding Group's collective qualifications provide an excellent foundation for establishing a high-quality charter high school in Delaware and assuming the stewardship of public funds. Resumes and professional biographies for the Founding Group may be found in Attachment 1. These descriptions provide evidence of the experiences, qualifications, and affiliations that each board member contributes to the development, governance, and operations of the FSMA. The board members have been selected for their professional experiences and skills related to the development, governance, and management of the FSMA, along with their passions for and ongoing commitment to the mission and vision of the school, and their abilities to ensure a superior educational opportunity for all cadets attending the school.

#### **Background [14 Del. C. § 512 (1)]**

The First State Military Academy (FSMA) founding group was established in 2011 and includes a diverse and passionate community of parents of future cadets, business and community leaders, educators, parents of former Delaware Military Academy cadets, and retired military officers – most of whom are residents of or are employed in Kent County. The diversity of the founding group exemplifies the principles of the charter school movement – community-founded, talent-powered, and outcomes-driven.

The Founding Board has organized itself into the following groups to build out key sections of the application: the Executive Committee (chair, vice-chair, treasurer, and secretary), Finance and Compensation, Facility, Academic Excellence, Human Resources, and Community Engagement. This group has worked in collaboration with Innovative Schools, a local, non-profit public school support organization hired by the FSMA Board to develop the charter application. As part of its responsibilities, Innovative Schools hosted model school tours for FSMA Board members to visit the other New Tech program in Delaware, provided Board training, and developed the narrative sections of the application in collaboration with the FSMA Board to ensure that the proposed charter school will offer a superior, 21<sup>st</sup>-century educational experience for students in Kent County.

<b>Principal/Founding Group School Leader and Leadership Team [14 Del. C. § 512 (1)]</b>
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#### **1. Name the Principal/School Leader candidate, if identified...**

The Commandant (school leader) for FSMA has not yet been identified. It is the intention of the Board to recruit and hire a Commandant by August 2013 so that he or she can be involved in all

aspects of the school's planning year, including facility selection, budgeting, teacher hiring, and curriculum planning. Recruitment for the Commandant will take place through postings on online job forums, as well as outreach through professional associations, school-leadership graduate programs, military organizations, and relevant nonprofit associations. The publicized job description will list the required and preferred candidate qualifications, which will include administrative certification, a master's degree in a relevant field, a military background, at least five years of school-based instructional experience, school leadership experience, and experience at the secondary level, among other characteristics.

The selection process for the Commandant will involve an initial application, including a resume and cover letter; written responses to scenario questions that will allow the Board's Selection Committee to assess the applicant's leadership approach; an initial interview by videoconference; and an in-person interview for select candidates involving authentic demonstrations of school leadership capacity, including communications skills, data analysis, and instructional expertise. A full selection timeline, list of online and offline recruitment venues, criteria, sample job description and selection process can be found in Attachment 2.

**2. If the Principal/School Leader candidate has been identified, provide specific data...**

The Commandant (school leader) for FSMA has not yet been identified. In addition to the start-up functions of the CMO, NTN, and the FSMA Founding Board includes a number of members whose backgrounds make them extremely well suited to serving the school's target population and performing the responsibilities of a school leader until one is hired early in the planning year. Additional summary information may be found in the response to question number 1 in 'Founding Group Membership' above.

**3. Who will work on a full-time or nearly full-time basis immediately after approval ...**

During the planning year and until the school's first charter renewal, Innovative Schools will serve as the Charter Management Organization (CMO) for FSMA. During the planning year, the leadership team will be comprised of the school's Board of Directors, the CMO staff, and, once hired, the Commandant. The planning year leadership team will work together through a series of regular check-in meetings with the Board's four planning year committees: (1) Academic, (2) Personnel, (3) Finance and Facilities, and (4) Marketing and Cadet Recruitment. Each committee will be co-led by Innovative Schools' staff members with expertise on that particular school start-up topic, and by the Commandant once hired. Board members will be assigned to each of the committees based on their areas of professional experience. Together, this team of Board, CMO, and Commandant, along with personnel from the CMO's subcontractor, New Tech Network (NTN), and the Army JROTC Instructor (once hired) will provide a range of experience and expertise to successfully launch the school. The CMO staff and Commandant will be compensated through a combination of grant funding and private donations that the Board intends to pursue immediately upon the approval of the charter.

**4. Describe the responsibilities and qualifications of the school's leadership...**

Following the planning year and once the school opens, the leadership team will be comprised of the Board of Directors, the Commandant, the Army JROTC Instructor, and the CMO –

Innovative Schools, and its subcontractor, New Tech Network (NTN). In this structure, the Commandant will work closely with the CMO to become the instructional leader with a deep understanding of the NTN learning model. The Commandant, Army JROTC Instructor, and CMO will work to ensure alignment of the military school model with the NTN instructional design. The CMO will oversee all operations and administrative functions of the school in collaboration with the Commandant. In Year 2 or 3, an Operations Manager will be hired by the school. The CMO will be responsible for training this person and building his/her capacity as the CMO transitions into a consultant role by Year 4 of operation. The CMO team will be comprised of members of Innovative Schools' staff. Please see Attachment 3 for biographies and resumes of these individuals, along with a timeline for these hires, and sample job descriptions for the administrative team. The resumes and biographies of the members of the Board can be found in Attachment 1.

**EDUCATION PLAN***14 Del. C. §§ 512 (4), (5), (6), (7), (8) and (11)***Curriculum and Instructional Design [14 Del. C. § 512 (6)]****1. Provide a framework for the proposed instructional design...**

The First State Military Academy (FSMA) will combine the strong school culture of a military academy with a rigorous and dynamic learning environment that embraces technology and project-based learning. Aligned with the JROTC program, the New Tech Network's (NTN) school design (Appendix A-1) emphasizes leadership development, service learning, technology skills, citizenship, emotional intelligence, communication skills, life skills, and career skills. Pending the approval of its charter application, the FSMA Board will begin to move through the NTN's readiness process to become the second New Tech High School in Delaware, joining a national network of 115 schools in 18 states. For a diagram showing the alignment of JROTC and the NTN to the mission of FSMA, see Appendix A-3.

NTN has a proven track record of success across demographic groups, working to propel students to academic success. In 2010-11, NTN schools demonstrated high levels of student engagement and continued growth along several measures of academic progress. Results on college acceptance rates, graduation rates and behavioral indicators point to strong performance levels among many New Tech schools. For a full report on the effectiveness of the New Tech school design, see Appendix A-9.

**Instructional Design**

**Project-based Learning (PBL):** PBL is at the heart of instructional approach used by all New Tech schools. It provides a context and structure for integrating academic, technical, and career skills and dispositions into holistic learning opportunities. Cadets will collaborate on meaningful projects that require critical thinking, creativity, and communication in order to answer challenging questions or solve complex problems. By making learning relevant, the model helps cadets to see the value in mastering state-required skills and content concepts. Cadets will be assessed on their understanding of academic content and on their ability to successfully apply that content using 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. Through this process, PBL will give cadets the opportunity to develop the real life skills required for success in today's world, and will lead to greater cadet engagement, which research shows is associated with higher student achievement. For the research on the effectiveness of Project-Based Learning, see Appendix B-1.

**Technology:** The smart use of technology will support the school's innovative approach to instruction and culture. All classrooms will have a one-to-one computing ratio. With access to web-enabled computers and the latest in collaborative learning technology, every cadet will become a self-directed learner who no longer needs to rely on teachers and textbooks as the sole avenues for content acquisition. For research on the effectiveness of the 1:1 computing environment, see Appendix B-3. As a New Tech school, FSMA will also make use of Echo, an

online learning management system that provides a vibrant network to connect cadets, teachers, and parents to each other and to New Tech student projects across the country. The technology required for a NTN-model school to support the one-to-one computing environment and a sample cost structure from a New Tech school similar to FSMA is included in Appendix B-19 and B-20, respectively.

The Board of FSMA recognizes that a one-to-one computing environment presents a unique set of challenges regarding the protection of cadets in a virtual space, the protection of hardware, and the logistics of tracking cadet computers. During the planning year, the school leader will work with the CMO Project Manager and request guidance from the Delaware Center for Educational Technology to develop policies and procedures to manage the 1:1 technology environment and to outline the school's acceptable use policies. The policies and procedures for computer use will be inserted into the Cadet and Parent Handbook and communicated to parents at the school's information sessions prior to enrolling and at the beginning of each school year.

Additionally, through the daily advisory period, lessons from iSafe will be used at all grade levels to ensure that FSMA is in compliance with the Children's Internet Protection Act and is eligible for E-rate funding. The incorporation of iSafe lessons will be more robust in 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades and gradually decrease over the four years of high school as cadets demonstrate responsibility in appropriate online behavior, including during interactions with other individuals on social networking sites, blogging, and chat rooms, as well as cyber bullying awareness and response.

**Integrated Coursework:** Integrated Coursework will demonstrate to cadets that learning is not isolated and that knowledge is used most effectively and deeply when integrated across disciplines. (Research on the effectiveness of teaching integrated courses is included as Appendix B-21.) At each grade level, there will be at least one integrated course, including CaGE (Civics, Geography, and English); Biolit (Biology and Literature), American Studies (American history and literature); and World Powers, World Voices (World History and English). The integrated courses will be team-planned and team-taught, meeting content standards for each content area through cross-curricular projects and the integration of themes and ideas across disciplines. Integrated courses will not have more than 55 cadets with two teachers. To house the integrated courses, the facility will be organized with classrooms that are large enough to support team teaching in a technology-rich environment, and furnished with furniture that allows for collaboration and flexibility.

**Business and Community Partnerships:** Partnerships with local business and community partners will be developed to link the projects that cadets work on to real challenges faced in their local community. Opportunities will also be explored for internships, and for local businesses to sit in and evaluate cadet projects. This community involvement will help to establish the school as a resource in the community and will provide opportunities for cadets to practice the kind of work that they would be expected to perform when they graduate.

**College and Career Readiness:** Rigorous core courses will meet state requirements for college readiness to ensure cadet eligibility for admissions to four-year colleges and universities. To ensure that all standards for college readiness are met, all projects will be aligned to Common Core Standards for ELA and math or to the Delaware Prioritized Standards through curriculum mapping, careful project development, and peer review in Professional Learning Communities. Cadets will take four years each of science and social studies, and three years of Spanish, surpassing the Delaware requirements, to ensure that they are prepared to enter premier, four-year universities. NTN's emphasis on 21<sup>st</sup> century skills, project management, and communications will prepare cadets to be successful in the less structured environment of college. Additionally, FSMA will develop key partnerships with local colleges and universities to provide college courses to high school cadets. For results of college persistence data for NTN alums, as well as NTN alumni self-reports of how the school design prepared them for college, see Appendix B-41.

**Professionalism and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Skills:** NTN schools are designed to replicate a modern workplace. In line with this design, teachers will instruct and evaluate cadets on their level of both 21<sup>st</sup> century skills (creativity, communication, collaboration, and creative thinking), and professionalism (appearance, demeanor, accountability, reliability, competence, poise, ethics and etiquette) as cadets work in their project groups and as part of the learning exhibitions. Assessment strategies and tools used across content areas, such as rubrics and checklists, will reflect the cadet's acquisition of both content mastery and 21<sup>st</sup> century skills as s/he works in his/her project groups and as part of the learning exhibitions.

## **2. Provide an overview of the planned curriculum, including, as Attachment 4...**

Please see the course scope and sequence documents in the Attachment 4 section. A course sequence overview may be found in Attachment 4-0. The research on effectiveness for each of the curriculum tools selected is included in Appendix B-43.

### **Science**

In grade 9, teachers will use the units of instruction available through the Science Coalition, which are based on research-supported instructional practices. Teachers will attend training to ensure that they are able to implement the curriculum with fidelity. In grade 10, teachers will use the units available through the Science Coalition to guide instruction, but when needed, teachers will be able to supplement the Coalition units with *Science and Global Issues* from the Science Education Program for Public Understanding Program. In grade 11, teachers will use the *Natural Approach to Chemistry* from Lab Aids. These materials emphasize that chemistry is all around us as a complex choreography of atoms and molecules that sustains life. For Physics in grade 12, teachers will use the science kits available from Lab Aids. The letter of intent to join the Science Coalition, the Memorandum of Understanding, and the science curriculum maps are included as Attachment 4-B.

### **Social Studies**

FSMA will join the Social Studies Coalition and use the published units and lessons that are based on research and best practices in social studies. To supplement the Social Studies

Coalition units, when needed, teachers will use *History Alive!* from the Teacher's Curriculum Institute (TCI). *History Alive!* transforms Social Studies class into a multi-faceted learning experience that places the cadet at the center of the learning. The letter of intent to join the Social Studies Coalition, a signed copy of the Memorandum of Understanding, and the Social Studies curriculum maps are included as Attachment 4-C.

### **Integrated English Language Arts**

FSMA will not use a specific textbook for ELA, but will integrate the Common Core State Standards into the integrated projects (speaking, listening, and research) and reading in the content areas (nonfiction reading strategies). Cadets will read, write, speak, and research topics related to projects across the curriculum. To address the literary standards, cadets will read novels, short stories, literary nonfiction, and poetry related thematically to the social studies units as a humanities approach to Social Studies/ELA integration. ELA curriculum maps are included as integrated maps with the content area and are included as Attachment 4-A.

### **Mathematics**

FSMA will use the Interactive Mathematics Program (IMP) for grades 9-11. IMP is a comprehensive program of problem-based mathematics that integrates traditional material, such as algebra, geometry, and trigonometry, with coverage of important topics, such as statistics and probability that have been underemphasized in many traditional programs. The IMP four-year core curriculum meets college entrance requirements and prepares cadets to use problem-solving skills in higher education and in the workforce. In grade 12, FSMA will offer Pre-Calculus, Statistics, and Calculus. Mathematics curriculum maps are included as Attachment 4-D.

### **Physical Education and Health**

Both of these content areas will use the extensive instructional resources found on the DDOE website. Physical Education curriculum maps are included as Attachment 4-E. Health curriculum maps are included as Attachment 4-F.

### **Spanish**

Teachers will use *¡Avancemos!* in Spanish class when needed to supplement the content from the curriculum map. This program includes instruction in the cultures of Spanish-speaking countries the Spanish culture as well as language instruction. Spanish curriculum maps are included in Attachment 4-G.

### **Visual and Performing Arts**

Visual and performing arts teachers will use various teacher developed resources. Visual and Performing Arts curriculum maps are included as part of Attachment 4-H and I, respectively.

**Pathways Coursework** will include the four years of Leadership Education and Training that is part of the JROTC program. For a full description of this program, see the Course Selection Handbook in Appendix B-49.



See Attachment 5 for the curriculum development timeline for the pre-opening year.

### **3. Specify instructional strategies that your school will implement...**

**Project-Based Learning:** For the description of project-based learning, see question 1, Instructional Design, above. For research on effectiveness, see Appendix B-1.

**One to One Technology:** For the description of one to one technology, see question 1, Instructional Design, above. For research on effectiveness, see Appendix B-3.

**Integrated Courses:** For the description of Integrated Coursework, see question 1, Instructional Design, above. For research on effectiveness, see Appendix B-21.

Because of the high degree of cadet ownership in the instructional framework of PBL, there are multiple opportunities throughout an instructional block for teachers to dedicate time to purposeful, data-driven instruction, flexible grouping, and targeted interventions to both enhance and advance cadet learning. Teachers will use assessment data from formative and interim assessments to purposefully place cadets in project groups so that they have the opportunity to capitalize on their strengths, building confidence and accessing opportunities for growth. Teachers can work with cadets individually and in small, flexible groups based on their needs and growth areas.

Additionally, PBL will provide cadets with the tools necessary to be self-propelled learners as they work collaboratively in teams, holding each other accountable as they address challenging tasks and solve complex problems. With this collaborative approach to learning, teachers will be able to team cadets based on learner profiles, interest inventories, and desired project outcomes. At the beginning of each project, cadets will sign a contract with their group members that outlines their understanding of the project deliverables, their role in the project, and the path for project completion.. Armed with this knowledge, cadets will become avid researchers as they work to achieve project outcomes and will be able to manage their own time in accordance with the expectations of their peers and teacher. PBL will also provide a structure for differentiation that has been effective at meeting the needs of diverse student populations and across various demographic groups. For effectiveness data on the NTN instructional design across demographic groups, see Appendix A-9.

### **4. Provide a statement of plans for additional academic support for at risk students...**

FSMA will work to ensure that at-risk cadets are provided a variety of opportunities for academic support. All teachers will participate in professional development relating to the delivery of differentiated course content and to the building of a tool-kit of multiple learning supplements (such as Khan Academy, HomeworkSpot.com, and differentiated readings) to support cadets. Departments will also develop a rotating after-school tutoring schedule that will provide subject-based tutoring to cadets in need. The school will also create a cadet tutoring core; cadets who volunteer their time as peer tutors for this program will receive credit toward community service hours. This first level of support will be for cadets who are

struggling with a defined area of a particular course, not with the general content or aptitude in content areas.

For cadets in need of deeper intervention who demonstrate risk for academic failure, the Response to Intervention process will be initiated as described in the Special Populations section below. The Instructional Support Team (IST) will actively monitor and address cadets who are at-risk academically in a tiered support system, including testing for special education services if necessary. Supports will be outlined in IEP/504 plans and will be implemented in a timely manner either with existing staff or through contracted related services.

At-risk cadets who do not have identified disabilities and are not performing academically will be asked to sign and complete an academic contract that outlines the plan to address academic deficits and lists the partners who will support the cadet in addressing deficits. Those cadets with an academic contract who fail to complete the tasks set forth in the contract will face the school's Academic Review Board, as outlined in the cadet handbook, in full uniform and with a parent/guardian present, to explain why the tasks set forth in the contract were not completed and the new actions that must be undertaken as part of an updated academic contract.

<b>Student Performance Standards [14 Del. C. § 512 (4) and (6)]</b>
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**Respond to the following regarding the proposed school's student performance standards...**

**1. Describe the student performance standards for the school as a whole.**

In addition to the content standards articulated by Common Core Standards and Delaware Standards, at FSMA, cadets will be expected to meet 21<sup>st</sup> century learning standards, demonstrating creativity, collaboration, communication, and critical thinking. They will demonstrate competency in using information and technology as well as the life skills required to be successful – commitment, efficacy, resilience, and work ethic. It is the goal of FSMA to prepare cadets for a successful future that requires adaptability and the flexible application of skills across fields and sectors.

**2. Provide, in Attachment 6, a complete set of the school's proposed learning ...**

The curriculum maps included in the Attachment 4 section articulate the proposed learning standards for each grade level. Attachment 6 includes learning standards for 10<sup>th</sup> grade cadets and outlines expectations that go beyond meeting academic standards.

**3. If you plan to adopt or develop additional academic standards beyond the Delaware...**

FSMA will use Common Core State Standards and Delaware Prioritized Standards. As Delaware moves to adopt additional standards, such as Next Generation Science Standards, teachers will be trained and curriculum will be realigned to meet those standards.

**4. Explain the school's policies and standards for promoting student's proficiency level ...**

FSMA will go beyond the credit requirements of the DDOE in its promotion and graduation criteria. For the exit standards and promotion criteria for cadets in grades 9-12, see

Attachment 6. Cadets will not be promoted into the next grade until all of the requirements at each grade level have been met.

The criteria for promotion will be communicated to parents through the Parent/Cadet Handbook, at Back to School Night, and during the Parent Information Night when cadets register to attend the school. Additionally, in their advisories, cadets and their advisors will be updating and monitoring their Cadet Success Plans and sharing that information with parents. By December, if a cadet is not making adequate progress on the promotion criteria, the advisor will communicate with the parent. If the cadet is still not making progress by February, the parents will be asked to come into the school for a conference to assist in goal setting with the cadet and advisor, and to approve an action plan that will assist the cadet in meeting promotion criteria by the end of the school year.

**5. Provide, in Attachment 6, the school's exit standards for graduating cadets.**

See the curriculum maps included in Attachment 4 and see Attachment 6 for exit standards.

<b>High School Graduation Requirements (HS Only) [14 Del. C. §§ 512 (4), (5), (6) and (7)]</b>
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**1. Explain how the school will meet these requirements.**

Cadets will earn an additional seven credits above the 24 required by the DDOE, including advanced Science, Social Studies, World Language, and Leadership Pathways credits. The table in Attachment 4-0 outlines the course sequence overview for cadets at FSMA. Additional required credits in science and social studies during grade 12 and an additional year of World Language in grade 11 will be required of all cadets so that they meet the minimum "Commitment to Delawareans" admission criteria from the University of Delaware, as well as similar course requirements at other four-year colleges and universities.

Elective courses will be offered in technology, the arts, and military science. For full descriptions of all of the courses to be offered at FSMA, see the Course Selection Handbook in Appendix B-49.

The schedule for FSMA will include four 90-minutes blocks each day for 36 weeks, totaling 135 hours in each course. Cadets will attend 180 days of school, and will accumulate 1080 hours of instructional time. Courses will rotate on an A/B block schedule. Sample schedules are included as Attachment 7-B.

Grades for individual courses will be calculated using assessments of both content and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning. For example, in Chemistry, a cadet's grade might be computed as 70% acquisition of the chemistry standards, 10% collaboration, 10% oral and written communications, 5% creativity, and 5% professional work ethic. The specific percentages will be determined by the Commandant and teachers based on their development of the School-wide Learning Outcomes during the summer prior to opening. The FSMA will use a +/- grading scale as follows:

Grading Scale				
A+ 98-100	B+ 90-92	C+ 82-84	D+ 75-76	F 60-69
A 95-97	B 87-89	C 79-81	D 72-74	
A - 93-94	B - 85-86	C – 77-78	D - 70-73	

Grade point averages will be computed by assigning the following point equivalency to each letter grade.

Grade Point Equivalency				
A+ 4.33	B+ 3.33	C+ 2.33	D+ 1.33	F 0.00
A 4.0	B 3.00	C 2.0	D 1.00	
A - 3.67	B - 2.67	C – 1.67	D - 0.67	

College courses that are taken for dual credit and AP coursework will be weighted as the grade point equivalent listed in the table plus 1.0. Therefore, an A- in an AP or college course would equal 4.67.

Transcripts for the cadets from the First State Military Academy will reflect the course titles listed in the course sequence above and the letter grade that the cadets earned in the course. Transcripts will also include information about how each letter grade was calculated.

**2. If applicable, also explain how the school will meet the requirements for any CTE...**

The First State Military will not offer CTE coursework.

**3. Explain how your graduation requirements will ensure student readiness for college ...**

The graduation requirements support the development of both academic content knowledge and the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills that will enable cadets to be successful in college or other post-secondary opportunities. All of the work that cadets complete to earn high school credits will be aligned to Common Core and Delaware State Standards. In addition, graduation requirements will require that cadets take the PSAT and SAT, and that they research, visit, and apply to four colleges.

For cadets entering FSMA who are served under an Individualized Education Plan (IEP), transition planning will be a part of the document, with postsecondary goals related to training, education employment and, where appropriate, independent living skills embedded in the plan. When a cadet's IEP is revisited and revised annually to reflect academic achievement and growth, transition planning will continue to be considered when planning services and activities, including course of study, that are needed to assist the cadet in achieving postsecondary goals.

**4. Explain the process for ensuring that all students in grades 8-12 have a student success...**

At FSMA, cadets will be placed into advisories to build school culture and as a way to facilitate college readiness. Advisory is a new and distinctly different construct for student-teacher engagement, and unlike traditional homerooms that are convened for administrative purposes, advisories, which meet on a regular schedule, play a critical role in the school's overall academic and cadet support services plan. Advisories are based on relationships, coaching, and an agenda driven by the needs of the cadets. The teacher who leads each advisory will be one of the teachers for that cadet group's current grade level to promote cohesion between academic programming and the advisory structure. Advisories play a critical role in Cadet Success Planning, as this is the time when cadets will create their post-FSMA plan and update their profile on Career Cruising at least twice per year.

**School Calendar and Schedule [14 Del. C. § 512 (6)]****1. Provide, in Attachment 7, the school's proposed calendar for the first year of operation...**

See the school calendar and instructional schedule in Attachment 7-A. The proposed calendar includes professional development opportunities for teachers to begin planning projects prior to the start of the school year as well as opportunities throughout the year to work with colleagues to plan joint projects. The calendar also notes the new cadets' induction Boot Camp and the summer school program.

**2. Describe the structure of the school day and week.**

The sample daily and weekly schedule of classes is included in Attachment 7-B. The schedule for FSMA will include four 90-minutes blocks each day for 36 weeks, totaling 135 hours in each content area and elective. FSMA will use an A/B day-alternating block schedule so that all classes have the instructional time required for Project-Based Learning. Unlike direct instruction and lecture-based methods, PBL requires time for cadets to collaborate, problem-solve, and construct knowledge. The process of completing the work and developing the project becomes a critical learning opportunity that takes longer than the typical 45-minute period. Additionally, in the A/B schedule, cadets will take eight classes at a time on alternating days all year long, so there is an unbroken development of skills, unlike when cadets take courses on a semester basis. Cadets will be able to take up to 31 credits over the four years, providing opportunities for electives, internships, and college classes.

**School Culture [14 Del. C. § 512 (6), (7) and 14 Del. C. §4112D]****1. Describe the culture or ethos of the proposed school and how this culture ...**

FSMA will provide cadets with a strong academic program while instilling in them a sense of discipline, duty and leadership. From the Boot Camp prior to freshman year to the graduation ceremony at the end of senior year, the culture of the military will be infused throughout the school. Cadets will demonstrate high standards of personal conduct, honor, and courtesy, bringing credit to themselves, the school, and the Corps. At all times, the conduct of cadets will be characterized as a "smartness in all actions, neatness in dress, cleanliness of person, and

respect for those who are senior to the cadet in age as well as rank.” Cadets will be expected to perform their duties to the best of their ability, striving for perfection in each task. FSMA will foster in cadets a devotion to the officer’s code of “Duty; Honor; Country” and will teach cadets how that code can be infused across the JROTC leadership classes and the academic program.

In alignment with the high standards of personal conduct of the JROTC program, the culture of New Tech schools is built on trust, respect, and responsibility. As part of a New Tech school, cadets and teachers alike will have ownership of their learning experience and their school environment. Working on projects and in teams, cadets will be accountable to their peers and will acquire a level of responsibility similar to what they would experience in a professional setting. The development of culture will extend to the teachers and other adults in the building, who will be expected to model trust, respect, and responsibility in their interactions with each other.

## **2. Describe the school’s bullying prevention and anti-hazing policies.**

A Bullying Prevention Committee will be part of a broader team that addresses school safety, school culture, and behavioral and academic expectations that align with the school’s mission and vision. Development of these pieces will become part of planning year activities. FSMA intends to use the Kuumba Academy Bullying Policy as a model and will create a specific policy in the planning year. This model Bullying Policy is included in Attachment 9-C. The makeup of the committee and reporting procedures for cadets are included in Section 10 of the sample Bullying Policy; reporting procedures for staff are in Section 5, and investigative procedures are included in Section 11.

## **3. Explain how you will develop this culture using scientifically researched-based practices...**

Army JROTC Program: The ideals of the JROTC program will be infused throughout the school day at FSMA and will provide the foundation for the school culture. Through the JROTC program, cadets will learn how to be good citizens of the school, their communities, the country, and the world. Since leadership development is a critical component of the school, cadets will be given opportunities to develop leadership skills both in JROTC and in their academic classes. Cadets will be taught effective communication strategies, positive self-motivation, and how to work as a member of a team. Cadets will look into the world to develop global awareness and will develop a historical perspective on military service. Research on the JROTC program has suggested lower drop-out rates for African American cadets, and higher self-esteem ratings for female cadets<sup>1</sup>. Other research indicates that in a JROTC program, metrics of cadet behavior show positive character traits which indirectly impact the academic program through less time spent on discipline<sup>2</sup>. Additional data about the

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<sup>1</sup> Pema, E. and Mehay, S. (2009) The Effect of High School JROTC on Student Achievement, Educational Attainment, and Enlistment. *Southern economic journal*, v.76, issue 2 pages 533-552. Accessed December 14, 2012 at [http://www.ufpj-dvn.org/ed-com/JROTC\\_Pema\\_Mehay.pdf](http://www.ufpj-dvn.org/ed-com/JROTC_Pema_Mehay.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Bulach, C. & Burke, N. (2001). A comparison of character traits for JROTC students versus non-JROTC students. Presentation at the Eastern Educational Research Association Conference at Hilton Head, NC. Accessed December 14, 2012 at <http://www.westga.edu/~cbulach/sclimate/jrotc.htm>.

positive effect that JROTC programs have on academic programs through the creation of career academies (similar to what will be created at FSMA), is included in Appendix B-59.

Summer Induction Program: When a cadet is enrolled at FSMA for the first time, s/he will spend one week in the summer participating in Boot Camp. The primary goal of the program is to begin to build the culture of the school through an introduction to JROTC leadership, expectations, formations, and drills. The Summer Induction Program will also teach cadets about 21<sup>st</sup> century learning targets and give them an introduction to Project-Based Learning. Cadets will take their baseline MAP tests for reading and math, log into their Cadet Success Plans, and make a presentation about themselves to their peers.

Project-Based Learning: FSMA, in alignment with New Tech, will use wall-to-wall Project-Based Learning. This instructional approach relies on the interdependence of cadets and differentiation of roles. Furthermore, when working in a group, cadets must trust that their team members will perform their assigned tasks. Cadets will be graded not only on academic content and skills, but also school-wide learning goals that define 21<sup>st</sup> century learning skills, placing a high value on these elements of school culture. Research on the effectiveness of PBL is included in Appendix B-1.

Advisory: The use of advisories will supports the culture set by the JROTC and New Tech programs. The advisories will meet on a regular basis and will contribute to a positive school climate by increasing the sense of trust and belonging among cadets and faculty, increasing communication between all members of the school community, and creating a strong sense of equality. For specific research on the use of high school advisories to build school culture, see Appendix B-86.

Professional Culture: Establishing the school's culture will begin with the Commandant and teaching staff. Just as cadets are taught to collaborate and hold each other accountable, the professionals in the building will be expected to do the same. As a NTN school, FSMA staff will be trained in various discussion protocols to facilitate their work in project planning, looking at cadet data, and planning interventions. The integrated courses especially will require that teachers have a strong professional culture as they work together to develop projects and ensure that the standards for all included content areas are woven into the instruction. Through the grade-level teams, adults will collaborate to improve the academic performance of all of the cadets in the grade, not just a subset of the grade.

#### **4. Explain how the school culture will take account/serve students with special needs...**

As a JROTC school, FSMA will promote equity among cadets, regardless of the special needs of any individual cadet. All cadets will be able to participate in the JROTC and accommodations will be made for any physical disabilities according to a cadet's IEP or 504 plan. The Senior Army Instructor or another JROTC instructor will serve on the Instructional Support Team to provide guidance on how a cadet with disabilities will be able to participate in the program and

what accommodations will need to be made. Additionally, through the JROTC leadership development program, all cadets will engage in character education that includes promoting sensitivity and diversity. The use of PBL will promote teamwork and the inclusion of all teammates in the production of the project. Cadets will be encouraged to capitalize on their strengths and make progress in their growth areas when completing projects.

**5. Summarize, for illustrative purposes, a typical day from the perspective of a student ...**

For a fully developed “Day in the Life of a FSMA Cadet” see Appendix B-94.

**6. Summarize, for illustrative purposes, a typical day from the perspective of a teacher...**

For a fully developed “Day in the Life of a FSMA Teacher” see Appendix B-94.

<b>Supplemental Programming [14 Del. C. § 512 (6)]</b>
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**1. Will you offer summer school?**

Unless grant opportunities are secured, FSMA will offer a summer school only to those cadets requiring an extended school year (ESY) or needing additional time in the summer to complete an academic contract. Advisors in each of the core content areas will be hired to work with cadets for five weeks, Monday through Thursday, from 8:00 am – 11:00 am. The time will be used to provide small-group instruction, individualized tutoring, and independent work time, based on each cadet’s contract or the goals outlined in the ESY section of the IEP.

The school will provide ESY services for all eligible cadets. ESY services are based on the unique needs of each child as well as the team-developed goals and objectives contained within his/her Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Any cadet, who will not receive a Free and Appropriate Public Education (FAPE) during the regular school year, as determined by the IEP team, will be eligible for ESY services. The decision, rationale, and description of the setting and goals for the program will be outlined in the IEP under “Considerations of Eligibility for Extended School Year Services (ESY).”

**2. Describe the extra- or co-curricular activities or programming the school will offer...**

FSMA will offer extracurricular activities based on the JROTC program and the interests of the cadets. The JROTC activities will include Drill Team, Color Guard, Honor Guard, Rifle Team, Raider Team, Leadership Weekends, and JROTC Summer Camp. The activities sponsored by the JROTC program will be funded through the Army.

In addition, FSMA will offer a sports program, clubs, and activities based on the interests of the cadets and the availability of staff members to sponsor the groups. Sports teams will be funded through the development of a Sports Booster program. Clubs and activities will be self-supported through activities fees and fundraising.

**3. Describe the school’s programs or strategies to address student mental, emotional...**



FSMA teachers will be trained by a contracted psychologist and will draw on the expertise of special education staff to recognize signs of appropriate mental, emotional, and social development for the grades they are teaching. Through the advisory system, adults in the building will be particularly in-tune with each cadet and able to recognize changes in behavior. If issues arise, they will be reported to the school nurse and reported by the nurse, the teacher, or special education teacher to the appropriate state or social service agency.

**4. If applicable, describe any other student-focused activities and...**

FSMA will be a military academy where the culture of the JROTC program pervades all areas of school academics and operations. The JROTC program will emphasize “Citizenship in Action, Leadership Theory and Application” and will teach foundations for success in wellness, fitness, and first aid; geography, map skills, and environmental awareness; citizenship in American history and government; cadet safety and civilian marksmanship; and integrated curricular activities. JROTC is a cadet-centered program where cadets will develop their leadership skills and can rise through the ranks of the cadet body to positions of significant responsibility.

Cadets at FSMA will complete 25 hours of community service each school year. Cadets will find their own community service opportunities and will document their service with the signature of their supervisor. In addition, cadets will also be asked to complete a leadership activity in the community. This could be leading a team of cadets to pick up litter, for example, or raising money for a particular cause. These volunteer and leadership opportunities will be coordinated through the advisory period and entered into each cadet’s success plan.

In their junior and senior years, cadets will work on their senior capstone projects, which are built around the cadets’ interests and career goals. This project will involve significant research into a topic that is meaningful to the cadet, focused community service and leadership hours, internships in the community, and a presentation at the end of the senior year. During their senior year, time in ELA class will be spent preparing for the senior project. Progress will be monitored during Advisory..

<b>Special Populations and At-Risk Students [14 Del. C. § 512 (4), (5), (6) and (7)]</b>
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**1. Identify the special populations and at-risk groups that the school expects to serve...**

FSMA expects to serve a diverse population of students in terms of demographics and socio-economics. Some of the cadets will choose the school for geographic reasons, while others will come to the school in search of an innovative approach to education. The one characteristic that all cadets will share will be that they are all looking for an education rich in discipline and culture that will push them to be the best they can be. Based on the current percentage of special education students in Delaware, In year one, FSMA expects to have a 12.5% special education population, for a total of 25 cadets out of the 200 who will be enrolled in grades nine and ten. Two Delaware certified Special Education teachers, who also hold at least one Highly Qualified content area certification, will be employed in year one. As FSMA grows and adds grades eleven and twelve in the two subsequent years, the school anticipates a similar

proportion of special-needs cadets. By Year 4 of operation, when the school is at capacity, FSMA will have four full-time, Delaware certified Special Educators.

FSMA, with its unique approach to learning, will allow cadets with diverse needs and abilities to reach their full potential. The approach for serving cadets with identified special needs or those who are deemed at risk will be community-based. Through the RtI process, blocks of intentional, intensive instruction at Tiers II and III for identified areas of struggling cadets' weakness will assist all cadets in achieving the academic standards.

The cadet schedule, split between research and hands-on, project-based learning approaches, coupled with the daily structure of the JROTC program and leadership building, will provide the structure and flexibility necessary for an array of cadet needs. Facilitators will work closely with those cadets who require additional support in terms of advocacy, educational planning and mapping, and college or career planning, ensuring that they are meeting their success plan benchmarks. For cadets who are at risk or are being served under an IEP or 504 Plan, facilitators and/or related school personnel will provide all necessary accommodations and modifications to course and project work, assisting cadets in achieving performance expectations.

## **2. Describe the school's plan for ensuring compliance with state and federal statutes...**

### **a. How the school will implement response to intervention procedures...**

FSMA will implement all Response to Intervention (RTI) procedures with fidelity to state and federal RTI regulations. The RtI tiered instructional process will be an anchor component in the educational program, in that all cadets will be educated at Tier I, in the general education curriculum, with research-based instruction, and will move through the tiers if cadet needs are not met and progress is not made on academic benchmarks with the supports and interventions put in place at that level. Once a cadet is identified as having difficulty succeeding in the general curriculum, as evidenced by observation and diagnostic or benchmark assessment, the cadet's team of facilitators will review screening data and adjust the regular education program to include supports to address cadet need. If the cadet improves, s/he will continue in the general education program with those supports in place. If the cadet's performance data does not improve, FSMA's Instructional Support Team (IST) will review the data and design interventions for the cadet. This will move the cadet into Tier II of the RTI process, with a minimum of 90 minutes per week of targeted, research-based intervention instruction, still within the general education classroom when possible. Progress monitoring of cadet performance and achievement in targeted skill(s) will be done weekly. If cadet performance increases and goals are met, the IST will decide if the cadet has made enough progress to transition back to Tier I and if any of the interventions should remain in place. If the cadet does not make adequate progress in Tier II, as reflected in assessment data, the cadet will transition into Tier III of services. In Tier III, the cadet will receive a minimum of 120 minutes per week of targeted, research-based intervention instruction, again within the general education classroom when possible. Cadet progress is monitored weekly by cadets and teachers. Instructional intensity at both levels of additional intervention instruction is addressed through duration, frequency and time of interventions, and group size.

**b. A description of the evaluation process to determine eligibility for special education...**

FSMA will use the Response to Intervention process with all cadets. (See above.) This will allow facilitators and parents a carefully documented path regarding areas of growth and relative weakness for a cadet, as well as provide documentation of strategies and accommodations that were implemented in an effort to improve learning outcomes with the curriculum. Once a cadet reaches Tier III of the RTI process and has not shown adequate growth, a cadet can be referred for a psycho-educational evaluation. Once parental permission is received, the evaluation will be conducted by a certified school psychologist to determine whether or not there are any identifiable disabilities hindering the cadet's academic success. Once results of the evaluation are made available, the teachers, parents, school administrator, psychologist, and cadet will meet to discuss the results of the evaluation and determine whether or not, based on the recommendations of the psychologist and collected data from the IST, the cadet is eligible for an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). This same team will meet to craft that plan, taking into account Evaluation Summary recommendations, cadet performance data against grade level expectations and outcomes, as well as cadet college and career aspirations for appropriate transition planning.

**c. How the school will regularly evaluate and monitor the progress and success of...**

Within each cadet's IEP will be measurable annual goals based on collected cadet data and current academic performance in identified areas of weakness. Annual goals will be broken down into measurable benchmarks that will allow for progress monitoring. Every two weeks, data pertaining to cadet goals will be tested and collected. Quarterly, parents will receive cadet goal sheets with updates on progress toward achieving annual goals. Having these multiple entry points and checks for cadet growth will allow educators to be formative in their decision-making and allow for conversations regarding the efficacy of each cadet's educational plan.

**d. How the school will provide a continuum of educational placements for students...**

All cadets will be educated in their Least Restrictive Environment (LRE). The preference will be for all intensive services to be implemented in the general education classroom whenever possible. If a cadet does not make adequate progress in the general curriculum with the increased, intensive support at the third tier of the RTI process, then a recommendation will be made by the Instructional Support Team (IST) for the cadet to be evaluated for the possibility of a disability that is hindering learning and adequate progress in the general curriculum. The psychological evaluation process will be completed in full compliance with state and federal timelines and regulations. (See question "b" above.) If a cadet is deemed eligible for additional services under the definition of a student with an identified disability, the IEP team will determine what placement constitutes the LRE for that cadet. For cadets who enroll at the school already being served under an IEP, the new IEP team for the cadet (in consultation with the parents) will provide a FAPE to the cadet, including services comparable to those described in the cadet's current IEP, until the current IEP is adopted or a new IEP is developed by the IEP team. After reviewing the documentation under which the cadet was served in their previous educational setting, the IEP team will decide whether they will adopt or adapt the IEP based on their observations of the cadet's needs.

**e. Describe how the school will organize and use instructional support teams...**

Members of the IST will be organized to include, but not be limited to, the cadet's facilitator(s), the School Leader, the cadet's parent/guardian, Special Educator, and others who may be able to speak to the identified needs of the cadet such as the school nurse, guidance counselor, or reading interventionist.

At FSMA, there will be a strong blended culture of discipline and academic excellence, with many people invested in the success of each cadet. With the smaller class sizes, co-taught, integrated content areas, and a cadet-inquiry-driven, hands-on, project-based approach to learning, there will be many opportunities for every cadet to receive increased levels of academic and behavioral support to promote growth if and when that is needed. If a facilitator feels a cadet is in need of additional strategy instruction within the classroom to meet his/her specific needs, the facilitator will bring those concerns, as well as data evidencing specific concerns, to the Instructional Support Team (IST). Looking at each cadet on an individual basis, resources, strategies and supports will be determined, approved, and implemented in efforts to increase cadet success within the general education classroom. For cadets who do not respond to supports and strategy interventions put in place at Tier I of RtI, the team will work with the facilitator to develop increased, specific strategy support using a research-based intervention to assist in promoting adequate growth.

**f. For middle schools, how the school will address transition planning for students...**

The FSMA is a proposed high school. Therefore, cadets who are served under an IEP will already have had built into their plans elements of transition planning for college and career aspirations. These transition elements will be revisited each year at the annual IEP review to ensure that they continue to align with cadet aspirations for postsecondary success. For any cadet who becomes eligible for an IEP based on collected data and lack of achievement through the RtI process, transition and identification of postsecondary goals will become a part of the cadet's IEP. These measurable, postsecondary goals will be based upon age-appropriate transition assessments related to training, education, employment, and, where appropriate, independent living skills. The transition services and activities including courses of study to assist cadets in achieving the goals will be included in the IEP as well.

Because the build-out of postsecondary plans is so individualized, the appropriate people required at transition IEP meetings will vary depending on the needs of the cadet, as well as his/her post-secondary aspirations. However, the following people will be mandatory participants: the cadet, a parent/guardian, a regular education teacher, a special education teacher, and an administrator and/or person who will serve as the Local Education Agency (LEA) and assume responsibility for compliance with the IEP and executing the plan with fidelity. Other staff will be employed on a contractual basis. All related service providers and school psychologist(s) will be contracted to work with cadets in need of those services as documented in their IEP or recommended in the Psychological Evaluation Report and agreed upon by the IEP team.

**g. How the school will ensure staff are adequately trained and properly implementing...**

Additional professional development will focus on the areas of universal and diagnostic assessment. This will include professional development regarding the collection and interpretation of data for ongoing progress monitoring in the classroom and the school; the development of collaborative team problem solving (such as the Instructional Support Team model) and the development of skills to identify instructional needs, as well as linking appropriate interventions to individual instructional needs. Additional specific professional development as it may relate to the implementation of school-selected, research-based instructional interventions to support cadets in need of Tier II or Tier III supports will also be provided if and when necessary.

The special education facilitators at FSMA will be a valuable source of additional support in effectively working with the school's special education population. These facilitators will be able to provide other facilitators with strategy instruction and resources for effectively working with cadets with special needs.

**3. Explain how the school will meet the needs of English Language Learners (ELL....****a. How the school will identify ELL students, including the use of a Home Language...**

Cadets who are not currently being served under an IEP but who are suspected of having language delays due to there being a different language spoken at home will have the Home Language Survey sent home for parents to complete. This will begin the process for cadets evaluated as needing language instruction as a necessary part of their curriculum.

In order for the necessary modifications to be made so teachers can reach and teach diverse learners at their current content and language acquisition levels, teachers will be educated in how to deliver multiple assessments whose results will signal the necessity of intervention and strategy instruction.

Cadets who are currently being served as ELL students will continue to receive ELL services from both special educators for intensive instruction, as well as from regular educators who will be introduced to, or re-trained in, effective lesson delivery for ELL cadets.

In the event that a cadet is a migrant child, under the definition set forth in Title I, Part C Education of Migratory Children of the No Child Left Behind Act, FSMA will refer to the resources available at the DEDOE as well as the Draft Non-Regulatory Guidance document provided by the US Department of Education to be sure that it is in compliance with all relevant regulations and ensuring that those cadets receive a FAPE.

**b. How the school will assess and monitor the progress and success of ELL students...**

FSMA will comply with the law requiring that all ELLs be tested annually. By testing the cadet using the Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State (ACCESS) test, baseline data will be generated to set language acquisition goals and measure progress over the upcoming year. The cadet's level of proficiency needs to be established in order for appropriate

accommodations, identifiable goals, and lesson delivery accommodations to be made so that ELL cadets have equal access to the general education curriculum and are ensured a FAPE. The ACCESS test will be given during the published window for each academic year. FSMA will be sure to identify testing window dates if necessary and provide opportunity for all eligible cadets to take the annually administered test.

For cadets who are eligible for intense, supplemental English Language instruction so that they can achieve at levels commensurate with their English-speaking peers, the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model will be used to plan and implement effective instruction. Within this approach to language acquisition, facilitators will be educated in the instructional delivery framework as well as provided with resources for ensuring that content delivery is appropriately scaffolded to meet the needs of emerging English Language Learners, as well as cadets who speak English as a second language. Facilitators will promote English Language Proficiency Standards as well as content based standards within each of their lessons.

As cadets become Fluent-English Proficient, monitoring will continue to ensure that the cadet remains able to access grade-level content with no barrier due to language or communication delays. Informal assessments, performance-based assessments and portfolio-based assessments will be used as multiple data points to ensure that cadets are performing as expected academically. Performance-based assessments are an element of the New Tech model and will be used by FSMA facilitators to view cadet work through multiple lenses and to ensure that cadets are on a path to academic success without hindrances due to language barriers.

#### **4. Explain how the school will identify and meet the learning needs of students...**

The school will implement the RtI process with fidelity. Cadets who are identified as being at risk and/or who are performing below grade level expectations will have additional instruction in their identified areas of need, receiving either 90 or 120 minutes of targeted, research-based instruction to assist in raising achievement scores and removing obstacles to learning, including a limited background knowledge. Through universal screening tools, observation, anecdotal notes, curriculum-based measures, and formative assessments, facilitators will have multiple opportunities to assess cadet acquisition of grade-level content and growth toward grade-level expectations.

At FSMA, time and resources will be used in innovative ways. Special Education teachers will provide strategies and resources to other facilitators to work with cadets who are identified at risk.

#### **5. Explain how the school will identify and meet the needs of gifted students, including:**

- a. The specific research-based instructional programs, practices, strategies....**

For cadets who are identified as gifted, teachers will provide these cadets with resources and opportunities that will allow them to go above and beyond a traditional content curriculum.<sup>3</sup>

The hands-on, inquiry-based, project-based approach to learning that is part of the NTN model will allow gifted and talented cadets increased autonomy. All cadets will be charged with fulfilling a role on a project team. Gifted cadets will have the opportunity to self-select roles and assist with identifying the responsibilities and deliverables that may go above and beyond facilitator-defined curricular deliverables.

**b. How the school will provide qualified staffing for gifted students.**

FSMA will provide qualified staffing for gifted cadets by hiring dually certified regular and special educators. The goal will be to recruit facilitators who have experience working with a gifted and talented cadet population for these roles. In addition to the on-staff expertise in the area of special cadet populations, the school – through its mission to engage the larger community in unique school-community interactions, – will seek opportunities for its gifted cadets to explore ways to enhance their learning through the use of their strengths and talents.

The Delaware Statewide Advisory Council on Programs for the Gifted and Talented has adopted the National Association for Gifted Children (NAGS) program standards as a guide for educational programming. The facilitators at FSMA who are responsible for the education of highly able cadets will be sure to promote the opportunity within lesson and project planning for cadets to engage with and attain gifted programming standards in the areas described in Appendix B-98.

**c. How the school will assess and monitor the progress and success of gifted students.**

FSMA will assess and monitor the progress and success of highly able cadets at additional, regular intervals of one time per month to ensure that the opportunities for enrichment and enhancement are maintaining the interests of the cadet and providing a level of supplemental challenge that promotes enhanced learning. Because FSMA will be a place where cadets are authentically assessed for both content and 21<sup>st</sup> century skill acquisition through the use of culminating products, portfolio- and performance-based assessments, these methods will also be used for the gifted and talented cadets. In addition to these New Tech assessments, FSMA will also assess cadets through their creative outlets and creative, project-based products. In line with the school's emphasis on leadership, highly able cadets will have increased levels of control over the implementation of their projects to further enhance the opportunity for gifted and talented cadets to have a voice in their education and assessment of knowledge acquisition.

In addition to multiple assessment methods, an integral part of how the school will monitor the success of gifted cadets will be based on how gifted cadets assess themselves. Cadets will

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<sup>3</sup>[http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Gifts\\_and\\_Talents&Template=/TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=37&ContentID=5628](http://www.cec.sped.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Gifts_and_Talents&Template=/TaggedPage/TaggedPageDisplay.cfm&TPLID=37&ContentID=5628)

define their expectations for personal achievement and success. In addition to being held to content and 21<sup>st</sup> century skill acquisition measures, cadets will hold themselves to their own expectations for achievement, thereby increasing their autonomy in the learning process and laying the foundation for lifelong learning.

<b>Student Recruitment and Enrollment [14 Del. C. § 512 (6) and (8)]</b>
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**1. State the maximum enrollment *school-wide* and *per grade level* you are setting to...**

	<b>2014-15 Year 1</b>	<b>2015-16 Year 2</b>	<b>2016-17 Year 3</b>	<b>2017-18 Year 4</b>
Grade 9	125	125	125	125
Grade 10	75	125	125	125
Grade 11		75	125	125
Grade 12			75	125
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>325</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>500</b>

**2. Explain the plan for student recruitment/marketing that will provide equal access to...**

To ensure that the first-year enrollment target of 125 freshmen cadets and 75 sophomore cadets is met, Year 1 recruitment strategies for FSMA will focus on two key Kent County audiences: (1) rising high-school-aged cadets (specifically teenagers aged 12-15) and (2) parents of rising high-school-aged cadets. The goal of recruitment will be to have a diverse cadet population that has a 50:50 male-to-female ratio and reflect a balanced diversity.

The school will make a concerted effort to ensure that all families and potential cadets, including families in poverty, academically low-achieving cadets, cadets with disabilities, and other youth at risk of academic failure, are reached. The Board, school leader, and CMO will do this by:

- Visiting local public middle schools that serve a diverse cadet population to share information;
- Conducting a targeted advertising campaign in diverse neighborhoods throughout Kent County to ensure that all families have opportunities to learn about the school;
- Hosting parent information sessions in different parts of Kent County, including local community centers and churches, to ensure that meetings are accessible to all families;
- Offering free child care and refreshments to make attendance at parent information sessions easier for families who have young children;
- Working with local press outlets to publish stories about the school's progress;
- Developing a website and print information about the school and the process for enrollment for families who are unable to attend parent information sessions in person; and,
- Publishing information about the school in both English and Spanish.



Through this outreach plan, the Board believes that it will be able to recruit a diverse cadet population that reflects similar student demographics to other Kent County high schools.

To execute its marketing plan, the FSMA Marketing and Cadet Recruitment Committee of the Board, the school leader, and the CMO Project Manager will work together on cadet recruitment. For Year 1 recruitment, materials would be developed in May and June 2013, following the approval of the school's charter. The bulk of community outreach and cadet recruitment would begin in July 2013 and conclude in January 2014 if enough cadet applications have been received. Should the school have an excess of applications for open seats, a lottery will be held after the January deadline, and the outcome of the lottery will be communicated to all applicants in early February. If not enough applications have been received, the school will continue to hold recruitment events until enough cadets have enrolled or until the school's September 30<sup>th</sup> count. Cadets and parents will receive enrollment packets in July 2014, prior to the school's opening. This timeline will be repeated in subsequent years. For a more detailed Marketing Plan, Tools and Strategies, and Timeline, see Appendix B-106.

### **3. Provide, as Attachment 8, the school's Enrollment Policy....**

See the full Enrollment Policy in Attachment 8.

<b>Student Discipline</b> <i>[14 Del. C. § 512 (6), (7) and (11)]</i>
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#### **1. Describe the school's planned approach to student discipline.**

The approach to cadet discipline at FSMA will be based upon military core values, the Honor Code, and the Essentials for Success, which follows:

##### **Essentials for Success**

- **SELF-CONTROL.** The ability to control one's emotions and actions under adverse conditions. If you cannot control yourself, you cannot lead others.
- **SELF-DISCIPLINE.** The ability to continue to strive toward one's goal without dependency on outside control, punishment, or reward. If you cannot motivate yourself, you cannot motivate others.
- **SELF-ESTEEM.** The internal feeling of pride and confidence in oneself that, regardless of the difficulty, one has the self-control, the discipline, and the knowledge needed for leadership.
- **LEADERSHIP.** Leadership is not obtained by faulting others, but by the realization that I AM WHAT I MAKE MYSELF AND ONLY WHEN I MAKE MYSELF SOMEONE WHOM OTHERS RESPECT, WILL I ACQUIRE LEADERSHIP.

More information about this approach, along with the military core values, Honor Code may be found in the Cadet Handbook in Appendix B-117.

In the unlikely event that behavior violations of a serious nature (Level III) occur, state and DDOE regulations will be followed relating to the reporting of crimes to the appropriate authorities.

**2. Describe how the school will ensure staff are adequately trained and properly...**

FSMA will be proactive in the training and professional development of all teachers, administrators, and staff to assure that all state and federal laws are followed with full compliance in the discipline of cadets with disabilities.

In the case that such a cadet is in violation of FSMA behavior expectations, the school, overseen by the Commandant, will adhere to all disciplinary provisions of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Discipline of a cadet with a disability will be handled on a case by case basis, with careful attention paid to ensure that at no point is the cadet's right to a FAPE jeopardized.

All due processes will be followed in order to ensure that the cadet's rights under the Individual with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act are complied with fully.

**3. Provide, as Attachment 9, a draft of the school's discipline policy...**

The Cadet Code of Conduct (CCC) for FSMA will be modeled after one developed by the Appoquinimink School District. The CCC will be incorporated into the Cadet Handbook (Appendix B-117), integrated with the Cadet Honor Code, and distributed to cadets and their parents. These documents will also be published on the school's website. A sample Cadet Code of Conduct (modeled after Appoquinimink) is included in Attachment 9-A, along with Other Discipline Policies, the Attendance Policy, and the policy on Bullying – modeled after Kuumba Academy Charter School's Policies and Procedures (Attachments 9-B, 9-C and 9-D, respectively).

**4. Describe how parents will be informed of the school's discipline policy prior to students applying for enrollment at the school.**

As part of the application process – and prior to cadet enrollment – parents will be directed to review the Cadet Code of Conduct (CCC), either by way of an online download and review, or through a hard copy provided by the school. As part of the application process, parents will be required to sign a statement verifying they have reviewed the CCC. A sample CCC (based upon Appoquinimink) is included in Attachment 9-A.

**PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT***14 Del. C. §§ 512 (4), (5), (6) and (7)***1. Describe any mission-specific educational goals and targets ....****Goal Area #1: Academic Achievement and Adequate Yearly Progress**

At the FSMA, cadets will grow academically in reading, math, science, and social studies as measured by their performance on the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) and the attainment of yearly AYP goals. In both grades 9 and 10, the percentage of cadets meeting or exceeding standards in math and reading, as measured by DCAS will exceed state averages. In grade 10, more FSMA cadets will meet or exceed standards on the science DCAS than across the state. In 11<sup>th</sup> grade, the same will be true for Integrated Mathematics III and American History, where higher percentages of cadets at FSMA will pass the End of Course Assessments in these two content areas. All cadets will demonstrate growth in writing achievement as measured by an analytically scored writing sample, scored using the DDOE endorsed writing rubric and benchmarked papers from the Common Core.

**Goal Area #2: The Path to College and Career Readiness**

When cadets enter FSMA they are on a path to graduation. Dropout rates from FSMA will be lower than the state average, and cadets will demonstrate college and career readiness by earning SAT scores that demonstrate readiness for college. All of the FSMA cadets will apply to college, and large percentages will be accepted to rigorous four year colleges. Some cadets will be accepted into smaller community colleges, but most cadets will have a post-secondary education option after graduation. While still at FSMA, cadets will be encouraged to complete college courses during their junior and/or senior year and graduate with the knowledge that they can be successful at the college level. Upon graduation, most FSMA seniors will have spent some time in the community at an internship site, connecting what they are learning in school to the real world.

**Goal Area #3: Leadership and Citizenship**

All cadets will be enrolled in Leadership Education Training (JROTC), and all cadets will strive to fulfill all of the course requirements to earn the Military Training Certificate (DA Form 134), signifying their successful completion of the JROTC standards. Cadets will compete with other military academies to send cadets to military colleges such as West Point and the Citadel. To support their growth as community-oriented young people, cadets will volunteer a minimum of 25 hours per year to the local community, helping out wherever there is a need. Furthermore, each year, some of the volunteer hours donated by the cadets' needs to build their capacity as a leader and show their professionalism and ability to lead a team.

**2. If you are proposing to serve students at risk of academic failure...**

While it is likely that the First State Military Academy will serve cadets at risk of academic failure, the Board does not seek waivers or exemptions.

**3. Describe any mission-specific organizational goals and targets ...****Goal Area #4: Personal Conduct and Military Discipline**

Cadets at the FSMA will conduct themselves with a high degree of honor and decorum. The culture of the school will emphasize leadership, trust, respect, and responsibility. The average daily attendance at FSMA will meet or exceed the state's average high school daily attendance. Because of the alignment of culture and academic programming, the need to discipline cadets for severe infractions will be low and suspensions from school will be equally low. Moreover there will be very few, if any, reportable incidents that require the engagement of local law enforcement.

**Goal Area #5: School Satisfaction and Market Accountability**

The FSMA community will demonstrate strong involvement and satisfaction from parents, staff, and the community. Parents, guardians, or adult family members will attend their cadet's project exhibitions each year, report that they are satisfied with the school on annual surveys, and intend to re-enroll their children each year. Teachers will also demonstrate their satisfaction with the school through high rates of average daily attendance rates and low levels of teacher turn-over from year to year. In the community, businesses will continue to partner with the school to contribute project ideas, partner on exhibition panels, and host cadet interns.

**4. Describe the anticipated performance levels and academic needs of the ...**

While it is impossible to predict enrollment trends, based on the current trends at local high schools (Appendix C-1) the Board estimates that 65-75% of the cadets will be able to meet reading and math standards when they enter FSMA. Cadets will need additional help in reading and math to close the gap before the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade. Additionally, high school cadets are traditionally disengaged or, at best, are strategically or ritualistically compliant<sup>1</sup>. High school cadets need an academic program that capitalizes on their strengths, while building out their growth areas, and engaging them in learning that is relevant.

After the enrollment window closes and the lottery is conducted, cadets who are new to the FSMA will be given the reading and math NWEA MAP assessment in the spring to determine a baseline level of achievement and to assess their strengths and growth areas using NWEA's DeCartes Learning Continuum, which links the MAP assessment to reading and mathematics content strands along a continuum of learning. Cadets who are performing below grade level will be given an academic contract that lists the areas of growth needed in reading and math and associated activities that the cadet must complete prior to the opening of Boot Camp (see School Culture in the Education Program). At the summer Boot Camp, the cadet will retake the MAP assessment in reading and math to chart growth and to prepare for the fall. Once the school year begins, teachers can use the MAP data to group cadets flexibly into project groups or workshop groups for instruction and RTI interventions.

**5. In addition to the mandatory Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System...**

In math, teachers will use the interim assessments available through the Interactive Math Program (IMP). This program is aligned to Common Core State Standards and assessment items will capture the instructional and cognitive shifts required by Common Core: deeper

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<sup>1</sup> Schlechty, P.C. (2002). *Working on the work: An action plan for teacher, principals, and superintendents*. Hoboken, NJ: Jossey-Bass.

understanding, increased focus and coherence, and the application of mathematics to real world learning. The tasks within the IMP assessments are comparable to the performance-based items that have been released by the Smarter Balance Assessment Consortia.

In reading, teachers will use a variety of tools as interim assessments to monitor cadet growth and to signal improvement. Cadet's work in literacy will primarily be assessed through project work that is integrated across the content areas. This work will be assessed using teacher developed rubrics that define which reading standards a particular project is addressing and articulating what performance looks like as cadets fall well below, approach, meet, or exceed reading standards. As part of the project development, the teacher would assess smaller pieces of the final project using quizzes and other formative assessment measures to monitor cadet progress. Furthermore, teachers will use oral communications rubrics to assess cadet's comprehension abilities when they talk with other cadets in a collaborative context as they work on projects. All of the rubrics will be developed in alignment to Common Core and will align with assessment rubrics provided through the Smarter Balance Consortia to assess performance-based tasks. The project rubrics and oral communications rubrics will be developed for the 9-10 cluster and the 11-12 cluster to reflect the two grade clusters in the Common Core Standards and the increased complexity of reading between grades 9-12.

#### **6. Explain how the school will measure and evaluate academic progress ...**

FSMA will measure the academic growth of cadets using the assessment schedule that is detailed in Appendix C-4. Assessment data will be regularly reviewed by teachers in their Professional Learning Communities to assess the strengths and growth areas for each cadet. It will be collected and warehoused on eSchoolPlus and made available to the teachers through the Insight Data Dashboard. The teachers will also use Echo, NTN's online learning platform that combines a grade book function with a communication space between teachers and cadets around the project work. Teachers will review the cadet data at least twice per month and will use that data to revise upcoming projects, differentiate instruction within projects, pull together flexible groups to reinforce or teach skills and strategies and to build the capacity of cadets to use what they have learned through the application of the project.

As part of the learning cycle, as cadets complete projects, they are asked to reflect on their work and evaluate themselves and their teammates on how well each of them met each of the 21<sup>st</sup> century skills standards with a project rubric. The group rating system informs the teacher as she is working to complete the rubric for each cadet. The teacher can use this data to conference with specific cadets around how well they are working with others on the projects. Furthermore, this information can be used by the teacher to build project groups specifically to make sure that the cadet's work is targeting areas needed for growth.

The school leader or her designee will be responsible for the collection of school-wide data on assessments, although much of the data is automatically uploaded to eSchool and the Insight Data Dashboard. Teachers will load data into Echo based on their assessments, and

cadets will load their own self and team assessments into Echo. The analysis of cadet data will be done in collaboration with the school leader and the teachers. The data will be reported to the Board through the board's data dashboard which is aligned to the school goals. As described below, the work of reporting/analyzing school data will be supported by Innovative Schools' instructional coaches and the New Tech school development coach.

#### **7. Describe the information system the school will use to manage student performance ...**

FSMA will use e-SchoolPLUS to manage cadet performance data and IEPPLUS for special education program management. The school leader will be able to view and print reports on attendance, discipline and longitudinal data and run accountability, achievement, certification, or demographic reports with full confidence in the accuracy of the data. The school leader or his/her designee will be responsible for warehousing the data. Parents will also be more connected to the performance of their children through the Home Access Center which allows parents 24 hour access to cadet's grades and attendance.

In addition to e-SchoolPlus, the First State Military Academy will use the DDOE's Education Insight system to create an aggregate of cadet performance data. The dashboard shows a comprehensive view of each cadet -- including items such as cadet biographical information, schedule, attendance, assessment scores, grades and credits. The data provides a single location for data from multiple sources - such as the state's eSchool system and DCAS -- and provides a central location for all data pertaining to a specific cadet.

The heart of managing the instructional program is Echo, New Tech Network's learning management systems, designed to support project-based learning (PBL), facilitate communication and collaboration, and improve teacher practice. Teachers, cadets, and parents at the First State Military Academy will use Echo on a daily basis to access course resources, project plans, assignments, a multi-dimensional grade book, online groups, and an extensive library of instructional resources for teachers. [Google Apps for Education](#) is seamlessly integrated into the platform, providing schools with a powerful suite of communication and publishing tools including Gmail, Google Docs, and Google Sites. Echo is delivered as a web-based service that is accessible 24/7 via any web browser with an Internet connection. For a more in-depth description of Echo, see Appendix C-6. During the planning year, the school leader and board of the First State Military will work with representatives from DDOE and the Delaware New Tech Academy (a New Tech school at Seaford High School), to see if integration is possible between eSchoolPlus, IEPPlus, the Insight Data Dashboard, and Echo.

The school leader or her designee will be responsible for the collection of school-wide data on assessments, although much of the data is automatically uploaded to eSchool and the Insight Data Dashboard. Teachers will load data into Echo based on their assessments, and cadets will load their own self and team assessments into Echo. The analysis of cadet data will be done in collaboration with the school leader and the teachers. As described below, this will be supported by Innovative Schools' instructional coaches and the New Tech school development coach. The use of Echo, in particular, will enhance teacher's instruction as it is

built on New Tech's deep experience with technology-enhanced, PBL instruction and assessment practices, and it includes access to hundreds of exemplary projects that can be easily customized and implemented by teachers. As a result, Echo is an integral component of New Tech Network's professional development programs.

**8. Explain the training and support that school leadership and teachers will receive ...**

The professional development around using and interpreting data will take place in both whole school professional development sessions and embedded and contextualized support through Professional Learning Communities and individual coaching sessions. The coach from the New Tech Network, in collaboration with the Innovative Schools project manager and/or instructional coach and the school leader, will use the information available through e-School Plus, the Insight Data Dashboard, and Echo to model for teachers how to take a class set of data and use it to work with individual cadets around personalized learning goals, how to flexibly group cadets into cohorts around common areas for growth, and plan for whole group projects. After the whole group professional development, the New Tech Network coach will work with each teacher individually or in the grade level team to talk about how instruction can be adjusted and daily agendas can be created to meet the needs of individual cadets, cohorts of cadets, and the whole class.

**9. Describe the corrective actions the school will take if it falls short of student ....**

When a school falls short of cadet academic achievement goals, it is imperative that it have a process in place to self-correct and put the school and its cadets back on track to academic success. With effective governance and regular monitoring, if the data reported on FSMA's Board Governance Data Dashboard suggest that FSMA will not meet its Performance Goals, it is the duty of the board to begin a process of gap analysis and course correction to see what areas of the school need attention and support. The process of gap analysis will include an in-depth analysis of the following areas of school operations. This is critical, because although cadet achievement is the "red flag" that calls attention to a problem, the classroom and academic program may or may not be the root cause. An effective gap analysis will collect data in the following five areas: (1) School Culture and Academics; (2) Organizational Leadership and Governance; (3) Financial Integrity and Soundness; (4) Operational Effectiveness and Compliance; and (5) Community and Parent Relationships.

The gap analysis will be conducted by the school leader and the school's CMO, Innovative Schools, with oversight provided by the Board. The gap analysis will involve an instructional culture survey; interviews/focus groups with cadets, teachers, and parents; conversation with the board; surveys/document analysis; building walkthroughs, and a thorough analysis of disaggregated data. Based on the gap analysis, and the discovery of root causes for the lack of cadet achievement, the board, in collaboration with Innovative Schools and the school leader, will develop the goals and action steps that are necessary to improve cadet performance. The school leader and Innovative Schools will be given the task of implementing the plan and following through on all deliverables. All sections of the action plan and the metrics defined to measure the deliverables will be monitored on a monthly basis at regular board meetings.

**STAFFING***14 Del. C. § 512 (6)***Staff Structure [14 Del. C. § 512 (6)]****1. Provide, as Attachment 10, a complete staffing chart for the proposed school.**

See Attachment 10 for the complete staffing chart and position descriptions.

**2. Based on the organizational chart provided, describe the administrative and staff ...**

As shown in the attached organization chart (Attachment 15), the school's administrative team, which will be responsible for ensuring implementation of the school's academic program and maintaining a high-quality operations infrastructure, will be composed of the the Commandant and the CMO Project Manager. The Commandant will dedicate the majority of his/her time to serving as the instructional leader, while also providing oversight of the school's operations. The CMO Project Manager will dedicate a larger portion of his/her time to helping establish all operational components of the school, and provide oversight of implementation of the school's academic program. Both will be full-time and will report directly to the Board.

Two part-time CMO staff members will also support the school in the start-up years: a charter school finance specialist and a New Tech school design coach, both of whom will be overseen by the CMO Project Manager. Additional school employees considered part of the administrative team and overseen by the Commandant will be a full-time administrative assistant, a part-time custodian, a full-time school nurse, and a part-time IT consultant.

In Year 1, the school intends to enroll 125 9<sup>th</sup> grade cadets and 75 10<sup>th</sup> grade cadets. These cadets will be formed into two battalions, by grade. Each battalion will be served by 4 core teachers with expertise in ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies. Two of the eight teachers hired by the school in operating Year 1 will be dually certified in their content area and Special Education. The school will also employ one full-time PE/Health teacher, one full-time and one part-time Spanish teacher, one senior army instructor, and one military staff member. Military staff are provided by the U.S. Army as part of the JROTC program. All academic staff members will report directly to the Commandant. The teacher-to-cadet ratio will be roughly 1:20. The adult-to-cadet ratio will be roughly 1:13.

By Year 5 of operations, the administrative team will change slightly. The CMO team will have built the capacity of the school staff to operate a strong, healthy school independently, and will have transferred operational responsibilities to a full-time Director of Operations employed by the school. The only CMO staff that is likely to stay in place will be the part-time charter school finance specialist, who would report directly to the Director of Operations. The Commandant will continue to lead the school's instructional program, oversee the school's operations, and supervise all staff hired by the school. The Commandant and Director of Operations will both report directly to the Board.

Non-teaching staff at the school will grow slightly to include 1 nurse, 2 administrative assistants, 1 full-time custodian, and one full-time IT consultant.



By Year 5, school enrollment will grow to 500 cadets, with 125 cadets per grade. The cadet body will be grouped into four battalions by grade. As in the early years, each battalion will be supported by four teachers with expertise in ELA, Math, Social Studies, and Science. Of the 25.5 teachers employed by the school, four will be dually certified in their content areas and Special Education. The school will employ an additional 2 special education teachers, 1 full-time Guidance Counselor/athletic director, 1 full-time and one part-time PE/health teacher, 3 full-time Spanish teachers, a full-time visual arts teacher, a full-time music teacher, a full-time technology teacher, one senior army instructor, and 3 military staff members. The teacher-to-cadet ratio will be maintained at roughly 1:20. The adult-to-cadet ratio at full capacity will be roughly 1:15.

<b>Staffing Plans, Management, and Evaluation [14 Del. C. § 512 (6)]</b>
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**1. Explain the relationship that will exist between the proposed charter school and its...**

Upon hire, employees will sign an employment contract. The purpose of the contract is to outline the employee/employer relationship and identify compensation for performing outlined, mutually agreed-upon duties. New employee orientation will include an explanation of the school's core values, vision, and mission. In addition, the new employee will be given an overview of benefits, tax, and legal issues, and complete any necessary paperwork.

All employment at FSMA is "at will." This means that both employees and FSMA have the right to terminate employment at any time, with or without advance notice (though all parties may request and should try to give thirty days' notice), and with or without cause. However, FSMA will not discharge employees for exercising their right to vote or for their political affiliation; for answering the call for military duty; for exercising their right of association; answering the call for jury duty; for filing a workers' compensation claim; or for receiving an order for wage garnishment. A sample Employee Handbook may be found in Attachment 11. This handbook will be reviewed and finalized by the board following the approval of the school's charter.

**2. Outline the proposed school's salary ranges and employment benefits for all employees, as well as any incentives or reward structures that may be part of the compensation system. Explain the school's strategy for retaining high-performing teachers.**

For an outline of proposed salary ranges and employment benefits for First State Military Academy staff, see Attachment 21-C. Salaries for the School Leader and the Director of Operations (hired in Year 3 of operation) are based on comparable salaries for these positions at other Delaware charter schools. Custodial, clerical, counselor, IT, and nurse salaries are based on the Christina School District salary schedule for similar positions. Teaching staff salaries are calculated at 90% of the Christina School District's salary for comparable education levels and years of experience, as outlined in Attachment 21-C, because similar rates for teachers in the Smyrna school district were not available.

The school intends to provide an incentive-based pay structure as part of its compensation system. For this purpose, 15% of each individual's salary will be based on individual as well as

school-wide achievements established by the school. Descriptions of how these goals for individual and school-wide achievement will be established and evaluated can be found in Section 3 of this application relating to Performance Management, and in question 6 below. In addition to the incentive system, the school will offer its employees a 2% raise each year, contingent upon the school's financial health. All full-time employees will be able to participate in the state's benefits program.

In addition to the incentive pay system, in order to help the Commandant understand how to retain high-performing teachers as well as all staff, FSMA will take part Innovative Schools' Delaware Talent Management program as part of its CMO services. Utilizing the instructional Culture Insight Survey component of this program, the Commandant will seek evaluative feedback from the school's teachers twice per year. Teachers will be surveyed on a number of issues that reflect on the school leader's performance and inform their intent to stay at or leave the school. This feedback will be collected at the middle and end of the school year and will be used by the Commandant to improve his/her approach to leadership and to help address issues that may prevent staff from being successful, or may lead to the highest quality staff seeking alternate opportunities.

### **3. Describe your strategy, plans, and timeline for recruiting and selecting the teaching ...**

Innovative Schools' (CMO) Project Manager will aid the school's recruitment efforts by working with its subcontractor, New Tech Network (NTN), to recruit teachers already in the NTN national network, and by facilitating the school's participation in Delaware Talent Management (DTM). The Teacher Pipeline component of DTM includes a national recruitment campaign and a rigorous screening process that makes available a large pool of certified teacher candidates based on the specific hiring needs of participating schools. The program will also provide FSMA's Commandant with training on how to access candidates. In addition to accessing NTN's national network and participating in DTM, FSMA will recruit Delaware certified teachers through multiple advertising venues, social and professional networking sites, and outreach with Delaware's institutions of higher education.

If non-certified teachers are hired on emergency certification, it will be necessary for them to successfully pass the PRAXIS I and to possess a nationally accredited degree in their core area of instruction. The PRAXIS II test will also be offered to uncertified teachers. FSMA will not exceed the state maximum for uncertified teachers. All teachers will be required to maintain compliance with state and federal certification guidelines.

As CMO, Innovative Schools, along with its partner NTN, will share responsibility with the Governing Board to recruit and hire the Commandant, Army JROTC Instructor, teachers and non-teaching administrators, and other personnel, as well as to define responsibilities, determine compensation for all school employees within the constraints of the budget adopted by the Governing Board, provide counsel on the evaluation and disciplining of personnel, and provide training in the NTN model. The Commandant shall have the final authority to hire teachers and other school personnel, determine compensation, and terminate employees. Innovative Schools may also recommend termination.

The process for hiring the principal, teachers, and other school staff will include: recruitment and screening; review of credentials, background, experience, and references; sample lesson (if applicable); writing sample; interviews with the school principal and/or Board; and recommendations and contract approvals by the Board. The tasks and timeline for hiring may be found in Appendix D-1.

**4. Outline the school's procedures for hiring and dismissing school personnel....**

The procedures for hiring and dismissal may be found in Appendix D-2.

**5. Describe how the school will secure appropriate DPAS II training...**

The Commandant of FSMA will complete the online DPAS II Evaluator Training accessible via the Professional Development Management System (PDMS) during the school's planning year, as required for all new administrators in Delaware public schools, and will attend the recommended three-day, in-person DPAS II Training for New Administrators offered in the fall of the planning year. In the unlikely event that the leader has not yet been hired by the date of the training in 2013, s/he will attend in the fall of the school's first year of operation.

All FSMA teachers will complete the online DPAS II Teacher Training blackboard course available through PDMS, and all specialists will complete the online DPAS II Specialist Training, prior to their first evaluations in the first year of the school's operation.

**6. Explain how the Principal/School Leader and teachers will be evaluated ...**

In accordance with the appraisal standards for teachers, administrators, and specialists, the Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS II) will be incorporated to foster professional growth, continuous improvement, and quality assurance. The process will include goal-setting, conferencing for formative and summative feedback, and improvement planning as needed for both the one-year and two-year appraisal cycles.

In addition to the formal DPAS II evaluation, the school leader will receive evaluative feedback from the school's teachers twice per year as part of the school's participation in Delaware Talent Management, Innovative Schools' human capital support program. Teachers will be surveyed on a number of issues that reflect on the school leader's performance, including the administrators' implementation of the behavior system, the quality of professional development, and their trust in the leader's hiring decisions, among many other issues. This feedback will be collected at the middle and end of the school year as part of a survey on the school's instructional culture and will be used by the principal to improve his/her approach to leadership of the school.

**7. Explain how the school would handle unsatisfactory leadership or teacher performance...**

Employees with unacceptable job performance will be treated according to the following process<sup>1</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from <http://ebookbrowse.com/tscs-staff-reference-guide-2011-2012-tslt-3-12-docx-d342555135>

a) Employees will typically be notified of the need for improved performance in written and verbal communication and will be provided counseling and support needed to make improvements. In the most extreme cases (e.g., employee actions or words that harm or threaten to endanger cadets' well-being and behavior that creates an irrevocable breach of trust), employees may be terminated immediately.

b) In cases where termination is necessary to ensure a safe and/or productive learning environment for cadets, the following will guide the termination process:

- The Commandant makes the decision to terminate an employee.
- The employee may appeal this decision to the Board by initially informing the Board Chair of the intent to appeal in writing.
- The employee will meet with the Board and a final decision will be rendered.

Should a teaching vacancy arise in the middle of the year, it will be filled using the Delaware Talent Management teacher pipeline and referral service.

If the Commandant does not meet performance expectations, s/he will be notified of the need for improved performance in written and verbal communication by the Board. The preference will be for the Commandant to finish the current academic year (though in the most extreme cases as described above, the Commandant may be terminated immediately by the Board), and to receive support throughout the remainder of the year from the Delaware Talent Management coach assigned to the school. Should the Commandant's performance not come to meet expectations within a reasonable length of time, the Board will begin recruiting and interviewing for a replacement Commandant.

<b>Professional Development</b> [14 Del. C. § 512 (6)]
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**1. Provide a schedule and explanation of professional development that will take place ...**

The focus of professional development during the planning year will be to train the Commandant in the Army JROTC and the New Tech Network (NTN) learning design, and to build his/her capacity to open a school with a strong culture and academic program. For the teachers, the goal will be to empower them to build the military culture with cadets and to implement a strong academic program that delivers on the promise of superior learning. Because NTN is a unique instructional model, teachers will be prepared through a visit to a model NTN school, will attend the NTN New Schools conference, and will participate in professional development conducted by the NTN coach. A schedule of professional development activities for the Commandant and teachers may be found in Appendix D-3.

**2. Include the expected number of days/hours for professional development throughout ...**

To facilitate professional learning at the FSMA, consistent structures will be put into place and monitored by the CMO and NTN to facilitate the professional growth of the teachers and the Commandant. These structures may be found in Appendix D-4.

The school calendar for the 2014-2015 school year, included in Attachment 7-A, shows the professional development days and annual retreat. The sample teacher schedule in Attachment 7-B, shows when teachers at each grade level will have time for their PLC meetings.

In addition to the professional development provided to teachers, a comprehensive professional learning program will be in place for the Commandant. He/she will participate in these activities to continue his/her development as an effective NTN leader.

- **Leadership Residency:** This occurs only in the first year when the school leader is hired. The purpose of the residency is to learn the core components of the model, how to lead the development of culture, and how to develop a plan for creating a New Tech.
- **Spring Leadership Summit:** Specifically for leaders in the New Tech Network, these Summits provide networking opportunities and professional development for NT leaders.
- **Coaching:** Leadership coaches provide individualized coaching sessions for each school site administrator several times a year. These coaching sessions are focused on school culture, supervision of instruction, coaching of advisors and classified staff, generation and interpretation of data, and strategies for enhancing community involvement.

### **3. Explain how professional development will be aligned with the interim ...**

Professional development will be aligned to Delaware Standards, Common Core State Standards, and the FSMA goals, with progress toward meeting these goals benchmarked with interim assessments. Progress toward meeting these goals will be measured throughout the year to determine the support and modifications needed.

- The Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS) will be administered in grades 9 and 10 in both reading and mathematics three times a year to measure what FSMA's cadets know and are able to do. Under the Delaware Department of Education's newly designed process, each teacher will receive growth target goals from DDOE that will determine if cadets are making adequate progress toward achieving their goals. Staff will use the DCAS measures to determine if cadets are on target, and if not, professional development will be designed to address specific areas of need.
- Interim assessments such as common grade-level assessments, portfolios, and demonstration projects will examine a cadet's level of proficiency in meeting set targets. Specifically designed rubrics will measure each cadet's performance on these assessments and identify specific areas of needs. Staff will collaborate during Professional Learning Communities to analyze data and identify common skill sets that reflect common areas of need requiring intervention and modification. Together, staff will develop goals, evaluate instructional strategies and structures, modify practices, discuss cadet work and expectations, and determine what additional supports may be needed.
- It is expected that all staff members will move their cadets toward meeting learning targets developed by the FSMA. Teachers will need opportunities to try new tools, methods, and approaches to support effective instruction. It is the responsibility of staff to understand and execute: thoughtful standard-based planning; the creation of an environment conducive to learning; effective learning strategies; and use of data

feedback to assess cadet's understanding of the content. Staff members' performance will be evaluated under the guidelines of the Delaware Performance Appraisal System (DPAS II). DPAS II will help teachers identify areas for professional growth and opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge will be provided. Structures and practices for supporting staff learning will include: self-assessment and reflection; coaching and modeling of best practices; working collaboratively with colleagues to improve curriculum, assessment, instruction, and classroom practices; conducting action research; developing and piloting new instructional techniques and structures; analyzing cadet and school data to shape the school program, classroom instruction, and cadet outcomes; and discovering new learning opportunities.

#### **4. Explain how the professional development program will be evaluated ....**

The chart below outlines how data on each level will be assessed<sup>2</sup>. More information on evaluation may be found in Appendix D-5.

Prior to each professional development activity, the Commandant will collaborate with the NTN coach and CMO Project Manager to identify the desired outcomes for the professional development activity, establish a driving question, and determine an appropriate method of evaluation. As much as possible, the Commandant will include leaders from among the teachers when making decisions around professional development, including sharing this framework with each team and having them create outcomes and evaluation measures for the focus of that team's professional development.

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<sup>2</sup> Content adapted from <http://www.educationminnesota.org/en/professional-development/tall/5levels.aspx>

## **GOVERNANCE & MANAGEMENT**

*14 Del. C. §§ 512 (1), (2), (6) and (9)*

### **Legal Status and Governing Documents [14 Del. C. § 512 (2)]**

**Identify the name of the organizing corporation, date of incorporation, and names of the corporation's officers and the office held by each.**

The name of the organizing corporation is First State Military Academy, and it was incorporated on March 17, 2011. The Certificate of Incorporation and By-Laws adopted by the Board can be found in Attachment 13. The signed Statement of Assurance can be found in Attachment 14. The officers of the Board are as follows:

<b>President:</b>	C. Scott Kidner
<b>Vice President:</b>	Christopher Weeks
<b>Secretary:</b>	Manuel Cuesta
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Karen DeLissio

### **Organizational Chart [14 Del. C. § 512 (1), (2) and (6)]**

Attachment 15 provides an organizational chart showing school governance/descriptions.

### **Governing Board [14 Del. C. §§ 512 (1), (2), (6) and (9)]**

#### **1. Governance Philosophy.**

Following approval of the school's charter, the Founding Board of First State Military Academy (FSMA) will transition to a Governing Board and will be responsible for the oversight and governance of the school, its operations, and its administration. The overarching philosophy of governance that will guide the proposed school is to operate in an open and transparent way to ensure that parents, teachers, and stakeholders have a clear understanding of FSMA's financial health and academic standing, and have regular access to all governance functions, as prescribed by law.

Key stakeholder groups may participate at the school by serving as Board members or by serving as members of advisory groups or on the Citizen's Budget Oversight Committee, or Parent/Family Engagement Committee. Further discussion of these bodies may be found in the Advisory Groups section in question 7 below.

#### **2. Structure, Roles, Composition.**

A list of current board members, their intended roles, and the constituencies they represent, and their interests in and qualifications for serving on the school's board may be found in Attachment 1-C. Board resumes, professional biographies, and the Charter Board Information Forms collectively provide evidence that the founding group is committed to governing the school effectively, and will ensure the achievement of the school's mission and goals. These supportive documents may be found in Attachments 1-A, 1-B and 16, respectively.

The general governance structure, Board size, and composition may be found in Articles IV and V of the By-Laws (Attachment 13). Following approval of FSMA's charter, the Founding Board will transition to a Governing Board that will be responsible for oversight and governance of the school, its operations, and its administration to ensure the school is meeting the obligations outlined in its charter and in its Performance Agreement with the Delaware Department of Education. More specific information about the responsibilities of the board may be found in Appendix E-1.

To ensure adequate representation as a Governing Board once the charter is approved, the Board Chair will evaluate the Governing Board's membership against a matrix (Appendix E-2) and develop a recruitment plan to fill newly created Board vacancies or gaps in areas requiring specific expertise consistent with Delaware regulations for a charter school board. Closer to the school's opening date, the Governing Board will hold elections to fill two additional Board roles – one for a parent of a cadet attending the school and one for an FSMA teacher – again, to ensure compliance with Delaware charter school requirements.

The Governing Board will also directly involve its Charter Management Organization (CMO) as part of its reporting structure. Per the intended contractual relationship outlined in the CMO agreement in Attachment 23-B, FSMA will contract with Innovative Schools to manage the business and academic services of the school during the planning year and the school's first four years of operation. It is understood by both parties that at all times, Innovative Schools remains accountable to, and subject to the oversight of, the FSMA Governing Board, the Authorizer, and State authorities.

The Commandant and CMO will report directly to the Governing Board at monthly board meetings on the school's financial health, academic standing, parent and community involvement, and any other topics relative to the school's success measures outlined in the school's charter and Performance Agreement. The Board will be responsible for evaluating the performance of the Commandant and CMO, and will hold these individuals accountable for the school's success. The Board will have the power to fire the Commandant and CMO if the school is not meeting its obligations.

### **3. Board Continuity.**

As explained in question 2 above, the Board's will evaluate its membership against a matrix (see Appendix E-2) and develop a recruitment plan for newly created Board vacancies to fill gaps in areas requiring specific expertise to ensure they are meeting Delaware requirements for a charter school Board and to implement the school's education program.

Further, nomination and election protocols for open positions on the Board and Committees will be posted on FSMA's website (to be developed following approval) and, as openings arise, communications will be sent directly to all school stakeholders to ensure a fair, open, and transparent recruitment and election process. As new Board and Committee members are brought on, they will be expected to participate in workshops hosted by Innovative Schools on



the Army JROTC and New Tech Network (NTN) learning models, as well as on effective governance, to ensure all members have adequate knowledge and understanding of their role.

#### **4. Procedures.**

All board members have been selected for their professional experiences and skills related to the development, governance, and management of FSMA, along with their passion for and ongoing commitment to the mission and vision of the school, and their abilities to ensure a superior educational opportunity for all cadets attending the school.

During the application process, the Founding Board has been meeting on a monthly basis, lending its valuable expertise to develop clarity around the vision and mission, establish protocols, and thoughtfully review and advise on various sections of the application. To increase understanding of their role as Board members and of the details of the Army JROTC model and the NTN academic program, these individuals have also participated in Innovative Schools' Board Development program, have visited Delaware New Tech Academy (DNTA), and have attended informational webinars.

During the planning year, the Board will have four subcommittees: (1) Finance and Facility, (2) Personnel, (3) Marketing and Cadet Recruitment, and (4) Academics. Working with the CMO, each committee will meet weekly or as often as needed to perform the necessary work to open the school in the fall of 2014, including securing a school building, hiring a Commandant and staff, conducting community outreach and recruiting cadets, and planning the school's academic program. As the school nears its opening, a Citizen's Budget Oversight Committee, and Family Engagement Committee will be added.

Once the school has opened, the Board will meet monthly in regularly scheduled open meetings and workshops to review and discuss reports on school operations, finances, and academic performance. The Commandant and CMO will be expected to report at these monthly meetings on cadet performance in areas such as attendance, academic achievement, JROTC performance, progress toward graduation, and family engagement. Monthly financial reports shall also be presented to the Board and to the Citizens Budget Oversight Committee. A schedule of Board meetings will be posted on the school's website at least seven days before the meeting so that members of the community may attend, and 20 minutes per meeting will be reserved for public comment. Board minutes of monthly meetings, along with those of workshop sessions, will be posted on the school's website and shared with staff and parents. Twice annually, the Board and Citizens Budget Oversight Committee will also meet to review the school's progress. In addition, the Board will maintain compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and public bodies, public records, and open meeting laws.

#### **5. Ethics and Conflicts of Interest.**

Pending the approval of the school's charter, the FSMA Board will adopt a formal policy on board ethics and conflicts of interest. A draft policy has been developed, modeled upon two sample policies. The portion of the draft policy regarding general ethics has been adapted from the *Charter Schools Board Governance Smart Start Guide* issued by S. Hollins Associates in 2004

and made available by the Georgia Department of Education on its website.<sup>1</sup> Regarding conflicts of interest, as recommended by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in its guidance for charter schools in its *Exempt Organizations 2000 Continuing Professional Education Technical Instruction Program*,<sup>2</sup> the Board has adapted the draft policy outlined for health care organizations in the IRS's CPE-2000, Tax-Exempt Health Care Organizations Revised Conflicts of Interest Policy.<sup>3</sup> The full draft policy can be found in Attachment 17-A, and will undergo a more thorough review and approval process following the authorization of the school's charter.

In accordance with the IRS guidance mentioned above, the Board will be required to disclose all financial interests they have in any service provided to the school. To streamline this process, the Board will make use of a Conflict of Interest Disclosure form adapted from one developed by the *Center for Charter Schools* at Central Michigan University. This sample form is included in Attachment 17-B for reference.<sup>4</sup>

## **6. Board Expansion.**

Recruitment for FSMA's Board and Citizen's Budget Oversight Committee will occur through a number of different venues, including, but not limited to, Innovative Schools' ongoing Board Development recruiting efforts, solicitations for nominations of FSMA employees and of parents of cadets to be enrolled at the school, and businesses and organizations in Kent County. Nominations will be collected by the Board's designated nominating committee and the results of the school Board elections will be shared at a public Board meeting.

The Board will follow best practices for on-boarding new members to ensure consistency in the governing structure. New members will participate in orientation training through Innovative Schools' Board Development workshop series (Appendix E-3), with modules focused on small-group deliberations, self- and group evaluations, and consensus-building to promote Board cohesion and informed decision-making. New members will also participate in DDOE Board trainings, including school finance and performance management training. Over time, the Board will continue to evaluate the success of plans and processes for recruiting Board and Citizen's Budget Oversight Committee members and make adjustments as necessary.

## **7. Board Improvement.**

To ensure adequate evaluation of itself and the school, the Board will participate in Innovative Schools Board training workshops. Three training sessions will build capacity within the Board in the areas of superior school effectiveness; governance and oversight aligned with the school's mission and vision; accountability for all financial, legal, and academic and performance matters; and best practices for school leadership and operations. These domains are framed into key elements of the school's program and are used to create a data dashboard specific for the school that links the school goals to data. Prior to each board meeting, the data dashboard

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<sup>1</sup> [http://archives.gadoe.org/documents/pea\\_charter/New%20Charter%20Training/Resources/Governance%20Handbook%20Smart%20Start%20Guide.pdf](http://archives.gadoe.org/documents/pea_charter/New%20Charter%20Training/Resources/Governance%20Handbook%20Smart%20Start%20Guide.pdf), accessed Nov. 1, 2012.

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-tege/eotopicj00.pdf>, accessed Nov. 1, 2012

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-tege/eotopice00.pdf>, accessed Nov. 1, 2012

<sup>4</sup> [http://cmucso.org/modules.php?name=Pages&sp\\_id=215&pmenu\\_id=248](http://cmucso.org/modules.php?name=Pages&sp_id=215&pmenu_id=248), accessed Nov. 1, 2012

will be updated by the school leader to show how well the school is performing relative to the school goals. This process provides the Board members with a clear blueprint of their obligations, knowledge of the authorizer's requirements and expectations, and the ability to align their board responsibilities with the performance frameworks. At the end of the Board training sessions, the Board also will have the knowledge to create and modify changes in the program based on the data collected, reviewed, and analyzed through the monitoring tool of the data dashboard. A summary of each Board workshop can be found in Appendix E-3.

The Board will also learn successful strategies for interfacing with the community. As an additional component, the Board will annually evaluate its own internal operations in terms of effectiveness and practices in governance and oversight, with a goal of continuous improvement.

Innovative Schools, as part of its CMO responsibilities, will also work regularly with the Board of FSMA, using both formal and informal evaluative measures to ensure the school is staying 'on target' in all aspects of its Performance Agreement. Annually, a 'Gap Analysis' will be conducted to ensure the school is maintaining fidelity to its mission and goals. Through this process, Innovative Schools will work with the Board and staff to review the approved charter application and the school's actual data to identify "gaps" between the charter and actual performance, and to develop a plan to fill those gaps the following year as part of the Consolidated Grant process. Working with the Board, Innovative Schools will conduct a formal review of goals for cadet performance, inclusive of all data relative to the goals and achievement targets. In accordance with the Charter Performance Agreement, an Annual Report shall be provided to the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) in accordance with required procedures and timeframes.

<b>Advisory Bodies</b> <i>[14 Del. C. §§ 512 (1), (2) and (6)]</i>
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The Board will establish a Citizen's Budget Oversight Committee, consistent with State law. This Committee will have at least five members that consist of one educator from FSMA, one Board member, one teacher, at least two parents or community members who are not school employees or Board members, and representation from the DDOE.

Recruitment for the FSMA Board and Citizen's Budget Oversight Committee will occur through a number of different venues, including, but not limited to, Innovative Schools' ongoing Board recruiting efforts, solicitations for nominations of FSMA employees and of parents of cadets to be enrolled at the school, as well as requests to key members of the Delaware Business Roundtable and other businesses and community organizations throughout Kent County. Nominations will be collected by the Board's designated nominating committee and the results of the school Board elections will be shared at a public Board meeting.

Twice annually, the Board and Citizens Budget Oversight Committee will also meet to review the school's progress. The Governing Board and Citizen's Budget Oversight Committee will

have staggered terms of service to ensure smooth transitions and stability of knowledge and expertise with board roles and responsibilities.

<b>Grievance Process</b> [14 Del. C. § 512 (9)]
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Accountability for the school's success rests on strategic decisions made by the Board, and on the execution of academic and operational programs by Innovative Schools as CMO, the Commandant, and the school's staff. Parent representation on the Board and Citizen's Budget Oversight Committee will be a primary means of assuring that FSMA families have influence and a path of recourse on matters of importance or concern. Parent representatives will be selected from at-large nominations from the cadets, parents, and stakeholders for the Board and the Citizen's Budget Oversight Committee.

In the event a parent and/or cadet has an objection to a governing board policy, administrative procedure, or practice at the school, a written communication would be required defining the concern, along with a description of the circumstances surrounding the concern and the impacts of the identified policy, procedure, or practice. Twenty minutes of each monthly board meeting will also be reserved for public comment to allow an opportunity for grievances to be discussed publicly. Concerns about a Board policy would be directed to the Board Chair; concerns about administrative procedures or practices would be directed to the Board Chair and Commandant.

Consideration of the concern by the Board Chair and/or Commandant would involve, but not be limited to, careful review and investigation of the complaint; discussion among members of the leadership team; communication with the originator of the grievance to seek more information or clarity, as needed; and a decision rendered to the complainant. The grievance may or may not result in a change of policy, procedure, or practice.

**PARENT & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT***14 Del. C. §§ 512 (1) and (6)***1. Describe the role of any parents and community members involved in developing the proposed school.**

Preparation of the charter application and development of the First State Military Academy (FSMA) charter school and academic program has involved two key groups: (1) Delaware teachers, parents, and community members who comprise the school's Founding Board, and (2) Innovative Schools, a Delaware non-profit public school support organization. The Founding Board hired Innovative Schools to help the group research and select a high quality instructional design to complement their vision of a military school, and then to coordinate the development and preparation of the charter application.

The FSMA Board selected the New Tech Network (NTN) learning instructional design from Innovative Schools' portfolio of school models, identifying many areas of alignment between the intended military school model and the NTN academic program. For more information on this alignment, please see Appendix A-3.

The Founding Group has been working together since 2011, and remains passionate and committed to the successful launch of FSMA in Kent County. They have worked hard to bring together key stakeholders with an interest in offering a military academy south of the canal. Since adding the NTN academic program to the military school model, they have expanded their Board to include several new members with leadership and instructional experience in education, business, and community mobilization and engagement to support and advocate for the unique aspects of FSMA's military school model and unique NTN instructional design. (For a full listing of the Founding Group and committee members, see Attachment 1-D.

**2. How will you inform parents and the community about the school's development?**

FSMA Founding Board has already begun the process of engaging and informing communities in Kent County about the development of the proposed school. Outreach activities have included conducting two community meetings; reaching out to Kent County elementary charter schools to send materials about the school home with students; advertising information about the school in a number of publications and newsletters; and requesting that the community provide feedback by completing a survey. Results of that survey can be found in the Feasibility Study in Appendix A-15. The Founding Board has also accumulated a mailing list of 200 individuals who are interested in following the school's progress. The school will continue to engage these individuals by sending regular communications highlighting the school's progress over the next several months.

**3. Describe how you will engage parents in the life of the school, in addition to any proposed governance roles described above.**

Teachers and parents will be involved in leadership and decision-making within the school. A minimum of one Delaware certified teacher employed by the school and one parent of a cadet

enrolled in the school will hold positions on the Board. Parents and teachers will also be represented on the schools' Citizens Budget Oversight Committee and Advisory Board. It is anticipated that parents and teachers will assume leadership roles through their involvement with the Board, Advisory Board, and Citizen's Budget Oversight Committee, along with their participation on school committees. To manage these functions, the Parent/Family Engagement Committee of the Board and Advisory Board will serve as a critical resource in the school for identifying needs, corraling resources, organizing and running events, and serving as primary ambassadors to promote the school.

It is anticipated the school will have a robust Athletic Booster Club operated by parent volunteers. In addition, parent surveys will be a tool used on an annual basis to gauge parent satisfaction with many aspects of cadet learning and school operations. In addition, parent feedback will be sought following cadet exhibitions and other school events. Data on family and parental engagement will be collected by the Commandant and CMO and will be reported to the Board as one measure of the school's success. The Board will use this data to ensure that FSMA is meeting the needs of parents and families.

#### **4. What community resources will be available to students and parents?**

The core partnerships for FSMA will be with the Army JROTC and NTN. Following the charter's approval, opportunities for field trips and other collaborative activities will be investigated with military branches throughout Delaware. There is also the potential for internships and community service projects that could include businesses, community organizations and/or other educational institutions

Letters of support from community partners and individuals, along with community engagement responses may be found in Attachment 18. FSMA Board continues its community outreach and engagement and anticipates providing additional evidence of community support at the initial interview with the Charter School Accountability Committee.

**START-UP & OPERATIONS***14 Del. C. §§ 512 (1), (8), (9), (10), (12) and (13)***1. Start-Up Plan.**

The Start-Up Plan for First State Military Academy (FSMA) (Attachment 19) identifies the specific tasks, timelines and individuals responsible for the start-up operations of the school. Accompanying budget information is provided in Attachment 21.

**2. Transportation. Describe how students will be transported to the school....**

FSMA will contract bus transportation services to get cadets to and from school. Such services will be secured using a highly reputable and insured firm that specializes in the student transportation business. A sample student transportation contract for Kuumba Academy Charter School may be found in Appendix F-1, and will serve as a model for cadet transportation contracts at FSMA.

The Commandant will maintain responsibility for oversight of transportation operations. The Commandant will ensure appropriate supervision of cadets before and after school, oversee bus routing and transportation operations, and will schedule and supervise safety drills.

FSMA will make every effort to accommodate transportation to/from the school beyond any single school district by establishing central hub points inside of the district for cadet pick-up and drop-off. The Commandant and CMO will work diligently with the transportation company planners to identify and establish convenient spoke and hub configurations that maximize cadet access and minimize ride times, providing the most efficient and cost-effective means of getting cadets to and from the school campus location.

Appropriate accommodations, as defined in the cadets' Individualized Education Plans (IEP), will be provided to meet the needs of all special needs cadets requiring transportation and will be managed on a case by case basis. As special transportation needs are identified, the school will work with the cadets' parents and the transportation services company to ensure compliance with specialized transportation needs.

As field trips and other such events are planned, arrangements will be made through the school's contracted transportation services provider. Transportation costs for athletic programs and other such activities will be funded through the Athletic Booster Club.

**3. Safety and Security.**

The Commandant will establish a School Safety Committee to serve as a clearinghouse for the discussion issues, policies, and practices related to the safety of cadets, parents, and staff. Committee representation will include, but may not be limited to, the school leadership team, teachers, the school nurse, and the custodian, along with a parent.

**Building Access**

In the interest of safety for cadets, staff, and visitors, “controlled access” to the school facility will be maintained at all times. A security system will provide visual live feeds of all building entrance locations, as well as other key spaces inside and outside the building. All outside doors will remain locked from the outside, except during cadet arrival and dismissal times. Visitor access will be restricted to the main entrance – all guests must present proper identification and comply with all ‘guest pass’ procedures before being allowed to pass beyond the main entrance. All cadets and staff will be required to wear ID badges while on school premises. Guest sign-in procedures will be established.

**Healthcare**

Assuring a safe and healthy environment for cadets and staff will be of the highest importance. FSMA will hire a registered nurse who will be responsible for operating under the *Nursing Technical Assistance Manual* issued by the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE).

FSMA will implement a comprehensive set of health, safety, and risk management policies and practices, in accordance with the *Nursing Technical Assistance Manual*. In addition, these policies and practices will be communicated to parents, cadets, and staff as part of enrollment procedures and various orientation programs.

The school will maintain diligence in communicating with parents, staff and cadets about urgent health issues, and will make every effort to employ best practices in managing the health and safety of cadets, staff and guests.

The Commandant will assemble a Safety Committee composed of stakeholders that will meet quarterly and conduct a yearly audit. The Commandant will maintain responsibility for oversight and management of health and safety policies and practices.

**Background Checks**

As part of the pre-employment process, all employees and CMO-related staff will be required to have completed a criminal background check (CBC). In addition, the Child Abuse Registry (CAR) will be checked through Department of Services for Children, Youth and Families (DSCYF). The CMO will maintain due diligence in following the regulations for CBC’s and CAR’s for volunteers. Results will be maintained in a secure file, separate from personnel files; and, available for authorized inspection.

The Commandant will be directly responsible for ensuring that criminal background and child abuse registry checks are initiated, completed, and appropriately documented prior to an individual staff member’s employment or board member’s appointment.

**Cadet Enrollment**

Policies will be developed and approved by the Board prior to cadet recruitment beginning in the Fall of 2013, and at a minimum will address the following topics:



**Ensuring that students have physical examinations prior to enrollment;**

Proof of a cadet's recent physical examination and immunizations will be collected at the time of enrollment. All health information will be reviewed, maintained, and monitored by the school nurse, and will be included as part of the cadet record.

**Establishing procedures for administering medications and medical treatments, including first aid at school;**

The school nurse will administer medications and medical treatments in accordance with DDOE's *Nursing Technical Assistance Manual and Regulations*, and any other appropriate governmental regulations or professional guidelines when cadets are onsite at school. In accordance with state regulations, parents will be notified when immunization and other screening requirements are not met, and the cadet will be excluded from school until the regulation has been met. Properly documented immunization exemptions will be considered by the school leader in consultation with the school nurse.

**Monitoring cadet health and maintaining health records;**

The school nurse will monitor and maintain cadet health records in a secure location and forward the required documentation of services to DDOE.

**Ensuring that immunizations and TB screenings are conducted;**

The school nurse is the on-site health expert for FSMA. His/her duties include monitoring cadet health records. In accordance with state regulations, parents will be notified when immunization and other screening requirements are not met, and the cadet will be excluded from school until the regulation has been met. Properly documented immunization exemptions will be considered by the Commandant in consultation with the school nurse.

**Ensuring the school nurse will serve on IEP teams, as required, when medical treatment is necessary;**

The nurse will serve as a member of IEP teams when medical issues are discussed. The nurse will also provide medical information during evaluation processes.

**Screening for health problems (vision, hearing, orthopedic, etc.);**

The school nurse will conduct an active screening program for vision, hearing, orthopedic issues, etc. as prescribed in DDOE's *Nursing Technical Assistance Manual and Regulations*.

**Establishing procedures for containing and controlling the spread of infectious diseases; and**

Procedures will be developed to communicate appropriate precautionary steps for containing and preventing the spread of infectious diseases and other medical conditions.

**Ensuring a safe environment to include procedures and training.**

Procedures will be in place and training will be conducted for responding to natural disasters and emergencies, including fires and earthquakes; preventing contact with blood-borne pathogens; and emergency responses including appropriate "first responder" training or its equivalent. Policies will be established specifying that the school shall function as a drug,

alcohol, and tobacco-free workplace. The school will be housed in facilities that have received state Fire Marshal approval and have been evaluated by a qualified structural engineer who has determined that the facilities present no substantial seismic safety hazard.

These Board-approved policies will be incorporated, as appropriate, into the schools' parent, cadet, and staff handbooks as they are developed and will be reviewed on an ongoing basis. Appropriate staff training will be held as part of orientation programs.

#### **4. Lunch/Breakfast.**

FSMA intends to participate in the National School Breakfast/Lunch Program, and will contract for meals from a qualified food service vendor. Meals will be served on-site five days each week to all cadets.

Meals will be provided to all cadets, including those eligible for free/reduced meals and cadets who are homeless. Eligibility for free/reduced meals will be determined annually during the first week of school and in accordance with established state and federal procedures. The Commandant and CMO Project Manager will work with the food service vendor to ensure that all meals are consistent with state and federal guidelines and compliant with USDA regulations.

#### **5. Insurance Coverage.**

Related information about insurance coverage and estimated premiums may be found in Attachment 20.

#### **6. Student Records.**

FSMA will be part of the state's eSchoolPlus pupil accounting system. The use of this system will ensure the timely transfer of cadet data and records to other schools and the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE). All staff members required to use eSchoolPlus will be fully trained on the system. The FSMA will remain current with staff training and data requirements defined by the DDOE.

**FACILITIES***14 Del. C. § 512 (8) and (12)***1. Discuss the school's facility needs based on the educational program...**

At the time of this application, the Board of the First State Military Academy (FSMA) is assessing appropriate sites for the location of the school. Health and safety considerations, along with school size facility calculations, are being incorporated into the search. It is anticipated that the facility will be located in the greater Smyrna/Clayton area in Kent County and will be acquired through lease once the school charter has been approved. The specifications used to evaluate appropriate sites include:

- 62,500 square feet under roof for the high school.
- Adequate space (based on Kent County Zoning Code) to accommodate cadet drop-off and pick-up logistics as well as faculty, staff, and parent parking.
- Access from major arterial roadways to facilitate cadet access and safety.
- Depending on the improvement needs of the final facility, the ability to engineer health, fire, and safety systems per state, county, and city codes, as well as to implement storm water management upgrades and modern environmental building systems to create a low-energy-consuming and highly sustainable complex for the future.

**2. If the applicants have identified a facility, identify where the school will be located...**

A site for FSMA has not been finalized at the time of this application submission.

**3. To the extent that the school has discussed or established specific lease or purchase ...**

As "working estimates" for lease and operations, FSMA has budgeted rent and other occupancy costs at approximately \$275,000 per year,. The Board is looking at space located in the greater Smyrna/Clayton area in Kent County. The preferred site will be an attractive and safe location, providing easy access to the school locations for both the cadets and their families.

The school will utilize operating funds provided by the Delaware Department of Education (DDOE) and annual local revenues, per formula calculations, to pay the rent and maintain the facility. In order to ensure fiscal viability is maintained, the CMO Project Manager will regularly analyze enrollment, expenditures, and financial management practices, and will report on this information to the Board and Citizen's Budget Oversight Committee. To ensure financial solvency, particularly during the planning years and first four years of operation, The Board intends to aggressively implement a fundraising plan, and to apply for operating and capital loans (see Appendix G-1) to supplement available resources for school operations.

**4. To the extent that the facility will require renovation or 'build out,' describe those plans...**

A site for FSMA has not been finalized at the time of this application submission. While the board is working to finalize a site/facility location, pending approval of the school's charter, cost estimates for basic renovations and upgrades have been calculated. Upgrades to the leased facility will include any necessary health, fire, and safety upgrades as well as enhancements for access and use by people with disabilities. New entrance ramps, fire-protected shelter spaces

on the upper floors, fire-retardant doors and walls, and multiple dedicated ADA compliant bathrooms in the building are just a few examples of the efforts that will be made to meet and often exceed established regulations. The school facility will maintain compliance with all county and city code requirements and will work with personnel from DDOE to ensure school-specific health, safety, and logistical aspects of the site are addressed.

The Board of FSMA has budgeted an estimate of \$3,000,000 for renovations to a leased space.

**5. Describe the organization's capacity and experience in managing facility acquisition**

In addition to resources provided by Innovative Schools as CMO, the FSMA Founding Board brings significant expertise in the areas of construction, building and design, and facilities management with more than 70 years of collective experience in these areas.

Prior to securing the location, the Finance and Facility Committee will provide an overview of the best options as well as their recommendations to the full Board for its final review and approval.

**6. If a facility has not been selected, specify potential locations that are under consideration...**

The board is currently investigating the feasibility of leasing the St. Joseph's Industrial School site in the greater Smyrna/Clayton area of Kent County. This location was utilized as the start-up site for Providence Creek Academy (PCA) charter school, and has become available now that PCA relocated to its new site. Following approval of FSMA's charter, the board will move forward to structure plans for acquisition of this, or another suitable site.

**7. Include pursuant to 14 Del. C. § 511(l) an affirmative representation by the applicant**

The Board will await final approval of the school's charter before finalizing any lease agreement and a site and facility.

FSMA will identify, negotiate, and lease a site prior to December 15, 2013 and will ensure that the facility is in full compliance with all applicable codes and regulations prior to the opening of the school. Renovations to the leased facility will be completed no later than late spring of 2014 so that a Certificate of Occupancy (CO) can be obtained by the deadline of June 15, 2014, in accordance with Delaware charter school law.

**BUDGET & FINANCE***14 Del. C. §§ 512 (8) and (9)***Describe the systems and processes by which the school will manage accounting...**

The Board of First State Military Academy (FSMA) intends to contract with Innovative Schools to serve as the Charter Management Organization (CMO) for the first five years of the school's existence. The intent of this contractual relationship is twofold:

1. As CMO, Innovative Schools will build the capacity of FSMA board and staff to be able to sustain the administrative and academic functions of their charter school independent of a CMO by the time of the school's first charter renewal. Should the Board desire, FSMA can contract with Innovative Schools after the first four years for any services offered through Innovative Schools' three service divisions – School Models, School Staffing, and School Solutions – on an as-needed basis.
2. As CMO, Innovative Schools will support full implementation of the New Tech Network (NTN) academic program, and will serve as the main partner with NTN as its subcontractor.

In this capacity, the intended CMO contract between the Board of FSMA and Innovative Schools will optimize implementation of the academic program and school operations with support from a range of professional education experts who have worked extensively in Delaware's public school system and other school environments. These supports from Innovative Schools will be coordinated by Innovative Schools' CMO Project Manager, who will be based at the school site. As it relates to the school's financial operations, this relationship will streamline administrative costs during the first five years of the school's scale-up activities, save time and money, allow maximum resources to be re-directed to the classroom, and ensure transparency and an effective administration. Innovative Schools has been performing these administrative services for Delaware charter schools as a school support organization for several years.

As the CMO representative, Innovative Schools' on-site Project Manager will assign all budgeting- and finance-related activities to Innovative Schools' charter school finance specialists. During the first five years of operation, the charter school finance specialists from Innovative Schools will work directly with FSMA's Commandant (school leader), Governing Board, Citizens Budget Oversight Committee (CBOC), and later with the Operations Manager to develop a projected budget for each fiscal year, for review and approval by the Governing Board during the prior year. Additionally, Innovative Schools' charter school finance specialists will provide initial training to the Operations Manager (once hired) on financial management software selected by Innovative Schools and will work closely with the Operations Manager to perform the tasks and specific deliverables which are described in the intended CMO contract and itemized scope of work included in Attachment 23-B. Following the approval of the school's charter, the Board will work with Innovative Schools to finalized the specifics of the contract and scope of work.

FSMA will follow the State Budget and Accounting Policy Manual as it relates to all transaction regulations, guidelines, and filing procedures. The school will use the First State Financials (FSF)

system for all financial, accounting, and purchasing transactions. FSMA's financial reports will be posted on the school's website on a monthly basis following Board approval. The Financial Position Reports, required by Title 14, will be prepared and submitted to the Department of Education. In addition, the school will commission an annual independent audit of financial accounting and procedures to ensure compliance with the standards of the State Auditor's Office with respect to process controls and segregation of duties.

FSMA will utilize the Payroll Human Resource Statewide Technology (PHRST) system for managing and reporting compensation, payroll, personnel information, and employee benefits. All pension-related functions, from the initial actuarial form at the time of employment through the pension application at retirement, will be processed by Innovative Schools' charter school finance specialists. All personnel involved in executing these processes will be properly trained in accordance with state requirements.

FSMA intends to hire its teachers as state employees, and as such, will offer compensation packages, retirement, and benefits through the State of Delaware. The school will continue to take advantage of the state purchasing system in order to maximize its buying power. The school may independently contract for certain goods and services as needed and appropriate.

In order to maintain responsible fiscal accounting, planning and management practices – and to comply with the requirements of Title 14, Sec 736 of the Delaware Administrative Code – a CBOC will be established during Year 1 to review and analyze all financial expenditures, management practices, and budgeting. This Committee will have at least five members, including one educator from FSMA, one Board member, at least two parents or community members who are not school employees or Board members, and representation from the DDOE. Training for the CBOC will be provided by DDOE to ensure the committee members have been adequately prepared to assume their responsibilities. The CBOC will consult regularly with the Board, CMO, and school principal. The committee will remain actively in place during each year of school operation, and will comply with the regulatory requirements for membership, training, and operations.

### **1. Budget Sheets.**

A budget based upon the target enrollment for FSMA, a budget based upon 80% of the target enrollment, and salary calculations may be found in Attachments 21-A, B, and C, respectively.

### **2. Budget Narrative.**

Revenue Estimates for FSMA (and at 80% enrollment) may be found in Attachment 21-D through K, respectively. It is the intention of FSMA Board to obtain a loan for the renovations of the facility. The first year of loan payments will be interest-only payments on the total loan amount, with principal payments beginning in year 2. The funds received from the loan are reflected on page 3 of the Budget Worksheets in Attachment 21-A and B.

FSMA has also developed an aggressive Fundraising Plan (Appendix G-1) to defray the costs of school operations. Revenues raised through fundraising activities will be collected by a

Fundraising Committee of the Board and deposited into the school's First State Financial (FSF) account, in accordance with required procedures. Decisions for the use of these funds will be become part of the overall financial planning process for the school, subject to review by the CBOC, and will be part of the annual all-funds (single) audit of the school.

The contingency finance plan for FSMA, should enrollment fall below the projections as presented in this application, will be to reduce personnel and operating costs to meet funding limitations. FSMA has demonstrated in this application that it can operate financially at any cadet level between 160 and 200 cadets. The minimum number of cadets the school can enroll to remain economically viable in year 2 is 325; in year 3 and beyond, that number is 450 cadets.

**a. Provide details on how financial, personnel and administrative support will be....**

Support for the financial, personnel, and administrative operations of the school will be provided by the school leader, the school's Board of Directors, Advisory Board, the CBOC, and the CMO. The Commandant will work directly with the CMO Project Manager for professional support services to ensure all financial operations and practices are in accordance with the standards established by the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB), Delaware's State Budget and Accounting Policy Manual, and DDOE Regulations. The Board and CBOC will receive regular reports that include assessments of financial practice in addition to information about the status of financial accounts and ongoing sustainability.

Internal controls will be established, monitored, and modified, as needed. Such internal controls will include, but not be limited to, the approval of all school budgets by the Board, monthly reconciliation with expenditure reports, monthly disclosure to the Board of expenditures which exceed a pre-defined percentage of the budgeted line item, authorized approval documentation on appropriate financial transactions, and employment of a system of checks and balances in processing financial transactions. Since financial transactions will be processed through the FSF system, complete and accurate documentation will be regularly available for inspection.

**3. Audits.**

In order to maintain responsible fiscal accounting, planning and management practices – and to comply with the requirements of Title 14, Sec 736 of the Delaware Administrative Code – a CBOC will be established during Year 1 to review and analyze all financial expenditures, management practices, and budgeting.

FSMA will follow the State Budget and Accounting Policy Manual as it relates to all transaction regulations, guidelines, and filing procedures. The school will use the First State Financials (FSF) system for all financial, accounting, and purchasing transactions. FSMA's financial reports will be posted on the school's website on a monthly basis, following board approval. The Financial Position Reports, required by Title 14, will be prepared and submitted to the Department of Education. In addition, the school will commission an annual independent audit of financial accounting and procedures to ensure compliance with the standards of the State Auditor's Office with respect to process controls and segregation of duties.