

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHARTER SCHOOL PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT – New Charter School
First State Montessori Academy (FSMA)

This Performance Agreement (“Agreement” is entered into this Tuesday of July 30, 2013 by and between the Delaware Department of Education (hereinafter referred to as “DDOE”) and First State Montessori Academy, a public charter school of the State of Delaware (hereinafter referred to as “School”), authorized by the Department of Education with the assent of the Delaware State Board of Education (hereinafter referred to as “DSBE”).

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

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

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

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

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

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

(b) Make satisfactory annual progress toward the indicators and performance targets in the Academic, Financial and Organizational Expectations set forth in this Agreement as measured by the Framework. An annual performance review will be conducted by the Department of Education Charter School Office using the Framework to evaluate such progress. The Framework is incorporated into and made a part of this agreement. If the DDOE finds that the school is not making satisfactory progress toward its performance targets the DDOE, with the assent of the DSBE, may place the school’s charter on formal review pursuant to 14 *Del. C.* §515 (c).

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

First State Montessori Academy, Inc. ("FSMA") is a Montessori Charter school located in New Castle County, Delaware (the "school"). The school will utilize the proven methods and educational philosophy of Maria Montessori, methods which have successfully served students throughout the United States for over 60 years; and of Wilmington, Delaware for over 40. These methods are based on the scientific observation of children's learning processes and foster self-direction, creativity, confidence, problem-solving skills and sensitivity. FSMA projects an initial enrollment of 240 students from Kindergarten through 6th Grade.

The acceptance of FSMA's 2012 application marked the collaborative efforts of the Montessori community of Delaware interested in not only ensuring the preservation of Montessori learning in Delaware but providing choice and open access to the successes achieved through a Montessori curriculum. As a result of a meeting of several Heads of Schools, including participants from the Elementary Workshop Montessori School, Wilmington Montessori School, Hockessin Montessori School, and FSMA, a greater picture of Montessori in Delaware was formed: FSMA became a combined Charter school effort, Elementary Workshop is working with the Christina School District creating public school programming, Wilmington Montessori formed the Center for Montessori Advancement, and Hockessin developed the Delaware Institute for Montessori Educators (DIME). This interconnected support system continually improves and refines Montessori education to the highest possible standards in Delaware.

The founders of FSMA (the "FSMA Founders") all have significant knowledge of and experience with Montessori education as parents, educators, and/or administrators and have seen first-hand the strength and success of quality Montessori programs. Thoughtfully, carefully, and methodically, the FSMA Board of Directors (the "FSMA Board") and its Advisors have created a refined model of this powerful methodology and, coupled with the promotion of a strong school community and opportunities for parental involvement, will provide New Castle County residents a new option in education.

Mission Statement

The mission of First State Montessori Academy is to nurture successful, contributing, life-long learners in a Montessori public educational program for students in Kindergarten through 6th grade.

Vision Statement

The vision of First State Montessori is to provide parents and students with an authentic, time-tested, Montessori education in a public school. We believe that the creation of a Montessori public school in New Castle County, DE will improve student learning, allow for greater choice for parents, and serve as a model for alternative approaches to education by providing a proven and innovative teaching and learning environment.

Academic Performance Expectations

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

Financial Performance Expectations

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

Organizational Performance Expectations

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

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

First State Montessori Academy

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

BY: Courtney Fox
President

Courtney Fox

BY: _____
Secretary of Education