

**From:** [Johnson Donna R](#)  
**To:** [Nagourney Jennifer](#); [Kay-Lawrence Sheila](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Gate Way lab School  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 25, 2014 4:32:44 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Please add this letter to the record of public comment regarding Gateway Lab School's renewal application

*Donna Johnson*

Executive Director  
State Board of Education  
401 Federal Street, Suite 2  
Dover, DE 19901-3639  
302-735-4010  
[www.destateboarded.k12.de.us](http://www.destateboarded.k12.de.us)  
Twitter: @destateboarded

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**From:** Tony Santucci [mailto:TSantucci@pma.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 25, 2014 4:14 PM  
**To:** Johnson Donna R  
**Subject:** FW: Gate Way lab School

We are raising a grandson Michael D. Santucci since he was two years old. Michael has dyslexia and ADA problems. Michael attended Baltz school from kinder garden up to second grade. Doing these years Michael could not read and meet the standards for class room learning. Doing his 1s and second grades the teachers continually marked him that he needs improvement needs improvement. They said we are not promoting Michael to the next grade, but we are just pushing him on to the next grade. Michael continue to fail on all his subjects. Although we met with all his teachers several times thru 1<sup>st</sup> & 2<sup>nd</sup> grades they recognize Michael needed special help which they didn't have the time, resources, or know how to help Michael. Gate-Way Lab School open up starting with the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. We signed Michael up to attend Gate-Way lab and over the past 4 yrs.' Michael has excelled in all subjects going from failing to A & b's on his report cards. In addition Michael has improved in his reading not only reading on his own but also able to read out loud in the class rooms and not be embarrassed.

If you close down Gate-Way lab School you will be throwing back all these children like Michael who came from the regular public schools and committing them to failure.

I strongly implore you to consider reinstating the charter to keep Gate-Way lab School open and meeting the needs of all these special children who need this type of schooling to become responsible and productive citizens.

Tony Santucci

Facility Manager  
Produce Marketing Association  
P.O. Box 6036  
Newark, Delaware 19714-6036  
P: 1+ (302) 738-7100x3065  
F: 1+ (302) 731-2409  
[tsantucci@pma.com](mailto:tsantucci@pma.com)

**From:** [Johnson Donna R](#)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Closing of Gateway Lab School  
**Date:** Thursday, November 27, 2014 9:01:14 PM

---

Please add to the record of public comment for Gateway Lab School

Donna Johnson  
(sent from my iPhone)

Executive Director  
State Board of Education  
401 Federal Street, Suite 2  
Dover, DE 19901-3639  
302-735-4010  
<http://www.destateboarded.k12.de.us>

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** <[cpottinger1@comcast.net](mailto:cpottinger1@comcast.net)>  
**Date:** November 27, 2014 at 8:55:45 PM EST  
**To:** <[donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Cc:** "Pottinger, Beverley" <[bevnickcam@comcast.net](mailto:bevnickcam@comcast.net)>  
**Subject:** **Closing of Gateway Lab School**

Dear Ms Johnson, Please do not close Gateway Lab School. Since starting at Gateway Lab School my niece reading skills has increased. She's not afraid to read anymore. The environment is very conducive to learning. She told me that the teachers understand that she is slow and don't make her feel stupid like teachers at other schools did. She has not experienced any bullying at this school like she and other kids who have a learning disability has at other schools. At your school, she and the other kids are taught to work together and help each other at all times. she has gained a lot of confidence as she goes before the class and read her weekly projects and isn't afraid the other kids in the classroom will laugh at her when she make mistakes.

She has began to socialize with her classmates where before she isolated herself. I have toured the school and have never heard a teacher raised their voice and the classmates are orderly. When I look in the classroom, she is focused and seems to be intrested in participating in what was being taught. This is a healthy environment for my niece with her learning disability, the change with her academically and socially is remarkable, often-time I cant even believe this is the same niece I knew before she entered your learning facility.

Sincerely,

Courtney A. Pottinger (Uncle)

**From:** [Johnson Donna R](#)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Gateway Lab Charter School  
**Date:** Friday, November 28, 2014 2:07:23 AM

---

Donna Johnson  
(sent from my iPhone)

Executive Director  
State Board of Education  
401 Federal Street, Suite 2  
Dover, DE 19901-3639  
302-735-4010  
<http://www.destateboarded.k12.de.us>

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Heffernan Pat <[pat.heffernan@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:pat.heffernan@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Date:** November 27, 2014 at 10:30:26 PM EST  
**To:** Johnson Donna R <[donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Subject: Fwd: Gateway Lab Charter School**

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Rebecca Zedan <[beckiennate@me.com](mailto:beckiennate@me.com)>  
**Date:** November 24, 2014 at 7:29:09 PM EST  
**To:** <[Pat.Heffernan@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Pat.Heffernan@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Subject: Gateway Lab Charter School**

Mr. Heffernan,

I'd like to let you know about my children, and why we need Gateway Lab Charter School.

I don't know where we would be without Gateway. My children were being left behind in their school. My daughter Sierra was getting in trouble a lot, and it wasn't because of behavior. It was because by the end of her lessons on Monday she knew what she was supposed to know. So Tuesday thru Friday she would pull a book out and read or start drawing. She would get in trouble because the other kids would then want to do that as well. The problem was that they had not learned everything that they needed to learn for the week. Sierra was not being challenged at all. I begged and pleaded with the school to help her, to challenge her. Their only option was to put her in

"enrichment classes". Enrichment classes were for the advanced students, they met once a week for 30 minutes. How does this change anything? We put her in the enrichment class hoping that they would help even a little while we struggled to figure what else to do. Homeschooling was a definite and very real option for us as it was for many of our friends in the area with the same or similar issues.

Towards the end of Sierra's 2nd grade year I was talking to a close friend (again) about both Sierra and Savanna's issues in public school. She told me about this charter school that had a whole different concept for teaching children. She gave me the info, and my husband and I checked out the school. I'm pretty sure I was in tears by the time I was done reading everything I could find about it. We quickly filled out the application and set up an interview.

Sierra has been at Gateway since the doors opened and Savanna is in her second year. Both of my girls are thriving in Gateway, something I never thought possible before Gateway. I think we were about a month into school in Sierra's first year when I got a phone call from Sierra's teachers. They wanted to start working on 4th through 6th grade work with her because she wasn't being challenged enough. Those were their words, not mine. Someone else saw her potential and knew she needed more.

Savanna is thriving at Gateway as well. She is learning and actually understanding not just memorizing like she was at her other school. She is no longer bullied, no longer comes home from school in tears. Her self esteem has blossomed in Gateway in a way it never would have in her other school.

We are so thankful for Gateway. In fact we love Gateway so much that I recruited our neighborhood. We have our own hub stop and now have 5 families that get on and off at our stop. We have families that can't wait for their children to graduate 2nd grade so that they can get them into Gateway. I honestly never thought that the day would come when I wouldn't have to fight with my kids every morning to get them to go to school. Now that they are at Gateway we get in trouble with the kids if we have to pick them up early!

The teachers take the time to talk to the parents, email the parents, and work with the parents to make sure each child is working to the best of their ability and being challenged. Gateway teaches our kids with art-based learning which makes it fun as well as educational for them. They are always striving for excellence with our kids, pushing them to be the best that they can be. You would never know that our school is 63% learning disabled children when you walk through it. The kids are all engaged in learning in every classroom. We are thankful beyond words for Gateway, we would be a homeschooling without them! Please take this into consideration before you turn off the light at the end of the tunnel.

This community cannot afford to lose Gateway Lab Charter School. Neither can these children and their families.

Forever Grateful for Gateway,

-Rebecca Zedan

Mother of two Gateway Gladiators  
"Gladiators never give up!"

**From:** [Johnson Donna R](#)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Gateway lab school  
**Date:** Saturday, November 29, 2014 9:57:20 AM

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Donna Johnson (Sent from my iPad)  
Executive Director  
State Board of Education  
401 Federal Street, Suite 2  
Dover, DE 19901-3639  
302-735-4010  
[www.destateboarded.k12.de.us](http://www.destateboarded.k12.de.us)  
Twitter: @destateboarded

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** ELIZABETH HUBSCHMIDT <[lizhub123@verizon.net](mailto:lizhub123@verizon.net)>  
**Date:** November 29, 2014 at 7:58:48 AM EST  
**To:** "[donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us)" <[donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Subject:** Gateway lab school  
**Reply-To:** ELIZABETH HUBSCHMIDT <[lizhub123@verizon.net](mailto:lizhub123@verizon.net)>

Hello Ms .Johnson,

just wanted to explain how my son has been in packed by this wonderful school.  
My son since being in gateway has done better in reading and writing .  
His scores from his testing show improvement for him not district wide. After all the reason why  
these kids are in this school is because they don't fit the mold for the other schools .

My son is doing well socially ,I see him coming out of his shell. This is a huge jump for him  
because he is painfully shy. He has kids that he can actually call a friend.

I hope that with all the info you get from parents will be put in to play and the district can find it in  
there realm to keep our school going.

There is a great need for this school children are needing more and more of this one on one help.

Thank You  
Elizabeth and Blake Hubschmidt



**From:** [Johnson Donna R](#)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Gateway Lab  
**Date:** Friday, November 28, 2014 2:05:17 AM

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Donna Johnson  
(sent from my iPhone)

Executive Director  
State Board of Education  
401 Federal Street, Suite 2  
Dover, DE 19901-3639  
302-735-4010  
<http://www.destateboarded.k12.de.us>

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Heffernan Pat <[pat.heffernan@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:pat.heffernan@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Date:** November 27, 2014 at 10:29:11 PM EST  
**To:** Johnson Donna R <[donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Subject: Fwd: Gateway Lab**

Please consider the send date on the emails I'll forward as it relates to the public record.

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** kim tompkins <[tompkins1213@gmail.com](mailto:tompkins1213@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** November 26, 2014 at 9:29:50 PM EST  
**To:** <[Pat.Heffernan@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Pat.Heffernan@doe.k12.de.us)>, <[Jorge.melendez@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Jorge.melendez@doe.k12.de.us)>, <[Randall.hughes@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Randall.hughes@doe.k12.de.us)>, <[teri.gray@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:teri.gray@doe.k12.de.us)>, <[Gregory.Coverdale@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Gregory.Coverdale@doe.k12.de.us)>, <[Barbara.Rutt@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Barbara.Rutt@doe.k12.de.us)>, <[Terry.Whittaker@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Terry.Whittaker@doe.k12.de.us)>, <[mmwb1229@yahoo.com](mailto:mmwb1229@yahoo.com)>  
**Subject: Gateway Lab**

Hello,

My name is Kimberlee Rachel Tompkins. My neighbor Hudson Bures goes to Gateway Charter School. He's 11 years old and a 6th grader. I've know Hudson for about 8 years. I've seen him when he went to elementary school, home school, and

Gateway. Throughout all of these schools I've seen him achieve the best at Gateway. Hudson has adhd and while he's a smart young man and one of the kindest kids I know, he can be a much sometimes. I don't mean that in a bad way, what I mean is that he's able to strive best when there's a teacher who doesn't look down on his condition but has the patience and understanding that the teachers at Gateway School do.

When he went to Brookside he was very unhappy. He got bullied and the teachers were hard on him because he wasn't able to act like all the other kids. At Gateway he has been able to meet friends and teachers who accept him for who he is and still help work on controlling his ADHD better. Hudson has come home prideful of his dcas scores, report cards, and learning whether it be in class or after school in band club. I've seen this kid happier in the last two years than in all the time he went to Brookside or was home schooled.

I'm a senior in high school and I can tell you honestly that school's won't have the resources to help these kids reach their potential. There are kids at this school who have special needs and I know that this school has helped them not only interact with normal kids but specifically with their disability. I stress the importance of keeping this school open for all the kids that have strived there but also my best friend and little brother Hudson. I want the best for him and the happiest he can be and this school is it. So please let it stay open.

Thank you,  
Kimberlee Rachel Tompkins

**From:** [Johnson Donna R](#)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Gateway Lab  
**Date:** Sunday, November 30, 2014 5:21:25 PM

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Donna Johnson  
(sent from my iPhone)

Executive Director  
State Board of Education  
401 Federal Street, Suite 2  
Dover, DE 19901-3639  
302-735-4010  
<http://www.destateboarded.k12.de.us>

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Rutt Barbara <[Barbara.Rutt@DOE.K12.DE.US](mailto:Barbara.Rutt@DOE.K12.DE.US)>  
**Date:** November 30, 2014 at 5:14:48 PM EST  
**To:** Johnson Donna R <[donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Subject: Fw: Gateway Lab**

---

**From:** kim tompkins <[tompkins1213@gmail.com](mailto:tompkins1213@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, November 26, 2014 9:29 PM  
**To:** Heffernan Pat; Melendez Jorge; Hughes Randall; Gray Teri; Coverdale Gregory; Rutt Barbara; Whittaker Terry; [mmwb1229@yahoo.com](mailto:mmwb1229@yahoo.com)  
**Subject:** Gateway Lab

Hello,

My name is Kimberlee Rachel Tompkins. My neighbor Hudson Bures goes to Gateway Charter School. He's 11 years old and a 6th grader. I've know Hudson for about 8 years. I've seen him when he went to elementary school, home school, and Gateway. Throughout all of these schools I've seen him achieve the best at Gateway. Hudson has adhd and while he's a smart young man and one of the kindest kids I know, he can be a much sometimes. I don't mean that in a bad way, what I mean is that he's able to strive best when there's a teacher who doesn't look down on his condition but has the patience and understanding that the teachers at Gateway School do.

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Thank you,

Kimberlee Rachel Tompkins

**From:** [Johnson Donna R](#)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Revoking the charter of Gateway lab charter  
**Date:** Friday, November 28, 2014 2:10:04 AM

---

Donna Johnson  
(sent from my iPhone)

Executive Director  
State Board of Education  
401 Federal Street, Suite 2  
Dover, DE 19901-3639  
302-735-4010  
<http://www.destateboarded.k12.de.us>

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Heffernan Pat <[pat.heffernan@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:pat.heffernan@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Date:** November 27, 2014 at 10:29:50 PM EST  
**To:** Johnson Donna R <[donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Subject: Fwd: Revoking the charter of Gateway lab charter**

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** TINA <[riv815@msn.com](mailto:riv815@msn.com)>  
**Date:** November 25, 2014 at 2:20:50 PM EST  
**To:** "[Pat.Heffernan@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Pat.Heffernan@doe.k12.de.us)"  
<[Pat.Heffernan@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Pat.Heffernan@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Subject: Revoking the charter of Gateway lab charter**

Good afternoon Mr. Heffernan,

My name is Christina Arnold and my daughter is in her first year at Gateway lab charter. She is in sixth grade and I would like to let you know a bit about her.

My Gabby has a mild left sided cerebral palsy, thyroid disease, and worst of all epilepsy. She had her first seizure at age 9. It was a tonic clonic seizure that lasted 20 minutes and she almost died in my husband's arms because she could not breathe, mind you my husband is a nurse and was just as helpless as I was. Following that seizure she was unable to do math as it took away even her ability to do algorithms. She

also lost a lot of her comprehension skills. She loved to read but could not retain all of the information she had just read. Her dcas scores prior to the seizure were a 3 in math and a 4 in reading following the seizure she had a 1 in math and 2 in reading big difference. We are in colonial school district which unfortunately is not the best district to be in especially for the services she needed. I requested that her 504 be changed back to an iep in January of 2012 it was not put in place until May of 2013...that is the first problem. Then last year she was suppose to be receiving math intervention 3 times per week, reading, 2 times per week and speech 1 time per week. From February until the end of the year in June the only service she received was speech which if you spoke to her you would know did not help much. When I questioned why her IEP was not being followed I was told her teacher was dual certified...well since she had 26 kids in her class she could not give my daughter the help she needed. My daughter failed every subject except science and I was not even aware of this until her report card came in the mail after school let out. She was bullied and made fun of for years at the school which I reported several times and nothing was done. She became very introverted. She hated school, had no friends, and would sit and cry every night trying to do her homework. She was not being given the education she needed and deserved. She was forced to go outside during recess only to be made fun of because of the way she talked and walked instead of doing what she wanted to and that was to read a book during recess...is there anything wrong with that? She could not wait to get out of that school because she knew she would not have to deal with that anymore.

My daughter is a totally different child now who loves school, loves learning, has friends and participates in after school activities. She sat and told me she does not feel different any more and that the teachers are finally helping her all this from a 12 year old. It is all because of Gateway. The teachers care about these children so much. They take the time to teach our children in the way they need to learn. My daughter in just 3 months is doing word math problems, her comprehension skills are just unreal, and she has confidence in herself again. There is nothing worse then seeing your child struggle and so sad and not being able to do anything about it. That child is gone she is herself again. She smiles again, oh and what a beautiful smile it is I forgot how beautiful it was because she never did for years. She is passing every subject. Her lowest grade right now is an 80. She is thriving in such a short time and to hear that there is a possibility this will all be taken away from her is sickening to me.

This school is amazing. They are helping these children to thrive and giving them back the confidence they have lost in the district schools by being put on the backburner. They are learning. Go to the school and walk around you will see how

amazing it is. I left there the first time I toured with tears knowing this is where she needed to be, that they could teach her, they could give her the time and education she deserved.

This school is not just a school it is a family that cares about these children. I looked at many schools for her and I looked at the testing scores. What I saw was low numbers but that were improving year by year. I truly believe that all they need is time to show how much these children are learning. The other charter schools were given time and could not prove this to the board and I understand that, but this is the first time we are up for renewal. Please support our children. Please do not let them go back into the system to be made to feel different and not get the help they need. Sixty percent of these children have IEPs and another I believe nine percent have 504s. Please give them a chance. Please do not let my daughter and all the other children who are thriving in this school have the confidence they have gained knowing they can learn taken away. Please if at all possible go to the school take a tour. I have no doubt you will feel the same way my husband and I felt when we left. Please do not let them revoke this charter. All we need is some time and that is all we are asking for.

I hope you will not support any decision to revoke the charter of this amazing school. They have given my daughter something that she was unable to receive in our district school, an education.

Thank you for your time and consideration with dealing with this matter.

With many thanks,

Christina Arnold  
[Riv815@msn.com](mailto:Riv815@msn.com)  
302-328-3069

**From:** [Johnson Donna R](#)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Support for Gateway Lab School Renewal  
**Date:** Friday, November 28, 2014 2:07:03 AM

---

Donna Johnson  
(sent from my iPhone)

Executive Director  
State Board of Education  
401 Federal Street, Suite 2  
Dover, DE 19901-3639  
302-735-4010  
<http://www.destateboarded.k12.de.us>

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Heffernan Pat <[pat.heffernan@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:pat.heffernan@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Date:** November 27, 2014 at 10:30:06 PM EST  
**To:** Johnson Donna R <[donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Subject: Fwd: Support for Gateway Lab School Renewal**

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Jackie <[livviesmom@hotmail.com](mailto:livviesmom@hotmail.com)>  
**Date:** November 24, 2014 at 11:10:16 PM EST  
**To:** "Pat.Heffernan@doe.k12.de.us "  
<[Pat.Heffernan@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:Pat.Heffernan@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Subject: Fwd: Support for Gateway Lab School Renewal**

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Jackie <[livviesmom@hotmail.com](mailto:livviesmom@hotmail.com)>  
**Date:** November 19, 2014 at 11:14:35 PM EST  
**To:** "[mark.murphy@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:mark.murphy@doe.k12.de.us)"  
<[mark.murphy@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:mark.murphy@doe.k12.de.us)>  
**Subject: Support for Gateway Lab School**



## Renewal

Please find this email my vote to renew Gateway Lab Schools Charter. My daughter started 5th grade there this year, since her previous school failed in providing her appropriate IEP and OT services for her processing disorder. This school is the only school in DE that caters to children who cannot thrive and perform well in a traditional school setting. My daughter has gone from Cs last year to straight As so far. She is excited to go to school and is eager to do her homework assignments because she is no longer struggling to comprehend her lessons. To take my child out of his setting, in which she is excelling to put her back into the system where she was struggling is a grave mistake and disservice to not only my child, but all of the children of Gateway. By closing this school you would be discriminating against special needs children who need this arts based education. In no other school has my daughter flourished as she has done at Gateway. Special needs students cannot be judged and graded by standard guidelines. My daughter has become a confident, independent child whose grades and self esteem have sky rocketed at Gateway. Please do not make me, as a parent lose what little faith I have left in the DE school system. This school is much needed in the community and needs to remain an option for our children. It was my choice to send her here and it remains my choice to keep her here.  
Jackie Graham, parent  
Sent from my iPad  
Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Appleton Erica](#)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** Gateway Lab School  
**Date:** Monday, December 01, 2014 7:26:21 AM

---

Good Morning-

I am writing to you as a teacher of students who have had the opportunity to become part of the Gateway Lab School community. It is with great concern that I write this email, having heard that because of low test scores the charter for Gateway is going to be revoked. As educators and professionals of the field, basing the success or failure of a school on its test scores is not only unfair, but also misleading. The population of the school is one, that based on the very core ideals of the school, that it would be illogical to look at test scores as any indicator holding such merit of a school.

The students in Gateway are the very students that need the more focused attention and programs that are offered to them there. The students I have had in the past that attend(ed) Gateway were/are successful because of the way the program centers around the specialized needs of these students, in an environment they can feel secure in to challenge themselves and make mistakes. As a classroom teacher in the public school I know how important it is that these kids have every chance to succeed, with opportunities that although we strive for every day, can simply not be met in a classroom with 27+ students and one teacher following a regimented curriculum and pacing guide.

As you know, student success can be measured in a variety of ways, and standardized tests should only be one part of the process. Student growth and successes far exceeding a score on a standardized test are happening every day. To

belittle or under value those successes in favor of a number on a matrix is a slap in the face to the very philosophies we are critiqued on with every evaluation and walk-through we are given. No one success or failure should determine the fate of student or the professionals that work with them. As a concerned teacher and parent I strongly urge you to reconsider the revocation of the charter for the Gateway Lab School. Valuing student successes is far more important an indicator than any number on a standardized test would ever show. Thank you for your time and consideration to keep the Gateway Lab School open to those students who so desperately need it.

Sincerely,

*Erica K. Appleton, M.Ed.*

**From:** [Jen M](#)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** Gateway Lab School  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 25, 2014 10:51:36 PM

---

Gateway Lab School,  
Is a honor to have in our community. The staff at Gateway our incredibly well educated staff more creative ideas to help children build a solid foundation with all of the academics that they learn. For example:  
The third grade learned about Greece and then created a game called " knuckle bones" The children learned about this game, how they played the game, what materials were used back then and then they created the game and the pieces. Also, got to play the game in class that each child made.  
My child came home from school and told me all about the game. What the pieces resembled back in Greece? Where Greece is located on the map.

As a parent of Gateway Lab School, I am so proud to hear my child come home and tell me about what he has learned. He was able to recall the day, and go in detail about history class.  
It's a delight to see my child NOT frustrated or crying about his day or even complain that he doesn't want to go to school.  
We need this school. These children need the self esteem, the positive attitude to succeed in school. These children are learning, they are excited to go to school. They enjoy the after school activities with the coaches who encourage them to think about the game and they use math skills why they are playing the sport. They use reading skills and comprehension while playing the sport.

The teachers and counselors gave me great feed back on my son's IEP. Showed me how to help my son with his homework with out tears. I sat listened to them, we talked about how to improve my son. This was more then I had ever gotten in my son's few years of school. I was so happy that finally someone had listened to me, to hear what I go thru in the evening to get homework done. Also, that my son is not a failure, it just takes a little more time then the other children. A little more patience.

The couch is awesome person, always eager to help encourage. Tell the child you can do this.....You can play in the NFL, but you must do the work. Focus, on the task, take your time we are in no hurry. You can, you will do your best! I see a child running toward "Couch" guess what I did it, "Couch " ! I hear Couch say, " yes, son I had to write papers too, I had to do the math as well and yes nothing came easy. However, I made it too... and you will too.

We are all Gladiator 's! We need this independent Charter School, in this area for these children. Think of the child first!

Sincerely,  
A Gladiator Parent  
Jen

**From:** [Dina du Pont](#)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** Help Save Gateway Lab School  
**Date:** Friday, November 28, 2014 4:02:11 PM

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Dear Madam and Sir,

One of my best friend had been struggling with her son's ADHA and learning differences for years, seeking in every directions to help him be in the best learning environment possible. He was placed in a Public School in Delaware, along 29 other classmates.

The teacher as you can imagine had neither the time , nor the training, to help the struggling kids, resulting into a very frustrating experience for the child, the parents, and the teacher.

Well, that was before, as one day she found an amazing Charter School that was addressing all the different learning issues the children had, and this done in smaller classes with LD qualified teachers.

My friend's son is now a fluent reader with an abundant curiosity for learning.

Also, when they found out last week that this just so perfect school might be closed, you can imagine the despair the parents went through, along the children.

This mean all those kids will be flooding back the Public School System, schools that will not have the real means to help them, most of them will fell eventually.

The Gateway Lab school does more than just helping Children with a Learning Disabilities, the Gateway Lab School gives them confidence and the same hopes for a bright future than Children with no Learning Disabilities have.

I hope you will revoke the decision of closing this school for those Children's sake.

Best regards,  
Dina du Pont

**From:** [jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 26, 2014 3:36:41 PM

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## GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 11/26/2014 3:32:32 PM

Response End Time: 11/26/2014 3:36:31 PM

IP Address: 68.81.1.31

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

## SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name  
Elizabeth Grunza

2. E-Mail Address  
maermale@comcast.net

3. Which charter school renewal application do you wish to comment upon?  
Gateway Lab School

4. Comment:

I have heard wonderful stories from friends about what good things the Gateway Lab School is accomplishing with their children. I would hate to see that opportunity being taken away from these students due to low test scores. That is the whole reason why these children need the specialized instruction. Please consider giving this school more time to make adjustments or fix issues. These children deserve the best education they can get!

**From:** [jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 26, 2014 5:05:31 PM

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## GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 11/26/2014 5:01:42 PM

Response End Time: 11/26/2014 5:05:14 PM

IP Address: 71.175.90.188

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

## SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name

Kristine Brooks

2. E-Mail Address

Krismae28@gmail.com

3. Which charter school renewal application do you wish to comment upon?

Gateway Lab School

4. Comment:

I am writing to appeal the possible closing of gateway lab school. We as a community need to provide services to these children who learn differently. This is an opportunity to make a difference in these kids lives. Please don't dismiss them.

**From:** [jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"  
**Date:** Friday, November 28, 2014 11:54:23 AM

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## GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 11/28/2014 11:51:42 AM

Response End Time: 11/28/2014 11:54:11 AM

IP Address: 71.200.61.201

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

## SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name  
Brenda Riley

2. E-Mail Address  
Brenda\_riley@verizon.net

3. Which charter school renewal application do you wish to comment upon?  
Gateway Lab School

4. Comment:

I am a concerned grandparent for my granddaughter as well as other students at Gateway Lab Charter School. It is devastating to these children and parents that they may lose this school. I have seen such an improvement in my grandchild since she has been at Gateway Lab. Her confidence, self esteem and learning ability has soared. These children need someone such as these teachers and administrators who not only give them special attention but also are very caring. It would be such a hardship on these children to lose their school.

Please take the welfare of these precious children to heart and reconsider.



**From:** [jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"  
**Date:** Friday, November 28, 2014 11:57:47 AM

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## GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 11/28/2014 11:54:43 AM

Response End Time: 11/28/2014 11:57:33 AM

IP Address: 71.200.61.201

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

## SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name  
Mitchell riley

2. E-Mail Address  
Mitchellriley@verizon.net

3. Which charter school renewal application do you wish to comment upon?  
Gateway Lab School

4. Comment:  
Don't close the school it's about the kids, not their test scores.

**From:** [jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"  
**Date:** Friday, November 28, 2014 12:02:49 PM

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## GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 11/28/2014 11:59:10 AM

Response End Time: 11/28/2014 12:02:39 PM

IP Address: 71.200.61.201

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

## SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name  
Mary Perdue

2. E-Mail Address  
Mary.perdue@comcast.net

3. Which charter school renewal application do you wish to comment upon?  
Gateway Lab School

4. Comment:  
Don't stop the successes my great-granddaughter has had at her school--keep Gatewsy open. Her self-confidence has increased tremendously during her time at Gateway Lab School.

**From:** [jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"  
**Date:** Saturday, November 29, 2014 10:00:04 AM

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## GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 11/29/2014 9:50:22 AM

Response End Time: 11/29/2014 9:59:56 AM

IP Address: 68.83.168.186

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

## SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name  
Angela Hale

2. E-Mail Address  
[angelahale75@gmail.com](mailto:angelahale75@gmail.com)

3. Which charter school renewal application do you wish to comment upon?  
Gateway Lab School

4. Comment:

Please renew Gateway Lab charter! Our son has benefited greatly from attending. Upon entering our son was not reading well and disliked school very much. Two years later our son is reading on grade level, is on the honor roll, and loves school. Gateway Lab staff has supported our son academically and emotionally, helping him to function as a responsible student. The staff at Gateway accommodates our sons' learning difference with emergent curriculum, alternative teaching techniques, and emotional encouragement. If Gateway Lab closes their students will be lost in a over crowded school system, ill equipped for children with learning challenges.

**From:** [jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"  
**Date:** Saturday, November 29, 2014 11:08:02 AM

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## GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 11/29/2014 11:07:03 AM

Response End Time: 11/29/2014 11:07:45 AM

IP Address: 69.249.18.214

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

## SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name

Janice J Hill

2. E-Mail Address

janicejgamble@gmail.com

3. Which charter school renewal application do you wish to comment upon?

Gateway Lab School

4. Comment:

All students have different learning styles, rates and abilities so a personalized approach to learning is best for each student especially students with IEPs and/or with other learning needs. The recent adoption of Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) by Gateway gives the school an opportunity to provide in-depth personalized learning and assessments for all of its students. MAP is a computerized adaptive assessment system and provides real-time data on student progress and is norm-referenced. Likewise, the MAP aligns with the Common Core Standards.

I am certain, that with effective pedagogy along with the use of norm-referenced assessments, progress monitoring with the RTI model including summative assessments students' academic performance will improve. Also, I believe it is important Gateway students be juxtaposed with students of similar academic and social emotional challenges.

As a former teacher, school administrator and current educational coach-consultant, I know that with enhanced PD along with improved accountability measures in place for teachers and students, all Gateway Lab Students are on an optimum academic trajectory.

Since Gateway's Revised Charter was recently approved, I strongly request that

Gateway Lab School be given an opportunity to demonstrate its ability to improve student growth over the next two years.

Because, I was on the Board and Search Committee when Gateway hired the new Head of School, Catherine Dolan, and I strongly believe that Gateway has the right leadership in place to move the school forward. Likewise, Stacey Solomon, the new principal, is an extremely effective Curriculum and Assessment Director, thus with these two strong leaders in place an improved school culture, improved teacher satisfaction, improved student performance and increase student enrollment are inevitable.

Thank you.

Janice J. Hill, MA  
Educational Consultant/Coach  
Former Gateway Lab School Board Member

**From:** [jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us](mailto:jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"  
**Date:** Saturday, November 29, 2014 1:17:40 PM

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## GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 11/29/2014 1:15:56 PM

Response End Time: 11/29/2014 1:17:27 PM

IP Address: 76.124.52.100

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

## SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name  
Rhonda Berti

2. E-Mail Address  
rhonda629@gmail.com

3. Which charter school renewal application do you wish to comment upon?  
Gateway Lab School

4. Comment:  
In Support for Gateway Lab School Renewal

Dear Secretary Murphy,

It has come to my attention that the renewal process, Charter School Accountability Committee has recommended Gateway Lab School be slated to close at the end of this school year 2014-2015. This is of great interest to me because I am the parent of a child whom attends this school. This proposed closure directly impacts not only my daughter, but every student and future students of Gateway Lab School.

Gateway Lab School serves a very specific student population. These students have not been able to perform well academically in a traditional inclusive public school setting. In the nearly four years my daughter has attended Gateway Lab School, she has learned to read and write on grade level, has dramatically improved her attendance, and is meeting her IEP goals.

My daughter came to Gateway at the age 10, unable to read kindergarten level material, little to no writing abilities and very basic, first grade math skills. Even though she was not meeting her IEP goals and showing insufficient progress in learning and retaining basic skills; Mt. Pleasant Elementary School, in the

Brandywine School District, promoted her each year "based on her size", and "how she would fit in with younger smaller children." Her attendance at this "traditional public school" was sporadic, because of long stays at residential treatment centers constantly interrupting instruction. My daughter was given basic accommodations to assist her in her learning, and any additional accommodations that were hard won by her father and I battling constantly to acquire them, were only causally provided. My daughter was in danger of never achieving even a basic education that she is legally entitled to.

Gateway Lab School has changed my daughter's future. She no longer is consistently absent because of hospitalization, on the contrary, she has not been hospitalized since her enrollment at Gateway. Her medications have been reduced by half, she no longer suffers from the major symptoms of her disability, and her symptoms no longer interfere with her instruction. She no longer has behavior issues and is meeting developmental milestones appropriate for her age. She loves school, she loves learning, and she loves the feeling of success and the empowerment that knowledge brings. She has learned to look to the future and make goals for her future, she wants to attend college. This is something we never thought she would be able to even think about.

Mr. Murphy, I ask that you give Gateway Lab School the three years that you mentioned. You said in three years we would be meeting proficiency. It has also come to my attention that Gateway Lab School has been granted the alternative framework designation, but not for this year. This is very unfortunate. I must repeat that we need more time! Mr. Murphy please grant us the three years you said we needed to meet our proficiency. Gateway Lab School is making a difference now and for the future of not only the students but for their families, future employers and our communities. Great students equal stronger communities and economic growth. We need this school and more schools like this.

I believe in this school, this issue. Thank you for your consideration.

**From:** [May Alison](#)  
**To:** [Carolyn Clark](#)  
**Cc:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** Re: proposed closing of Gateway Lab Charter School  
**Date:** Sunday, November 30, 2014 4:45:13 PM

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Thank you. I am forwarding your email to the charter office, which is compiling the public comment for inclusion in the record for the Secretary and State Board to consider. If you have any additional public comment, you can send directly via the link here: <http://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/399>

Public comment on this matter is being accepted through Dec. 12.

Alison

Sent using OWA for iPad

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**From:** Carolyn Clark <cdc3737@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, November 30, 2014 3:59:30 PM  
**To:** May Alison  
**Subject:** proposed closing of Gateway Lab Charter School

Alison: We have some comments to make on the proposed closing of Gateway Lab School by the DOE. We are hoping that you will be able to get this email to the proper person or persons prior to the hearing in December.

Over the past several years, we have had the opportunity to observe and participate in activities with the students and staff at Gateway. The staff there is dedicated, capable and goes far beyond the normal to educate the students in their care.

Stating that scores are low and unacceptable is a rather broad statement when almost 2/3 of the student population is learning disabled. Many of the students are unable to sit and test and understand the directions even though they have had complete directions.

A new math curriculum was written and approved by the state this past summer. It has just recently been introduced to the students. Scores do not improve immediately, and we feel that Gateway needs more time to see the benefits of the new curriculum. The school is young, and is just ready to turn the corner if given more time.

We have also had the privilege to attend one of the newly introduced afterschool clubs. The students are learning and growing in the area of both science and math while participating in the Fishing Club. It is amazing to watch students measure, calculate and ask great questions of the staff with them. Other new clubs formed are Music Composition, Hiking and Math League. All of these add to the special needs of the students and provide an alternative learning experience.

Many of the Gateway students are only able to learn by alternative methods. These



are provided so well at the school, and the staff is very, very committed to treating each child as an individual in their learning process.

Please give Gateway more time to continue what they have started. Do not base your decision on scores but on the alternative learning which is going on at the school. The students are truly blessed to have such a wonderful staff working to help make them responsible adults.

Carolyn and Dennis Clark

**From:** [infocso](#)  
**To:** "[Nicole Grebloskie](#)"; [infocso](#)  
**Cc:** [Angela Hale \(angelahale75@gmail.com\)](#)  
**Subject:** RE: Support for Gateway Lab School  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 25, 2014 9:46:59 PM

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Thank you very much for your comment. It will be entered into the public record, and will be reviewed by the Secretary of Education and the State Board of Education as part of the decision-making process.

My very best,

Jennifer M. Nagourney, J.D.  
Executive Director, Charter School Office  
Delaware Department of Education  
401 Federal Street, Suite #2  
Dover, DE 19901-3639  
302.735.4020 (T) 302.739.4483 (F)

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**From:** Nicole Grebloskie [mailto:[nicoleg@arthurhall.com](mailto:nicoleg@arthurhall.com)]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, November 25, 2014 1:42 PM  
**To:** infocso  
**Cc:** Angela Hale ([angelahale75@gmail.com](mailto:angelahale75@gmail.com))  
**Subject:** Support for Gateway Lab School

To whom it may concern,

I was very disappointed to hear that the Delaware Dept. of Education has announced that they will revoke the Charter title from Gateway Lab school.

As you know this school is an independent Charter that specializes in helping children with learning disabilities. 60% of the students have an IEP or 504, which means they require certain accommodations in the classroom. Many of the students have ADHD and or Autism. I understand that this decision was made using DCAS Scores. It concerns me that you are using these scores as one of your decision tools when they are no longer using DCAS tests to assess our children.

I can tell you on a personal level that I know 3 children who attend this school. The Gateway Lab School has been hugely beneficial in this children's academic life. Prior to their attendance, these children were struggling in school which would then affect their personal lives. These children are now reading and writing at their appropriate grade level- and they actually enjoy learning. Isn't that

what we are trying to install in our children- the joy of learning and helping them retain this knowledge so they can become well rounded and educated individuals who can enter the work force or college? The teachers and staff at Gateway have used new and emergent curriculum, along with compassion and encouragement to challenge these children and boost their self-esteem. Please continue to support this school so we don't leave these kids behind.

Sincerely,

Nicole

Nicole C. Grebloskie, CIC, CISR  
Personal Lines Vice President

Arthur Hall Insurance  
Phone: 610-696-2394  
Fax: 610-696-5519  
[www.arthurhall.com](http://www.arthurhall.com)



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**From:** [Angela Hale](#)  
**To:** [infocso](#)  
**Subject:** Support for Gateway Lab School  
**Date:** Saturday, November 29, 2014 9:49:32 AM

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To whom it may concern:

I'm writing in regards to the abrupt decision to close Gateway Lab School.

Since 2012 my son has attended Gateway Lab. Upon entry into Gateway my son has flourished academically. He has increased his reading capacity and is now reading on grade level. Not only has my son improved academically with the help of Gateway staff, he has also improved emotionally and physically. Gateway offers many after school sports and activities. My son hated school and felt bad about his learning ability while attending our typical feeder school, now he loves going to school and shows a good attitude about his learning.

Please take into consideration the benefit of Gateway Lab. DCAS scores are only a small indicator of a child's intelligence. If Gateway Lab closes, my son among many other needy children, will be placed back into an over crowded school without the capacity to properly teach or accommodate them.

Sincerely,  
Angela Hale

**From:** [seealisons@aol.com](mailto:seealisons@aol.com)  
**To:** [infocso](mailto:infocso)  
**Cc:** [seewaldwoodwork@aol.com](mailto:seewaldwoodwork@aol.com)  
**Subject:** Support for Gateway Lab  
**Date:** Wednesday, November 26, 2014 9:29:55 AM

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To Whom it Concerns,

Gateway Lab has been a huge blessing to my family, especially for our two adoptive sons who were enrolled at Gateway this Sept. 2014. Both of our boys struggle with emotional scars, reactive attachment disorder, FAS, & learning differences. They were in the Delaware foster care system for 3+ years. In that short amount of time, they were in 7/8 different placements each.

At Gateway our boys are receiving a top notch education in a way that best suits their needs. The teachers are consistent, patient, firm, caring, dynamic! They are a team working together to help build up a child into being the best they can be.

Gateway Lab is the school for our boys. There is no other choice for them. We have exhausted all of our options. It would it be a mistake to close the doors to so many special, gifted, needy children.

Please keep Gateway Lab open for our children.

Thank you for your time.

Respectfully,  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard B. Seewald

Sent from my Verizon 4G LTE Smartphone

David R. DeJoseph  
1814 Belfield Avenue  
Wilmington, DE 19804

November 25, 2014

Mark Murphy  
Secretary of Education  
State Board of Education  
401 Federal Street, Suite 2  
Dover, DE 19901-3639

Dear Mr. Murphy:

I am writing to ask you to review and reconsider the Charter School Accountability Committee's recommendation *not* to renew Gateway Lab School charter. I realize that the committee has accountability not only to the State of Delaware but also to the community. Therefore, consideration of an excellent learning institution should not be based solely upon test results reflected in an Excel spreadsheet.

My granddaughter was fortunate enough to be enrolled in the Gateway Lab School this school year. She has a minor learning disability and at times struggled processing mathematical functions in step order. Since she has been at Gateway her teachers have been providing the attention and mentoring that she has not received anywhere else. Teachers at Gateway are extremely dedicated to their students and understand their individual needs and work to overcome their disabilities. My granddaughter has blossomed since she has been there. She has a better understanding of the lessons that are taught and her grades have improved.

The Gateway Lab School is a viable asset that serves its students, parents and community well and produces positive academic results and accountability to sponsors, parents who choose them, and the public that funds them.

Please reconsider the committee's recommendation and *extend* Gateway Labs charter and ***DO NOT*** leave these children behind.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration.

Sincerely,

David. R. DeJoseph