

From: [Samantha Spruance](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: "Support for Keeping Gateway Lab School"
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 2:34:45 PM

To whom it may concern,

I am a learning specialist at Tower Hill School. I began my career in education at The Lab School in Washington D.C. - The school that Gateway is modeled after! I am shocked and saddened to learn that Gateway is closing because the students are not meeting state test scores. State testing will not measure a child with learning disabilities ability! The Gateway school provides the best education model possible. When I started with the students at The Lab School, they were all reading 3-4 years below grade level. They all graduated from The Lab School, attended college and are successful, hard working citizens. It does not make sense to deprive them of the resources that they need and put them into an educational setting that does not provide what they need.

Thank you,

Samantha Spruance

Regarding: Kevin MacMicking, 5th grader at Gateway Lab School

When I first heard that Gateway Lab School would be closing at the end of the year, I was deeply saddened. Our son is a 5th grader who attends Gateway. He started in 3rd grade. My husband and I have seen significant achievements since he started there.

As you know, Gateway Lab School starts providing education for grade three up through grade 8. The primary population of this school has either an IEP (60%) or a 504 (9%). Children come to this school because they are not achieving academic or social success in their feeder pattern school. Every child learns differently and education is not a “one size fits all”.

On an academic level, many parents have seen significant strides in their child's education. Some victories are instantly noticeable, others will take some time. It is unrealistic to expect 69% of the student body, who have struggled academically, to instantly improve their state test scores. They went through their feeder pattern school falling further and further behind. They have a lot of catching up to do. The fact that every year our school's state testing scores are steadily improving shows that these bright children are being taught in a manner that suits their needs and gives them a chance at a good education.

Gateway Lab School fosters a social atmosphere that embraces the unique personalities of the student body. Socialization is an integral part of any academic environment. Our children spend more time in the classroom than they do at home. My son was always anxious at school because he didn't understand the environment around him. At Gateway, we have seen his confidence in the classroom blossom. During the open house this summer, our son walked into the school with excitement and relaxed attitude that showed he felt like he was at home and comfortable with his surroundings. He knew he belonged there. You could see it in his posture and smile on his face.

Our son was bullied prior to starting Gateway. When he was in 1st grade, he was choked by another 1st grader on the school bus. Because he is an Aspergers child, the bullying had been going on for awhile before it escalated to that moment. Aspergers children have a difficult time expressing their feelings or even understanding them. It makes him extremely uncomfortable to even talk about it which allowed him to continually victimized. Had he not been choked, we would not have know the true extent of the bullying that was taking place. Of course that has left an impression on him. Gateway has offered a safe environment in which to learn.

Our son had also struggled with reading in the past. On 8/31/11, our son took the STAR Reading Test during his 2nd grade year. His score was 0.8 and his reading skills were listed as “comparable to those of an average Kindergartner after the eighth month of the school year”. We had him independently tested for a second time (once in kindergarten) on 9/9/11 for a cognitive and educational evaluation with Lynn Erb PhD. He was tested using the Woodcock Johnson III criteria. He tested in the “superior range” for intellectual and cognitive abilities. However, his testing showed that “he is exhibiting learning disabilities in the reading and written language areas”.

I am happy to say that our son's DCAS scores in both 3rd and 4th grade (when he started Gateway) for reading showed "Proficiency Level: Advanced". As I have kept records of my child's academic struggles and achievements, I would be more than happy to provide you with a copy of the testing information I have referenced. Having a safe environment with smaller classroom sizes and individualized attention have been a huge academic success for our child.

Closing Gateway Lab School would be a disservice to the community, the current student body and any other child who has different education needs. Please reconsider closing this school.

Sincerely,

Chris MacMicking, Concerned Parent

Secretary Mark Murphey,

We are writing to you today in regards to the recommendation of the Charter School Accountability Board to close Gateway Lab School. Our son has attended this school since it opened three years ago. Our son is an intelligent, curious individual who also happens to have ADHD. We were very excited for him to attend this school, for he had a very rough time while he attended his previous school. We loved the idea of smaller classroom sizes, individual attention, gym daily and music or art daily at Gateway Lab School. We have not been disappointed in the way Gateway Lab School has provided an education for our son.

During our son's first year he was below standard on the DCAS tests. His teachers developed an individualized education plan, otherwise known as an IEP. This was implemented with my son's best interest in mind. Throughout his 4th grade year he continued to show improvement. His spring DCAS testing had him at meets standard. We were of course very happy to see this. At the end of his 5th grade year he was meets standard in everything, except reading, where he was scored at advanced. He was so proud of himself. We were proud of him. Our son's IEP gets smaller every year. We are beginning to believe that one day he may not even need it. We believe that Gateway is the reason for this amazing progress. Before attending Gateway Hudson was struggling in the school he was attending.

Some of the most amazing rewards we have seen our son achieve at Gateway are not quantifiable in any exam. They are when our son says "I am smart." "I am good at math." These are things we were never sure we would hear when he began kindergarten, before Gateway Lab School was an option, and had a difficult time. Gateway gives our son a place where he belongs and is accepted. They see our son for who he is and not just as a boy with ADHD. They help him refocus when needed and give him the tools he needs to be successful in class.

He has learned how to play the guitar and the trombone at Gateway Lab School. His trombone education began in the 5th grade when he joined band and has happily continued into 6th grade, increasing his musical knowledge. He began learning guitar, in guitar club which is after school, when he was in 4th grade. He now hears certain songs on the radio and states "I think I might be able to play that" He is also in choir. He tells us things like "I am very talented. I can play the trombone, the guitar and sing." He loves to go to school everyday and gets upset if he is late for any reason.

We are proud that our son goes to Gateway Lab School, a school that has an incredibly dedicated staff. Every single staff member in that school is dedicated to making a positive difference in the lives of the students. We can see what a difference their hard work has made in the life of our son and in our family. We no longer worry about him struggling in school, academically or with his behavior, as we can see positive improvements in both.

Sincerely,

Craig and Maggie Burress

December 7, 2014

To Whom It May Concern:

My son is a current 3rd grader at Gateway Lab School. Gateway's charter may be revoked for the upcoming school year. This would be a tragic mistake for my son and the other students who attend Gateway.

My son has always struggled in school. He was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome in April of Kindergarten. In addition, he was diagnosed with ADHD in first grade. He does not have any behavioral problems, but is about a year behind in his academics. All Saints and St. Matthew's did the best job that they could, but he needed more services. He has been tutored since first grade after school and has attended Centreville School's Summer Program and University of Delaware's Summer Reading Program. I did tour Richey School (our feeder), but I thought the class sizes were too big for James. He really needs a lot of extra attention and help.

Gateway Lab School starts in 3rd grade, so we decided to give it a try. James qualified for an IEP for reading, math, OT, and Speech (social); His class size is 9 with a teacher and floating classroom aide. He is thriving! They go to school an extra hour a day so they can have 2 success blocks of reading and math (remediation in small groups) and gym class every day. He is so happy and his reading and Math skills have improved dramatically. Also, he is more social around other kids and he is confident! He just received his report card and it was the best one he has ever had..all A's and B's.

Gateway's test scores have been struggling. However, the 3rd grade score are higher than Richey Elementary, my feeder elementary school. Gateway had 65% of the students passing reading in 2014; Richey had 54.55%. Since reading is the academic area where he struggles

the most, he would be more successful at Gateway. 60% of the students have IEPs and another 9% have 504 plans. As an inclusion teacher myself, I know how many special education students struggle with standardized tests.

This year the instructional theme is rigor and the students have been doing more challenging tasks aligned to common core. Even though the test scores are lower than many of the other schools, they are showing progress. The state has allowed them to use the alternative assessment chart for the upcoming school years, but the state is sticking to the original one for this year. I think this is unfair.

Besides all of the services, Gateway provides extra curricular services that are not available at all of the other schools. Volleyball, golf, flag football, soccer, tennis and basketball are some of the sports that are offered. There is a very strong music program with a chorus, band, guitar club and drumming club. My son played golf and absolutely loved it. He has always struggled with team sports, but has gained so much confidence with the program.

Gateway is financially and organizationally sound. Please do not allow the state board to shut it down on test scores alone. The teachers there are amazing and are making a difference with the kids. I can see it with my own child. As an educator myself, I think Gateway is the best fit for my child. He is showing the most academic and social progress than any other educational setting. Please renew Gateway Lab School's charter.

Sincerely,

Tina Horgan, English Teacher at Delcastle Technical High School and parent of James Horgan, 3rd grader at Gateway Lab School

PATRICIA M. BLEVINS
President Pro Tempore
STATE SENATOR
7TH District



SENATE
STATE OF DELAWARE
411 LEGISLATIVE AVENUE
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

December 4, 2014

The Honorable Mark Murphy
Secretary, Dept. of Education
401 Federal Street, Suite #2
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Secretary Murphy:

As you prepare to make your decision on whether to close the Gateway Lab Charter School, I would like to provide some input on the matter.

I have been contacted by a number of parents and grandparents regarding their satisfaction with Gateway Lab Charter School. They have stated that their children and grandchildren are finally blossoming, both developmentally and educationally, in this uniquely supportive environment. For the first time in their lives, these students are learning to love learning. These are children who have faced significant challenges in their previous schools and many had lost confidence in themselves and their abilities. This could not be reversed overnight, but Gateway Lab has shown that these children can regain their confidence and can find a renewed zest for learning.

We know that this school is not one that can be judged by test scores. Ideally, I would like us to find a new way to measure progress in schools that serve students with special needs. Additionally, we should consider giving this kind of school extra support to succeed, as they serve a population of students that traditional schools have a great deal of difficulty serving.

If Gateway Lab is closed, the test scores of these students will not rise. Test scores will remain the same, but will simply be attributed to different schools. What is most concerning is the uprooting and destabilization these children will certainly experience should they be required to attend a new school next year. These students, who desperately need creative interventions and a stable environment, will have to cope with yet another impediment to their overall growth.

For their sake, and for the sake of an innovative school with an exciting concept, I sincerely urge you to choose to keep this school open, and am eager for the State to find a way to help it succeed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Patricia M. Blevins".

Patricia M. Blevins
President Pro Tempore
Delaware State Senate

PMB:clr

PAUL S. BAUMBACH
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
23rd District



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE OF DELAWARE
411 LEGISLATIVE AVENUE
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

RECEIVED

DEC 8 2014

Dear Ms. Johnson and Secretary Murphy,

Please share this letter with the state Board of Education, in their consideration of the request to renew or not the charter of the Gateway Lab School.

I have joined several of my colleagues in a separate letter, requesting that the Board and Secretary renew Gateway's charter and continue to monitor their progress.

I would like to reinforce that request, but to add an additional perspective. I recognize that the Charter School Accountability Committee (CSAC) has narrow requirements for its largely quantitative review. The Board and Secretary are deliberately provided discretion with these decisions, for extenuating circumstances fall into a very wide range, and especially in the case of children's education, it is imperative that we look beyond hard numbers. Frankly, a school primarily serving students with high-needs is one that is most deserving of this additional consideration. Please grant Gateway this consideration.

As I understand it from Ms. Johnson's December 2nd correspondence, Gateway has already taken two steps this past summer, to adopt a new enrollment preference and to adopt an alternate performance framework. As I further understand it, the CSAC's review and conclusions are prompted from the school's failure to meet its prior performance framework's requirements. I find that the new school leader, the execution of recommendations from the University of Delaware's Delaware Academy for School Leadership, the hiring of the new Principal of Instructional Focus, the curriculum change, along with the new enrollment preference and alternative performance framework warrant the Board and Secretary granting the school the opportunity to see the fruit of these labors. As long as the Board and Secretary believe that these steps, several of which you have already approved, are intended to produce positive results, then I suggest that Gateway deserves a reprieve until June 2016. During this time, I would hope that the DOE and the Charter School Accountability Committee will regularly monitor the schools progress under the alternate performance framework.

I am certain that you have already heard, loudly, how pleased that parents of students at Gateway are with the school, and the services that it provides to their children. This school, these children, and these families have special needs. Please match those with your special consideration, and please extend their charter, subject to closer ongoing review, through June 2016.

Thank you very much for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul Baumbach".

Paul Baumbach
State Representative
23rd District

JOSEPH E. MIRO
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
22ND District



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE OF DELAWARE
411 LEGISLATIVE AVENUE
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

COMMITTEES
Appropriations
Education
Health & Human Development
Joint Finance

Secretary of Education

December 4, 2014

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The Honorable Mark Murphy
Delaware Department of Education
Townsend Building
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, DE 19901

Dear Secretary Murphy,

I am writing to urge you and the State Board of Education to renew the charter of Gateway Lab School at the State Board of Education's next meeting on December 18, 2014.

On behalf of a number of parents who have contacted my office with concerns that the school's charter would not be renewed, resulting in the school's closure, I am writing in support of the charter being renewed and Gateway Lab remaining open.

As you are aware, Gateway Lab serves a particular student demographic in the northern New Castle County area, with more than half of enrollment determined as special education. Gateway Lab's approach to learning is highly-tailored to students who have had trouble achieving in a traditional school setting. Please consider the personal testimony I received recently from a proud parent whose child attends Gateway Lab:

She's expanding her mind and abilities with the help and support of the wonderful teachers at Gateway. We have already had (her) IEP and were so impressed at how well they seemed to know and understand her after only two months. Last Thursday night we sat in a packed room full of Gateway parents and listened to testimonies about happy thriving students.

We heard from many parents who shared their personal experiences of quantitative evidence of growth in both academic and social skills in each and every one of their children. Many of these children were unsuccessful in feeder pattern and parochial schools.

Like the parents and citizens who have contacted my office, I, too, am concerned that if Gateway Lab were to close, many of the students would be forced to return to a school that offers only a traditional educational style, where they, unfortunately, had previously been under-served.

Please consider all other alternatives with closure of the school as the last possible solution. I urge you to renew Gateway Lab School's charter. As members of academia, you and the State Board of Education members understand that all children learn differently. And, when a student has trouble thriving in a traditional school setting, it may take more than just traditional measurements to evaluate a child's overall academic performance in order to determine how much progress is actually being made.

Because I am unable to attend the public hearing on this issue on December 10, 2014, I am also sending a copy of this letter to the State Board to be included as part of the public comment record. Thank you for your careful consideration of this request and please feel free to contact me directly to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Joseph E. Miro". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "J" and "M".

Joseph E. Miro
State Representative
22nd District

cc: Delaware State Board of Education
Jennifer Nagourney, Department of Education
Catherine Dolan, Gateway Lab School
Nathaniel Schwartz



DELAWARE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE OF DELAWARE
LEGISLATIVE HALL
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

Secretary Mark Murphy
Delaware Department of Education
401 Federal St Ste 2
Dover DE, 19901

VIA US MAIL AND FAX

December 8, 2014

Dear Secretary Murphy,

In response to the recent review of The Gateway Lab Charter School, and the possible closure, we request the Department of Education's Charter School Accountability Committee reverse their decision.

The State of Delaware offers many alternatives in education for our children. The Gateway Lab Charter School educates children with Individualized Education Programs and 504 Plans, a unique group of students, which have found positive results because of this program.

My colleagues and I have received countless emails and calls for support. Based on the information shared by the Gateway Lab Charter School we request that school remain open.

On December 10, at the public hearing, please consider our support in favor of the Gateway Lab Charter School remaining open as you make your decision.

Sincerely,

Karl Poore *Margaret Rose Henry* *Valeri Longhurst* *Anthony A. Hall-Long*

Senator Poore

Senator Henry

Representative Longhurst

Senator Hall-Long

cc Catherine Dolan, Head of School, Gateway Lab Charter School (via US mail)

Dear Charter School Committee,

My son is a thirteen year old boy , he was diagnosed with a neurological brain disorder which causes him to feel very irritable and anxious and culminates in tantrums and rages, these moods shift from being annoyed, silly, goofy, angry or irritable, he can descend into periods of intense boredom, depression, and social withdrawal, fraught with suicidal thoughts; along with this is ADHD, a neurological and behavioral disorder, this disorder robs you of executive and other essential functions that we so often take for granted until you become aware of there importance in everyday life. Zack's moods shift abruptly and without warning, they can last for hours or days, leaving me on high alert for his safety. These episodes leave him exhausted and often Zack is in tears because he is helpless to control these actions. I have educated myself about this heartbreaking illness and have come to recognize the magnitude of the problem. I think of Zack as having a spasm in the emotional part of his brain, he seems to be in an altered state of consciousness and have realized that my anger and my desire to assert my will over his is like pouring fuel onto a fire, screaming and threatening him inflame the situation and are damaging to him. No child should ever have to contend with tis level of emotions in such a little body and a developing brain, this has robbed my son of a normal childhood and of those precious early years of learning. Zack has a difficult time in social settings and does not pick up on social cues like we do. This devastating illness is life long but we have found the right treatment and Zack has overcome most of the symptoms. Because Zack was not diagnosed until he was he was almost ten years old he has lost all those years of precious learning, always held back a grade and never able to understand what was going on around him, feeling lost, in fact he used to refer to himself as a loser, my heart would break. Zack would often tell me, mommy I want to learn but I can't, he was always an outsider looking in at everyone else. Gateway has opened Zack's eyes, I see the lights on, his brain is working overtime to catch up, it has only been three months and I see so many wonderful changes in my son, he is excited about homework, sports, science and creating things. Gateway is giving my son a chance to be happy, to learn and to become a productive confident man. Something so grand and so wonderful is happening at Gateway, the staff, the teachers, all in harmony with one another, knowing how to put it all together for our children is such a treasured gift and so very priceless that it would be insane to close the doors beautiful school. I want to thank you for your patience.

Sincerely

Valerie and Zack Ward

December 8, 2014

Support for Gateway Lab School

To: Mark Murphy, State of Delaware Secretary of Education

Re: Charter School Accountability Committee' decision not to renew the charter for Gateway Lab School

Dear Secretary Murphy,

In July of 2014 my husband and I became legal guardians for our granddaughter, Kayla Gardner. Kayla's mother enrolled her at the Gateway Lab School for the fall of 2011. Kayla has attended Gateway Lab School for fourth, fifth and sixth grades and is currently in her second trimester of seventh grade. The decision to enroll Kayla at Gateway Lab School was made in light of her documented learning disability in mathematics and her diagnosed Attention Deficit Disorder-Combined Type and Anxiety after her poor social and academic progress in the private school in which she was previously enrolled.

Given that we did not have legal guardianship and custody of Kayla until this summer, I am not able to provide you with her measurable academic growth over the last almost three and one half years as I write this letter. I am confident that I can meet with Gateway Lab School leadership to receive a copy of Kayla's previous report cards and her state testing scores. I am, however, able to attest to the fact that she has made great strides in her social and emotional growth during the time she has been enrolled at Gateway Lab School. I am also able to attest to the care, concern and professionalism of the faculty and staff that assisted us by providing us with information to assist Kayla when it became evident that she was negatively impacted by serious attendance issues. I am also pleased that the faculty of Gateway Lab School has used the MAP testing to provide an evidence based analysis of Kayla's skills. She has been receiving assigned work through Achieve 3000 that is specifically determined differentiated instruction targeted to help her improve academic mastery.

During the past four months, as legal guardians, my husband and I have had the opportunity to interact with Gateway Lab School students and their families. I am edified by the depth of commitment and determination shown by the parents of Kayla's classmates. These parents are working with the faculty and staff of Gateway Lab School to provide the best possible education for their children knowing that their sons and daughters learning challenges cannot be addressed in a traditional public school setting.

The administration of the Gateway Lab School has taken great strides forward to structure and evidence based curriculum of instruction to meet the learning needs of a school community where approximately 60% of the enrolled students are documented as having learning disabilities. I am eager to see the ratings of performance for Gateway Lab School when the Alternative Framework for Assessment is used in 2015.

I am requesting that you grant Gateway Lab School a renewal of their charter. All indications are that Ms. Dolan and Ms. Solomon are guiding the school's faculty and staff to strengthen instruction and provide for measurable growth in student achievement.

Sincerely,


Susan M. Gardner

Grandmother/Legal Guardian of Kayla Gardner



DELAWARE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
STATE OF DELAWARE
LEGISLATIVE HALL
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

Secretary Mark Murphy
Delaware Department of Education
820 North French Street
Wilmington, DE 19801

December 4, 2014

Dear Secretary Murphy,

We are writing to you today on behalf of the families whose children attend Gateway Lab School. Many families have communicated to us expressing their concerns regarding the proposed closure of Gateway. We are aware of the Charter School Accountability Committee recommendation of non-renewal for Gateway Lab School and we recognize the work the committee has done. We do have concerns as to why Gateway Lab School has been recommended for non-renewal but Delaware Academy of Public Safety and Security and Positive Outcomes were both recommended for renewal under similar Academic Framework outcomes. Delaware Academy of Public Safety and Security did not meet the Academic or the Financial Frameworks and Positive Outcomes did not meet the Academic Framework; but both were renewed. Additionally, Positive Outcomes was named a Partnership Zone School in 2010 and received an additional \$600,000 in funding from the Race to the Top Grant. Positive Outcomes did not meet the standards on the Academic Framework in 2011, 2012, or 2013. It took four years and over \$600,000 of additional funding before Positive Outcomes met the Academic Framework standards. How can the state not provide the same assistance to Gateway?

	<u>Gateway Lab School</u>		<u>DE Academy of Public Safety & Security</u>		<u>Positive Outcomes Charter</u>
Enrollment	208 students		330 students		120 students
Special Education	58.70%		13.30%		63.30%
Low Income	27.90%		29.40%		38.30%

Gateway Lab School serves 58.7% special education students compared to the state average of 13.6%; this is over four times Delaware's average. The numbers alone demonstrate the needs that this school fulfills for the families within our state. The school's mission statement states: "It will provide an extraordinary educational opportunity for children who are struggling to achieve academic success in a traditional school environment, utilizing research-based intervention strategies and a highly tailored, arts-based learning environment that seeks to identify and capitalize on a student's strengths and interests."

Gateway Lab School has made significant changes over the last year: the board hired a new school leader Catherine Dolan. The University of Delaware's Delaware Academy for School Leadership group was brought in to complete a Comprehensive Success Review. The Comprehensive Success Review report included the current status. Areas for improvement and strategies of how to achieve the goals were also mentioned. The Comprehensive Success Review report, recommended the school hire someone to just focus on instruction, so Stacy Solomon was assigned as Principal of Instructional Focus. The school's curriculum was changed for English Language Arts and mathematics.

If you agree with the recommendation of the Charter School Accountability Committee and close Gateway Lab School, you need to ask yourself, "Will these students be better off with their school closed or will they be better served continuing where they are? Will Gateway students receive the same individualized learning that they are currently receiving? Will the students return to their feeder schools and be placed in classrooms with class sizes of 8 to 14 students? Will the students be engaged and still want to go to school every day like they do currently? Will their families be able to be as involved as they are at Gateway?"

We respectfully request that you renew Gateway's charter and monitor their progress. We all want what is best for children: keeping Gateway open is what is best for the students and their families.

Sincerely,



Representative Kim Williams



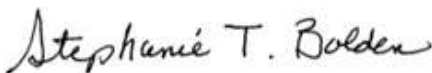
Representative Michael A. Barbieri



Representative Paul Baumbach



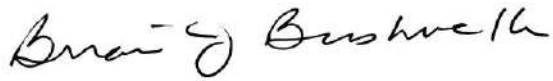
Representative Andria Bennett



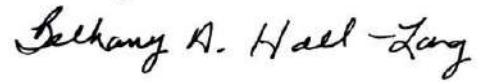
Representative Stephanie Bolden



Representative Gerald Brady



Senator Brian Bushweller



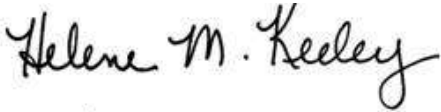
Senator Bethany Hall-Long



Representative Deborah Hudson



Representative James Johnson



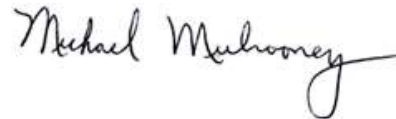
Representative Helene Keeley



Representative John Kowalko



Representative John L. Mitchell



Representative Michael Mulrooney



Representative Ed Osienski



Representative W. Charles Paradee



Senator Karen Peterson



Representative Charles Potter



Representative John Viola

SUPPORT for GATEWAY LAB School

We are speaking on behalf of our son Joshua Watt and the Gateway Lab School. Joshua is a 7th grade student at Gateway. As a student with special needs, Joshua is thriving academically, socially and behaviorally. Joshua loves it there.

We learned of Gateway after hearing about it through one of the therapists at our “normal feeder pattern school”. It was suggested that we “look into it.”

We researched it and learned of its teaching methods for children with learning differences. As parents, learning about Gateway and their mission to help teach children with learning differences was that.....FINALLY.....someone gets it that our sons learn differently than “normal kids.” We applied to the school for both of our sons. Thankfully, both were accepted.

YES OUR SONS ARE NOT NORMAL.

Our older son, Matthew came into Gateway in the opening school year of 2011 entering 6th grade. His IEP has been in-place since he was a student at RPLC. Matt is classified as “developmentally delayed.” At Gateway, Matt thrived academically and socially. Matt’s class work, quizzes, tests etc. were all very good. He was on the honor roll just about every marking period. He even joined the basketball team! However, Matt tested very poorly initially on his DCAS scores. Yes they improved over the next couple of years, but not to the level of a “normal student.” Today, Matt is a freshman in high school. He is succeeding in his school work and his grades reflect it. Matt was one of only a handful of freshmen that made the honor roll for the first marking period all while being on the school’s swim team and practicing six nights per week. AMAZING progress that we attribute to Gateway Lab School for building Matt’s foundation for high school.

Our youngest son is Joshua.

Joshua also came to GLS in 2011 into the 4th grade. He has *Asperger’s Syndrome*. Asperger kids learn differently. Because he learns differently, the “normal feeder pattern” school could not accommodate him to the level that Gateway is capable of doing. In the “feeder pattern schools” his IEP’s was not followed completely, and he could not get the attention that he needed to succeed. In a class of +25 students, how could a teacher spend the extra time to help a student who learns differently than the rest of the class?

We found the answer was that teachers could not spend their valuable time on him and what he needed. He became the opposite of “No Child Left Behind” by being the child being left out.

Gateway comes along with their new programs, methods and ways of teaching. A school geared to teaching the required curriculum but presenting it in a different way so that children who learn differently can learn.

Joshua is smart. He understands he has neurological issues and that he is different than “normal students”. At Gateway, he is among students who have needs and conditions as he does. He has a strong commitment to what is truthful, honest, fair, and just. He has the morality to know what is right and what is wrong when he sees it; whether he is involved or observes it happening to others. As I said earlier, Joshua is thriving academically, socially and behaviorally thanks to the Gateway Lab School.

Have any of you stepped into our school? If you had, you would feel the positive and caring energy that is present there. You would get the feeling that “I want to be here” and that “YES, I know my child will succeed here.”

Have you spend time with the students? How about the parents? Have you asked any of us what we think of Gateway? If you had spent any time with any of the parents or guardians, you would find that we all believe in Gateway. You would learn that Gateway has been a God send for our children.

Yes, they may not take tests well. They may score poorly on standardized tests, but that does mean that they have not learned the lessons. It only means that they scored poorly on the standardized test.....where the standardized test that Gateway is being measured against, DCAS, is in of itself, now obsolete and not being used.

So what happens if you decide to close Gateway?

The majority of the children at Gateway have special needs. Do you realize what you would be doing? You would be freely choosing to allow our children to fail in the “regular schools.” They will be picked on and bullied because they ARE DIFFERENT. Is that what you are freely choosing? Do you really believe that is

acceptable rather than educational success at Gateway? How do you justify taking the option to attend Gateway from the parents?

Metaphorically speaking, you are freely choosing to allow the weakest of the flock to be lost! Do you justify that with the rationale that.....as long as the ninety and nine % are corralled and standardized..... that the loss of the weakest 1% is acceptable?

Gateway Lab School is NOT a charter school that cherry picks the “Best of the Best or the cream of the crop” like Wilmington Charter School or Odyssey. It is not Conrad. It is not Cab Calloway. It is not Moyer Academy. It is not Newark Charter. It is not DMA. WE ARE Gateway Lab School where many of the 1%, that you have deemed as an acceptable loss, go to school.

If you elect to close Gateway, you are accepting the premise that it is OK to set these children up for failure. YOU are freely choosing and accepting that. You accept that you will helping these special needs children to be a burden on society because they could not get an education in the “feeder pattern school.”

Isn't it easier to accept that **you HELPED** these children to become productive members of society by allowing them to get an education in a school that is designed for children such as ours? That is what Gateway does. It is what they do and it is what they do well.

So when the dust settles and you make your decision, remember that “there by the grace of God” went you and your children. Why would you take the Gateway option away from the children who need it?

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffrey and MaryEllen Watt
511 Chapel Court
Hockessin, DE 19707
302-239-1177

16 Wimbledon Way

Tabernacle, NJ 08088

December 3, 2014

Delaware Department of Education

Carvel State Office Building

820 North French Street

Wilmington, Delaware

To all whom it may concern:

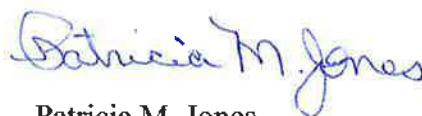
It has been brought to my attention that the Delaware Department of Education will be reviewing and determining the fate of Delaware's charter schools. As a retired public school teacher who has taught in Delaware and other states, I am opposed to charter schools as a rule. However, there are certain charter schools that provide essential educational needs for some students.

One such charter school is the Gateway Lab School. Gateway Lab does not accept the best and brightest as college prep schools do, they accept students who have fallen behind in the public school setting. Approximately sixty-nine percent of Gateway Lab students have IEPs or 504 plans. Thus their success or failure should not be judged by the same academic standards as college preparatory schools and military academies. Gateway Lab's mission statement clearly defines their goal to provide an "extraordinary educational opportunity for children struggling to achieve academic success . . ."

I personally am aware of their success. My great-nephew, while attending a Delaware public school, was three years behind in reading, being bullied, and hated school. After attending Gateway Lab, he is reading above his age level, making friends, and looks forward to going to school.

Since the state has the duty to provide the best educational experience for all students, programs need to reflect the individual needs of each child. Since Gateway Lab accepts students with IEPs and 504 plans, the charter school is providing for the special needs of these students. Therefore, I respectfully request that the Delaware Department of Education renew the charter for Gateway Lab School.

Sincerely,



Patricia M. Jones

From: [Rachael Coffey](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Comments Gateway Charter proposed closing
Date: Tuesday, December 09, 2014 5:58:24 AM

I have seen first hand what a wonderful effect this school has on children. A good friend's daughter attends this school. I watched this child struggle in another local school for three years. With an IEP, with help from the school and outside tutoring Gateway made a HUGE difference in her achievement and enjoyment of school. Her reading level has increased to grade-level, her math skills are now at grade level - because of this school. Instead of fighting learning she is excelling and excited to attend school every day.

As a high school teacher I see every day how the current school system disenfranchises students that have differing learning styles and challenges. Expecting a school that is specifically for children with learning challenges to perform at the same rate on the same testing standards is not only ridiculous, it is pedagogically incorrect. THE SUCCESS OF THIS SCHOOL SHOULD BE MEASURED BY THE GROWTH OF THE INDIVIDUAL CHILDREN ACADEMICALLY. This is the true measure of the success of the school - not if they proceed at the same rate as all other schools. This school is for students that are different, it should be measured differently also.

This one-size, one-standard fits all model of education has to change. Will you be the first state to realize this? I sure hope so.

Thank you.

“When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the world.”

~ John Muir

From: [Jesse Samluk](#)
To: [infocso](#); [Johnson Donna R](#); [Nagourney Jennifer](#); [Murphy Mark](#)
Subject: Email for support of Gateway Lab School
Date: Tuesday, December 09, 2014 9:04:13 AM

Good morning,

I am writing this email to express my support of Gateway Lab school. As a taxpayer, I feel that keeping the doors open to this school is a very wise investment. I've seen firsthand the difference this school has made to someone I know personally. Before she transferred, this person was in a parochial school where she did okay. But when she was transferred to Gateway, she blossomed. She is now excelling in her academics, getting involved in a lot of activities, and to top it off, she's not as stressed. I'm not trying to put down the parochial school in any way, but I think that Gateway is better equipped to teach students with learning difficulties compared to those students who do not.

What I am frustrated about is the fact that the recommendation for closure depends on standardized test scores, where this is Gateway's weak point. Now, let's step back and think about this for a moment. Do you really think that kids with learning difficulties, which include having a hard time concentrating for extended periods of time, are going to be able to excel at these tests? Who are we kidding here? For the past several years it just seems that all the State cares about are these test scores so that the federal dollars keep rolling in. How is that benefitting any kid in the state who is having a hard time? Simple answer - it's not.

And to add to that point, if Gateway is closed, I would imagine that some (if not most) of these kids are going to be put into their respective feeder schools. You know how some of these feeder schools are. Do you really think that kids with learning issues are going to thrive there? Not only from a learning ability standpoint, but the potential bullying? Yeah, that's what I thought.

In closing, I hope that Gateway retains its charter. It's the only chance that these kids have at an awesome education.

Jesse Samluk

From: [Nagourney Jennifer](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: FW: Gateway Lab School - 8th Grade Math Teacher's Perspective
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 9:42:10 PM

From: Murphy Mark
Sent: Sunday, December 07, 2014 9:30 AM
To: Nagourney Jennifer
Subject: Fwd: Gateway Lab School - 8th Grade Math Teacher's Perspective

Sent from my Verizon Wireless 4G LTE DROID

----- Original Message -----

Subject: Gateway Lab School - 8th Grade Math Teacher's Perspective
From: Stephen Clark <stephen.clark@gl.s.k12.de.us>
To: Murphy Mark <Mark.Murphy@DOE.K12.DE.US>
CC:

Mark Murphy,

I am writing to you about the possible closing of Gateway Lab School. I am the 8th grade math teacher here and am in my second year.

We have made amazing improvements in the school in the last year and I wanted to let you know about our math curriculum improvements. Last summer I worked on the curriculum committee and investigated different math programs. I finally settled on CMP3 which is an excellent curriculum for problem based learning, higher order questioning, and team learning. The elementary school also chose a new math curriculum by the same publisher (Pearson). The change has made a great difference in the achievement of my students. Students are engaged in learning activities based on the Common Core standards as well as working daily with Standards for Mathematical Practice.

This curriculum change is definitely not an "instant cure." For example, I have had to stop and review prerequisite materials that students never learned (or didn't remember learning) in order to continue with certain portions of the curriculum. However, next year when the now 7th grade enters the 8th grade they will have learned the prerequisite material. And the following year when the now 6th grade enters 8th grade they will be even more prepared to achieve in this curriculum. This will improve every year. In addition to this I wrote the sample math unit based on the CMP3 curriculum for our school renewal. This unit was approved! Unfortunately the board of education seems to believe that our improvements are irrelevant. I hope that you can share our future vision of success for our incredible students and will give us any support possible in the upcoming weeks.

In addition, I recently started the 8th grade Robotics Club. We have joined First Lego League and will work with the EV3 robot. Around 30% of our 8th grade are in this club. I had to turn the younger students away. Imaging if our school continued and next year 30%

of the middle school was involved in robotics! If we continue, I will make this happen. The 8th grade will also visit Dickinson High School to learn about the robotics program on 12/17/14.

Let me know if you have any questions, I have a great vision for the future of our school and I hope you have gotten a taste of that.

Steve Clark

Gateway Lab School

8th Grade Math

From: [Nagourney Jennifer](mailto:Nagourney_Jennifer@infocso.org)
To: [infocso](mailto:infocso@gatewaylab.org)
Subject: FW: Gateway Lab School Charter Renewal
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 9:43:39 PM

From: Terry Short [mailto:tshort5@verizon.net]
Sent: Sunday, December 07, 2014 8:54 PM
To: Heffernan Pat; Melendez Jorge; Hughes Randall; Gray Teri; Coverdale Gregory; Rutt Barbara; Whittaker Terry; infocso; Johnson Donna R; Nagourney Jennifer; Murphy Mark
Subject: Gateway Lab School Charter Renewal

Dear Secretary Murphy and Board of Education Members,

As a parent of a child who attends Gateway Lab School, I urge you to renew its charter.

My child attended district feeder schools until third grade. I watched her begin her educational journey with an innocent enthusiasm, a genuine curiosity, and zest for learning. As her school experience unfolded, however, I witnessed steadily decreasing test scores and sagging confidence. Despite our many efforts to assist her through the district feeder schools we were unable to find a learning style that suited her. When she was retained and had to repeat second grade, we agreed with the staff that it might prove beneficial and allow her additional time to mature. When this course of action did not help her catch up with her peers we were dismayed. Over a three year period we had watched our happy, effervescent kindergarten student turn into a frustrated and angry second grader. We truly knew it was time for a new course of action when she would get physically ill each Sunday night in anticipation of Monday morning and a new week of school.

Despite some initial skepticism, we decided to visit Gateway Lab School. After meeting with some of the staff and understanding their mission, we decided to give it a try. The immediate improvement in our child's attitude about attending was evident. Our happy child had returned! As a result of Gateway's alternate teaching methods and its caring staff, my child's ability to learn has been fostered. She has consistently achieved Honor Roll status and we have watched her self confidence bloom. The new found confidence has allowed her to participate in many different activities which have further augmented her intellectual and emotional development.

I respectfully submit that closing Gateway Lab School at this juncture would cut short its mission and stifle my daughter's potential. Please allow them additional time to fully realize their vision for my child's future.

Sincerely,
Terry Short

From: [Nagourney Jennifer](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: FW: Gateway Lab School Charter Renewal
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 9:43:13 PM

From: Murphy Mark
Sent: Sunday, December 07, 2014 5:02 PM
To: Nagourney Jennifer
Subject: Fw: Gateway Lab School Charter Renewal

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

From: Denise <denisejohnson56@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 7, 2014 1:36 PM
To: Murphy Mark
Cc: infocso; Whittaker Terry; Rutt Barbara; Coverdale Gregory; Gray Teri; randall.huyghes@doe.k12.de.us; Melendez Jorge; Heffernan Pat; Johnson Donna R; Nagourney Jennifer
Subject: Gateway Lab School Charter Renewal

Dear Secretary Murphy and Members of the Board of Education,

As a parent of a student currently attending Gateway Lab School I am writing to urge you to consider renewing its charter. The progress in my daughter's grades and state test scores is proof that Gateway's alternate teaching methods are helping my daughter and preparing her for a successful academic future.

When my daughter attended the district feeder school she struggled severely with testing, classwork and ultimately socially due to the continuing decline of her grades and a lack of understanding of the material being taught. In a classroom with a student to teacher ratio of 27/1, she did not receive the attention or direction that she required to succeed. In her classroom at Gateway the ratio is 13/2 which allows her to be less distracted by other students and to receive the assistance she needs daily in order to continue progressing in school. While attending the district feeder school, she marked "below proficiency" in all core subjects and was retained in second grade because she was not receiving the attention needed to understand the classwork. As a result of having to repeat second grade, she suffered socially and her confidence continued to decline. At Gateway most of her classmates and friends have suffered with the same struggles so she feels less isolated. Knowing that she is just like everyone else at "her school" her confidence has grown. As a result of her increased confidence, her grades have progressed from "below proficiency" to

"meets and exceeds" in all core subjects. She has attained Honor Roll status since she started at Gateway in 3rd grade.

In addition to individual subject grades, her state test scores have also continued to improve yearly. Her instructional reading score has increased 159 points from the beginning of 3rd grade to the end of 5th grade. The accountability score in reading has increased 173 points from the beginning of 3rd grade to the end of 5th grade. At this rate she should meet the state testing standards in reading for both categories by 8th grade. Math instructional score has increased 133 points from 3rd to 5th grade and the accountability score increased 138 points from 3rd grade to 5th grade. At this rate she should meet state testing standards this year. Her test scores at the end of last year were below state standards but were above district standards. If Gateway is being judged on testing scores alone, my daughter's results are a perfect example of the amazing work being done at the school. Additional time is needed to allow my daughter to meet the state standards.

We know that all children learn differently and the dedicated faculty at Gateway has taken that knowledge and transformed it into action. They understand that children with hyperactivity disorders and attention deficit disorders need an outlet so that their disorders do not impede learning. At Gateway my daughter participates in physical education daily and in her words, that activity "gets the energies out" so she can focus while in her core classes. Art and music classes are attended on alternating days which provides the creative outlet needed by my daughter. These are all things that she would be denied at a traditional feeder school. As a result, her ability to focus and be successful in her education would be negatively impacted.

I urge you to renew Gateway Lab School's charter. Please give them additional time to prove that the unique environment they provide for our kids is truly helping them to succeed in school and in life.

Thank you,
Denise M. Johnson

From: [Nagourney Jennifer](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: FW: Gateway Lab School Charter Renewal
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 9:42:17 PM

From: Denise [mailto:denisejohnson56@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, December 07, 2014 1:37 PM
To: Murphy Mark
Cc: infocso; Whittaker Terry; Rutt Barbara; Coverdale Gregory; Gray Teri; randall.huyghes@doe.k12.de.us; Melendez Jorge; Heffernan Pat; Johnson Donna R; Nagourney Jennifer
Subject: Gateway Lab School Charter Renewal

Dear Secretary Murphy and Members of the Board of Education,

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I urge you to renew Gateway Lab School's charter. Please give them additional time to prove that the unique environment they provide for our kids is truly helping them to succeed in school and in life.

Thank you,
Denise M. Johnson

From: [Catherine Dolan](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Fw: Gateway Lab School
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 9:54:40 AM

A letter of support from Dr. McReynolds.

Catherine Dolan
Head of School
Gateway Lab School
2501 Centerville Rd.
Wilmington, DE 19808
302-633-4091 P
302-633-5680 F
<http://www.gatewaylabschool.org>

From: E McReynolds <mcreynolds_associates@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 03, 2014 1:01 PM
To: Catherine Dolan
Subject: Gateway Lab School

As a practicing pediatrician for 40 years, I have cared for many children with Attention Deficit Disorder and Learning Disabilities. Medication and balanced health care only do so much for these patients. They require educational attention that is only available to many through Gateway Lab School. Many of my patients, e.g. Michael Kempiski and Quadir Davis, really need this service. I commend this work and encourage the State to continue this essential service.

Edward W. McReynolds, M.D., F.A.A.P.

From: [Nagourney Jennifer](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: FW: Gateway Lab School/Nathan Beyer
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 9:43:56 PM

From: Chris Beyer [mailto:beyaut@yahoo.com]
Sent: Sunday, December 07, 2014 6:14 PM
To: nathaniel.r.schwartz@dupont.com; Johnson Donna R; Nagourney Jennifer; Murphy Mark; Heffernan Pat; Melendez Jorge; Hughes Randall; Gray Teri; Coverdale Gregory; Rutt Barbara; Whittaker Terry; infocso; Jaques, Jr Earl
Subject: Gateway Lab School/Nathan Beyer

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Christopher Beyer and I'm writing this letter in response to the issue of my son, Nathan Beyer, and Gateway Lab School. I know you're looking for information of factual based proof (which there is more than plenty of with our students) about how this school has made improvements and impressions. What needs to be taken into consideration is the battle that must be fought by both teachers and students before these improvements in learning can be made. These improvements aren't always cut and dry and don't always work the same for every child, therefore changes may not be seen immediately on paper and in grades.

I am able to relate to this and my son's situation because throughout my life I've fought this same battle. Thirty-six years ago I was the first grader who was sitting in the hallway in a mainstream school because I didn't learn like the other children. "Christopher is lazy and doesn't apply himself" was always my problem, they said. It took my mother, who stepped up, realizing somebody was missing something, and, after visits with my pediatrician, a rash of testing began. I was diagnosed with dyslexia and other learning disabilities. Shortly after, I was enrolled in a program at Delaware Learning Center. I attended that school for three years and then onto Shue-Medill School. Both of these schools helped me to adapt by teaching different skills, both socially and educationally, in order to be mainstreamed back into a normal learning environment. I was able to graduate high school with my original class.

I see my son struggle with the same issues I did and I see him learning the same skills to adapt to them. Gateway Lab School and it's teachers are the ones responsible for his adaptation of skills. This school is needed by him and the other 211 other students who attend.

Thank you for your time,

Christopher Beyer

Please do not close Gateway Lab School. Before Gateway Lab School my sister would always say she “can’t read”. Now she’s reading without fightingly mother. She do not feel like an outcast at that school she “fits in” and it makes her want to learn as no one laugh at her when she makes mistakes. She has thrived at that school. The teacher work well with the students. The students work together as a team and no one feels left out and I can see the change in instead of sitting quietly she now converse with people around her.

Sincerely,
Nicole Pottinger

From: [Nagourney Jennifer](mailto:Nagourney_Jennifer@infocso.org)
To: [infocso](mailto:infocso@delaware.gov)
Subject: FW: Renew Gateway Lab School's charter
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 11:09:33 PM

From: Leslie Mitchell [mailto:lm1.mail_it13@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, December 08, 2014 8:04 PM
To: Murphy Mark; Johnson Donna R; Nagourney Jennifer; Heffernan Pat; Melendez Jorge; Hughes Randall; Gray Teri; Coverdale Gregory; Rutt Barbara; Whittaker Terry; Jaques, Jr Earl; infocso
Subject: Renew Gateway Lab School's charter

Dear Secretary Murphy, Delaware State Board of Education Members, and Friends,

I am writing to rally your support and the State Board of Education to renew the Charter license of Gateway Lab School (GLS) for 5 years. A hearing is scheduled for [December 10, 2014 at 6pm](#) and Secretary Mark Murphy will be making a final decision at the next Board of Education meeting [on December 18th](#).

As an active parent, I am very concerned since my son, diagnosed with Ataxia SCA-7, just started his first year in 5th grade at GLS this past August. He has made remarkable strides in such a short time compared to his experiences in the public school system. For example: Public School DECAS Assessments in the past 2 years dropped from meet standards to below: Reading-758 to 701, Mathematics- 684 - 683 with IEP accommodations. Last year, he scored 386, below range, in Social Studies.

After testing in the Spring 2014, he remarked that much of what was on the DECAS Assessment was not taught in class nor in the materials sent home that we reviewed together. He became unfocused due to the fast class pace, he withdrew from participating in class and at times when he did ask questions, his teacher responded "figure it out". His final report range was proficient to meets proficient.

After the 2nd trimester, his fourth grade teacher recommended GLS as a better fit for his needs and stated that she recommended another student to transfer there who was accepted and doing well.

This year, after his first trimester at GLS:

Using a modified curriculum, he ranged from near proficiency to exceeds proficiency in academics.

He has developed socially with more friendships than all the previous years put together and finally feels part of a school family.

He actively participated after the first week, and he is able to tell me what he learned in most subjects.

He is also learning to play the guitar which he loves!

Most importantly, he is a much happier kid living a more normal life at GLS as any kid should.

It is clear that in only 3 years GLS has made a positive footprint towards their mission in successfully tailoring to meet the needs of a student population that has had difficulty learning in a traditional school setting. We learned that the Delaware Board of Education approved GLS for an Alternative Framework in 2015 based upon the positive trends over the last 3 years. Therefore, it was extremely shocking to hear that this same board has refused to renew our charter.

I recently read about Governor Markell's Universal Recycling program and how it first lagged behind and is now benefiting our environment and economy. He mentioned it took "educating the public" and 4 years after adopting a comprehensive plan in 2010 before dramatic results were achieved. As we supported and respected these efforts as well as Board of Education initiatives, we pray you will support ours. Please give GLS "**more time**" and have the same faith in GLS and our children by granting us a 5 year charter using the same faith you approved our Alternative Framework for 2015. Allow our program the opportunity to achieve dramatic results. Surely our kids are even a more valuable investment and their future benefits more rewarding to our overall economy and communities.

"Many Thanks" in advance for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Leslie Mitchell
GLS Parent

GLS Student



Sent from my iPhone

From: [Nagourney Jennifer](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: FW: Support of Gateway School
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 12:53:17 AM
Attachments: [image005.png](#)
[image006.png](#)

From: Nagourney Jennifer
Sent: Sunday, December 07, 2014 9:44 PM
To: infocso
Subject: FW: Support of Gateway School

From: Murphy Mark
Sent: Sunday, December 07, 2014 7:14 PM
To: Nagourney Jennifer
Subject: Fw: Support of Gateway School

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

From: Jim MacMicking <jamac@mediacombb.net>
Sent: Sunday, December 7, 2014 7:13 PM
To: Murphy Mark
Cc: 'Chris MacMicking'
Subject: Support of Gateway School

Mr. Murphy:

As concerned grandparents of Kevin MacMicking, we are writing this letter in absolute support of the renewal of Gateway Lab School's Charter in Wilmington, Delaware. The school was opened in the fall of 2011 and teaches grades 3 through 8. A public hearing regarding the renewal is scheduled on December 10, 2014 at the Delaware Department of Education's (DOE) Carvel State Office Building, 820 North French Street in Wilmington. Kevin's school experiences from K to 2 and his overall perception of school were exceptionally negative. He was often bullied by other students because he didn't fit into the norm. Additionally, the school was clearly failing him in his education as his reading level was only that of a late kindergarten student. Even though Kevin had an Individual Education Plan (IEP), his experiences were not unpredictable as children with learning disabilities have special needs which cannot always be provided in the conventional public school setting. With great concern about the damaging experiences Kevin had been subjected too, our son and daughter-in-law (James and Christine (Chris) MacMicking) began researching possible alternatives to the conventional public school setting. As a result of that effort, they discovered that the Gateway Lab School has the ideal Mission Statement:
"To provide an extraordinary educational opportunity for children who are struggling to achieve academic success in a traditional school environment, utilizing research-based

intervention strategies and a highly tailored, arts-based learning environment that seeks to identify and capitalize on a student's strengths and interests."

With considerable effort, James and Chris were able to have Kevin transferred to the Gateway Lab School. After only a few days, Kevin's view of school began to positively change. Since Kevin has great difficulty accepting change, such a quick and encouraging response was not at all expected and can only be attributed to the school's environment and the teaching methods of the staff. But the good news didn't stop there. Kevin is now thriving and his reading abilities now surpass his age and grade level. He is excited each morning to go to school, which allows him to be more receptive to learning and makes him eager to interact with his classmates.

As extremely active members of the *National Alliance on Mental Illness*, we completely understand the special needs our grandson will require throughout his formal education. It is for this very reason we are so thankful for and appreciative of the Gateway Lab School. It is also for this very reason we are extremely concerned after our review of the Delaware DOE's Academic Framework Report for Charter Schools. According to the report, Gateway Lab School is being rated by the same criteria and is being set to the same standards as college preparatory schools and military academies. This cannot be considered a reasonable comparison as 69% of Gateway Lab School's student population is either on an IEP or a 504 Plan. One cannot compare children of special needs with students that are not academically challenged and may be the polar opposite in learning ability.

In conclusion, we sincerely request the renewal of Gateway Lab School's Charter in Wilmington, Delaware.

With our greatest respect,

James A. MacMicking
jamac@mediacombb.net

Ginger L. MacMicking
gmacmicking@yahoo.com



Jim MacMicking • 17375 Polo Ridge Blvd., Fairhope, AL 36532 • 512-627-4440

From: [Johnson Donna R](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Fwd: Gateway lab school
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 6:58:35 PM

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
Twitter: @destateboarded

Begin forwarded message:

From: Heffernan Pat <pat.heffernan@doe.k12.de.us>
Date: December 6, 2014 at 12:51:58 PM EST
To: Johnson Donna R <donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us>
Subject: Fwd: Gateway lab school

Begin forwarded message:

From: Anita Batot <rabatot@icloud.com>
Date: December 6, 2014 at 10:09:05 AM EST
To: "pat.heffernan@doe.k12.de.us"
<pat.heffernan@doe.k12.de.us>
Cc: Vinnie <vjordan62@yahoo.com>
Subject: Gateway lab school

Mr. Heffernan

I am James Jordan aunt, I want to tell you about James and the major Improvement I have seen in James .

I see Jimmy about once a month, mostly on holidays and special occasions. I always bring a games or a scavenger hunt for the kids to do. Jimmy would never want to participate in the games or the hunt. He always said "I am not smart enough"

This year he was eager for the hunt to start, and participate. He was so happy to play I made him the Captain. He read the clues and was quite good at it.

Please don't close Gateway Lab school.

If this big improvement was just from the first semester at the school

Imagine what the rest of the year will do!
Please don't close it for the sake of James and all the other
kids who go there
For you maybe closing the door on the future of the children
lives.

Thank you for consideration

Anita Batot

Sent from my iPad

From: [Johnson Donna R](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Fwd: In support of Gateway Lab School
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 9:29:05 PM

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
Twitter: @destateboarded

Begin forwarded message:

From: Ghazala Farooqui <gtfarooqui@yahoo.com>
Date: December 7, 2014 at 9:17:09 PM EST
To: "mark.murphy@doe.k12.de.us" <mark.murphy@doe.k12.de.us>, "donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us" <donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us>
Cc: Catherine Dolan <Catherine.Dolan@gl.s.k12.de.us>, "Nathaniel.R.Schwartz@dupont.com" <Nathaniel.R.Schwartz@dupont.com>
Subject: In support of Gateway Lab School
Reply-To: Ghazala Farooqui <gtfarooqui@yahoo.com>

Dear Mr. Murphy,

After hopping several private and traditional public schools in New Castle County, I am happy that I found Gateway Lab School which my daughter joined in her 4th grade. I certainly do not wish to add negative remarks about other schools that my daughter had attended in the past. I can however; confidently state that Gateway Lab School has positively impacted my daughter's development. She has developmental delay and ADHD. GLS has a much protected environment for children with special needs that we were unable to find in any other school in this area. There is no bullying by students nor are there any threats or pressure by teachers. Students' negative behavior is improved not by punishment but by positive reinforcement by staff members along with family's involvement. With this approach my daughter has gained tremendous self-esteem and she is willing to compete in both academics and sports. Her school grades have improved; this year for the first time in life, she participated in all spring sports; for the first time ever, she performed national anthem in front of an audience of 200 guests (a banquet attended by physicians of Pakistani origin from the tri state area); her writing and expressions have improved; she is gaining social skills and making new friends. Until her 3rd grade, she would get terrified by the sight and sound of birds – this fear has now completely vanished. She used to be hesitant to talk in public, now she is eager to present her "current event" every week. We used to wonder if she could go beyond eight-grade; now we

can hope for her college education.

I strongly urge you to let this school stay open. It is imperative that she graduates from this school. My daughter's progress has been exponential for the amount of time she has spent at GLS. Improvement in one child means improvement in one generation. Please do not vote to revoke the existence of this school. I can undoubtedly voice, that your decision to let this school running will produce enriched and dynamic students, and in the long run many self-sufficient generations rather than dependent ones.

I honestly thank you in advance for considering my appeal in favor of Gateway Lab School. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,
Ghazala T Farooqui, MD
Pulmonary and Sleep Consultants, LLC
4512 Kirkwood Highway
Suite 300 B
Wilmington, DE 19808

CC: Jack Markell

Ghazala Farooqui, MD
Pulmonary & Sleep Consultants, LLC
4512 Kirkwood Highway, Suite 300B
Wilmington, DE 19808
Ph: 302-994-4010 Fax: 302-994-4080

From: [Johnson Donna R](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Fwd: Please save Gateway Lab School
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 4:28:21 PM
Attachments: [Support letter Gateway.docx](#)
[ATT00001.htm](#)

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
Twitter: @destateboarded

Begin forwarded message:

From: <mmwb1229@yahoo.com>
Date: December 7, 2014 at 2:59:55 PM EST
To: "donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us" <donna.johnson@doe.k12.de.us>
Subject: Please save Gateway Lab School

We have attached a letter in support of charter renewal for Gateway Lab School. We believe that Gateway has lead to positive progress in our child's education and represents the BEST option for our child's success.

Sincerely,
Craig and Maggie Burress

Sent from Windows Mail

From: [Nagourney Jennifer](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Fwd: Support Gateway Lab School
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 12:40:55 PM
Attachments: [20140819_193642\[2\].jpg](#)

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: Murphy Mark <Mark.Murphy@DOE.K12.DE.US>
Date: December 8, 2014 at 12:31:18 PM EST
To: Nagourney Jennifer <Jennifer.Nagourney@doe.k12.de.us>
Subject: FW: Support Gateway Lab School

Mark T. Murphy

Mark T. Murphy
Secretary of Education
Delaware Department of Education
401 Federal Street, Suite #2
Dover, DE 19901-3639
302.735.4000 (T) 302.739.4654 (F)

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Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail

From: Barbara Carucci [<mailto:bt1carucci@comcast.net>]
Sent: Monday, December 08, 2014 9:02 AM
To: Gray Teri; Murphy Mark; Blevins Patricia; Brady Gerald; tpgordon@nccde.org; Joan Beard; jdcastle@comcast.net
Cc: nathaniel.r.schwartz@dupont.com; Catherine Dolan
Subject: Fw: Support Gateway Lab School

Dear Representatives Patti Blevins, Representative Gerald Brady, County Executive Tom Gordon, Friends Joan & Sam Beard, Jane and Mike Castle,

RE: D.O.E. Charter School Renewal For Gateway Lab Charter School

I wonder if you have the time to help a cause that I believe is truly worth while. I'm not one to ask for favor and any cause I believe is worth pursuing I generally do it myself. However, this problem effects many children and is rooted not

only in their education but in their future. I'm seeking all the help I can get. While almost all of you have no direct connection with the Dept. Of Education (D.O.E.), all of you have influence with people and positions that can make a difference. Thank you in advance for taking the time to read my message below. Barbara

I am a grandmother of a 4th grader, Donte Christopher Hayes, who attends the Gateway Lab School.

I have been Donte's caregiver before and after school since he started attending school at the age of 5. Donte has struggled in the public school system since 1st grade.

Over the last 3 years his ability to learn and self-confidence was at his lowest point being enrolled in the public school system and their special education program, especially last year. This school did little to encourage learning for Donte. Three years of continual frustration and disappointment in the public school system, our family was at the end of our rope. Just imagine a child everyday coming home from school in tears, frustrated, low self-esteem and now behavior problems. After last year, I knew as a family we had to help Donte as it was a critical point in his life with his ability to learn at a school where he could be educated. We research two schools for learning disabilities in the State of Delaware; unfortunately they come at a hefty tuition fee and one that is not an option for us. These 2 schools would support the data; there is a need for an affordable school that can teach children with learning disabilities.

Then we had heard about Gateway Lab School, a school which specifically taught children with learning disabilities. We toured the school and talked with the educational teachers and staff. We agreed, as a family, this is what Donte needed. I was excited that Donte would now have the opportunity to be provided with an education and in an atmosphere where he would be encouraged to listen and learn. At Gateway Lab School, Donte would get the education he deserved. However, he was not immediately accepted into Gateway Lab. Once I handed in the application with all the necessary paper work for Gateway Lab School, which included "Gateway Lab School Teacher Evaluation of Students Strengths and Needs." This form needs to be filled out by the previous teacher of Donte'. My first thought was OMG, (Oh my God) but then again I believed the administrators at Gateway would be able to decipher through the negative and arrogant comments written by this teacher. Of course it was no surprise to us the teachers evaluation remarks were exactly what she demonstrated and consistently verbally expressed throughout Donte's 3rd grade year. Stemming from this teacher's harsh words, Donte was not accepted into Gateway Lab. Again, this public school was doing an injustice to Donte and creating an obstacle for him to be accepted in an educational school that would benefit him. Our family determined as ever to fight for Donte, my husband initiated a phone call to Catherine Dolan, head of school and speaking

at great lengths, she concluded, she was concerned about Donte. Hesitant, on whether this would be the right fit for Donte. She would be open to talk to another teacher. We all agreed and I contacted the school counselor from the previous school. This counselor was more than happy to talk with Mrs. Dolan to discuss Donte. He understood the difficulty of learning Donte had experienced in the public school system. Only after this conversation between Mrs. Dolan and the Counselor was Donte accepted into Gateway Lab. I knew once she had talked with the counselor, she would know Donte was being handled incorrectly by educators who did not understand him. Mrs. Dolan knew they could do better. She was right!

In the last 15 weeks of school, at Gateway Lab, Donte who struggled academically in a traditional classroom has flourish in an environment that combines multi-sensory instruction, integrated arts and learning by the process of experiential learning. Donte tears have turned to smile's. Donte frustration to learn has turned to success in learning. Donte behavior has gone from aggressive to friendly all due to an environment where he can learn. The constant of the teachers and staff at Gateway Lab School and their commitment to educating Donte is above and beyond. Since Donte has been at Gateway Lab School he has become a happier, healthy, confident, intelligent 9 year old student looking forward to a bright future at Gateway Lab. He loves his school. He has become part of a family and he has made friends, learning an instrument, and for the first time and most importantly, **Donte is academically successful**. I have seen more education progress in my grandson in 15 weeks then in his previous 3 years of public schooling. We are so proud of Donte and the Gateway Lab School for providing Donte this opportunity. Gateway is providing Donte with a strong foundation in learning and continuing to build on this foundation can only bring success for him.

What I know for sure, it will be difficult for Donte to learn and compete effectively in the routine school environment. To have Donte return to the school system he previously attended would be an injustice to him. We have taken 5 giant steps forward; please let's not take 10 giant steps backwards. Not renewing certification for Gateway Lab would be an injustice to all the children at this school. The data that has been collected and presented to this board is incorrect. How can one compare children who have been diagnosed with learning disabilities with the general population of student's? This is not a fair or accurate comparison. It is like comparing apples to oranges.

There has been significant progress at Gateway. This school is only at the beginning phases and given the chance the possibilities will be endless. My belief, Gateway will be turning out students that parents and teachers will be proud. Furthermore the DOE will see, years later they had made the correct decision for the recertification of the Gateway Lab School.

Barbara Carucci

20140819_193642



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Version: 2015.0.5577 / Virus Database: 4235/8699 - Release Date: 12/08/14

From: [Mary Beardsley](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Charter School Closure
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 4:55:21 PM

Dear Mark Murphy and the State Board of Education,

I am writing to request that the Gateway Lab School not be closed. As an educator, I have written recommendations for students to attend the school for the individualized instruction and accepting atmosphere. I have seen the positive results of such a setting. No longer do these students with disabilities deal with constant ostracism and mockery from their peers. No longer do they deal with a mainstreamed classroom that neither meets nor understands their needs. I certainly hope you and the Board do not base your decision on test scores alone. I hope that you look at the students' progress holistically.

My niece is a perfect example of the type of student who has benefitted tremendously from Gateway's approach. She struggles with autism, and in a DAP school, she met with only so much success. She would not and could not carry on a conversation or discuss her likes and dislikes. She had no hobbies. She presented fractional portrayals of her thoughts. She would much rather sit in a room by herself and not join the family. Since attending Gateway, she has improved drastically. This Thanksgiving, she joined the family, tried new foods, and told me about her cat. She has learned to play the flute and even tried out for tennis. She was not able to do any of these things while matriculated in the Christina School District. Closing Gateway would be an unbelievable detriment to so many.

Should the focus remain on test scores alone, then I urge you to consider the result of turning all of these students over to the public school system. Indeed, that will have an effect on the test scores where you already anticipate a downturn due to the new test. Furthermore, I know of no other public school that can meet the IEP requirements of these students efficiently. If they could, the students would not have moved to the charter school in the first place.

It will be a sad day in Delaware's educational system when the test score means more than the student. Closing the school will loudly and clearly communicate that our children are merely numbers. Their mental, emotional, and psychological development mean absolutely nothing to the Board of Education. The act will tell the world that data, and data alone, is the most important factor in Delaware's schools. It will make Delaware the First State to tell the disabled that they have failed because they can't perform the same as the rest of the population. The wiser decision would be to allow the Gateway Lab School to continue helping those who need help the most.

Sincerely,
Mary C. Beardsley
Secondly English Education

From: [Wallace, Valerie](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab School
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 10:16:52 PM

It has come to my attention that the Gateway Lab School may be closed. I think this would be a terrible injustice to the children & parents who have found this school. My niece attends this school presently and it has been the best thing for her and her parents. In public school, her needs were not met, she was failing and her self esteem was very poor. It's so hard for kids with special needs to find the right kind of assistance in public schools. Parents of these children have such a hard time understanding how to help educate their kids and I know my sister and her husband have found this school to be the best for their child.

Please reconsider closing this school. Children's futures at stake and you shouldn't throw away this chance to overcome obstacles to create bright futures.

Thank you,

Valerie Wallace

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From: [Denise](#)
To: [Murphy Mark](#)
Cc: [infocso](#); [Whittaker Terry](#); [Rutt Barbara](#); [Coverdale Gregory](#); [Gray Teri](#); randall.huyghes@doe.k12.de.us; [Melendez Jorge](#); [Heffernan Pat](#); [Johnson Donna R](#); [Nagourney Jennifer](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab School Charter Renewal
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 1:36:58 PM

Dear Secretary Murphy and Members of the Board of Education,

As a parent of a student currently attending Gateway Lab School I am writing to urge you to consider renewing its charter. The progress in my daughter's grades and state test scores is proof that Gateway's alternate teaching methods are helping my daughter and preparing her for a successful academic future.

When my daughter attended the district feeder school she struggled severely with testing, classwork and ultimately socially due to the continuing decline of her grades and a lack of understanding of the material being taught. In a classroom with a student to teacher ratio of 27/1, she did not receive the attention or direction that she required to succeed. In her classroom at Gateway the ratio is 13/2 which allows her to be less distracted by other students and to receive the assistance she needs daily in order to continue progressing in school. While attending the district feeder school, she marked "below proficiency" in all core subjects and was retained in second grade because she was not receiving the attention needed to understand the classwork. As a result of having to repeat second grade, she suffered socially and her confidence continued to decline. At Gateway most of her classmates and friends have suffered with the same struggles so she feels less isolated. Knowing that she is just like everyone else at "her school" her confidence has grown. As a result of her increased confidence, her grades have progressed from "below proficiency" to "meets and exceeds" in all core subjects. She has attained Honor Roll status since she started at Gateway in 3rd grade.

In addition to individual subject grades, her state test scores have also continued to improve yearly. Her instructional reading score has increased 159 points from the beginning of 3rd grade to the end of 5th grade. The accountability score in reading has increased 173 points from the beginning of 3rd grade to the end of 5th grade. At this rate she should meet the state testing standards in reading for both categories by 8th grade. Math instructional score has increased 133 points from 3rd to 5th grade and the accountability score increased 138 points from 3rd grade to 5th grade. At this rate she should meet state testing standards this year. Her test scores at the end of last year were below state standards but were above district standards. If Gateway is being judged on testing scores alone, my daughter's results are a perfect example of the amazing work being done at the school. Additional time is needed to allow my daughter to meet the state standards.

We know that all children learn differently and the dedicated faculty at Gateway has taken

that knowledge and transformed it into action. They understand that children with hyperactivity disorders and attention deficit disorders need an outlet so that their disorders do not impede learning. At Gateway my daughter participates in physical education daily and in her words, that activity "gets the energies out" so she can focus while in her core classes. Art and music classes are attended on alternating days which provides the creative outlet needed by my daughter. These are all things that she would be denied at a traditional feeder school. As a result, her ability to focus and be successful in her education would be negatively impacted.

I urge you to renew Gateway Lab School's charter. Please give them additional time to prove that the unique environment they provide for our kids is truly helping them to succeed in school and in life.

Thank you,
Denise M. Johnson

From: [Askins, Debra](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab School Closing-Student Madeline Askins
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 7:35:02 AM

I'm writing you in regards of the closing of my daughter's school Gateway Lab. I'm not sure if you have heard in the news about the closing but this would be detrimental to my daughter's education. You see my daughter is not like all other children in Delaware. My daughter at the age of 5 had a virus that ran thru her blood stream that traveled to her brain. She became paralyzed on the left side of her body the day before her 6th birthday. We rushed her to A.I. DuPont and her life forever changed. We were told that the virus ate part of her brain (right particle lobe) to be exact and were not sure of the outcome. She began to have seizures daily up to 20 a day, along with daily occupational therapy and physical therapy; also she has been seeing a G.I. Specialist. 10 Days later we were sent home with a different type of child. We had to watch for daily seizures and monitor them on a daily basis. We spent many years back and forth at DuPont.

As you can imagine with all the health issues school became a challenge to say the least. At the time she was at Christ the Teacher but due to the sudden medical condition of seizures the school could not provide the safe environment she so needed. We moved her to our feeder McVey it is there we were introduced to 504 Education Plans and I.E.P's. After months of testing and still only a 504 in plan we hired a tutor whom worked at the University of Delaware. He helped with math and reading twice a week that lasted two years long. He helped with the I.E.P. program and how to get Madeline the help that she so needed. She became a nasty victim of bullying far beyond anybody's believe. Ms. French the principle at the time was in disbelief. This lasted about 8 months long two girls physically and mentally abused my daughter because she was different. I think the icing on the cake was when the principle called back and stated this had happened to my child and they would be punished to the fullest extent of the school. By the way it was one day suspension, she the principle asked my husband and I not to have contact with the parents of the two students. I decided my daughter was no longer safe in that school. We moved her and my son to Immaculate Conception School in Elkton MD the following school year.

After two years there she could not handle the work load with her medical condition. So we headed back to McVey with a new principle and I knew the two girls were no longer attending McVey as well. Still after a year she was not thriving she didn't want to go to school. So I searched the Delaware State web site: looking for a school that dealt with so many medical issues. The first one we went to was The College School at the University of Delaware at the price of 15,000 back then. With no financial aid this was not an option for us. So I googled school that work with children with seizures and found a school called Gateway Lab. We toured the school liked it and put in for the lottery and got in. From day one the updated her I.E.P. gave her extra tools to read and do math. She began to have eye contact with others. Her grades shot up for C and D's to A's and B's for the first time since kindergarten. This school forever changed her and gave her something those two girls stole from her self-esteem. My daughter loves to go to school now she also helps others when they need help. She joined the running club and ran her first 5k down at the Riverfront this October. Now the state wants to close the school due to low testing on DECAS. Although the state granted a different scale for these children the school (Gateway Lab) is not allowed to use this scale this year.

The state said it is valid for next year which the school would be technical closed!

But please don't take my word for it please visit the school and the children whom go there. Talk to the teacher's all double board certified in Special Education. The principle whom came from Delaware University meet them all and you be the judge. My daughter Madeline would love to give you a tour!

Regards,

Debbie Askins
252 Romney Blvd.
Newark, De 19702
debbieaskins@yahoo.com
302-983-0880-cell

From: [Sherlock Hack](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab School closure.
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 3:37:25 PM

Classification: Public

To whom it may concern;

I am writing this letter because I was disappointed to read that the Delaware DOE have targeted Gateway Lab School, a Delaware public Charter school which focuses on educating kids with learning disabilities, for closure.

I have spent 7 years with the organization prior to it successfully gaining approval from the Delaware DOE, and through its first successful school year. Before that I had no knowledge of the plight that kids with learning disabilities encountered in the public school system in Delaware and around the nation and I thought it was a great idea to create a public school that will help these kids achieve just like everyone else. No one said it will be an easy task.

It was a sad learning experience for me to talk to some of the kids about what they went through in other public schools such as bullying, being called stupid or being sent to remedial classes because they were seen as slow learners. Gateway Lab school was established to take these kids out of that hostile environment and placed them in a nurturing class where class size was small, teachers could focus on each student and structure assignments based on their learning curve.

The process of educating a student with a learning disability is clearly and vastly different than that of a normal student as commonsense will dictate. Please ask yourself where will these kids be if placed back into the general public school environment, less than 5% passing rate and 95% dropout rates prior to graduating. Is that what we want?

With the DOE asking Gateway Lab school to fit it's students passing rates into the same box as normal students and then having to do it within two years, something the State public schools couldn't do even after many many years of teaching, I think is really unreasonable for that child.

I am sure that if the committee members that sit on the State's charter school accountability board had spent time visiting the kids at the school, speaking to them and understanding what the school is doing to meet their needs we won't be here deciding to send these kids back to a hostile environment. If the committee members also had a kid with a learning disability they would all be supporting more schools like this. I urge them to visit the students.

I am therefore asking the committee to do whatever they can to keep Gateway Lab School open and help them do everything they can to educate all kids in Delaware. At the end of the day it's all about educating ALL our kids.

Regards,
Sherlock Hack (former Board member of Gateway Lab School)



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Passion to Perform

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From: [Liz Hoffmann](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab School
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 9:55:17 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

My nephews both began attending Gateway Lab School at the beginning of this school year. Both have special needs. One was doing okay in his previous public school, but the other one was repeatedly suspended for bad behavior and not completing his school work. Neither were excelling academically.

After much research into other school options, my brother and his wife were thrilled when both boys were offered admission to Gateway.

I can't believe the difference this school has made in both boys!!! Sam is now reading and writing so much better, and is so enthusiastic about school!! He loves it!! The biggest difference has been in Will. He previously hated school. Previously he felt that he was a "bad" boy because he was always getting in trouble. His self-esteem was terrible, largely due to the harsh punishments he received in his public school. He was not progressing academically at all. He wouldn't talk about school, and although he loves learning, and is academically gifted, he completely shut down and was miserable.

Gateway changed all that!!! He loves to go to school and learn! He has not been in any trouble at all this year. He now feels that he is a "good" boy!!! The change in him has been wonderful!! Both boys are thriving!!!

Gateway Lab School has been so beneficial for both boys. To revoke the school's charter based in part on standardized test scores seems so narrow-minded. Special needs children deserve an opportunity to thrive!!! Standardized tests are not a clear indication of their abilities. My own son, now age 26 also had special needs, and I would have loved the opportunity for him to attend a school such as Gateway, but no such school existed. Please consider continuing the charter for Gateway Lab School.

Respectfully,

Liz Hoffmann

From: [Jamie Geyer](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab School
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 8:55:33 PM

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing this to show support for Gateway Lab. I have child graduating this year from the 8th grade. For the first time ever she has gotten all A's and B's, and her confidence level and self pride are higher then I ever imagined possible. I am positive that this outcome would not have been possible for her in a traditional public school setting. In fact, before starting Gateway in 5th grade she was completely lost in almost every aspect of her education, including socially. If you allow this school to close you will be making a major mistake and performing a total disservice to many children and families.

Thanks and warmest regards,
Jamie Geyer

From: [Julie Pinder](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab School
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 10:04:15 AM

At this Wednesday's hearing, I hope you will consider the input from those supporting Gateway Lab School and keep it open. Children with learning differences (and their families) need educational options to ensure that their unique needs are being met. School-aged children who don't realize their full potential will grow into adults who never reach their full potential. Even if this school is not right for your child, isn't it comforting to know that such an option even exists in our community? Help save Gateway for these kids and kids like them for years to come.

Sincerely,

Julie Pinder

From: cbeukema@verizon.net
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab School
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 3:05:08 PM

Dear Sir:

I am writing to you regarding your recommendation to close Gateway Lab School. Gateway serves a high population of disabled children. My granddaughter has attended Gateway since it opened. The strides she has made academically and socially far surpass her achievements at DAP or any other public school. She is able to converse with us. She is quick to pick up pieces of information and remember them to draw on later. She participates in sports and other activities involving groups of people. She actually likes being around people rather than withdrawing. She is an intelligent child but not in a manner to pass standardized tests which is the same for most of the other children in this school. This school has given these children an opportunity that they do not have in DAP or other public schools i.e. the ability to function as worthwhile individuals on their own merits without fear of ridicule. They are seen as people not just a number. It is unrealistic to judge a school like Gateway by standardized test scores when these are not "standardized" children. Please consider the good for these children before you make your decision. How many of them will ever be able to pass a standardized test? Yet, they learn as much as they can in an environment that nurtures their special attributes.

Sincerely,

Christine Beukema

From: [John Ignace](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab School
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 11:07:53 AM

I am writing to encourage the State BOE and Secretary Mark Murphy to allow Catherine Dolan and her staff more time to improve student proficiency and test scores at Gateway Charter.

Gateway is a unique school addressing special needs and should be judged with more flexibility than traditional schools. The loss of this school will be to the detriment of the students it serves.

John Ignace

From: [Patricia Damiri](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Cc: [Stacy Solomon](#); [Catherine Dolan](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab School
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 5:04:55 PM

As an interior architect with over 25 years of experience, designing corporate and healthcare facilities, I wanted to do more to help people. I decided to pursue my degree in elementary special education because I wanted to help struggling children. I went back to school for over ten years to obtain my Masters of Education as well as a dual certificate in Elementary Education and Special Education. Having come from a highly creative profession, I was awestruck when I was hired this past October to teach in an arts infused curriculum to help children learn. Our hands-on approach to instruction is truly inspiring. While I have only been at this school for a short while, I have noticed a drastic difference in the children in my classroom. They are engaged, alert and excited to learn. To send them back to a regular education classroom would make them "invisible" - their needs would not be met and they will fall through the cracks. I am forever hopeful that Gateway will be given time to show the progress that these children can make in this exceptional school. Respectfully submitted,

Patricia Damiri
4th Grade Teacher
Gateway Lab School
2501 Centerville Road
Wilmington, DE 19808
<http://www.gatewaylabschool.org>

From: [timothy durnan](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab School
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 6:39:46 PM

To the Delaware Department of Education,

I implore and urge you to please keep the Gateway Lab school open. Although I don't have a child in the school, it is all too obvious that this school does great work in helping children with special needs; help that they would not be able to get elsewhere in the State of Delaware without considerable financial difficulty. I find it unconscionable that this closing is even being considered. Thank you.

Timothy Durnan

From: sandrann6@aol.com
To: [Murphy Mark](#); [infocso](#)
Subject: GATEWAY LAB SCHOOL
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 11:16:16 PM

To: Mr. Mark Murphy
DE Secretary of Education

From: Sandra A. Scheinberg

I am the grandmother of two students at the Gateway Lab School.

My granddaughter, Delia Scheinberg, is autistic and has been a student there for the four years it has been in existence. During this time, she has made great improvement in her personal growth. Delia has developed self confidence and has increased her level of social interaction with others. Delia has thrived under the individualized learning system of Gateway and does well in class. However, she is unable to translate her proven knowledge to a standardized testing format.

My grandson, Harry Scheinberg, is a third grader at Gateway. He is intellectually very bright, but struggles both socially and emotionally. At Gateway, he is in a small class, with situations tailored to lessen his anxieties and improve his ability to interact with other children. He has an IEP and receives occupational therapy to treat his sensory process disorder.

As an educator, I have high hopes that the Gateway Lab School will be recognized for the educational opportunities it offers to developmentally challenged students. Please give it enough time to succeed.

From: [Chris Beyer](#)
To: nathaniel.r.schwartz@dupont.com; [Johnson Donna R](#); [Nagourney Jennifer](#); [Murphy Mark](#); [Heffernan Pat](#); [Melendez Jorge](#); [Hughes Randall](#); [Gray Teri](#); [Coverdale Gregory](#); [Rutt Barbara](#); [Whittaker Terry](#); [infocso](#); [Jaques, Jr Earl](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab School/Nathan Beyer
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 6:13:45 PM

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Christopher Beyer and I'm writing this letter in response to the issue of my son, Nathan Beyer, and Gateway Lab School. I know you're looking for information of factual based proof (which there is more than plenty of with our students) about how this school has made improvements and impressions. What needs to be taken into consideration is the battle that must be fought by both teachers and students before these improvements in learning can be made. These improvements aren't always cut and dry and don't always work the same for every child, therefore changes may not be seen immediately on paper and in grades.

I am able to relate to this and my son's situation because throughout my life I've fought this same battle. Thirty-six years ago I was the first grader who was sitting in the hallway in a mainstream school because I didn't learn like the other children. "Christopher is lazy and doesn't apply himself" was always my problem, they said. It took my mother, who stepped up, realizing somebody was missing something, and, after visits with my pediatrician, a rash of testing began. I was diagnosed with dyslexia and other learning disabilities. Shortly after, I was enrolled in a program at Delaware Learning Center. I attended that school for three years and then onto Shue-Medill School. Both of these schools helped me to adapt by teaching different skills, both socially and educationally, in order to be mainstreamed back into a normal learning environment. I was able to graduate high school with my original class.

I see my son struggle with the same issues I did and I see him learning the same skills to adapt to them. Gateway Lab School and it's teachers are the ones responsible for his adaptation of skills. This school is needed by him and the other 211 other students who attend.

Thank you for your time,

Christopher Beyer

From: [Anna Loper](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab School's Charter Renewal
Date: Tuesday, December 09, 2014 10:50:46 AM

December 9, 2014

Delaware Department of Education
Carvel State Office Building
820 North French Street
Wilmington, DE

RE: Gateway Lab School's Charter Renewal

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

As concerned mental health advocates, we are writing this letter in absolute support of the renewal of Gateway Lab School's Charter in Wilmington, Delaware. The school was opened in the fall of 2011 and teaches grades 3 through 8. A public hearing regarding the renewal is scheduled on December 10, 2014 at the Delaware Department of Education's (DOE) Carvel State Office Building, 820 North French Street in Wilmington.

Students with mental health issues have an overall perception of public school as being exceptionally negative. They are often bullied by other students because they don't fit into the "norm". Typically, the schools fail them educationally even though they have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or a 504 Plan. These experiences are not unpredictable as children with learning disabilities have special needs which cannot always be provided in the conventional public school setting.

With great concern about the damaging experiences these children are being subjected to, parents reach out and discover that the Gateway Lab School has the ideal Mission Statement:

"To provide an extraordinary educational opportunity for children who are struggling to achieve academic success in a traditional school environment, utilizing research-based intervention strategies and a highly tailored, arts-based learning environment that seeks to identify and capitalize on a student's strengths and interests."

Students experience a positive change after a short period of time at Gateway. Since these students have great difficulty accepting change, such a quick and encouraging response is not at all expected and can only be attributed to the school's environment and the teaching methods of the staff. But the good news doesn't stop there. These students are now thriving and their abilities now surpass that of their age and grade level. They are excited each morning to go to school, which allows them to be more receptive to learning and makes them eager to interact with their classmates.

As Affiliates of the *National Alliance on Mental Illness*, we completely understand the special needs these children will require throughout their formal education. It is for this very reason we are so thankful for and appreciative of the Gateway Lab School. It is also for this very reason we are extremely concerned after our review of the Delaware DOE's Academic Framework Report for Charter Schools. According to the report, Gateway Lab School is being rated by the same criteria and is being set to the same standards as college preparatory schools and military academies. This cannot be considered a

reasonable comparison as 69% of Gateway Lab School's student population is either on an IEP or a 504 Plan. One cannot compare children of special needs with students that are not academically challenged and may be the polar opposite in learning ability.

In conclusion, we sincerely request the renewal of Gateway Lab School's Charter in Wilmington, Delaware.

With my greatest respect,

Anna S. Loper

From: [Bunny LaMotte](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway lab. School
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 7:53:49 AM

My grandson Trey Hale is a 5th grader there. His is ADHD the progress he has made there is wonderful.
He is so much more confident. This note is to encourage
that the school remain open. There are other kids that need the extra care that Gateway offers.
Bunny LaMotte

Sent from my iPad

From: [John Meiser](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway lab
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 6:01:15 PM

Mark Murphy,

Please don't close the gateway lab school. These kids deserve a chance to learn and improve on their scores for the state wide tests.

Thanks for your understanding!

John Meiser

From: [Christine Boughton](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab
Date: Tuesday, December 09, 2014 8:52:19 AM

Please keep this school open, give it a chance to make a difference in a child's life.

Christine Boughton

From: [Mike Kerwien](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 8:51:09 AM

Please keep Gateway Lab open. This school is critical for children with learning disabilities. Where will they get the special attention they need if this school closes. It has only been open for a short time and should be given more time to prove itself.

Please give this school more time by keep it open. If you had a child with special needs, you would want the same. Thanks for your consideration.

[Mike Kerwien](#)
302-593-3939 (cell)

From: [Christine Boughton](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Lab
Date: Tuesday, December 09, 2014 8:52:19 AM

Please keep this school open, give it a chance to make a difference in a child's life.

Christine Boughton

From: [Randy London](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway Renewal
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 11:50:56 AM

I am the Financial Secretary here at Gateway Lab School. This School offers a great environment for the students. I have only been here for 2 years and have seen dramatic improvements with many students. I am not involved with the daily teaching but I am grateful for the job and enjoy interacting with these eager students. The teaching staff along with the administrators are all top notch who deserve more time for the Gateway Mission to work. I have been an Accountant for over 30 years and must say that this environment is very positive and deserves more time for its mission and goals to fully evolve. I personally had many learning difficulties when I was in school and Gateway Lab School would have been perfect for me. Please do the right thing and extend our Charter for the current and future students who deserve the best.

Thank you.

Randy London
Gateway Lab School
302-633-4091 X232

From: [Vicki Tillman](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway School
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 8:17:33 AM

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a therapist at Pike Creek Psychological Center. I have a several young clients who are students at Gateway Charter School. I heard from one of their parents that the school may lose its charter over test scores.

I am hoping that this is not correct information. My clients have blossomed educationally, socially, and emotionally since coming to Gateway. These kids with high functioning autism (Aspergers Disorder) are overwhelmed by the stimulus and sensory noise of the average school classroom. They have IEPs but are too high functioning for a school for autistic students.

At Gateway, the small classrooms have a controlled sensory environment. The students can concentrate on academics and learning vital social skills and self-awareness. They are learning to be successful contributors to society.

From what the parent told me, the issue regarding the charter is the school's testing scores. May I suggest that standardized tests are not a valid measure of progress in a population with learning and social differences? Perhaps master portfolios might be a better option or reviews of progress on IEPs?

I wish you could talk to my clients. The before Gateway and the after Gateway in their lives has been profound. I hope that they can continue to attend this excellent school.

Sincerely,
Vicki Duncan Tillman MA
Pike Creek Psychological Center

From: [Heather Rabenold](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Gateway School
Date: Tuesday, December 09, 2014 7:45:17 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

To whom it may concern,

I heard about the closing of Gateway School and I think it's unfair. Those kids deserve a chance to go to a school that fits their needs. Learning disabilities are one of the fastest growing problems in our nation. Our public school system is not equipped to handle that continuous growth. We have teachers that can handle one or two children with Attention Deficit Disorder or even Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder in their classrooms. But we don't have the staffing to support a classroom full of a handful of fast readers, a handful of kids with ADD, two kids with ADHD, and a kid with dyslexia. It isn't fair to try and mainstream these kids with learning disabilities who need that extra attention from a hands on teacher. Those kids need the time and the patience that comes with having a strictly special needs school. An 11 year old with a learning disability who's still trying to come into their own in their education and learning to deal with their learning disability and how to operate with it, is not ready to be thrown into a middle school like Stanton or Skyline. Yes, I know there are other options. The University School, for example, is a phenomenal school just like Gateway. That school costs in the upwards of \$10,000+ a year. You can't ask a parent to pay a private or Catholic school tuition just to get their child the extra help they need and deserve. Not every parent can afford the extra help their kids need. Not every adult understands that. I've heard a lot of "send them to private school" and "send them to the University School". That's not fair to assume everyone can afford to do that. I know for a fact, not all of them can.

The biggest problem is that you are choosing to close a school of special needs kids because of poor testing scores. Standardized testing will someday be obsolete. The SAT no longer holds the stature it used to. Colleges have steered from basing acceptance on standardized testing scores. Some kids are going to college to be Art majors and to play football and to be Biomedical Engineers, they all can't do well on a standardized test, but they could succeed in all the other things they do every day and what they aspire to do in the future. Colleges have caught on to the standardized testing flaws. While I know our school system still encourages the testing and mandates that it is the way to go, and I don't agree, I understand that is the standard here. In that case, Gateway School deserves the time to get their scores up!! I know I've attended 4 public schools in the state of Delaware. I've attended below par public schools. Schools that didn't meet the standards multiple times. We continued to get chances to raise our scores. We were told as kids that our scores needed to improve to reach the national averages. We were taught like it was a competition to do well on those tests. Teachers had to stop their core curriculum to go over testing practice. And it worked. I think Gateway needs the same chance. Those kids need the same chance. Those teachers need the same chance.

It's not just a school you're closing. It's teachers' jobs, family's comfort, and students' faith in their ability to improve with their learning disabilities you're taking away.

Give Gateway a chance! They deserve it.

Thank you for your time and Happy Holidays.

Heather

Heather Rabenold

Accounting Assistant



(302) 993 3308

Heather.Rabenold@mdavisinc.com

From: [Edward Wise](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: GATEWAY SCHOOL
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 2:32:04 PM

I have a grand daughter who is in 5th grade at Gateway School and is making extraordinary improvement in her studies and now beginning to catch up with other students her age. She now reads at her grade level and got high marks in the last grading cycle. Not only is she a good student but she is also a very creative art student. Her progress has been tremendous since she enrolled at Gateway and she loves going to class.

I am sending this to you to ask that you give Gateway a second chance of complete what they have started. Many times the right thing to do is what is best for the students and not something is arrived at by looking only at umbers. Please do not disrupt the accomplishment of the wonderful teachers and staff at gateway.

Thank you, Edward and Bonita Wise

From: LESLIE MITCHELL <lml.mail_it13@yahoo.com>
Date: December 9, 2014, 9:58:49 AM EST
To: "governor.markell@state.de.us" <governor.markell@state.de.us>
Subject: Renew Gateway Lab School Charter

The Honorable Governor Markell
820 N. French Street
12th Floor
Wilmington, DE 19801

Dear Governor Markell,

I am writing to rally your support and the State Board of Education to renew the Charter license of Gateway Lab School (GLS) for 5 years. A hearing is scheduled for [December 10, 2014 at 6pm](#) and Secretary Mark Murphy will be making a final decision at the next Board of Education meeting [on December 18th](#).

As an active parent, I am very concerned since my son, diagnosed with Ataxia SCA-7, just started his first year in 5th grade at GLS this past August. He has made remarkable strides in such a short time compared to his experiences in the public school system. For example:

- Public School DECAS Assessments in the past 2 years dropped from meet standards to below: Reading- 758 to 701, Mathematics- 684 - 683 with IEP accommodations. Last year, he scored 386, below range, in social studies.
- After testing in the Spring 2014, he remarked that much of what was on the DECAS Assessment was not taught in class nor in the materials sent home that we reviewed together.
- He became unfocused due to the fast class pace, he withdrew from participating in class and at times when he did ask questions, his teacher responded "figure it out".
- His final report range was proficient to meets proficient.
- After the 2nd trimester, his fourth grade teacher recommended GLS as a better fit for his needs and stated that she recommended another student to transfer there who was accepted and doing well.

This year, after his first trimester at GLS:

- Using a modified curriculum, he ranged from near proficiency to exceeds proficiency in academics.
- He has developed socially with more friendships than all the previous years put together and finally feels part of a school family.
- He actively participated after the first week, and he is able to tell me what he learned in most subjects.
- He is also learning to play the guitar which he loves!
- Most importantly, he is a much happier kid living a more normal life at GLS as any kid should.

It is clear that in only 3 years GLS has made a positive footprint towards their mission in successfully tailoring to meet the needs of a student population that has had difficulty learning in a traditional school setting. I recently read about your remarks regarding the Universal Recycling program and how it first lagged behind and is now benefiting our environment and economy. You mentioned it took "educating the public" and 4 years after adopting a comprehensive plan in 2010 before dramatic results were achieved. We supported your efforts and we pray you will support ours. Please contact the Board of Education and Secretary Mark Murphy on our behalf to give us "**more time**" and have the same faith in GLS and our children by granting us a 5 year charter using the same faith to watch our program achieve these same results. Surely our kids are even a more valuable investment and their future benefits more rewarding to our overall economy and communities.

"Many Thanks" in advance for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Leslie Mitchell

GLS Parent

GLS Student



From: [don or eva](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: In support of Gateway School
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 9:53:56 AM

My Name is Eva Lyons, and I am the Director of Christian Formation at St. Catherine of Siena parish, the site where Gateway School is located.

I have had the opportunity, over the years since Gateway opened, to observe those children in our faith community who attend the Gateway School. I see them every Wednesday evening in a class setting for religious education, and at parish events. Keep in mind that I also had the opportunity to observe these same students when they attended our parochial school or other public schools prior to their attendance at Gateway. I cannot say enough good things about the way that Gateway School has affected their behavior and self-confidence and ability to participate in class.

One student in particular went from being a behavior challenge in the classroom to participating with dignity in a prayer service last year. How many children do you know, with or without learning challenges, whose behavior can be described as dignified? In another instance, I watched as this same student dealt with the pestering of a student next to him by quietly moving away to the end of the pew, on his own initiative, and continuing to pay attention to the speaker. This was the result of Gateway training.

Another student was sent to me in the office more times than I can count over the past several years, because of disruptive behavior in the classroom. He transferred to Gateway this school year and has had only one behavior infraction at religious ed. This is a real Gateway miracle, in my opinion!

As a taxpayer in the state of Delaware, I feel strongly that we have an obligation to care about the whole child, not just their test scores. I have observed that most children with learning or behavior challenges have a host of other challenges as well, and if we don't address everything which gets in the way of a child learning, he or she isn't going to learn. This takes time, and lots of it. Human beings don't all function within the same time frame, and we can't all be tested the same way. We have to take the long view, towards the future for all of us in Delaware, and be patient as we look for improvement in individuals. Choosing to close Gateway School, which I believe does such a good job educating the whole child, would be short sighted, to say the least.

Places like Gateway need to stay open so that the kids who do not thrive in a traditional environment have a chance to succeed, and to make progress according to their own abilities and in their own time. Please – keep Gateway School open.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Eva Lyons

Director of Christian Formation
St. Catherine of Siena Church

2503 Centerville Rd.
Wilmington, DE 19808
(302) 633-4903

From: terri.mullins308@comcast.net
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Keep Gateway Lab School OPEN
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 7:47:54 AM

I am writing this on behalf of my niece who attends Gateway. I see her every day after school and what a joy she has become. She has thrived at this school. She has many diverse friends. She is very interested in learning now & takes it seriously. Her self worth & confidence has sky-rocketed. I see this in the other children also. I have met the faculty and am much impressed with their sincere desire to teach these children to be shining stars. How wonderful that a school like this exists for these children in need of emotional, mental, physical support & well-being! My sincerest hope is that Gateway remains open to these students & future students. Truly Yours, Terri Mullins P.S. My niece got all "A's" on her report card!!!! What a JOY! Thank you.

From: mjh2thdoc@aol.com
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Keep school open
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 9:26:12 PM

Dear Mr. Murphy,

I am writing to you in the hopes that the Department of Education will reconsider their plan to close Gateway Lab. My niece, Sofia Buonopane, is a student there. She struggled in class and was miserable in her previous public school due to her inability to learn at the same pace as the other students. Since she has attended Gateway Lab, she is happier, more confident and is learning at her grade level! We are proud of her accomplishments and want her to continue to grow in their nurturing environment. I know there are many other students who share this same story. Please consider what can be done to help the students improve, not close the school and put them back into situations that could derail their progress. Thank you for your consideration.

Julie Hazuda

Dr. Michael and Julie Hazuda
43 Delegal Road
Savannah, GA 31411
(H) 912/777-4739
(C) 302/547-7303
(C) 302/540-4055

From: rescignor@juno.com
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: KEEP the school
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 5:16:10 PM

We feel that you need to give the kids more time Please keep the school open

Thanks,
Ronald Rescigno
102 Parker drive Middletown,DE19709

Heavy rains mean flooding
Anywhere it rains it can flood. Learn your risk. Get flood insurance.
<http://thirdpartyoffers.juno.com/TGL3131/54822e354238a2e357fcfst03vuc>

From: [Todd Moran](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 7:03:38 AM

Mark,

I am writing in hopes that you will reconsider keeping the Charter at Gateway Lab. This school has provided the learning that other schools can not provide for students with learning disabilities.

Thanks
Todd

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 8:27:27 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/5/2014 8:24:42 PM

Response End Time: 12/5/2014 8:27:19 PM

IP Address: 98.111.129.50

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Leanne Gasink

2. E-Mail Address
Lbeers1972@yahoo.com

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

4. Comment:
This school is desperately needed for kids who don't have the options that other kids have. Before closing, please consider what will happen to the kids with special needs that have been thriving at this school.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 9:53:31 AM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/8/2014 9:52:13 AM

Response End Time: 12/8/2014 9:53:20 AM

IP Address: 167.21.142.12

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name

Anne MARie Shotwell

2. E-Mail Address

amshotwell@yahoo.com

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

Gateway Lab School

4. Comment:

I write today to briefly express my great opinion of the Gateway Lab Charter School. Two of my children attend this school and I can't tell you how much of a difference it has been for their education. Both my children have very high intelligence but have mild learning disabilities. My 13 year old has inattentive type ADHD and dysgraphia. My 10 year old has a written expression disorder known commonly as Dyslexia.

The best part about Gateway Lab to put it succinctly is that they teach to my child as an individual and their particular abilities. The smaller classroom size and the ability of the teachers to truly teach specifically by their IEPs makes all the difference in the world. When my older child was in a traditional classroom at our feeder elementary it was one teacher for 32 student 4 of which at that time had IEPs. It was not humanly possible for that teacher to address my child's needs. This is the story for most traditional classrooms. My younger son was pulled out for so much intervention that he felt singled out, his self-esteem suffered and he had anxiety about going to school.

My children now have elevated self-esteem, they no longer hate school, and they have friends and socialize. All things that were challenging for them in the tradition school setting.

The music and arts, project oriented learning, gym class every day, and even recess....all these things are working for them!!!

This school provides "a port in a storm" for many students that do not thrive in a traditional model. We would be devastated if we lost this school. Please, I urge you to renew Gateway Labs Charter. This school is a work in progress, it has many dedicated people working tirelessly to create this new and wonderful alternative school. My children and I are proud to be part of the Gladiator family. We are thrilled to be here to see how the improvement each year improve and progress to meet the needs of these unique students.

Respectfully,

Anne Marie Shotwell

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 9:13:18 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/5/2014 9:11:41 PM

Response End Time: 12/5/2014 9:13:12 PM

IP Address: 50.191.150.71

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Susie Grimes

2. E-Mail Address
susiegrimes1@yahoo.com

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

4. Comment:
Sam needs this school. Please allow it to remain available to him.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 11:31:28 AM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/8/2014 11:30:58 AM

Response End Time: 12/8/2014 11:31:20 AM

IP Address: 50.78.141.85

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Andrea Hill

2. E-Mail Address
hillrakz@verizon.net

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

4. Comment:

As the parent of a child who benefited greatly from a specialized elementary school learning environment (RPLC), I feel strongly that Gateway Charter School should stay open to serve a population of kids that does not learn effectively in a traditional environment. State test scores for schools that serve a high number of students with IEPs cannot fairly be rated on the same scale as scores from traditional schools and should not be used as an independent rating tool for such schools. Student progress on IEP Goals is real and measurable and should come into consideration when a school's charter is being considered for renewal. Allow Gateway Charter School to continue teaching students until a better measure is put in place for schools that serve students with special needs.

In the right environment and with the right supports special education students have a greater chance of succeeding in school and in life.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 9:40:07 AM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/7/2014 9:24:34 AM

Response End Time: 12/7/2014 9:39:58 AM

IP Address: 173.75.226.249

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Joanne Harrison

2. E-Mail Address
rj_harrison@verizon.net

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

4. Comment:
I have a friend whose son attends Gateway Lab School. It is the right setting for him as he needs small classes, unique teachers, and specialized attention. Closing this school would be detrimental for him and his long term educational viability. I would like the state to reverse the recommendation to close Gateway. Standardized test scores are not a good way to judge the progress of this school or these students.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 4:45:51 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/7/2014 4:12:21 PM

Response End Time: 12/7/2014 4:45:18 PM

IP Address: 76.98.155.249

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
William R. Berti

2. E-Mail Address
Bill_Berti@hotmail.com

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

4. Comment:
William R. Berti
1 Corinne Court
Wilmington, DE 19809
December 7, 2014

I support the approval of Gateway Lab School charter renewal application. Gateway deserves our support to continue its mission to provide a quality education and educational environment to disadvantaged, special-needs daughters and sons in our community.

The Charter School Accountability Committee is recommending to the Secretary of Education that Gateway's application for charter renewal be denied and to close the school. Denial of their charter renewal request will be a major mistake, in my opinion. Gateway needs more time to demonstrate to the Delaware Department of Education that the program they are developing works to help learning-disadvantaged students and will become a model for other schools to emulate.

Gateway has been serving disadvantaged students with special needs like our daughter from grades 3 to 8 since 2011-12. Our daughter has been a student at Gateway since the fourth grade when it first opened. For her and for us, Gateway

has succeeded in providing her an opportunity to learn and to succeed both scholastically and socially.

Our daughter had difficulties attending preschool. These difficulties become even more pronounced in kindergarten through 3rd grade at our feeder school in the Brandywine school district. She missed many days because she hated going to school. We would force her to go; I sometimes would carry her to school screaming, crying and still wearing her pajamas.

We thought we were finally getting her the help she needed in 2nd grade. She spent much of that year institutionalized at Rockford as an outpatient and at Kids Peace in Allentown, PA, for several months where she was in residence. However, when she returned to her regular school to repeat 2nd grade, she continued to have problems in school. She wasn't learning to read and write and was falling farther behind even with the special help that the school said they were providing to her.

As soon as we learned about Gateway, we attended a parent meeting and signed our daughter up to attend. She didn't want to go to school at the beginning; for her, school was never a place where she felt safe enough to learn. She quickly learned that Gateway was different, which didn't take nearly as long as we had thought. Within the first few weeks, the teachers and staff at Gateway began to understand why she became upset at school and unable to learn. They quickly made changes to help accommodate her special needs after coming to us to explain their plans.

Our daughter is a success story. She reads and writes, continues to improve in math, and is an active contributor in class and at the school. Just as importantly – maybe more so - she enjoys going to school. And because she goes to Gateway, we have seen other changes in her behavior. She has friends. She became a Girl Scout. She is relaxed at home and gets along better with her older brother. She has been able to reduce her dependency on medication by more than 50%. Without her experience at Gateway, she might be institutionalized, in jail, or worse. I am convinced that the teachers and staff at Gateway helped save our daughter.

I know that the teachers and staff at Gateway have been able to save many other children, too. I wonder how many more they will save if they are allowed to continue their mission. I wonder when other schools in the area will recognize the special mission, methods, and talents at Gateway and start suggesting it to the parents of sons and daughters with special needs.

I also worry how many children will be lost if Gateway is forced to close. I am concerned even though it makes no difference to our daughter; this is her last year there. She will start 9th grade next fall.

I am asking for your help to save the Gateway Lab School so that they can continue to save students to become productive members of our County, of our State, and of our Country.

Gateway needs more time. Please help them get it.

I will be there Wednesday night in support of the Gateway Lab School.

Thanks for reading.

Sincerely,

William R. Berti
(302) 764-0657

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 10:43:10 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/5/2014 10:39:00 PM

Response End Time: 12/5/2014 10:43:00 PM

IP Address: 69.136.210.140

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Evelyn pietrobono

2. E-Mail Address
e.pietrobono@comcast.net

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

4. Comment:
Please keep this school open. Our special needs children need the opportunities this special school affords them. Thank you

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 10:46:55 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/5/2014 10:38:07 PM

Response End Time: 12/5/2014 10:46:46 PM

IP Address: 50.191.101.23

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Lisa Capretto

2. E-Mail Address
LCapretto@msn.com

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

4. Comment:
Please do not close Gateway Lab School next year. I don't believe that it is fair to judge the effectiveness of Gateway solely on test scores. This school provides an educational experience for students who have special needs and need more attention. I have a friend with a child at this school, and they are happy with the progress he is making there. You would be doing a disservice to the children who are benefiting from the smaller classes and extra attention. Please give Gateway more time.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 11:43:59 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/5/2014 11:41:54 PM

Response End Time: 12/5/2014 11:43:50 PM

IP Address: 108.36.151.173

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Samantha Sand

2. E-Mail Address
hellogriffy@gmail.com

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

4. Comment:
Please keep Gateway Lab open. A wonderful friend and neighbor relies on this school for her son's education. She believes Gateway is the right school for him.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 12:56:03 AM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/6/2014 12:51:19 AM

Response End Time: 12/6/2014 12:55:40 AM

IP Address: 76.116.101.83

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Richard Beers

2. E-Mail Address
Rwbeers01@aol.com

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

4. Comment:
I am deeply saddened that Delaware is closing a school that helps Special Needs Children in so many ways. Please don't make this about politics and let's make it about the children that all of us as citizens have pledged to defend.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 2:23:18 AM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/6/2014 2:21:20 AM

Response End Time: 12/6/2014 2:23:09 AM

IP Address: 69.253.164.150

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Brenda Carey

2. E-Mail Address
brendacarey@hotmail.com

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

4. Comment:
Grateful

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 6:08:19 AM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/6/2014 5:46:14 AM

Response End Time: 12/6/2014 6:08:11 AM

IP Address: 98.114.184.246

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Moiria McGuinness

2. E-Mail Address
MoreUh@aol.com

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

4. Comment:
I have been told by very solid parents of children at this school that they have been thrilled with the education their child with a significant and lifelong learning disability has been receiving at this school. Please leave this school open and instead work on improving any problem areas. Thank you.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 7:19:27 AM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/6/2014 7:00:43 AM

Response End Time: 12/6/2014 7:19:19 AM

IP Address: 70.44.126.75

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Brenda Grassi

2. E-Mail Address
Brendasgrassi@tgcsnet.com

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

4. Comment:
Charter schools like Gateway Lab are important to allow students like Sam to grow and learn on their time line. Every student with special needs do not fit in our cookie cutter academic world. For one reason or another these students need more attention to succeed. Every student should be given the chance to reach their potential learning goals and beyond. I also work in a private district paid school and have seen students that were lost in the public system go on to serve our country, graduate from college and succeed in the trade school work force. These students are our future scientist, teachers, and or electrical engineers. Let us help them so that they in turn can help many more.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 9:23:54 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/7/2014 8:45:36 PM

Response End Time: 12/7/2014 9:23:44 PM

IP Address: 173.49.127.92

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Masood Siddiqui

2. E-Mail Address
siddiquimd@yahoo.com

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

4. Comment:
December 7, 2014
To
Mark Murphy
Secretary of Education
State Board of Education
401 Federal Street, Suite 2
Dover, Delaware 19901-3639

Re: Gateway Lab School

Dear Mr. Murphy,
I am writing this letter to provide my point of view regarding DOE's recent decision to not renew charter of Gateway Lab School. As you may know Gateway Lab School is a charter school dedicated to serving "children who are struggling to achieve academic success in a traditional school environment." It has 212 students in grades 3-8, more than 60 percent of whom have some kind of disability or special need and need IEP and 504.

My daughter has learning disability related to Developmental delay and ADHD. She has been through different public and private schools until she starts going to this school in 4th grade. She was having a difficult time in previous schools and was

constantly getting neglected by her peers and unfortunately at times by her teachers. Because of her learning disability, she needed lots of help from her teachers/ teaching aids to do her class work and during testing. She was unable to get this help all the time as teacher-student ratio was high and teachers were unable to have enough time for her. She always had IEP's, but it was always difficult to find special Ed homeroom teachers. We (I, my wife and her older brother) always managed to have extra help for her in studies including private tuition as well as helping her with school work. It was a constant struggle for her to go to school. This caused significant issue with her learning and eventually self-esteem. She developed phobias to birds, had difficult time in social circle and later was avoiding people.

Since she started to go to Gateway Lab School, she has done remarkably well. Her mathematics and reading skills have improved. She is more confident and has an improved self-esteem. She can stand in front of people to speak and present her work and is able to participate in sports. She looks forward to go to school now. Her IEP goals have been constantly met. She has shown improvement in standardized testing. She still has a long way to go to be at the level of a normal kid of her age. If you close this school, I am afraid that she will be unable to continue her progress and be a responsible person to society. Same could also be said of her class mates and school colleagues. This school is doing an excellent job in educating Special Ed kids. Here these kids see kids like them, with whom they can bond better and have no fear of been laughed at or made fun off. They have dedicated teachers, who are certified to work with special need kids, understand their needs and are able to provide help right away. I am also worried about future of these kids if their school is closed. They were not provided an adequate teaching atmosphere in traditional schools before and who can assure us that this time around it would be different.

I understand that Gateway Lab School was unable to show statistical improvement as required by the state. Unfortunately, 3 years is not an enough time to judge progress of a project. The trend shown in their testing over these years have been a positive one. School administration and educators have been diligently working to improve their scores by implementing measures as necessary. Also, I feel comparing Gateway Lab school's performance with other public schools is erroneous. Here almost 60% of the kids are special need kids, which compared to a traditional schools is a significantly higher number. Testing scores at traditional public schools will do better as they have less number (percent) of special need students. It would be worthwhile to compare testing scores of Kids from Gateway Lab to the scores of special need children who are enrolled in traditional public schools.

My request to you is that please give Gateway Lab School 3-5 years to show you required progress. Based upon our trend so far, I am confident that next time around, we will be able to show DOE that these kids can achieve any goals which are set for them.

Sincerely,

Masood Siddiqui, MD, FCCP
Pulmonary & Sleep Consultants, LLC
4512 Kirkwood Highway,
Suite 300-B
Wilmington, Delaware 19808

CC: Jack Markell, Governor

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 8:25:40 AM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/6/2014 8:24:22 AM

Response End Time: 12/6/2014 8:25:32 AM

IP Address: 68.82.151.28

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Rachel Gestwicki

2. E-Mail Address
rachel.gestwicki@gmail.com

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

4. Comment:
Please keep this school open as it truly helps children who cannot thrive in a traditional academic setting.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 7:47:55 AM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/8/2014 7:40:48 AM

Response End Time: 12/8/2014 7:47:17 AM

IP Address: 96.245.65.231

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Eleanor K. Wilson

2. E-Mail Address
ekwilson39@verizon.net

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

4. Comment:
Please consider keeping this school open for these special students. This is an environment in which they can thrive and feel safe. I am a retired teacher and have had experience in the past with special students. Mainstreaming these students into a regular school would be difficult for them to adjust to those unfamiliar surroundings.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 10:59:32 AM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/8/2014 10:58:10 AM

Response End Time: 12/8/2014 10:59:05 AM

IP Address: 67.109.150.194

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Jodi Shinn

2. E-Mail Address
shinnjt@gmail.com

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

4. Comment:
The news of this school possibly closing has really hit home for our family. Gateway has provided my brother with an excellent education as well as the will to overcome many obstacles due to the love and support he gets from his teachers. It is mind boggling that a school with over 60% of the children having IEP's could get shut down in the blink of an eye. I understand having standards and expectations but you can not just shut down a school on these children without providing them a chance to excel and prove themselves, or at least provide a little bit of hope. Haven't you ever heard of a probationary period? Have some compassion. This school is a safe haven for many children, if you take that from them, what kind of message are you sending? These kids don't need to be given up on, they need a place where they can learn and succeed and this is exactly where they can do this.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 9:52:55 AM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/6/2014 9:48:20 AM

Response End Time: 12/6/2014 9:52:46 AM

IP Address: 68.83.255.86

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Kelly Greisiger

2. E-Mail Address
kjohnston35@comcast.net

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

4. Comment:
This school means the world to my family. Please keep it open.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 9:53:55 AM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/6/2014 9:48:16 AM

Response End Time: 12/6/2014 9:53:46 AM

IP Address: 208.85.180.248

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Jane Enger

2. E-Mail Address
jane.enger@gmail.com

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

4. Comment:
Sam Kitts is a smart, kind, funny young man and Gateway has played an integral part in his learning and development. Please keep Gateway Lab open!

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 10:19:52 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/7/2014 10:18:26 PM

Response End Time: 12/7/2014 10:19:42 PM

IP Address: 166.137.244.75

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Bridget Huber

2. E-Mail Address
Huberg6418@gmail.com

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

4. Comment:
December 6, 2014

Dear Secretary Murphy,

We are writing you in response to the non-renewal of Gateway Lab School. We would like to advise you of the tremendous improvement we have seen in our daughter in such a short amount of time. Our eight year old daughter just started at Gateway on August 27, 2014. Our daughter has been diagnosed with ADHD, ODD, and developmental delays. We have noticed an improvement in her reading skills, speech, attitude, her willingness to attend school, socialization skills, and overall demeanor.

Firstly, our daughter entered Gateway unable to read. After working closely with her teachers, she is now reading. In fact, we often hear her reading to herself in her room. The first thing that she asked for, for Christmas, were books. We read to her every night and now she is reading to us. She is putting the tools to work that she has learned from her teachers. She sounds out the words and breaks them down. She was bothered before by the fact that she couldn't read. Her self confidence has improved tremendously in just learning to read.

Secondly, when our daughter attended her traditional district school, she struggle in Social Studies and Science. We just received her first report card at Gateway and she has received an "A" in Social Studies and a " B " in Science. We truly believe that the curriculum and teacher's have contributed to this improvement. The curriculum allows the students to be immersed in the period they are studying. This "hands on" approach has assisted our daughter in remembering and most importantly understanding the content.

Thirdly, when our daughter attended her traditional school, she was offered speech and occupational therapy two times a month. At Gateway, she is given speech therapy two times a week. This change has made a vast improvement in her vocabulary. She will often stop and think about what she will say and put the tools she has been given to use. She had recently visited her grandparents and they commented on how she has seemed to mature in such a short amount of time.

Lastly, our daughter has been taught "I can" at Gateway. In fact, the other day, her little friend was misbehaving and had to go inside and was unable to play. When we asked her what happened, she stated that her friend had made bad choices and needed to take a step back and think. This is a huge step for her, she is learning recognize in herself and others when its time to stop and think about her actions. She is learning to manage her anger and what steps to put in place to make that happen. She has made a considerable improvement in the amount of outbursts she has had.

In conclusion, we ask that you reconsider the decision of non- renewal of our Charter. This school is in its infancy and has alot if growing to do. We believe that if this school is closed, these children will be placed back into their traditional district schools where they will get lost in the shuffle, labeled a distraction, and passed from grade to grade when they are truly not ready. It is also our belief that a traditional district school is not equipped to handle the educational needs of these children. These schools tend to be overpopulated, oftentimes, with a student to teacher ratio of 25:1. These students require AND deserve to be taught in a way that will allow them to learn and flourish. We must ensure that they are prepared for their futures, by not only becoming educated but becoming advocates for themselves. Again, we ask you to keep this wonderful school open.

Sincerely,

Bridget O. Huber
Kenneth T. Smith

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 12:04:57 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/6/2014 11:59:33 AM

Response End Time: 12/6/2014 12:04:48 PM

IP Address: 68.82.185.55

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Beth gallagher

2. E-Mail Address
Buffygallagher@yahoo.com

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

4. Comment:
Thank you in advance for reading my email concerning your potential closing of Gateway School. This school has met so many children with special needs. The children that go there are gaining tremendous things that they need academically and socially. It would be a huge loss to the families and the community that rely on special services. I have a preschooler with an IEP and looked forward to seeking out a school for her. The Kitts family has said such wonderful things about both structure, teachers, and the success of the charter school. Please don't disappoint them along with all the other families and future families that need alternative schools for our community children.

Thanks
Beth Gallagher

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 6:41:02 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/6/2014 6:38:05 PM

Response End Time: 12/6/2014 6:40:53 PM

IP Address: 108.2.179.53

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
sally forrest

2. E-Mail Address
sallyt425@verizon.net

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

4. Comment:
Please renew Gateway Lab's Charter so this school can continue to serve families of children with special needs/ specific issues. Our friend's son is a student, and the program and staff are making solid progress.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 10:12:34 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/6/2014 10:10:35 PM

Response End Time: 12/6/2014 10:12:25 PM

IP Address: 68.238.222.190

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Rebecca McCudden

2. E-Mail Address
Rdmccudden1@aol.com

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

4. Comment:
I support this school and it continuing to be open.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 10:29:31 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/6/2014 10:01:16 PM

Response End Time: 12/6/2014 10:29:21 PM

IP Address: 68.80.168.4

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name

Anani Maas

2. E-Mail Address

ananimaas007@gmail.com

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

Gateway Lab School

4. Comment:

It takes more than Good Intentions to Run a Successful School

At the public hearing on December 10, supporters of Gateway Lab School will be invited to plead for their school to remain open. You will hear many heartwarming stories about how the school has helped their children when they hadn't received that kind of help elsewhere in the public school system.

Of course, special needs children deserve as much educational opportunity as anyone else. They deserve to be valued as individuals. They deserve to have their unique and varied needs met in a caring and encouraging environment with teachers, specialists, and therapists who can truly help them reach their full potential.

So, why, are they in a charter school? Charter schools have lower budgets and fewer resources than district schools. It simply does not make logical sense that we would place the children with the most complex (and therefore, expensive) needs in a system that affords them the fewest resources!

Gateway Lab School, they claim, has solved that problem by paying their teachers LESS! In the December 6, 2014 article in the News Journal said, "Gateway teachers

get paid less so that the school can afford smaller class sizes and extra specialists and paraprofessionals to give students the individual attention, something parents and teachers say the kids badly need."

The fact is, Gateway teachers get paid 20% less than their public school counterparts! According to Red Clay Consolidated School District's Teacher Salary Schedule, a first-year teacher with a bachelor's degree is paid \$39,159. This means that an equally credentialed Gateway teacher brings home \$31,327, or roughly \$15 per hour (if teachers worked only 40 hours a week, which we know is patently absurd). Can we actually believe that Gateway Lab School is able to recruit and keep the very best, most highly effective teachers with wages such as these?

And what about the working environment for those teachers? There is no provision that charter school administrators have adequate credentials. The first set of administrators and the first school board had not one educational professional who had any professional experience with special needs children! Not one! How does a novice administration with absolutely no experience or credentials supposed to create a supportive working environment for a highly effective cadre of teaching professionals? How, exactly, are they to assess their effectiveness? Can special needs children really stand to lose one or two years of progress while a floundering charter school "figures it out?"

The turnover rate alone at Gateway Lab School answers that question. Only a handful of founding teachers remain from the original crew hired in 2011. Nationwide, charter schools have a 20% to 25% higher turnover rate than traditional public schools. In addition, among veteran teachers in charter schools, the attrition rate is closer to 40%. Gateway's turnover rate has been even higher.

Why is teacher salary and teacher turnover an important consideration when deciding if a school should remain open? Because every research study conducted since the 1960's confirms one thing: the TEACHER is the single most important determinant of what and how much a student learns! Out of every component within the school's control, the teacher is the most important one. Not class size. Not curriculum. Not standards. Not the amount of money spent per student. Not test scores. "The best teachers get three times as much learning out of their students than the worst teachers do," according to Stanford economist Eric Hanushek.

If Gateway Lab School is to be given the time they claim that they need to make the improvements in student academic performance, then they are going to need to find a way to recruit and retain the best, most effective, strongest teacher workforce possible. And charter schools by their very nature are not equipped to do so.

Gateway Lab School hasn't done everything wrong. They had good intentions. They based their ideal on a demonstrated exemplary educational model in the Lab School of Washington. They have helped a few children and families who have not been helped elsewhere.

However, it takes more than good intentions to run a successful school. It takes highly trained, highly effective, dedicated experts in the field of special needs education. It takes resources, therapies, and support. If Gateway's model could be replicated in a district school where it could be fully funded and fully staffed, then many, many more of Delaware's special needs population could benefit. I hope to see that happen one day in Delaware. But Gateway Lab School, as a charter school

dedicated to help children “struggling to achieve academic success in a traditional school environment” needs to close.

Ultimately, it is not best for the students. It is not best for the teachers who work there. There has to be a better answer than to place our most needy children in an environment where the most important factor in a child’s education, the teacher, gets paid less than an assistant manager at WaWa.

Secretary Mark Murphy and Governor Jack Markell, we must be able to do better than that!

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 9:14:23 AM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/8/2014 9:11:44 AM

Response End Time: 12/8/2014 9:14:14 AM

IP Address: 69.249.19.28

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name

Robin Norris and Todd Norris

2. E-Mail Address

robinnorris610@comcast.net

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

Gateway Lab School

4. Comment:

The Delaware Board of Education should reverse the Charter School Accountability Committee recommendation to close the Gateway Lab School.

The Gateway Lab School provides critical support for students with learning differences. Gateway Lab School fills an essential gap for the education of these students, which is not accomplished through standard public schools. The families of over 200 students have selected Gateway Lab School as the optimum pathway for their children's educational needs. More than 60% of the students at Gateway Lab School have Individualized Educational Plans, which enable them to achieve success with a focused, customized academic approach. The son of our family friend is succeeding in this environment, following struggles within the standard public school system. It will be detrimental to him and his long term educational viability if Gateway Lab School is closed.

We support the role of the Charter School Accountability Committee to evaluate the performance of Delaware public schools and to take appropriate action, if necessary. However, the Charter School Accountability Committee approach of applying the defined academic criteria (DCAS results) against a special-needs school, such as Gateway Lab, makes no sense. It is not reasonable to expect this type of school to score favorably in such an assessment. Either the current academic criteria should

be excluded or an alternative criteria should be utilized for the assessment of schools which support children with learning differences.

We have been residents of Delaware for over sixty years. We want the State to be a supportive environment for the educational growth and development of all children. An innovative school, such as Gateway Lab School, helps achieve this goal.

The Board of Education is responsible to promote and ensure an effective educational process for all children in Delaware.

The Board should support renewal of the charter for the Gateway Lab School.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 9:01:57 AM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/6/2014 9:00:07 AM

Response End Time: 12/6/2014 9:01:18 AM

IP Address: 70.192.140.255

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Kerry Ferriter

2. E-Mail Address
Tkferriter@earthlink.net

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

4. Comment:
This school provides a service for a student population that no other school can provide!! Please keep this school going.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 3:43:37 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/5/2014 3:28:35 PM

Response End Time: 12/5/2014 3:43:28 PM

IP Address: 73.165.210.199

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
James P Gallagher

2. E-Mail Address
JimGallagher@Spartanpolymers.com

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

4. Comment:
Wow closing Gateway cause they did not meet standard with 60% of their population having goals and learning needs for the things most take for granted and you hold these kids to baseline academic standards..Is their no consideration for these special kids important development in other ways so beyond a test score? These special children can do things they could not do last year that really matter. They have confidence and can sit in church, sit in class and learn and prosper, social skill development to set them up for future success.... they are excited and capable of learning with confidence...Now you take their school....I cant think of a better place to place my tax dollars. Surely there is a fairer~ truer way to grade this s important school...so these kids can continue to prosper without setback?

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 11:20:36 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/5/2014 9:25:02 PM

Response End Time: 12/8/2014 11:20:26 PM

IP Address: 76.99.199.145

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Naomi Hoffman

2. E-Mail Address
Naomi@americanwhale.com

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

4. Comment:
My friend's son attends Gateway and has had a great experience there. Test scores don't tell the whole story. The unique circumstance of this school and the students it serves, many for whom a costly private school is not a financial possibility and who have not succeeded in regular public school, should be taken into account when reviewing the charter renewal application. We should champion programs and schools that employ innovative approaches, especially in aiding students who might otherwise fall through the cracks. At least in the case of the student I know, Gateway is a success because it has provided a nurturing environment where he can thrive and learn.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 9:39:43 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/8/2014 8:59:08 PM

Response End Time: 12/8/2014 9:39:34 PM

IP Address: 73.160.111.198

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name
Joseph Shinn

2. E-Mail Address
josephshinn@gmail.com

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

4. Comment:

When I was young, I was far from a model child. I failed to succeed in all academic areas, displayed behavioral issues, and suffered from social struggles with other students. My teachers tried to mold me; but most failed. When I reached junior high school, guidance counselors began to push me into specialized programs. I personally saw these specialized programs fail and in a public school system – things are different; If you fail in a specialized program, you fall by the wayside and your individual needs are not met.

By shutting down Gateway Lab, I fear you are forcing children into public schools where they can quickly become lost in the system. My brother currently attends Gateway. His needs are met, and at times, they are exceeded. The attention my brother receives at Gateway is irreplaceable. Success, in a school such as this, should not be measured by test statistics. Statistics and numerical measurements are one small piece of a much larger picture. Please take into consideration that children's lives may depend on the decisions you are about to make.

From: jennifer.nagourney@doe.k12.de.us
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: New response for survey "Renewal Public Comment"
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 9:51:54 PM

GENERAL RESPONSE INFORMATION

Response Start Time: 12/8/2014 9:49:31 PM

Response End Time: 12/8/2014 9:51:46 PM

IP Address: 68.81.177.127

Completed Survey: Yes

Respondent: Anonymous

SURVEY RESPONSES

SCORE: 0

1. Full Name

Laura GentryBurkholder

2. E-Mail Address

lgentry01@comcast.net

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

Gateway Lab School

4. Comment:

Dear Secretary Murphy,

I am writing in support of Gateway Labs School. Since my 11 yr old son Nicholas has attended GLS he has blossomed in many ways;

He enjoys going to school everyday

He has acquired and sustained many new friendships

He comes home from school less frustrated, although the school day is longer. The way the classes are structured with shorter class periods, enabling him to better concentrate on each subject.

I feel that if GLS were to close it would be a disservice to the children like Nicholas who benefit from this type of learning environment.

Yours truly,

Concerned parent

From: [Bain, Randy](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Please SAVE THIS SCHOOL!!!!
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 12:33:15 PM

To whom it may concern,

Our friend Elaine Buonopane's daughter started at Gateway in the third grade, she could barely read at the first-grade level because of a learning disability. This year, she's in the fifth grade, is reading at grade level, and scored the highest rating on the reading section of the state standardized test. She told us "regular public school just wasn't able to give her the one-on-one help she needs, the staff at Gateway gave her confidence. They got her to say to herself: I can do this."

There would be huge ripple effect and break the incredible momentum these children have experienced to this point.

DON'T DO IT!!!!

Jullie and Randy S. Bain
104 White Ash Avenue
Sicklerville, NJ 08081

From: [Thomas Beukema](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Proposed Closing of Gateway Lab Charter School
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 3:12:44 PM

Gentlemen and Ladies,

I have an autistic grandchild that currently attends the Gateway Lab Charter School and has made great strides while there. She used to be nearly totally withdrawn and through the efforts of the school now easily associates with her cousins and aunts and uncles. Her social growth has been astounding considering the number of years she spent in the public school where nearly no progress was seen.

She has also developed a caring attitude. She now has a cat that she plays with and cares for. She also has participated in Girl Scouting where she has developed a love for the outdoors through hiking, camping and the association with the other girl scouts. She is also interested in music and has taken up the flute and has participated in chorus.

The growth this young autistic person has shown is remarkable and has shown me that the effectiveness of a school **MUST** be measured in other ways than grades or academic improvement. In the Gateway Lab Charter School nearly 70% of the students are diagnosed as being educationally handicapped. Even considering the possibility of closing this school could be considered a form of discrimination. There has got to be a different set of standards for judging the effectiveness of schools such as Gateway. One size does not fit all in child development.

It has been a joy to see my grand daughter develop these past three plus years while at Gateway. She may never be like "Sally" down the street but just having her able to associate and communicate with her cousins, aunts and uncles has been wonderful.

Please do not close the Gateway School. It has done so much for those with social and learning disabilities.

Tom Beukema
Newark, DE

From: surfinsanj@yahoo.com
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Public Comment - 2014-15 Renewal Application
Date: Saturday, December 06, 2014 11:14:59 AM

Mark Murphy, I urge you to listen to the parents at the hearing on December 10th and read their comments. Feel the impact this school is making on their children. It is heart warming.

My son is in his second year at Gateway Labs and he is thriving there both academically and emotionally . He has a tic disorder as well as developmental delay, but loves going to school there. He did not miss one day this marking period and had all a,b and c grades. He did not pass the DCAS by a narrow margin, but my parental DCAS exam that I judge him on he passed with flying colors. I have invited you to tour the school and see first hand his story, his shoes...please feel free call me at 302-463-4293 at any time to make this happen.

I plead for you to sit down and read the parents comments

With regards,

Sanjay

From: [Leslie Mitchell](#)
To: [Murphy Mark](#); [Johnson Donna R](#); [Nagourney Jennifer](#); [Heffernan Pat](#); [Melendez Jorge](#); [Hughes Randall](#); [Gray Teri](#); [Coverdale Gregory](#); [Rutt Barbara](#); [Whittaker Terry](#); [Jaques, Jr Earl](#); [Infocso](#)
Subject: Renew Gateway Lab School's charter
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 8:04:27 PM

Dear Secretary Murphy, Delaware State Board of Education Members, and Friends,

I am writing to rally your support and the State Board of Education to renew the Charter license of Gateway Lab School (GLS) for 5 years. A hearing is schedule for [December 10, 2014 at 6pm](#) and Secretary Mark Murphy will be making a final decision at the next Board of Education meeting [on December 18th](#).

As an active parent, I am very concerned since my son, diagnosed with Ataxia SCA-7, just started his first year in 5th grade at GLS this past August. He has made remarkable strides in such a short time compared to his experiences in the public school system. For example:

- Public School DECAS Assessments in the past 2 years dropped from meet standards to below: Reading-758 to 701, Mathematics- 684 - 683 with IEP accommodations. Last year, he scored 386, below range, in Social Studies.
- After testing in the Spring 2014, he remarked that much of what was on the DECAS Assessment was not taught in class nor in the materials sent home that we reviewed together.
- He became unfocused due to the fast class pace, he withdrew from participating in class and at times when he did ask questions, his teacher responded "figure it out".
- His final report range was proficient to meets proficient.
- After the 2nd trimester, his fourth grade teacher recommended GLS as a better fit for his needs and stated that she recommended another student to transfer there who was

accepted and doing well.

This year, after his first trimester at GLS:

- Using a modified curriculum, he ranged from near proficiency to exceeds proficiency in academics.
- He has developed socially with more friendships than all the previous years put together and finally feels part of a school family.
- He actively participated after the first week, and he is able to tell me what he learned in most subjects.
- He is also learning to play the guitar which he loves!
- Most importantly, he is a much happier kid living a more normal life at GLS as any kid should.

It is clear that in only 3 years GLS has made a positive footprint towards their mission in successfully tailoring to meet the needs of a student population that has had difficulty learning in a traditional school setting. We learned that the Delaware Board of Education approved GLS for an Alternative Framework in 2015 based upon the positive trends over the last 3 years. Therefore, it was extremely shocking to hear that this same board has refused to renew our charter.

I recently read about Governor Markell's Universal Recycling program and how it first lagged behind and is now benefiting our environment and economy. He mentioned it took "educating the public" and 4 years after adopting a comprehensive plan in 2010 before dramatic results were achieved. As we supported and respected these efforts as well as Board of Education initiatives, we pray you will support ours. Please give GLS "**more time**" and have the same faith in GLS and our children by granting us a 5 year charter using the same faith you approved our Alternative Framework for 2015. Allow our program the opportunity to achieve dramatic results. Surely our kids are even a more valuable investment and their future benefits more rewarding to our overall economy and

communities.

"Many Thanks" in advance for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Leslie Mitchell
GLS Parent

GLS Student



Sent from my iPhone

From: [Lynn Magrogan](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Student data for renewal of Gateway Lab Charter
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 11:00:45 PM

Good evening,

My name is Lynn Magrogan and I am a certified instructional para educator at Gateway Lab Charter School. I support two 6th grade students with multiple learning challenges. I also work with 2 small groups of students who benefit from extra support in both reading and math.

I want to share some data concerning a student I have supported since the fall of the 2013/14 academic year. This student entered Gateway as a new student in fifth grade. His Fall DCAS reading accountability score was 654, and his instructional score was 672. Following several months of supported instruction, his Spring DCAS scores had improved considerably. His Spring reading accountability score was 732, and his instructional score was 728. His math scores show similar improvement. The student's Fall math accountability score was 605, and his instructional score was 603. His Spring accountability score was 728, and his instructional score was 731.

This student is now in 6th grade, and I continue to support him on a daily basis. He continues to make academic progress, but he has also grown socially. He has become an active member of the school community, participating in select chorus and other social activities.

The students in my small groups(called success blocks) are tested weekly to monitor progress. Each student has shown measurable growth in reading comprehension and math operation fluency. Each of these students have an identifiable issue that can impede their learning.

I believe that this measurable data clearly indicates the positive impact that Gateway Lab School has on our unique population.

Thank you for taking the time to consider renewal for gateway Lab Charter School.

Mrs. Lynn Magrogan
lynn.magrogan@gls.k12.de.us

From: [LAURA](#)
To: nathaniel.r.schwartz@dupont.com
Cc: [infocso](#)
Subject: Support for gateway lab school
Date: Monday, December 08, 2014 9:25:38 PM

Dear Secretary Murphy,

I am writing in support of Gateway Labs School. Since my 11 yr old son Nicholas has attended GLS he has blossomed in many ways;
He enjoys going to school everyday
He has acquired and sustained many new friendships
He comes home from school less frustrated, although the school day is longer. The way the classes are structured with shorter class periods, enabling him to better concentrate on each subject.

I feel that if GLS were to close it would be a disservice to the children like Nicholas who benefit from this type of learning environment.

Yours truly,
Concerned parent

Sent from XFINITY Connect Mobile App

From: [Anne L Deming](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Support for Gateway Lab School
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 7:08:55 PM

Mr. Murphy,

Please accept this email in support of the extension of Gateway Lab School's charter. The school clearly has made progress, but it needs more time to prove its worth. It's mission is so appropriate to the students it serves. To help provide one-on-one support to students who have not met the required standards, a group of retired teachers has formed to volunteer at the school. We are committed to offering as much time as may be needed to help these students succeed.

We need your support. The school deserves to continue.

Thank you.

Sincerely,
Anne Deming, PhD
Wilmington
302-999-1666

From: [Caroline Large](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Support for keeping Gateway Lab school
Date: Friday, December 05, 2014 9:21:25 PM

To whom it may concern:

This email is to request that you keep Gateway Lab open. It's the only public school for special need kids in the area and what would happen to them if it were to close?

The reason for wanting to close it due to academic failure is obviously an error. How could these kids reach the same academic levels than their peers if they have special needs? Isn't that why this school opened in the first place? Regular public schools cannot provide them with the extra attention they require...

I am friends with one of those kids and in the last year, I have seen great improvement in his social skills, even in his speech, which used to be impossible to understand. Our kids never wanted to play with him and he was constantly frustrated. Now, he is getting more and more included in the games and is gaining confidence. It is clear his school is making an enormous difference in his life.

Please, keep this school opened.

Respectfully,

Caroline Large

From: [Robert Harrison](#)
To: [infocso](#)
Subject: Support for keeping Gateway Lab School
Date: Sunday, December 07, 2014 10:05:19 AM

I recently learned that the Gateway School was denied renewal. I grew up in Pennsylvania and have a brother with special needs. We are both in our 50's now. I have two sons; one attends the Wilmington Charter School and the other Al DuPont HS. I consider myself very lucky. I can recall the struggles and frustration my parents endured trying to find my brother a proper learning environment. Efforts to educate him in a traditional public school proved disastrous. He was bullied, was stolen from and learned absolutely nothing. Fortunately that period of time was brief because my parents were able to pursue other options. I am afraid not everyone is that lucky. Please reconsider the decision to close Gateway. Many people depend on the special service and environment it provides. Also, please reconsider the standard by which you measure a school's success. Special needs do require special attention.

Thank you,

Robert Harrison
Hockessin, DE