

Hi,

My name is Isabela Chevres and this is my 7th year at Aspira. This bilingual school gives us a great opportunity that other schools don't. Since Aspira is one of the only schools that is bilingual, it is very important to the local community. It gives us a chance.

I feel safe with this community because we've grown together and we are all held at a much higher standard than most. Aspira is a diverse school accepting of all people regardless of ethnicity, religion or belief. The mutual respect we all have has been taught to us by our amazing teachers.

Our teachers have always been supportive role models. They never give up on us and their can-do attitudes help us reach our full potential. They push us to do our best, even when we think we can't. Would we be able to depend on other schools for the same support??

I have seen this school evolve every year since I started here. And every year it gets better. Personally I believe the K-12th grade opportunity would be the best option for us.

Thank you for your time.

Feb. 25, 2019

Delaware State Board of Education
401 Federal St. Ste. 2
Dover DE 19901

Attn: Delaware State Board of Education

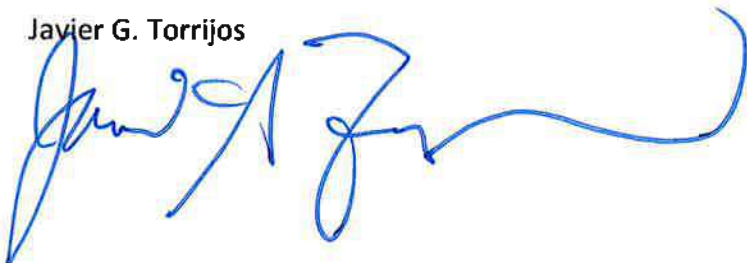
Dear Board Members,

I would kindly ask that you strongly consider Las Americas Aspira Academy (LAAA) to expand their education level to the High School. LAAA offers excellent student success in their current curriculum and will be offering a bi-literacy pathway that is crucial in today's emerging business markets. LAAA junior/senior high school students will have the opportunity to earn the Delaware Certificate of Multi-literacy. This is a win-win situation for not only the student that makes him/her competitive for college and future career job opportunities but positions Delaware to have a highly multi-literate workforce that can open up global markets for Delaware businesses. According to Child Trends Hispanic Institute report dated September 24, 2014, of the 74 million children in the U.S. today 17.5 million are Hispanic. They are the largest racial/ethnic minority group of children, and also the fastest-growing. By 2050 it will be one in three children will be Hispanic. These children represent tomorrow's work force, our future. It is extremely important that our educational institutions start developing programs that focus on bi-literacy and multi-literacy. Extending LAAA's grade configuration to include grades 9-12, would ensure students are better able to take advantage of career opportunities. HR Magazine published an article in May 2013 that stated that Hispanics are projected to make up 30 percent of the U.S. Labor workforce in 2050. The report goes on to say that a more highly educated society is better able to compete internationally. I submit to you today that LAAA is laying the groundwork for the highly educated workforce that will allow Delaware to compete in the global stage through its core educational values of excellence.

It also important to keep in mind that expanding the grade level to twelfth grade creates an educational continuity structure for students to learn in a school system that they are most familiar and comfortable. It helps reduce the student's anxiety and stress levels and allows them to focus within the existing education structural system where they are accustomed to. As most of you know changing schools is stressful and students that experience anxiety when they transition from one school to another can face challenges that may lead to poor academic achievements. By allowing the LAAA to modify its grade levels it allows the educators to build a strong relationship with the student and families.

Should you have any questions please feel free to call me at 302-367-8365.

Javier G. Torrijos



DAVID P. SOKOLA
STATE SENATOR
8th District



SENATE
STATE OF DELAWARE
411 LEGISLATIVE AVENUE
DOVER, DELAWARE 19901

February 5, 2019

To Whom It May Concern,

I am writing in support of the modification request from Las Americas ASPIRA Academy to expand to 12th grade. This charter modification is an essential part of establishing a biliteracy pathway for students from kindergarten to college and career in Delaware.

Las Americas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA) Opened in 2011 as the first Spanish/English immersion charter school in Delaware. In its first year of operation, there were 300 students in grades K-5, and there are currently 785 students enrolled in grades K-8. In learning a second language, 80% of LAAA's graduates have earned a minimum of one World Language Credit prior to transitioning to high school, with over 50% of those students earning two or more credits as a result of their dual language immersion experience. LAAA's dual language immersion program has proven to be effective in supporting their English learners as measured by the number of students transitioned out of ELL services each year. In the Spring of 2017, there were four students that transitioned out of ELL services compared to 17 students in the Spring of 2018. The majority of those students were in 4th and 5th grades. From these statistics, it is clear that ASPIRA Academy is promoting academic success for both ELL and non-ELL student populations.

According to the Migration Policy Institute, from 1997 until 2008, Delaware's ELL enrollment grew by 249%, and Delaware is listed as one of the top 10 states with significant increases in ELL enrollment. These numbers have continued to rise with a total of 11,082 ELLs in the 2016-2017 school year, a 433.3% increase. In Sussex County alone, between 1990 and 2010, the Hispanic population grew from 1,476 to 16,954. Among Delaware's ELL group, Spanish is the number one language of origin, with students from more than 15 Latin American countries represented. It is becoming more important in Delaware to support ELL students, and ASPIRA has proven their ability to support and promote success among ELLs.

An October 2018 survey of LAAA families revealed strong interest (86%) in having students continue their education in an ASPIRA high school. As a legislator and prior chair of the Senate Education Committee, I have witnessed ASPIRA's success firsthand. I have full faith in Margie Lopez Waite's ability as the Head of School to take Las Americas ASPIRA Academy to the next step in achieving success. Expanding LAAA to 12th grade will allow students to continue their biliteracy pathway to college and career.

If you need additional information, please do not hesitate to contact my office.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David P. Sokola".

David P. Sokola

State Senator, 8th District

24 Beech Hill Drive, Newark, DE 19711
Home: 302-239-2193 Senate Offices: Dover: 302-744-4139 Wilmington: 302-577-8719
Email: David.Sokola@delaware.gov Senatordave@live.com

February 11, 2019

To Whom It May Concern

RE: Las Américas Aspira Academy Charter Modification

As I am unable to attend the hearing I am writing to express my support for the application of Las Americas to have a high school. My daughter has been attending Aspira since it opened its doors; I have seen how much it has grown and developed. My is currently a 7th grader (I decided to keep her back in 1st grade). I chose to enroll my child at Aspira because I wanted her to be bi-lingual. I love Aspira because the teachers are wonderful, I am so grateful for them. They take the time to work with you and listen to your concerns.

If the expansion gets approved that means that my daughter would attend (if the schools if finished by then) the remainder of her school years at Aspira. That would be so great for her because she has developed many relationships with her teachers and friends. In today's society kids are being bullied, which is one of my great concerns if she was to go to another high school. With Aspira I don't have to worry about that because she will be with the same group of students since day one. We have talked about which high school she will be attending when she goes to the 9th grade and she stated that she would prefer a vocational school or be home schooled as opposed to going to another high school.

Please vote to have the expansion for Aspira.

Thank you kindly,


Maria L. Perez

February 14, 2019

Department of Education

To Whom it May Concern,

I am the parent of a child in Aspira Academy and a voting taxpayer in the State of Delaware. My son, who will be entering 6th grade next year, has attended Aspira since he began kindergarten. He has, to date, received a great education in a warm, safe, friendly, and caring environment. I want this academic style and proficiency to continue into his high school years. I **support** the approval of an expansion of the current model with a Las Américas Aspira Academy High School. Please consider the future of our children and the need for the same quality education they have known and love.

Thank you

Florence Smith
105 Pattie Drive
Newark, DE 19702
(302) 293-6469

February 18, 2019

Delaware Department of Education
John G. Townsend Building, Suite 2
Dover, DE 19901

To whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter to support the expansion of LAAA (Aspira) by creating a High School that will enhance the continuity of quality of education that the school is already providing.

As a Mexican mother of two amazing children, currently attending Elementary school at Aspira, I am a witness of the great job the school is doing in promoting a **"Bilingual learning experience"** that is not only developing the children's cognitive skills, but it is also planting the seed for future academic and employment opportunities.

As a social worker, I have also witnessed discrimination not only based on ethnicity, but also based on language, In spite of the statistics informing us that the Spanish speaking population in the U.S will continue to grow. For this reason, I believe it is imperative to better prepare the students for upcoming challenges by **"being bilingual and culturally competent"** as many professions and workplaces are expecting nowadays.

As a Mental Health professional, I strongly believe in the value of promoting unity, acceptance, tolerance, respect, empathy and peace that are so much needed in our current society. Aspira strongly supports these values and it is committed to continue embracing them.

Finally, I would like to add and remind everybody that all of us in our unique roles have a responsibility with our children because **"they are the future"**. We need to prepare them and to make a positive impact in their lives, and in this particular case, by providing the educational opportunities they deserve.

Thank you in advanced for your support.

Sincerely,


Linda Everardo Spotts, LCSW

A quién Corresponda.

Febrero, 19 2019

Mi nombre es Anabella Sánchez, escribo esta carta para manifestar mi apoyo y mi agrado en la construcción de una escuela High School en Las Américas Aspira Academy, mi hijo Ramiro Rodríguez cursa el tercer grado en ésta escuela y me siento muy tranquila sabiendo que mi hijo está en un ambiente escolar sano y de un nivel escolar alto. Mi razón principal en que mi hijo estudiara ahí es viendo al futuro cuando él este entrando en una Middle School, sabiendo que las escuelas al rededor de donde vivimos y que corresponden, tienen muy mala reputación ahora estoy tranquila al saber que mi hijo continuará sus estudios en ésta escuela hasta terminar ~~the~~ Middle School. Y me encantaría que fuera aprobada la construcción de High School en Aspira pues me preocupa mucho el ambiente y el sistema educativo de la escuela en donde mi hijo esté.

Gracias,

Anabella Sánchez

Clissita Patrick

PO Box 9821
Newark, DE 19714
grnypatrick1@gmail.com

February 22, 2019

Las Americas ASPIRA Academy

326 Ruthar Dr.
Newark, DE 19711

To Whom it may concern,

I am writing this letter in support of the ASPIRA High School. I am the guardian of five students who are currently attending Las Americas ASPIRA Academy. The boys have been attending ASPIRA for six years. Four of them began attending in kindergarten. Currently, the youngest now in first grade, the oldest, still attending is in 7th. My oldest graduated ASPIRA and is a ninth grade student at First State Military Academy. The experience of applying for a choice school was somewhat challenging. My grandson did not get into his first choice school. Although we thought the school we decided on was good, it has not turned out to be the best fit. Given the opportunity, my grandson would have chosen ASPIRA High School.

I initially chose ASPIRA because raising six boys I wanted them to have the advantage of learning a second language. The foundation that has been laid for them at ASPIRA is strong. I believe they will be more successful if they are able to continue at ASPIRA through 12th grade. They would be able to continue with the Spanish Immersion. Most importantly they would continue with the Core Values of ASPIRA. Not only do they offer a foundation in education, but, also in character building. ASPIRA is an extension of family and has been very supporting of making sure the whole need of their students are met. Lastly, as a single guardian it would be helpful for me in terms of coordination of schedules and events. I appreciate the commitment of the teachers and head of school. I have seen all of the growth and changes over the past six years that make ASPIRA a great school. I feel very strongly that it would be most beneficial for the students, especially my boys, if ASPIRA is able to offer education through high school.

Thank you for the opportunity to let you know how important this is for me and my family.

Sincerely,

Clissita Patrick

2/25/19

I am writing this letter
to let you know that I
support Aspira and I think
is a great idea that they
expand to a high school
because it is a great school
and it will benefit the
students and the community.
my daughter is a 1st grader
at Aspira and we love the
school since day one the
teachers are great, welcoming
and they care about their
students. Also, learning
two languages will open
more doors to the students,

and they can master their
language skills when they
are in high school. lastly,
having well prepared,
bilingual students will
help the community
because they will have
better jobs and will be
able to give back to
the community! thank you
in advanced for your
support!

Erica Chavez
302-482-9882

February 25, 2019

Dear Charter School Accountability Committee:

As a retired professional whose involvement in public school education dates to the early 1970s when I represented Hispanic children in starting the bilingual program in the Wilmington public schools and later represented them in the remedy stage of the desegregation case, I support the LAAA charter school's application to amend its charter to expand its program through high school.

Not only would such an expansion serve the younger children currently at the LAAA school, but it would also serve the larger Delaware community in that it would better enable our state to compete in what increasingly is a global market. I believe that out of state companies would be attracted to locate in Delaware if they see that there is a bilingual workforce. An expansion through high school of the LAAA program would facilitate such a workforce and would serve as a model in this state for this type of education through the high school years. To the best of my knowledge, there is no similar program currently available in Delaware at the high school level.

I understand that one person expressed a concern at a prior meeting that about half of the past graduates of the LAAA school have previously enrolled in vocational schools. I also understand that a survey conducted by the school found that 87 % of the school's families indicated a preference for enrolling their children in an Aspira high school if one became available. This is noteworthy since it indicates confidence in the current school program for the lower grades and makes me wonder whether the students who enrolled in vocational schools would have enrolled in a bilingual immersion high school instead if one had been available to them. It is not possible to know until such a high school becomes a reality. As the old saying goes, "if you build it, they will come." I believe that if such a high school became available, it would be attractive to many students beyond the Aspira school community. The best test would be to permit the expansion and test this proposition. Given the LAAA's experience with a waiting list since its inception, I am willing to predict that a similar waiting list would develop for a high school program before too long.

Respectfully submitted,

Aida Wasserstein.

Hello My name is

Marcia Cano

my daughter is Sofia Cano

I support the High School

for the kids. Would be

a great addition to the

School.

Marcia Cano

2/23/19

My daughter has attended ASPIRA since first grade and in only a few short years has become bilingual and more importantly, she has felt supported and included. We would love the opportunity to see her grow through 12th grade in this environment.

Please consider an approval of an ASPIRA High School.

Anne DeCaive



2/23/19

Hello,

My NEICE ATTENDS THE
SCHOOL AND ENJOYS BEING THERE
WITH ALL HER NEW FRIENDS.

JUST ATTENDED THE PLAY
AND IT WAS AWESOME.

WOULD LOVE TO SEE THE HIGH-
SCHOOL BUILT SO SHE CONTINUE
HERE EDUCATION HERE!

Daniel J. Me

My name is Maria Fernandez.
What a wonderful school
campus and outstanding theater
play. Hard work and
dedication pays off.
This school just expand
to a High School status.
We will witness more
greatness and role models
for our City and State.
Keep up the great work.
What a joy to have been
part of the audience tonight!

I support the ASPIRA
High school.

Our Latino Community
needs it.

Re

MI NOMBRE ES LAURA GRATALES.
ME GUSTARIA QUE LOS CHICOS DE NUESTRA
COMUNIDAD PUEDAN TERMINAR SUS ESTUDIOS
EN EL MISMO LUGAR DONDE EMPEZARON.
ASPIRA HIGH SCHOOL, SERIA UN PROYECTO
IMPORTANTE PARA TODA LA COMUNIDAD.

Love Peter/Kate's granddaughters
school.

Hudson

I want an Aspira High school
so my sister can get an good
education.

Evelyn 4th grade
Burrass

I want a high school because I want
to continue to learn at aspira ~~tion~~ when
I am in high school.

ANA Carolina-Peters | love Aspira | great education | great
community | Amazing teachers | love dual language education

To Whom it may concern

I Support Aspira Academy High school. As
Aspira Americas Academy is a wonderful
community of dedicated educators and students.
I cannot imagine my daughter attending
another school. I have been dreaming of an
Aspira High School for my daughter to continue
the amazing education she is getting.

Margarita M. Basso

Parent of 4th grade student at Aspira

Por que pienso que es el mejor sistema
para continuar hablando varias lenguas.

Mr. Alvarez

I Support Aspira High. It will
benefit our community & help
expand Hispanic culture.

Amyra Ortiz

I would like to have a high school
of Las Americas Aspira Academy
because it would be nice to
continue in Las Americas Aspira
Academy.

6th, Yenedith A.R

I support Aspira Academy High School because it provides diversity to our community, cultural knowledge and values to our kids, and they need that.

Isabel Bernal.

I support an Aspira High School. It is especially important for the Latino community. I have two children at Aspira and they are both thriving and speaking Spanish. This will eventually help them get a job. I feel that having a high school dedicated to continue the dual language model is something that is needed.

Thank you
Amy McDowell

A quien le corresponda, 1/23/19
Estamos en la necesidad de que esto
se haga posible. Es un gran Proyecto
Para el futuro de nuestros hijos, el
Saber que mi hija no solo termine sus
estudios en Aspira asta el octavo grado
pero que ayca la posibilidad de que
aya una preparatoria que se enfoca
en la creencia de los dos idiomas.
Yo apoyo la expansion de las
Americas Aspira Academy, vamos
por esta gran idea. Estoy muy
agradecida con todas las personas
que quieren y descan que esto se
aga posible. Amamos a esta
escuela y realmente descanos esto.

Att.
Yawari Meduz.

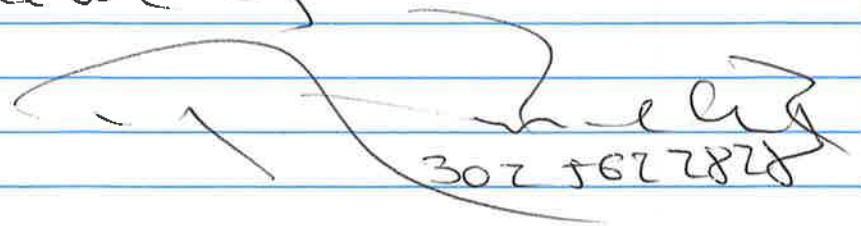
2-23-19

to whom it may concern

I support the opening of
Aspra high school. This
is a great school that
supports the bio diversity
the culture and the bilingual
kids.

I really look forward to
the high school so my daughter
can continue her education at
this great school.

Sincerely



307 562 2828

Andree Galindo

2/23/19

ASPIRA has one of the best, if not the best, educational programs in the State of Delaware. It is a well-rounded program which benefits our young ones. It is in the best interest of the youth to be exposed to this same program as they move on to their higher grades. A HS is needed!!

Art F Espiritu

Como padre la Educación de
Nuestros Hijos es realmente importante
y más si es una educación bilingüe
ya que el español es el segundo
idioma más hablado en los Estados
Unidos y los estándares de Aspire
son altos y es algo que me
gustaría que mi hija lleve en
la preparatoria "High School" y más
que otras personas de otras identidades
étnicas no sido beneficiada en esta
gran escuela

ATT Abel Prieto

I'm a mom of a ASara Student and
I Support the highschool (Carmelita Jones)

Eduardo Mendoza y Patricia Vargas

Nosotros Apoyamos la high school Aspira
Nosotros trabajamos La Aspira y apoyamos
y nos gustaria que nuestra hija siguiera
con la excelente Educacion que tiene
Asta ahora En Aspira Academy

M. Patricia Vargas
♡

My name is michelle silva and I agree because
we should have a high school for the wonderful
staff and children here at the school. ;)

My Name is Raquel Prado
I support Aspira Academy for
the high school construction.

The children of my family attend
Aspira with high level of
Education

att Raquel Prado

My Name is Ken Molina

I support this for
more, better education, for
our high school students.

for a great school with
wonderful teachers.

Flor Abreu

I support the Aspira
High School because
I have 3 daughters that
assist to the Aspira already.
my little daughter will assist
the High School if it is
get to build up.

Go Aspira

Flor Abreu

Elise Tios.

I Support Aspire High-School because
I would like to have my kids continue
the education they have been having and
Follow the same people

~~Elise~~

Mi nombre es Mignaluz Vega
y apoyo Aspira Academy y entiendo
que si es necesaria una High School
bilingue y que si ayuda a continuar
con estos grandes esfuerzos que se
comienzan desde años primarios y que
mantiene el desarrollo de estos niños
que dan lo mejor de si y por
medio de ASPIRA sacan y mantienen
grandes valores, esfuerzos, talentos y
esfuerzos academicos.

I am a mom of 2 ASPIRA students.
An ASPIRA high school would be
great to continue on with their
education.

Charter choice and high school options are so important. Give our community and families the choice of ASPIRA High School.

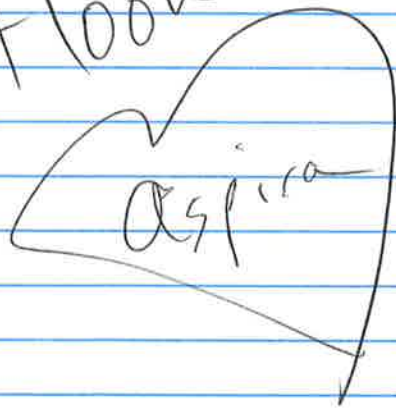
Respectfully,
David & Emily Nash

It is good for the children
to learn Spanish with others
who speak it. Bringing everyone
closer together

Lang Weir

Aspira

fosters
a
unique spirit
and compassion
outlooks!!!



We need the Aspira High
School to support the kids in
the Newark Community

Sincerely,
Nico Carter

2/23/2019

Aspira is a really good school and I can continue my education and be with my friends.

Aspira es una escuela excelente y puedo continuar mi educación y seguir con mis amigos.



love Natalie a faithful
aspira student

Go Aspira Goodluck LBurgas

Feb 23, 2019.

Yo apoyo la construcción para el High School, la escuela tiene un alto nivel y los estudiantes necesitan continuar con los estándares educativos que tienen hasta ahora.

Yolanda D'Estavilla

Yo Michelle Vega Morales soy madre de tres niños que actualmente estudian en ASPIRA, estoy muy interesada en la expansión de la escuela ya que es muy necesaria para el aprovechamiento académico de nuestros hijos. En mi experiencia ha sido muy gratificante desde que nos dieron la oportunidad de recibir a nuestros hijos y a su vez nos brindaron la oportunidad de trabajar dentro de la escuela. Es una escuela que se caracteriza por buscar el bienestar de los estudiantes y tienen una diversidad de programas donde los estudiantes pueden poner en práctica sus talentos tanto en deportes, música, arte entre otros. Como empleada pienso que con la expansión se darían más oportunidades de empleo y más oportunidades para el crecimiento y desarrollo profesional.