

**Positive Outcomes Charter School
2017-2018 Annual Report
October 1, 2018**



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<http://www.positiveoutcomescs.org>

I. Charter School Program

Narrative:

Provide a Synopsis of the School's Mission and Educational Program, Including Key Components of the Education Model and Any Unique or Innovative Features of the School

Positive Outcomes Charter School (POCS) welcomed its first students 22 years ago. The charter school was founded by a group of educators and physicians who recognized that students struggling with mental health challenges were an underserved population in desperate need of a small school setting that was not tied to district rules or geographic boundaries. POCS, which serves students in the seventh through the twelfth grades, has evolved from its first days; however, our core mission of providing individualized attention for students at risk of academic failure has never wavered.

The charter that governs POCS under the Delaware Department of Education authorizer has been renewed four times. At each renewal, the school received commendations for its work with a challenging population. As a charter school, POCS was able to apply for and receive a modification for charter school student achievement standards because of its service commitment to students at risk of academic failure. The school began with a small student population, and remains the smallest charter school in the state. Currently, our charter allows for the enrollment of 120 students.

Throughout the history of POCS, we have worked tirelessly to serve as a magnet for students demonstrating dramatic academic deficits in addition to identified special needs in education. School districts throughout Kent County regularly recommend POCS to families as another possible setting for public education. Currently, POCS draws students from all three counties, with some students commuting more than an hour daily to attend our school.

What brings families to the school is its attention to the individual needs of students. Small class sizes, assistive technology for all, a focus on collaboration and teamwork of all members of the school community, and a highly qualified staff with special education experience are the primary reasons that families choose POCS. What also draws families are the dramatic gains in both academic confidence and capacity of students as demonstrated by improvement on standardized assessments and other indicators. Today, nearly 100% of the students attending the school have identified needs ranging from federally mandated 504 or individualized education plans to mental health barriers and challenges.

Mission

Our mission is to provide an opportunity for students to learn in a safe, caring, respectful environment, where their individuality is valued and their individual needs are addressed.

Vision

Positive Outcomes Charter School develops graduates who are self-reliant citizens that are lifelong learners who contribute with integrity within their community.

Beliefs

- Education is the key to productive and responsible living in our society.
- All children can learn, but the rate at which they learn and how they learn differs.
- All instruction focuses on one student at a time.
- Education builds an understanding and respect for all cultures and ethnic groups in a global society.
- Effective education requires support and accountability at all levels.
- High quality, highly motivated and creative staff is essential for student success.
- Effective education can be measured.
- School success requires a partnership of community and school resources.
- Learning in an attentive and academically challenging environment builds character, enhances self-esteem and leads to success.
- Education and learning begin in the home with the family and require their ongoing involvement throughout the school years.

School Characteristics

Positive Outcomes Charter School serves students from throughout the state of Delaware. During the 2017-2018 school year, 126 students from nine different school districts were enrolled. 69.05% of our students qualified to receive services under IDEA and have an active IEP in place. The school population was 59.52% white, 32.54% African-American, 5.56% Hispanic, 1.59% Asian and 0.79% American Indian. The school population is, by various definitions, at risk (100%).

Positive Outcomes Charter School continues to experience a centralization of our student base. A major percentage of our student population comes from four districts that are located in our surrounding community. During 2017-2018 we had students enrolled from nine school districts. In 2017-2018 our student population was composed of 2 (1.59%) students from Appoquinimink, 36 (28.5%) students from Caesar Rodney, 1 (0.79%) student from Cape Henlopen, 59 (46.8%) students from Capital, 2 (1.59%) students from Christina, 1 (0.79%) student from Colonial, 14 (11.1%) students from Lake Forest, 4 (3.1%) students from Milford, and 7 (5.5%) students from Smyrna.

Key Components and Innovative Features

It is our belief that our entire program could be considered innovative. Our instructional supports, school climate and overall student support programs could and should be emulated in other school districts throughout our state. Additional features of our school that are considered innovative, unique or integral to fulfilling the school's mission and philosophy include the following:

Big Picture Learning Model School Integration

With the integration of the Big Picture Learning's (BPL) model into the POCS curriculum, our staff is committed to igniting the passions of the students through discovery and development of each student's unique interests. Our students feel empowered and have the self-confidence

to create their own success through a personalized learning environment and purposeful internships of their choice. With the support of advisors and community partners, our students graduate as confident and capable young adults, prepared to make their mark on the world.

Each student is part of an advisory, which serves as a small family unit. For many of our students, the advisory is the most stable and welcoming environment in their lives. Advisors build strong relationships with their advisees; in many cases the advisor, as an advocate for the student, is often the one adult that the student trusts in his life. Each advisor stays with his advisory for three consecutive years to provide a consistent, positive adult mentor in the life of each student. The advisors guide and help the students to manage their Personalized Learning Plans, mapping the skills, requirements, and goals necessary for graduation. Each student's advisor also manages and assesses internships and projects, and helps the students develop critical life skills.

In order to best serve each individual, advisors work with each student to develop a Personalized Learning Plan that maps academic content to be learned to personal goals and interests, outlines specific plans to accomplish these goals, and serves as the driver for student assessment. Learning plans are developed with a strong partnership with parents and student, guided by the advisor to ensure that the student fulfills academic and credit requirements. The Personalized Learning Plan also identifies any necessary support services, including remediation and counseling needed by the student. Advisors and peers hold students accountable for making progress toward their identified goals through one-on-one conferences with students and exhibitions. Each student's Personalized Learning Plan is reviewed with parents four times a year. The process also ensures that each student graduates from our school with a solid post-high school plan.

Among other unique features of the BPL school design is that students, in grades 10, 11 and 12, are taught in the 'real' world through interest-based (called Learning Through Interest – LTI) internships. POCS students discover and explore their personal passions through research and real world experiences during these interest-based internships. Advisors and content-area specialists tie these passions into the academic content through integrated LTI projects.

In addition, we help students identify their passions through exposure to opportunities in the community via advisory-based field-trips, community service, and guest speakers. Learning is not confined to the school building or school day. We work with students to identify other avenues and opportunities to develop their skills.

Parent Support

At POCS our parents and guardians are a significant piece of our school community. We believe in working closely with our parents and guardians to support the academic, behavior and social growth of their students. As part of our team, we create and foster a collaborative community designed to support relationships. Parents and guardians are invited to every meeting and function that we have. Our parents and former parents hold the majority of seats on the Board of Directors. Parents and guardians are a critical part of our school governance and decision making process.

Our parent and guardian programs are also exemplary. We provide numerous avenues to foster and develop our parents and guardians as school leaders who are involved in the continued development of our program. Parents have the ability to sit on our school board, participate during our Parent Action Committee meetings, and to be a part of our school improvement efforts. From our opening week parent/student barbeque to our final Parent Action Committee of the year, our parents and guardians are an ever-present component of our success and development.

Parents and guardians also continue to express satisfaction with our school program. They would highly recommend our school to other families seeking an educational program. This satisfaction can be observed by reviewing our school's End of Year Parent Survey. Key data points are listed below and the full survey is available on our school website at www.positiveoutcomescs.org.

Discuss Key Accomplishments of the Charter School Program Over the 2017-18 School Year

Please refer to the Positive Outcomes Charter School renewal application submitted October 1, 2018 for a detailed description of the school's accomplishments over the past five years. Please refer to pages 17-20 of the Positive Outcomes Charter School Renewal Application submitted on October 1, 2018 for a complete detailed description of the 2017-2018 Positive Outcomes Charter School academic performance.

II. Performance Reflection

Tier 2 Narrative:

Academic Performance

Identify areas or factors where the school has met standard in academic performance.

The academic progress of all students at Positive Outcomes Charter School is one of our highest priorities. Please refer to pages 14-40 of the Positive Outcomes Charter School Renewal Application submitted on October 1, 2018 for a complete detailed description of the Positive Outcomes Charter School academic performance.

Identify areas or factors where the school has not met standard in academic performance. Provide an analysis of strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth in these areas. What are the school's academic performance outcomes that will improve student growth, proficiency, and college and career readiness levels as measured by the Performance Framework?

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Organizational Performance

Identify areas or factors where the school has met standard in organizational performance.

The organizational practices at Positive Outcomes Charter School are linked directly to compliance established in law, regulation or requirements. Please refer to pages 41-63 of the Positive Outcomes Charter School Renewal Application submitted on October 1, 2018 for a complete detailed description of the Positive Outcomes Charter School organizational performance.

Identify areas or factors where the school has not met standard in organizational performance. Provide an analysis of strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth in these areas. What are the school's performance outcomes in meeting its organizational responsibilities including, but not limited to, administrative operations, reporting, and legal responsibilities as measured by the Performance Framework?

Positive Outcomes Charter School met the standard for all portions of the 2017-2018 Organizational Performance Framework. Please refer to pages 41-63 of the Positive Outcomes Charter School Renewal Application submitted on October 1, 2018 for a complete detailed description of the Positive Outcomes Charter School organizational performance.

Financial Performance

Identify areas or factors where the school has met standard in financial performance.

The financial management and stewardship practices at Positive Outcomes Charter School are linked directly to compliance established in law, regulation or requirements. Please refer to pages 64-70 of the Positive Outcomes Charter School Renewal Application submitted on October 1, 2018 for a complete detailed description of the Positive Outcomes Charter School organizational performance.

Identify areas or factors where the school has not met standard in financial performance. Provide an analysis of strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth in these areas. What are the school's financial performance outcomes that will demonstrate viability and sustainability as measured by the Performance Framework?

Positive Outcomes Charter School met the standard for all portions of the 2017-2018 Financial Performance Framework. Please refer to pages 64-70 of the Positive Outcomes Charter School Renewal Application submitted on October 1, 2018 for a complete detailed description of the Positive Outcomes Charter School financial performance.

ANNUAL REPORT CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Name of School:	Positive Outcomes Charter School
Location:	Camden, Delaware

I hereby certify that the information submitted in this annual of a charter school is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; that this application has been approved by the school's Board of Directors.



9/26/2018

Signature: Chairperson of Board of Directors (or designated signatory authority)

Date

Print/Type Name:	Susan Wills
Title (if designated):	Board President
Date of approval by board of directors:	September 26, 2018 POCS Board Resolution 19-20