

## The Delaware Met Response to the Charter School Accountability Committee Initial Report

### Educational Program

#### **1-1 Technology Distribution**

Parent conferences were held on November 4<sup>th</sup> and November 10<sup>th</sup> to discuss the acceptable use policy and computer sign-out policy. Any parent who did not attend a conference has been contacted directly in an attempt to set-up a conference and discuss the acceptable use policy and computer sign-out policy. Students with signed contracts have received their chrome books in advisory and, with their advisor, have been working on learning how to utilize the chrome book and google docs. The science teachers, who are utilizing virtual labs and other online resources, have received additional chrome books for their classrooms, to support instruction. When students return from the Thanksgiving break, those who are demonstrating readiness will be able to travel with their chrome book throughout the school day.

Computers were ordered during the summer once FY 16 funds were loaded. The company needed some additional information from our tech company prior to the order being placed. This delayed the order slightly. Once the computers were received, our tech contractor has to format and install software on each computer. The roll out plan for computers was delayed slightly due to the delay in the order being placed and the formatting and the time needed for software installation.

Computers were to be distributed via advisory. As part of the personalized learning plan development, advisors, students, and their parents were supposed to meet. At this meeting, the acceptable use policy and computer contract would be discussed and signed. This plan was followed, but took place later than anticipated.

#### **Schoology**

Schoology was selected as the online learning platform for the school by the teachers during summer professional learning. On August 17<sup>th</sup>, teacher Jonathan Guenther reached out to Michael League, who has worked with another Charter School on Schoology and e-school synchronization. On August 19<sup>th</sup>, Michael connected us with Dr. Wayne Hartshuh, Director of the Delaware Center for Educational Technology, to get information on the "enterprise" version of Schoology that interfaces with eschool. On September 1<sup>st</sup>, Dr. Hartshuh provided information that the timeframe for signing up during the first year of the State contract for Schoology was last spring. Since that window has passed for this year, we missed the initial setup and implementation for this year, and access to the State funding to support the per student and setup costs this year. There is a cost per student (\$3.33 with the State paying \$1.83 and the school paying \$1.50) and an initial fee to setup Schoology and integrate the system with eSchool. Even though you missed that window last spring to do that for this year, there will be the opportunity to do that again in the spring for next school year. Dr. Hartshuh further indicated that if we wanted to bear the entire cost to get started now, we could pursue that. The school leader replied that the school would like to explore this. On September 8<sup>th</sup>, we received information from Dr. Hartshuh indicating:

*We're still working on getting everything squared away with the initial 24 LEAs that are using Schoology. In the next couple of days, we'll be getting you some paperwork that needs to be completed related to the transfer of student data and a summary of the costs associated with Schoology and eSchool to do the integration.*

On September 17<sup>th</sup>, Dr. Hartshuh indicated:

*I just wanted to let you know that I haven't forgotten you, I've just been swamped with getting the initial 24 LEAs up and going along with everything else that comes down the pipe. I'll get you details on all of this but we will be getting you some documents concerning the transfer of student data to Schoology (those are legal documents that might need to have legal review), documents on what needs to be done to get eSchool setup, and I'll need to find out from Schoology what the setup costs will be. Sorry this is taking a little longer than anticipated.*

On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, Dr. Hartshuh connected us with a sale rep from Schoology. This was one day before the school leader's maternity leave, so the assistant school leader was given all of the information about purchasing the enterprise version of Schoology and this was shared with the interim school leaders in the pending items the school leader was working on before maternity leave.

### **Schoology Training and Online Resources**

No training on Schoology has occurred since we did not have the (paid version of the) software. We were unaware that we had access to the free version of Schoology until recently. Staff will complete Schoology training prior to the holiday break. We will utilize portions of planning time (daily from 3:30 to 4:30) and, if needed, of the ½ day professional development sessions on 12/02 or 12/16 to complete this training.

Regarding online resources, these resources are individual to the teacher and they worked with individual companies. The sales representative from Pearson/Prentice Hall did online demonstrations of available programs for the school leader and teachers in Math, English, Humanities, and Science. The Science demonstration included review of online labs and other interactive items. The Math, English, and Humanities demos simply reviewed available online resources.

### **Digital Citizenship**

We are utilizing Google's Digital Literacy and Citizenship Curriculum. This includes three lessons: evaluating the crediting of online content, managing your digital footprint, and avoiding online tricks and scams. The full lessons are included as attachments. **(Addendum C)**

### **Big Picture Learning Coaching (Addendum I)**

#### **What BPL Coaches will help with in the first quarter?**

---

School Culture -

- School Trips

- Pick Me Ups

- School Events

  - Orientation

  - Open House

- TGIF

- Retreat/Staff Meeting

  - Culture of reflection and considering the Big Picture

## Advisory Culture

- Forming Agreements
- Advisory Activities
- Trips/outings
- Bonding activities

## 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Learning Plans

- How to facilitate and LP meeting
- What a good 1<sup>st</sup> quarter LP might look like (what is enough)

## LTI Process

- Interest Exploration
- Informational Interviews
- Shadow Day (s)
- LTI Setup Meetings
- Project Setups

## Narrative

## Exhibitions

## Materials Introduction -

- Introduction of Journal
- Agenda
- BPL guides
- Portfolio Box
- Big Picture Learning Exchange

## Specific School/Principal Goals:

- School/Principal Learning Plan

Checking in with how principals are doing with creating an advisory board, meeting with the district, and fundraising. Attending board meetings.

- What are the conversations that we can start and participate in around this?
- What are the specific trainings that we can offer?
- Where are there materials and samples that exist around this?
- Where do new materials need to be created?

## **Role of the Teacher as Advisor – Overview and Professional Development**

Teachers are the advisors and are responsible for providing instruction throughout the day as well as advising students as they prepare for their internships. They also serve as the liaisons for the internships. In the advisor role, teachers are supported by Charly Adler, who coaches the staff on the BPL model, and the Learning Through Internship Coordinator, who is the point person for the internships. Advisors work with students on developing their personalized learning plans and meet with parents to discuss the plans. Staff received training over the summer from Big Picture Learning regarding how to serve in that role.

Staff completed a two-day “boot camp” in July and three weeks of professional learning in August, including a week-long training in New Orleans and three additional days with Mr. Adler at the school. However, not all teachers were hired at that time. Mr. Adler will continue to support the new hires with understanding and implementing the model and support those who received initial PD with deepening their knowledge and execution of the model. He is working with all teachers, but focusing on those teachers who did not receive the training, as well as those that did but are currently struggling with the process. Since there has been a significant turnover in staff, there will be intensive Big Picture professional development conducted for new staff members during December. In addition, BPL will provide one-on-one training in person and by Skype, depending on the needs of each staff member. In the meantime, they have all been assigned readings to prepare them for the professional development days.

### **Big Picture Learning – Start-up Challenges**

The first year of any charter school is filled with its own unique challenges. There are the usual difficulties with the building, technology, and supplies. But the most difficult aspect of opening a new charter school is that the culture has not been set, there are no older students to set the tone and act as role models, and in particular with a school design such as Big Picture, no teachers with experience in the design.

In spite of a very intensive hiring process, we were unable to find many teachers with urban experience or a familiarity with the local community and those that we did hire were from charter schools that had closed such as Moyer Academy. Those teachers brought with them the “alternative school” mentality, along with lingering conflicts from the past years, which perpetuated the punitive, authoritarian mindset, which is the antithesis of the BPL design. We had hoped that the past relationships with the students would have a positive effect on their relationships with students, though this was not the case.

Big Picture Learning schools almost exclusively serve students from urban areas. With the exception of its California schools, the advisory size is limited to 15-17 students. Due to budgetary considerations, the DE Met charter called for advisories of 22 students, similar to the California schools where per-pupil funding is significantly lower than the national average. BPL schools in Sacramento and Oakland faced similar challenges as the Delaware Met in their start-up year, though made significant progress each year as the culture was established. Once again, due to budgetary constraints the charter called for an opening enrollment of 260, more than twice the number of any previous school opening.

With an open-enrollment admissions policy, we became a refuge for many students who had had poor experience with their prior educational settings. It also became a depository for students unwanted at their previous schools. As a result, we accepted a high percentage of students with a history of violence, psychological disorders, and learning disabilities. Approximately 40% of our students were reading below a fourth-grade level, many of them not designated as Special Education. These are the students that needed the opportunities that the Delaware Met though we found ourselves at a disadvantage and unprepared for the intensity of the issues facing these students. Our guidance counselor tirelessly attempted to obtain student records from their previous schools with only limited success. As a result, when the school year started, we had students with needs and issues of which we were not aware. Many incidents could have been avoided had we been better informed.

It is unfair and unreasonable to expect students who have had negative school experiences for most of their lives to suddenly change when they entered our building. We knew that it would take time and that incidences would occur while the culture was being formed. The issues mentioned above magnified our challenges.

In addition to these challenges, which are not unusual for a first year charter, a confluence of events converged to create a situation, which hindered our progress. Though mistakes were made, most of the events were not in our control. Among them:

- The school leader, Tricia Hunter went out on maternity leave from September 30<sup>th</sup> until November 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- It was proposed that Sean Gallagher serve as the interim school leader but never implemented. This was not feasible because the budget could not afford the additional cost. Instead, Ms. Gerchman served as the interim school leader in Ms. Hunter's absence, but was out of the building for some days due to the death of her husband. Ms. Gerchman commitment was such that only a week after losing her husband, she returned to the school until Ms. Hunter's return on November 23<sup>rd</sup>.
- With little notice, the LTI coordinator/guidance counselor had to relocate to Baltimore due to family concerns, so we lost a key member of the staff at a critical time.
- It was necessary to fire the Operations Manager a short while after.

### **Internship Readiness**

The loss of the LTI coordinator/guidance counselor had a major effect on the development of the timetable for students to begin going out internships, though there were other factors as well. In spite of these setbacks, the LTI program is proceeding and the first group of students has begun their internships.

Internships are an integral element of the Big Picture Learning (BPL) school design and for many students it is their first real-world educational experience. In order to prepare them for this, BPL has developed a very specific Interest Exploration and LTI prep syllabus for the DE Met. Students have been proceeding at their own pace, which means that some students have completed the LTI and interest exploration training, while others are in progress. For those who have not completed the training, though are assessed as mature and "LTI ready" are being fast-tracked through the training in order to get them out as soon as possible. All advisors have submitted a list of their students' interests and LTI readiness status to the interim LTI coordinator who is matching them up with potential LTI internship sites. An example is attached.

Though there is pressure to get our kids out as soon as possible, we must be cognizant of the fact that as a new school, our first cohort of students to go out into the community must be especially professional and well prepared. With a positive experience with our students, our first cohort of mentors will be our greatest asset in recruiting other mentors to work with our students. We cannot afford to send out our students until we are confident that they are ready. The LTI is the key for students to learn through their passions and do meaningful, rigorous, and relevant projects. Without adequate preparation and thoughtful pairing of student and mentor, we risk greatly diminishing their effectiveness and resulting in a lack of integration between the LTI project/experience and core content subjects. We want to set our students up for success and give them every possible chance to succeed. As much as we would love to

begin sending our students out into internships as soon as possible, we must proceed with patience and responsibility – both for the student and for the mentor.

To date, a third of our students have begun to make calls to set up informational interviews, while another third should be ready in the coming weeks.

For the remaining students, until they are ready, they will participate in group volunteer projects, as well as ease their way into the LTI experience through internship projects in the school building. They will be mentored by staff members.

## **Special Education**

The Delaware Met opened in August 2015 as the second school in Delaware to implement the Big Picture Model. The entire Leadership Team was in agreement the Big Picture Model was not only compatible with a large number of students identified with disabilities but a complement. There are two reasons the Big Picture Model Complements a sound Special Education Program.

1. The Big Picture Model is based on Individualized Learning for all students. It is based on finding Real Life connections to make learning meaningful and allows students to work at their own pace on content and projects they are vested in. The Learning Plan in the Big Picture Model is completely aligned to a robust, realistic, student driven Transition IEP. All of the questions on the Transition Page of the current Transition IEP are addressed in the first module of Big Picture that all students participate in during the first few weeks of school. Participating in this portion of the Advisory program allows our students with disabilities to participate in the General Education Program while completing a core component of their IEP.
2. Having a School wide implementation of Big Picture created a culture for many students who had previously been identified as a student with a disability to truly feel part of a the General Education Curriculum without being identified as “Spec Ed.” Upon opening, within the first 45 school days, the Special Ed team reached out to every student that had been identified through Delsis and Eschool and surveyed the student about how they wanted to lead the IEP Process. Each student was invited to the Learning Through Internship Room and assessed using a teacher created assessment aligned to the Common Core Standards in ELA and Math. During this process, they were asked to complete a survey to identify:
  - a. Who they wanted invited to their annual IEP meeting
  - b. Whether they felt their family member would be able to attend during the school day; after work or participate by phone
  - c. Whether they wanted services delivered as indicated in their current IEP and specifically whether they wanted “pull out or push in”. Specifically they were asked if they wanted the push in service to be delivered by the Special Education Team members or whether they wanted their General Education Teacher to receive coaching to support their accommodations without identifying them as a student with a disability. This process was compatible with the current trend towards students owning and leading the IEP process and the Big Picture Model of helping students transition into adult learners who are in charge of their own learning.

The meetings with each student included time to talk to a member of the Special Ed Team and respond to questions about what had worked in the past and what services had not been effective. These conversations were held in two rooms of the school that were not associated with Special Education and students that had been identified through Child Find as students that may need to be evaluated for services were also included.

Intentionally, when asked, Mrs. Ogden identified herself as a Director of Student Services or Achievement Director to make sure students pulled from class for the assessment and survey were not identified as Special Ed.

In some cases, after meeting students who were very worried about being identified, the team intentionally called additional students from the same class that had never participated in the IEP Process. In 25% of the survey's the students response was they chose a new charter so they could avoid being identified as Special Ed and they never wanted a Special Ed teacher to work with them in class. This information was recorded in a database.

Statistically the state has been responding to the data that a large number of African American boys have been identified as special ed. Our team was able to respond to the underlying issues by incorporating the mentoring team in conversations around male students who were aggravated and defiant when asked to participate in the assessment process to update their IEP. In several cases, discipline problems arose when the IEP team asked the student to participate in the assessment. After working with the IEP team and the mentoring program, and talking to parents, 100% of the students willingly participated in the current and ongoing process of measuring the goals in their previous IEP and working with teacher created assessments to create new IEP goals.

3. During the process of the Special Ed team meeting with the students to complete the survey and assess basic Math and Reading, the team met to review other important parts of the student's records. The students' records were in the process of being gathered at the same time the team had access to the record dates recorded in Eschool. This process had several components that required alignment and follow up. The process was driven by responding to several questions on a weekly basis.

### **Eligibility**

Who are the students enrolled in the met who had previously been evaluated for Special Education services?

This information was gathered by doing an advanced search in school and sorting by the column with the data that included "last evaluation." If a student had been previously evaluated for Special Education services, even if the evaluation date had expired, the next step was to verify whether a request for records had been sent and if the records had been received.

From July 15<sup>th</sup> to the present, this process has been implemented weekly. As of today, not all records have been received at the school. The school has documentation of the repeated requests for 100% of the missing records.

After receiving the record packets, the team verified doing a manual check, whether the dates on the ESR and IEP matched the dates recorded in Eschool. This process identified major issues in files that were incomplete.

From July 15<sup>th</sup> to the present, the IEP has been working with districts to obtain complete IEP records. Major issues were centered more around eligibility documents than IEP's. In many cases, parents brought copies of updated IEP's but the school had difficulty obtaining the eligibility documents. In two cases with particularly difficult students, obtaining the ESR was the most difficult step. The school was able to obtain the psychological evaluation but not the actual ESR document.

Weekly the school would determine if there was evidence of expired eligibility and contracted with Boost Learning to administer the appropriate updated assessments based on the category of disability as mandated in the Delaware Code.

The team was very cautious to exhaust the request for records and made repeated trips to schools looking for Eligibility documentation to prevent the unnecessary testing.

In over 75% of the cases where the dates in Eschool indicated expired eligibility based on the date of the last evaluation, the Met Team was able to obtain updated eligibility and move forward with evaluating the IEP for an annual update using the information in the existing eligibility.

Ten days before the September 30<sup>th</sup> count the school had obtained signatures from all parents with "Permission to Evaluate, scheduled the School Psychologist to administer updated testing and scheduled an evaluation meeting for any student the team determined had expired eligibility after exhaustive correspondence with the district.

### **Individualized Education Plans**

In the first 30 days of school, the Met had received less than 50% of the valid Special Ed Audit files from the Districts. Over the next 30-45 days, as the files were received, the school took several actions based on the existing IEP's.

Was there evidence that we had the latest IEP? If the answer was yes, we updated the dates on the actual IEP with the information in eschool.

Next we evaluated all 80 IEP's for related services and contracted with Boost Learning for OT and Speech. We referred all of the students with counseling to our in-house team.

Next, we evaluated all 80 IEP's for services, accommodations, frequency and duration and matched up the information in the survey from the students with the information in the IEP. We reached out to the entire staff and repeated the same survey we had administered to the student and asked for documentation of whether each student with a disability was able to complete work independently; with teacher support; or was not completing any work without disruption or was the student not completing any work and was disrupting the learning of the entire class.

The student survey, the screening of the IEP's and the teacher survey was completed in the first 45 days.

We sent a letter home to each parent in the first 30 days explaining our process and asking them to send back a portion of the letter with the best time to hold a meeting. These letters went home with a stamped self-addressed envelope included. We asked the parents “what is the best time to schedule a meeting.” In the next few days, with responses from a few parents, we sent home “invitations to meetings” to every parent who had a child with an IEP that had expired. We had invited all parents to attend meetings by September 28<sup>th</sup> if their child’s IEP had expired. We scheduled the meetings for every hour on the ½ day Wednesday the 23<sup>rd</sup> with an alternate time the morning of the 28<sup>th</sup>.

After September 30<sup>th</sup>, in response to the memo from Exceptional Children requiring the parent survey prior to drafting the IEP, we sent home a parent survey with an invitation to meeting to every parent of a student whose IEP was close to expiring. We sent a second letter home addressed to the student with a copy of a student survey in addition to the survey we administered in school.

The IEP did not include a new Transition Survey as part of our process. The Big Picture Model has an intense focus on The Individual Learning Plan that includes modules including “who am I” and career interests and focus. The Met Team decided to include the information from the Learning Plan and the first project in the content of all new IEP’s and the meetings would include conversations around both products as the DRAFT IEP was being developed. The Met team observed over 75% of the transition pages of the IEP’s from the Districts included transition information designed to be in compliance with the required language but could be interpreted as unrealistic based on the students current eligibility status. The Met Team believe the detailed process of creating an Individual Learning Plan based on student interests and completing the who am I project will produce better and more realistic information for the critical transition page of the IEP.

This is the stage where the Met IEP Team is currently focusing all of our resources. We have sent “invitations to meeting” to parents in a priority order that reflect all of the data we have gathered and prioritized.

If a student’s IEP has expired, we have sent an invitation to meeting with the parent survey to the parent and in a separate envelope and invitation to meeting to the student with a student survey.

If we found a discrepancy between the services and accommodations in an IEP, the location of services or the frequency and duration between the teacher observations, the student survey and the most current IEP, we have invited the parents to a meeting.

In all cases when we have a big concern about the contents of the IEP and student needs, we have met in person with the parent but we have not held a meeting to draft a new IEP as of today.

In each instance, we met with the parent to obtain permission to evaluate from our school psychologist and several of those meetings are scheduled for Dec 2<sup>nd</sup>.

As of today, the Met is in the process of meeting with every parent in a meeting that lasts over 1 hour. At the end of the meeting, the parents and Met Team have agreed we will draft a new IEP and send home for approval. The meeting is truly a meeting where the met team shares all of the previous information, the results of the current assessment, and the options for push in or pull out and the frequency and duration of services. The parent and the student participate in the meeting.

Although in the interests of time, there is considerable discussion around typing the new IEP during the meeting and making sure the front page of the IEP is signed, the Met team has opted to remove the technology- laptop etc. from the meeting itself and model the meeting around a circular table without having any member of the team typing and utilize the time around the table to model the critical components of the Restorative Justice model by allowing a conversation around the long term planning for the student to be conducted in a non-threatening respectful manner. The results of the survey about IEP meeting with the students indicated in 100% of our surveys students did not feel connected to the process and it seemed to be more paperwork driven rather than relationship driven. In most cases, the parents who selected a new charter like the Delaware Met were open to the concept of incorporating all aspects of the Big Picture model into the IEP process to create and integrated, holistic Individualized Education Program for their child.

The process of updating the current assessments, scheduling long meetings and integrating the components of the Big Picture Model Transition information into the IEP has extended the time frame for completion of all IEP meeting beyond the 60 day window. At this point, 11/20/2015, all of the components have been collected, the assessments are complete, the transition information is up to date and the next step is the tactical logistics of having meetings with all of the members required by exceptional children including all of the subject teachers, the special ed teachers, Educational Diagnostician, nurse. We are working through scheduling issues, but we are up to date on the data and assessments required to deliver services to the students based on their previous IEP or updated IEP's if the previous IEP has expired.

The Met team is in the process of ensuring that everything in the student's individualized Education Programs are being accommodated in the educational program by obtaining data from previous records, conducting ongoing observations, collecting teacher input, collecting student and parent input and putting all of this information together as new IEP's are in the process of being created.

For some students, the services in previous IEP's that have not expired were appropriate after a review and the advisor for the student is responsible for setting up the meeting with the parent when meeting to discuss the Learning Plan. Students whose previous IEP's have been determined were appropriate did not receive an invitation to meeting in the first 60 days as required by code. Copies of the existing IEP's and invitations to meetings and meetings will be held with parents in the first two weeks of December. The parents will sign the new cover sheet at that time understanding they will have another meeting during our school year when a new IEP will be developed. The goals in the current IEP will be measured during this year and the frequency, duration and location of services, along with the goals and existing accommodations have been communicated to the staff for the period of time between now and the date of the new IEP meeting which will be determined by the expiration date.

We are in the process of giving all of the teachers the goals in each IEP. At this point in the year, our focus has been on making sure all of the teachers understand their role in implementing the services and supports in the IEP for the students with a disability by providing training around accommodations. The next few professional development days will include training around the goals. At this point in the school year, the IEP team has assumed the role of checking the goals and measuring the first marking period goals as we as a team are working with the school psychologist on assessment.

This process has allowed our team to collect multiple measures to determine if the goals in the existing IEP are appropriate or whether new goals need to be created. The IEP is supporting the teacher in

understanding how to support the student in the General Education classroom by understanding the accommodations in each student's plan. The IEP is also working with the students to have ways to self-advocate for the accommodations they need as we support their shift to a student centered IEP with individual ownership.

For example: If the PLEP and goal of an existing IEP indicates the student is 30% proficient in answering questions correctly simplifying expressions or solving equations with one variable, the Met team is assessing early skills in Numbers and Operations in base ten and looking for information about fluency to determine why the student is only 30% proficient. The students have responded very positively to the assessment of early skills because the assessments were intentionally administered in a non-threatening environment. A significant number of the students assessed needed to count on their fingers to subtract when the subtraction problem included zeros.

Ms. Ogden did provide professional development over the summer related to special education. Additionally, through Big Picture Learning professional development pertaining to student personalization scaffolding and differentiation were covered. Ms. Ogden has also worked 1-1 with teachers to provide support and coaching regarding meeting the needs of special education students.

Topics covered by Ms. Ogden with staff included:

1. What are the disability codes for students identified with a disability?
  - a. 100 MID
  - b. 200 ED
  - c. 300 LD
  - d. 600 ADHD
  - e. Distributed list of all of the students and sorted by disability.
  - f. Ask teachers to name students they taught that were MID, ADHD
  - g. Discussed the IQ range for MID as below 65.
  
2. What are the various categories for LD?
  - a. Distributed the page of the ESR that has the breakdown:

Basic Reading Skills	Mathematics Problem Solving
Reading Fluency Skills	Oral Expression
Reading Comprehension	Listening Comprehension
Mathematics Calculation	Written Expression

3. Discuss evidence of issues in Basic Reading Skills that will show up in spelling and asked teachers to make notes of students with major spelling errors for future PD.
  
4. Discussed research based strategies for addressing Written Expression issues for all students during advisory using the research based method of Framing Your Thoughts and Visualizing and Verbalizing.

5. Followed up with ELA and Social Studies teachers with specific examples of using Framing Your Thoughts to differentiate lessons supporting Written Expression in all areas including advisory and showed how there is a connection between this method of teaching written expression and Reading Comprehension.

During the summer training, all teachers received training on understanding available data on student's Lexile from the 2014 DCAS and 2015 Smarter Balanced Assessment. Teachers received training on aligning the Lexile levels with Grade Level Equivalents and given access and samples of content aligned to the current Science Framework in all areas with lexiles ranging from Gr3-9.

Future Professional Development will include Social Studies Content.

All ELA, Social Studies and Science teachers received training from Ms Ogden on understanding the requirements in Smarter Balanced in Informational Text and the need for coordination between ELA and core content areas. After an initial training in the summer program, the Met staff determined this training would be on-going as teachers individually sought resources and strategies for specific students.

During the summer training as most of the training was delivered by Big Picture, the staff agreed Big Picture would be responsible for the training around the model and the Learning Plan, the University of Delaware would supplement the training around Project Based Learning and Mrs. Ogden would assume the role of always connecting both Big Picture Goals, the University of Delaware's training around the "drilled down" details of the content not only in the Common Core but also at the granular level of content specifically included in the Smarter Balanced Assessment and the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade Science Assessment.

Mrs. Ogden reached out personally to April McRae copying both science teachers on a series of emails to fully understand the content included on the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade assessment. There was initial confusion around the most up to date list of science domains tested and some coordination between the Met Biology teacher's scope and sequence and the reality of the other content 10<sup>th</sup> grade students would be assessed on.

The Met team determined a practical solution would be to align the Informational Text requirements for the ELA intervention block with the content outside of Biology. What this means as an example is students are and will receive instructions around information text standards while reading content like energy that may not be included in the current science content. The informational text /science content is included in the intervention block. The content is available at the student's current lexile level in most cases with scaffolding to move the student forward closer to grade level on the same topic by providing the science content over several lexile levels.

Integrating the requirement for Science and Social Studies teachers to respond to Smarter Balanced, tested content on the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade science assessment and the principles of the Big Picture is the single biggest challenge in the professional development process. The Met Team did not incorporate enough time for teachers to understand how these three requirements worked together and were not prepared to simply this process by proving the essential questions included in the Science Framework to each, as an example, and support building project based learning around the scope and sequence provided with the new Science Framework.

The IEP team is in the process of making sure all eligible students have fully approved IEP's. All students who are enrolled in the Met who have an IEP have been assessed for a new PLEP. In 20% of the cases, the students have been evaluated by the School Psychologist using the WRAT or the WIATT. All students who have IEP's that have expired have a draft IEP and an invitation has been sent home to collect parent feedback. The process is at the point where the logistics of having the entire staff, parent and student at a meeting at the same time is holding up final signatures. In some cases, parents were invited to the meeting and all of the staff came to the meeting but the parents did not show.

The process is moving forward according to all Special Education regulations concerning invitations to meetings, multiple methods of contacting parents, staff required to attend including General Ed teachers, special ed teachers, administrative designee, CTE staff, nurse as need and parents being part of the process before the draft is completed, student input, transition planning, etc.

The process is not moving forward in the 60 days time frame however it is moving forward with the understanding of the requirements.

### **Special Education Staffing**

When fully staffed with an ELA Special Ed Teacher, Math Special Ed teacher and three paraprofessionals, the DE Met staff anticipates we can provide all of the "pull out services" for students and will evaluate if we need additional staff to support "push in" as we assess our staff's ability to provide the accommodations to students within the context of the Big Picture Model. The focus of the entire Administrative team is to provide the leadership, professional development and resources for our staff to support Special Education Students in the General Education setting by fully implementing the Big Picture Model.

As the school year is progressing, the first 60-90 days have included a heavy burden on acquiring paperwork on the Special Ed students; assessing their current level of performance; managing issues in behavior and establishing relationships to allow the learning process to proceed independently. What this looks like on a day to day basis can be very different. Particularly difficult students who are defiant, aggressive, antagonistic and not engaged can turn around overnight if offered learning opportunities that appear interesting and relevant. Utilizing the entire staff of mentors, discipline monitors, administrators, and finally the Special Ed team, we are working on engaging every student. Our success is illustrated initially when we successfully assess the student and obtain accurate performance levels in math, vocabulary and reading. We have been able to successfully assess all but one non-compliant student as of today.

This model can include the Special Ed staff providing back end support on the individual learning on the portals. Mrs. Ogden brings extensive experience with portals and distance learning and is enthusiastic about implementing this process inside the Big Picture Model.

Mrs. Ogden, has considerable experience working with the most serious "at risk" students. This category includes students with significant behavior problems, extremely significant achievement issues and in some cases have already been part of a criminal justice procedure. Given this experience, when applicable Mrs. Ogden provides instruction to help build a relationship with some of the most difficult students.

In most cases this instruction is designed to be part of the teacher training process and other members of the Special Education staff are intended to follow up with the providing the services. In all cases, when Mrs. Ogden is directly providing instructions to individuals or small groups of students, she is modeling for teachers how to respond to the goals of the students IEP and reflect the core components of Big Picture by individualizing and making the newly acquired skill relevant and meaningful.

It was never intended that Mrs. Ogden would be considered a Unit for the purpose of providing on-going services to meet the requirements of any one student’s IEP so the actual instruction is delivered as part of a team approach with the most difficult students.

**Other Services Needed**

The Met team is in the process of reviewing the Functional Behaviors Assessments and the Behavior Support included in the files acquired from other districts for the students presenting with the most difficult behaviors. The Met has contacted with a School Psychologist to lead this process of evaluating the significant amount of paperwork from the past district and charter schools with the current disruptive behaviors. In many cases the students with the most disruptive behaviors are the students the Met has found the most difficult to find their Special Ed audit file so this process is very time consuming and tedious for a new Charter with a significant number of children with prior lengthy records for behavior.

After reviewing the records from the past and obtaining permission to evaluate from the Parents, the contracted Psychologist is leading this process.

Delivery of services as pushing in or pull out is detailed in the spreadsheet.

The special education budget is below. The special education funding is being spent as follows:

- 1 Student Support Director
- 2 Special Education Teachers
- 3 Paraeducators
- 20% of the salary of 10 general educators
- 20% of mentoring service and climate team
- \$50,000 for medical related services – psychologist, PT, OT

<b>Total Units</b>		<b>16.76</b>		\$561,454
<b>Normal Units</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>7.70</b>	45.9%	\$257,947
<b>SPED Units</b>		<b>9.06</b>	54.1%	\$303,507
OECs			30.48%	\$92,509
Related Services - Basic				\$9,838
Related Services - Intense				\$22,806
Related Services - Complex				\$22,806
Division II - All Other Costs		\$49,023		\$0
Division II - Energy		\$40,811		\$0
Division III		\$110,822		\$0

IDEA

\$31,382

**Total Allocated to Support SPED**

**\$482,848**

### **Additional Planning Year Activities**

#### **Quarterly Report – December, January, February 2015**

Significant changes have been underway in the last quarter since the Board of the Delaware Met decided to delay their opening for one year. Now halfway through the beginning of a second planning year, the Board is excited to have identified a new leader who will be able to foster their commitment to the vision and mission of the Delaware Met. The Board worked diligently during the first and second quarter to become a known entity in the Wilmington community where the school will be located. The school has hosted multiple Chamber of Commerce events at their facility to leverage collaborative relationships and bolster the viability of their internship program. The Board subcommittees worked extensively with Innovative Schools to prioritize and complete those activities that were essential for school start-up.

#### **Facility Planning**

When the school opens in August 2015, the Delaware Met will occupy a facility that was formerly the corporate training center for the Maryland Bank, N.A. (MBNA, now known as Bank of America), in downtown Wilmington, Delaware. The facility was purchased from the State of Delaware by Innovative Schools, in partnership with the Charter School Development Corporation, and leased to the Delaware Met. The final closing on the property occurred in November 2014. During the second quarter, the school conducted an extensive facility assessment to determine lists of 'must dos' to ensure a completed Certificate of Occupancy prior to the state deadline. Since only minor renovations will be necessary, all facility modifications should be complete by May 2015.

#### **Student Recruitment**

Innovative Schools engaged a community-based group to conduct a grass-roots student recruitment effort. This team worked diligently with the Board and Innovative Schools, hosting multiple recruitment events throughout the fall and winter, and the school has received over 325 applications for the upcoming school year. The focus has now shifted to converting the applications into actual enrollments, and building the school community through various parent and student-centered events.

#### **Planning Year Staffing**

A new school leader was recruited for the school and began work this quarter. Patricia Hunter Crafton is an experienced school leader who is knowledgeable about the Deeper Learning models (of which Big Picture is one) and Restorative Justice (a positive approach to discipline using strategies designed to help prevent or deal with conflicts before they escalate).

#### **Patricia Hunter Crafton**

*Patricia Hunter Crafton joined the Delaware Met in 2015 as the School Leader following her term as interim campus Principal of Frederick Douglass High School in Baltimore City.*

*In 2005, she joined The Academies at Frederick Douglass High School faculty. While working with the Douglass team, Patricia charted her path as a Science Teacher, the Science Department Head, Instructional Leadership Team Member, Bridge Coordinator, Master Scheduler, Assistant Principal of Teaching and Learning, and the interim campus Principal.*

*As the Interim Campus Principal, Hunter-Crafton focused her time on providing strong academic and administrative leadership to The Academies at Frederick Douglass High School. Patricia's primary focus of supporting the educational programs throughout the school building and providing diverse opportunities, allowed the students at Douglass to reach new heights of academic success.*

*Patricia holds student achievement at the heart of her work and she sets and holds high expectations for staff, programs and students. She is very eager to be at the helm of the Delaware Met and is excited to implement the work of the Big Picture Learning Model, where the focus is on inspired learning, one student at a time.*

With the school leader now on board, the next staffing focus is the identification of the Learning Through Interests Coordinator (LTI). This position is posted and interviews will occur with an anticipated start date in May. Much of the initial work with the identification of internship locations and business partnerships was completed by the education pioneer and intern during the first quarter. When the LTI coordinator comes on board, they will build out the career and work-readiness strand of the student advisory program, and create tools for connecting academic standards to LTI projects.

### **Program Design - Big Picture Learning**

Planning with Big Picture Learning, the national school design partner, continued this fall and has intensified since the new school leader began work. The BPL coach is now working directly with the school leader on a weekly basis. Since the BPL National Conference occurred prior to the new school leader start date, a representative from Innovative Schools (as CMO) attended and has since shared conference learnings. The school leader will be participating in a three-day training at another Big Picture site in Rhode Island later this month. Big Picture Learning consultants participated in the school leader search and with the development of the job descriptions for all additional personnel. They also gave their insight and guidance on how to design the facility's space to best support the academic program during renovation.

### **Charter Management Organization (CMO) Support**

During the second quarter, Innovative Schools' CMO support included guidance and assistance with academic programming, finance, facility planning and acquisition, marketing and student recruitment, and numerous personnel needs. This level of support continues through the remaining quarters. The focus of support will now shift from the Board to the school leader and the additional school personnel. The Innovative Schools' Chief Schools Officer continued to meet with the Delaware Met Board Chair once a week, and the school leader joined these meetings once she was on board. In the coming year, Innovative Schools will continue to support the Delaware Met's student recruitment and enrollment, conduct the search process for teachers, continue to develop the academic program and materials, and ensure a safe facility is ready for the school opening.

## **Quarterly Report – March, April, May, 2015**

Significant changes have been underway as the second planning year for the DE Met Comes to a close. The new school leader, Patricia Hunter, has already established herself in the community and has shown she is able to foster commitment to the vision and mission of the Delaware Met. The school has hosted multiple Chamber of Commerce events at their facility to leverage collaborative relationships and bolster the viability of their internship program. The Board subcommittees, working with the School Leader, worked extensively with Innovative Schools to prioritize and complete the activities that were essential for school start-up, and the school is ready to start with a fully enrolled student body in August 2015.

### **Facility Planning**

When the school opens in August 2015, the Delaware Met will occupy a facility that was formerly the corporate training center for the Maryland Bank, N.A. (MBNA, now known as Bank of America), in downtown Wilmington, Delaware. The facility was purchased from the State of Delaware by Innovative Schools, in partnership with the Charter School Development Corporation, and leased to the Delaware Met. The final closing on the property occurred in November 2014. The school received their Certificate of Occupancy and submitted it to the state prior to the June 15, 2015 deadline.

### **Student Recruitment**

Innovative Schools engaged a community-based group to conduct a grass-roots student recruitment effort. This team worked diligently with the Board and Innovative Schools, hosting numerous recruitment events throughout the fall, winter and spring, and now have over 250 students fully enrolled in the school. Parent and student events will continue to occur throughout the summer to keep the families engaged. A recent barbecue to announce the new school mascot was attended by over 150 school community members.

### **Planning Year Staffing**

As soon the new school leader started in March, she hit the ground running in order to identify the rest of her staff. One of her key first hires was the Learning through Internship (LTI) Coordinator, Jerry Williams, who started in early June. Mr. Williams comes to the Delaware Met with over eighteen years of experience in teaching and school counseling in both Wilmington, Delaware and Baltimore, Maryland. Mr. Williams earned master of education degrees from Wilmington University in School Leadership and in School Counseling, and he earned his bachelor of art degree from Delaware State University in Mass Communications. Most recently, Mr. Williams was Director of School Counseling at Moyer Academy Charter School in Wilmington where he was responsible for delivering individualized and small group instruction for students ensuring social communication, conflict resolution, college and career readiness, and character development.

Much of the initial work on the identification of internship locations and business partnerships was completed by the Education Pioneer, Keina Hodge, during the first quarter, and this knowledge has now been transferred to Mr. Williams. Ms. Hodge has now joined the Innovative Schools' team as program manager, and she will continue to support the school and the LTI coordinator.

The Student Advisors (teachers) are almost all on board for the upcoming school year and will be training with Big Picture Learning in August. They will build out the career- and work-readiness strand of the student advisory program, and create tools for connecting academic standards to LTI projects.

### **Program Design - Big Picture Learning**

Planning with Big Picture Learning has occurred on a weekly basis since Ms. Hunter began as the school leader. Ms. Hunter took a training visit to Providence, RI where she was able to visit multiple Big Picture schools and learn first-hand by seeing the model in action. This trip was also attended by Teresa Gerchman, the Innovative Schools Chief Schools Officer, and time was used for in-depth planning. Big Picture Learning consultant participated in the Student Advisors' and LTI coordinator search and with the development of the job descriptions for these positions. Their insight and guidance was given on how to design the facility's space to best support the academic program, and these guidelines were used as the school building was renovated and received its certificate of occupancy.

### **Charter Management Organization (CMO) Support**

During the third quarter, Innovative Schools' CMO support included guidance and assistance with academic programming, finance, facility planning, marketing & student recruitment, and numerous personnel needs. This level of support increased with the addition of a dedicated Operations Manager who began in mid-May and will report to the school on a daily basis. The focus of support has shifted from the Board to the school team. The Innovative Schools' team continued to meet with the School Leader and Board executive committee once a week, and also spent at least one day a week, with the school leader, working on curriculum programs, mapping and career pathways. In the coming year, Innovative Schools will serve the Delaware Met in the areas of academics, business services, human resources, marketing and student recruitments, transportation, food services and board development.

### **Quarterly Report – June, July, August 2015**

This last quarter for the Delaware Met has been extremely busy. The school went from existing on paper, to being a true living organism, with student bodies in the building. The school was busy preparing for the arrival of the students by preparing the staff to be able to implement the model. The school held a one week Summer Institute for their students to allow them to become acclimated to the building and the model. The teachers received a week of training on site in July as well as week of training in New Orleans at the Big Picture Conference in August. The staff continued with PD right up onto the doors opened on August 24<sup>th</sup>. Mentors and potential intern sites came together for an orientation day as well.

### **Facility Planning**

The school opened on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The Delaware Met will occupy a facility that was formerly the corporate training center for the Maryland Bank, N.A. (MBNA, now known as Bank of America), in downtown Wilmington, Delaware. The facility was purchased from the State of Delaware by Innovative Schools, in partnership with the Charter School Development Corporation, and leased to the Delaware Met. The school received their Certificate of Occupancy and submitted it to the state prior to the June 15, 2015 deadline. A parking variance was obtained to ensure there is more than adequate parking for events at the school. Del Dot approved the Bus Loop pattern as well as the car drop off locations for the

school. Updates and improvements were made to the building to ensure it is a safe and comfortable place of learning.

### **Student Recruitment**

As of August 24<sup>th</sup> the school was fully enrolled with a waiting list. The school has continued to receive applications for new students and plans to maintain 100% enrollment. The Delaware Unit count process begins on Sept. 1<sup>st</sup> and will continue through Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>. At that point we will be able to give a final breakdown of the schools demographics. The school population was shown to have enough direct certification students to qualify for the Universal Free Lunch program. The school applied and will be participating in the program for the 2015-2016 school year.

### **Staffing**

The school year began fully staffed. The planning year staff of a School Leader, Learning through Internship Coordinator, Operations Manager and Special Education Coordinator has been joined by an assistant school leader, 12 Advisory teachers, a school secretary, school nurse, school climate advisor and 2 cafeteria workers. Additional community mentors will be joining to work with students in need of additional supports on September 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **Program Design - Big Picture learning**

The entire school staff was trained in the Big Picture Model. The teachers began receiving training in July. This training was school specific and designed for the unique needs of the DE Met. This training was run in partnership between the school design coach, Charly Adler, and the School Leader, Tricia Hunter. This was then followed up in August. The entire team met together on August 3<sup>rd</sup> in Delaware to prepare for the Big Picture Conference in New Orleans starting on August 4<sup>th</sup>. The entire team was trained in the model over that week by experts in Big Picture Learning. The teachers then came back to Delaware and spent the next two weeks in PD sessions and preparing the building and their rooms for the students. The first week of school, the week of August 24<sup>th</sup>, was planned out to keep the students in Advisory class all day to build the culture necessary for a Big Picture School.

### **Charter Management Organization (CMO) Support**

Innovative Schools' CMO support included guidance and assistance with academic programming, finance, facility planning, marketing & student recruitment, and numerous personnel needs. This level of support increased with the addition of a dedicated Operations Manager who began in mid-May and will report to the school on a daily basis. The focus of support has shifted from the Board to the school team. The Innovative Schools' team continued to meet with the School Leader and Board executive committee once a week and also spent at least one day a week, with the school leader, working on curriculum programs, mapping and career pathways. The Innovative Schools Program Manger spent at least two days per week dedicated to the school. They handled registrations, student's records, master schedule inputting and all other office and back office services. The Operations manager negotiated a bus and a food service contract. In the coming year, Innovative Schools will serve the Delaware Met in the areas of academics, business services, human resources, marketing and student recruitment, transportation, food services and board development.

### **Marketing and Recruitment Timeline during Additional Planning Year**

**October 2014:**

Board agreed to perform themed Open House Events.

Signs were made to advertise weekly Open House events manned by board members.

- Distributed flyers in churches and local Community Centers
- Networking Luncheon & School Tour
- Presentations done at local schools
- Connection made with Chamber of Commerce luncheon
- CMO & Board Member visit to Met East
- Breakfast & School Tour
- Choice forms given to interested parties

**November 2014:**

First Open House themed event

- These Open House events consisted of
- Guided school tours, interactive activities, music
- Opportunity parents to apply online & paper apps provided to apply (choice opened 11/3/14)
- Presentations done at local schools
- Community Leaders breakfast

**December 2014:**

Second Open House themed event

- Chamber of Commerce Networking event
- Neighborhoods flyer distribution
- Weekly Open Houses
- Presentations done at local schools

**January 2015:**

Third Open House themed event

- 87ers attraction for Open House Event
- Ice Cream Social Event
- School Leaders breakfast event
- Weekly Open House Tour
- Presentations done at local schools
- Press releases in English and Spanish

**February 2015:**

- Parents Meet & Greet
- Weekly Open House Tours
- Presentations done at local schools
- School Leader onboard
- Personnel Committee dissolved

**March 2015:**

- Weekly Open House Tours
- Presentations done at local schools
- TV appearance for Board Members, School Leader, Student Ambassadors, and Parents
- Radio commercials

- Phone Jam results – board members, school leader, and CMO called students to confirm acceptance

#### **April 2015:**

- Weekly Open House Tours
- Presentations done at local schools
- Phone Jam results – board members, school leader, and CMO called students to confirm acceptance

#### **School Psychologist**

The School Psychologist has been to the school weekly or twice a week since the contract was signed. The Psychologist has been administering achievement tests that can be delivered by a staff based Educational Diagnostician however based on the large number of students enrolling in the school with disabilities, the School Psychologist is administering all achievement tests including the WIATT and the WRAT in addition to the assessments required for updating eligibility. The school is contracting with Boost to assist in writing the ESR's until the initial process of the new school start up is complete as a way to add "another set of hands" while the startup process is so time consuming. The contracted School Psychologist is completing assessment by administering the BASC as the final step before drafting new ESR's for students with Learning Disabilities. It is the process that is underway at this time rather than complete.

#### **School Culture**

The original plan for opening the Delaware Met included the need for a School Climate Officer. Andre Wilson was selected as the School Climate Officer and was contracted before the beginning of the school year. Due to his personal reasons, he was not available to start until August 31<sup>st</sup>. In order to keep all of our students safe we realized that it was necessary to create a school climate team to support Andre. On October 19<sup>th</sup> additional team members were added. The school also began an In School Suspension program on September 30<sup>th</sup>. This program was designed to ensure students would continue to learn when they were not in their classroom. The process of finding a permanent person to run this program started right away. It was imperative that the Director would be someone that could run the program efficiently and would make sure that it could be an effective learning environment when needed for students. **(Addendum H)** Bryan Barnhill was brought in as the In School Suspension Classroom Director on October 19<sup>th</sup>. Bryan has experience with running ISS programs in Pennsylvania and in Delaware. Bryan completed 104 hours of essential learning courses related to school climate. He also completed his ART training in 2012. Rob Moore and Nami Ali are the other two members of the Climate Team. They also started on October. 19<sup>th</sup>. These two individuals have strong ties in the community and currently work with about fifty of our families outside of the school through youth basketball programs. They monitor the hallways and remove students from classrooms when needed. Mr. Moore and Mr. Ali monitor the halls and assist with ensuring students are moving purposefully between classes. If a student is causing a disruption in a classroom, they will come and remove the students, redirect their behavior, ensure they are ready to learn and then return them to the classroom. If returning to the classroom will

cause additional disruption of instruction then the students will be removed to ISS for the remainder of that class period. The goal of the team is to always teach and encourage each student to reach their goals. They work with the students and the parents to help them make decisions together about what will make a big difference in their son/daughter's development and future. This team received training from John Sadowski on November 18<sup>th</sup>; he continues to work with the team to ensure that they are in compliance with DOE requirements.

Mr. Wilson has developed a good working relationship with the Wilmington Police Department. He works specifically with Detective Danielle Watson. When there is a non-emergency at the school he will call her and she will give advice, and if necessary she will conduct an onsite investigation. When the school learned through social media that students would potentially bring weapons into the school, she gave advice on how to conduct searches. She recommended doing full searches for the first few days and then moving to random searches. The school also contacted the Wilmington Police Department to hire additional support for after school. The assignments are posted and officers are picking up the assignments as they have availability. They are at the school from 2:30-4:30, with student dismissal occurring at 3:45. This presence has helped to deter students from other schools from coming to the school. The dismissal process was also changed to dismiss two buses at time to prevent large groups of students left in the parking lot at the end of the day. These steps have cut down after school incidents significantly.

The English Lessons Youth Mentoring program began the week of August 31<sup>st</sup>. This program is facilitated by AJ English and provides services for the inner-city youth of Wilmington. His original team consisted of AJ English, Ugundi Jacobs and Cherise Lockett. In the beginning they started helping with the climate by monitoring student movement in hallways and developing relationship and rapport with students. This interaction helped the team determine the root causes of the disruptions that were occurring. The mentors then began working with and conferring with individual students. During the first few weeks they also worked with parents who came in with concerns or questions as well as parents who they had existing relationships with. After the first few weeks they began to include the families of the students who were having adjustment difficulties to following the schools' rules and expectations. AJ English recognized that there was a need for an additional female mentor on the team so he brought in Tamara Varella. Tamara and Ugundi overlapped for a few weeks to ensure continuity of service and support to the students. English Lessons program is being proactive with the student's behavior instead of always being reactive after a negative behavior. Currently the mentor team is working with forty-three students. Families of approximately twenty of these students have become involved with the program as well. Meetings have occurred between the parents, children and mentors to help establish better relationships in school and at home. The mentors are also dealing with at least ten of these students outside of the school due to their home situation. Home situations requiring intervention range from students who have been displaced by their parents, to runaways. Some students also have legal cases pending. In addition, the program assist parents with making connections to outside agencies for support with: drug rehabilitation, anger management, legal counseling, suicide prevention, and domestic violence.

It also works outside the school day to involve students in community service projects. Students will be visiting senior citizens homes and homeless shelter around Christmas time to hand out presents and other donated materials. They have also worked with students to get them enrolled in the Upward Bound Program.

AJ English returned to Wilmington after the end of professional basketball career and became the Executive Director of the Browntown Community Center. After working with the kids in the Browntown area of Wilmington, he realized he had a passion for helping at risk youth, so he partnered with Maurice Pritchett and Norman Oliver to start mentoring students at various schools in Delaware. These schools include Pulaski Elementary School, Christiana High School, and Central Middle School. AJ's ministry has always been to help all children in the pursuit of their education. It is his desire to help students realize their purpose, while getting their education in a safe and nurturing environment.

To ensure our staff is better equipped to work with our students we have arranged for SANDS (sexual assault network of Delaware) to do a training with the staff on "Trauma Informed Language". This will occur from 1pm-2pm on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. This training will be held to prepare them for the follow student presentation during 9th and 10th grade Advisory on the 3rd and 4th from 2:00-3:30pm, this will count as our required bullying training. This will be called "I've got your back."

### **Services to Special Education Students in In-School Suspension**

This is an area that has improved dramatically with the additional staff provided in the last 30 days. Although the staff added can be characterized as "hall monitors' or in school suspension staff" they are actually highly integrated members of the IEP team in the school for the most difficult students. Several members of this discipline support staff were recruited from local community agencies so they bring outside relationships into the building. They have created an in school suspension area and the IEP team moved one of the resource classrooms to the area immediately outside the in school suspension room. Now that we have the staff in place to manage the immediate offending behavior, after the behavior has been deescalated and the student is prepared to reengage in the learning process, Mrs. Ogden works in the room with the ISS staff to support making sure instruction is aligned to the IEP goals and the support staff is able to provide the accommodations in the student's IEP.

### **Governing Board and Leadership Capacity**

#### **School Leadership Structure**

School Leader, Patricia Hunter, returned from maternity leave on November 23, 2015. The board has decided to continue with the leadership structure outlined in the original approved charter and not to move forward with the hiring of an executive director. Ms. Hunter will continue to receive professional development and coaching from Charly Adler, BPL coach, support from Innovative Schools, with oversight from the board of directors.

As per the approved charter, the budget is now reflective of the original leadership structure including a School Leader, a Learning Through Internship coordinator, and an Operations Manager. The school climate and support resources are all reflected in the current budget.

**Charter Management Organization Capacity**

Response to question of CMO Capacity from Innovative Schools Executive Chairman, Matt Swanson

There is no denying that the role as CMO has been complicated and affected by the unexpected transitions in board leadership (medical leave) and school leadership (maternity leave) during critical junctures but adjustments were made in order to accommodate these changes and sufficient supports are in place going forward. The table below is taken directly from the approved charter and still accurately represents the designation of duties between the partners.

Function	Network/Management Organization Decision Making		School Decision Making
<b>ACADEMIC</b>			
Academic Performance Goals	Innovative Schools	Big Picture	School Leader, Board of Directors
Curriculum	Innovative Schools	Big Picture	School Leader
Professional Development	Innovative Schools	Big Picture	School Leader
Data Management and Interim Assessment	Innovative Schools	Big Picture	School Leader
Promotion Criteria	Innovative Schools	Big Picture	School Leader
Culture	Innovative Schools	Big Picture	School Leader
<b>OPERATIONAL</b>			
Operational Performance Goals	Innovative Schools		School Leader, Board of Directors
Student Recruitment	Innovative Schools		School Leader
School Staff Recruitment	Innovative Schools		School Leader, Board of Directors
H/R Services (Payroll, Benefits, etc.)	Innovative Schools		
Community Relations	Innovative Schools		School Leader, Board of Directors
Information Technology	Innovative Schools		School Leader
Facilities Management	Innovative Schools		School Leader
Vendor Management / Procurement	Innovative Schools		School Leader
Other Operational Services	Innovative Schools		School Leader
<b>FINANCIAL</b>			
Financial Performance Goals	Innovative Schools		School Leader, Board of Directors
Budgeting, Finance, and Accounting	Innovative Schools		School Leader
Fundraising / Development	Innovative Schools		School Leader, Board of Directors

**OPERATIONAL & FINANCIAL**

As shown in the table, Innovative Schools is directly responsible for all areas described in the Operational and Financial sections and will gladly answer any specific concerns related to those areas of the school’s performance. A specific breakdown of Innovative Schools team members, responsibilities and capacity is attached as a supplemental document. **(Addendum G)**

**ACADEMIC**

As shown in the table, academic oversight is a shared responsibility. Management of the Academic program is subcontracted to the academic partner, Big Picture Learning. Relative to this work, the primary role of Innovative Schools is to coordinate, facilitate and support the professional development programming and other training between the Big Picture Learning team, the School Leader and the overall staff. Our role is also to monitor the progress of training and hold Big Picture Learning

accountable for the academic partnership and the expectations detailed in the multi-year support contract outlined in the approved charter. These expectations have been met. Beyond general planning support, Big Picture Learning participated deeply in the leader selection process, delivered direct training to the school leader beginning in Feb 2015, participated deeply in staff selection and professional development of the overall team in July and August 2015, including but not limited to the one week seminar training at the Big Picture conference in New Orleans. Big Picture Learning has also contributed numerous extra hours of support throughout the interim leadership period and in light of specific teacher needs during the school opening.

## **CONCLUSION**

As the CMO, there is one additional thought to share from the perspective of an organization that has built its approach to this work through partnering with successful national organizations and working to import their innovations and their programs into Delaware. Everyone who is involved with education initiatives in Delaware knows that attracting the attention and the participation of high quality national funders and operators has been challenging due the inability for these organizations to follow their normal scaling strategy in such a small state. Innovative Schools has worked very hard to convince and provide an operating platform for organizations such as Knowledgeworks Early College, Expeditionary Learning, NewTech Network, Big Picture Learning, New York City Leadership Academy and Charter School Development Corp to bring their expertise and their capacity for impact to our state. We understand how these organizations evaluate new opportunities.

The concern is that the message that will be heard by this community of national players - that a new school is under consideration for closure 60 days into its opening, without probation or an opportunity for corrective initiatives - would have a chilling effect on the prospect of future conversations. When considering opportunities, a critical factor for these kinds of organizations is to identify states and state systems that balance high standards, rigor and accountability with fairness, consistency and pragmatism.

I would ask any committee members with historical perspective to consider what an objective evaluation of 3-month or even one-year performance or compliance measures for Kuumba or Eastside Charter might have yielded at the time; yet today those schools are two of our brightest examples of successful progress in urban education.

There is a plan of action underway to shore up immediate concerns with climate, culture, safety, academic planning and special education. Longer terms plans are developing towards resolving governance, leadership and other fundamental concerns. As far as the CSAC response to this review, Innovative Schools would welcome specific standards, milestones and targets that are required for this school to demonstrate successful progress and that the school be held accountable to those measures. We also support the position that, if these standards cannot be met, there should be immediate discussion about more fundamental changes to the status or oversight of the charter. Setting a rigorous but fair timeline for course correction will not only allow the school, and the community, the chance at success that it deserves but it will send a message more broadly that Delaware's approach to higher standards is both reasonable and reliable.

## **Board Training**

On September 16, 2015, the board completed the Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement (DANA) training with Dana Balick and Kendall Massett. All members except Nash Childs (on medical leave) were in attendance. The members in attendance were Adriane Anderson-Strange, Amina Baaith, Jeffrey Bross, Abby Fischer, Ryan Harrington, Andy Podolsky, Dee Reed, Aman Sharma, Richelle Talbert, and Jillian Wattley.

Ryan Harrington, board vice chair, completed Charter School Board Member and CBOC Member Finance Training on September 15, 2015.

#### **Financial Viability**

Updated school budget and cash flow analysis are included as supplemental files. **(Addendum A)**