

1.1 Executive Summary

Vine's Preparatory Charter School is a proposed charter school in Sussex County for students in grades six through eight (6-8). At Vine's Preparatory Charter School the overall focus is affording students the opportunity of learning their rights, privileges, and responsibilities of being a United States citizen. Additionally, the school will teach cultural diversity, and incorporate specific areas of interest in Engineering and Business fields. The vision for Vine's Preparatory Charter School is grounded in exposing students to educational choices early and preparing them for secondary and post-secondary education.

Mission Statement

The mission of Vine's Preparatory School is to provide comprehensive, progressive, high quality college preparatory education to all students regardless of race or socioeconomic status that will cultivate each students' talents and gifts in the areas of engineering, and business. Vine's Preparatory seeks to provide a STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) approach to education and to cultivate the students' leadership skills through learning their rights, privileges, and responsibilities of being a United States citizen and with courses in Business, and Engineering fields.

Vision Statement

A mind that understands is a mind that gains knowledge, always listening for new wisdom.
Vine's Preparatory School: cultivating wise leaders for tomorrow.

Educational Need and Target Population

Recently, there was an article published discussing the urgency of the community to do a better job with our children. The Secretary of Education Mark Murphy discussed the number of students that could end up in prison or without a job if there isn't a drastic change. He also discussed his concerns for young men of color. Although, there are a plethora of resources and charter schools in New Castle Delaware, currently, there still seems to be a lack in Sussex County. This proposed charter school seeks to target students and families in Sussex County. The charter school seeks to offer the opportunity for students to learn their rights and responsibilities of a United States Citizen, a solid core education curriculum in addition to a choice between business, or engineering related field of knowledge.

Currently, in Sussex County there is only one alternative to public education. In other areas in the state of Vine's there are multiple options for parents and students to choose from when it comes to education. According to the Delaware Department of Education, there are currently twenty four charter schools in New Castle alone. As you progress down state the numbers

decrease drastically with Kent County having six charter schools and Sussex County with one charter school. Vine's Preparatory seeks to afford students the opportunity of choice when it comes to their education. The school will offer students a choice between a business, or engineering related field of study. Not only will this give students a lead in these content areas, but it will also provide them experience in these particular areas making it easier for them to choose a career path in the future.

According to Rath, Rock, and Laferriere (2013) 63% of all occupations will require workers to have some type of postsecondary credential by 2018. Exposing students to various trades early could potentially reduce the overwhelming feeling of "what next" once students graduate from high school. Vine's Preparatory seeks to expose students early to career choices rendering them the opportunity of learning various trades in hopes of finding a career path that they will come to love. Vine's Preparatory seems to expose students early to choosing majors and areas of study preparing them for college.

Community Engagement

Vine's Preparatory seeks to meet the educational needs of people in Sussex County. Residents of Sussex County are in need of other choices for education. As previously mentioned, there are limited choices for education in Sussex County. Vine's Preparatory seeks to engage the community through community socials, presence in the community, and public assemblies. Additionally, Vine's Preparatory will engage and collaborate with the existing schools, businesses, and local agencies. Vine's Preparatory will also seek to serve the community through various events and socials. Recruitment efforts will also include targeting families with school aged children in Western Sussex County, conducting community meetings, meeting with key stakeholders, state representatives, and community leaders, and establish a social media presence.

Educational Plan

The Vine's Preparatory Charter School proposes to replicate a curriculum that will provide the students with hands on learning through various projects, exhibits, and demonstrations throughout the year while serving the community. The students will learn through innovative ways; leadership skills, the importance of serving and serving the community, character education, and life skills. Students will also have the option of participating and choosing from engineering, or business concentrations. Vine's Preparatory will provide "out of the box" education in order to teach students how to think "out of the box."

The school will provide a platform for learning where students become integral, credible, and empowered members of their generation. The hands on learning will provide students with an educational experience that will impact their career and their communities. A study conducted

at Johns Hopkins University determined that in high-poverty environments, a student's middle grades experience strongly impacts the odds of graduating from high school (Balfanz, 2006). Vine's Preparatory Charter School seeks to create an educational community that will provide students with tools to be positive contributors to their own destiny and motivators of their own success.

Innovation, creativity, critical thinking, and perseverance are at the heart of Vine's Preparatory and aligns with the skills of today's society that students will need as future leaders and professionals. Vine's Preparatory seeks to provide students with a solid education utilizing the STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) approach and incorporating extracurricular courses in business, and engineering. Vine's Preparatory seeks to ensure students master the traditional education in addition to other areas of interest. Ensuring that all students are able to thrive successfully in a complex, competitive, diverse world.

Beginning with grade 6 in year 1 there will be 4 classrooms with 15 students in each classroom. Year 2 will consist of grades 6 and 7 with a total of 120 students and 8 classrooms. The following year, year 3 will consist of grades 6, 7, and 8 with a total of 180 students and 12 classrooms. Students who participate in this program will graduate with knowledge in business, or engineering, and a knowledge base of hands on learning that will prepare them for a successful future. They will leave with a certificate verifying program completion and enter the next phase more prepared for college, their careers, and the world.

Leadership and Governance

Vine's Preparatory Charter School will be governed by a Board composed of the founder, qualified and competent professionals, parents and community members. The members of the Board has a passion for maximizing the educational experience and creating a conducive learning environment. The Board possesses a wealth of knowledge, skills, and talents. The Board will ensure effective governance and leadership in order to achieve the school's mission and vision. The philosophy of governance that will guide the proposed school is to operate in an open and transparent way to ensure that parents, teachers, and stakeholders have a clear understanding of the school's financial health and academic standing, and have regular access to all governance functions as prescribed by law. A highly qualified school leader will provide leadership and management for the school. The founding board will expand to fill in key gaps in membership and further engage in the community.

The essential function of the board shall be:

- Manage the implementation of its approved education program;
- Determine its own budget and operating procedures;

- Acquire and convey interests in real property, subject to rules and regulations established by the Department with the approval of the State Board with respect to real property acquired by charter schools using state funds;
- Hire, manage, and terminate any school employee in accordance with the terms of its personnel policies or any collective bargaining agreement it negotiates with its employees;
- Establish reasonable academic and disciplinary standards specifically related to the missions, goals and educational objectives for the charter school as set forth in its charter for students to continue enrollment in the charter school; and
- Establish an application and admissions process which shall enable the charter school to provide the local districts in which its students reside with a preliminary roster of its students for the subsequent school year on or before May 1 of each year. Each charter school shall make the timetable for its application and admissions process identical to any such timetable set forth by this Code for the operation of a public school choice program.

Business Plan

Vine's Preparatory seeks to operate as a charter school in the state of Delaware. Enrollment will be open to all Delaware students with an admission preference for those who have an interest in business, or engineering. Vine's Preparatory will be located in Western Sussex County. With financial support from various funders, DDOE and local revenues, per formula calculations, to pay the operating, payroll, and occupancy costs. The Board and school leader will ensure fiscal viability is maintained with regular analyzed enrollment, expenditures, and financial management practices. This information will be reported on a monthly basis to the Board. The Board intends to aggressively implement a fundraising plan, and apply for grants, and operating and capital loans to supplement available resources for school operations.