



1. Overview



1.1. Basic Information

Please review the following questions below for accuracy. Please fill in "Current Enrollment" at the time of application submission.

Q1. Name of School

- First State Montessori Academy
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q2. Year School Opened

- 2014
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q3. Current Enrollment

- Please fill in "Current Enrollment" at the time of application submission.

Enrollment for the 22-23 school year is expected to be 630 students.

Q4. Approved Enrollment

- 650
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q5. School Address

- 1000 North French Street, Wilmington, DE 19801
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q6. District(s) of Residence



- Christina School District
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q7.Website Address

- <http://firststatemontessori.org/>
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q8.Name of School Leader

- Courtney Fox
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q9.School Leader Email

- courtney.fox@fsma.k12.de.us
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q10.School Leader Phone Number

- (302) 576-1500
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q11.Name of Board President

- Meghan Newberry
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q12.Board President Email

- fsma.governance@gmail.com
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q13.Mission Statement: The mission of the First State Montessori Academy is to create successful, contributing, life-long learners in a Montessori public educational program for students in Kindergarten through 6th grade. First State Montessori Academy will provide parents and students with an authentic, time-tested, Montessori education in a public school. We believe that the creation of a Montessori public school in New Castle County, DE will improve student learning, allow for greater choice for parents, and serve as a model for alternative approaches to education by providing a proven and innovative teaching and learning environment.

- Correct; this is our Mission Statement
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Applicant Comments :

FSMA updated our mission to reflect that we serve students through 8th grade when we completed our expansion modification.

1.2. Enrollment and Demographics

Q14.Please review the Enrollment & Demographic Information table (see Resources), complete the last column, and upload the revised document.

Upload Required File Type: excel Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 1

Resources

FSMA 1.2 Enrollment and Demographi...

Applicant Evidence :

FSMA 1.2 Enrollment and Demographi...

Uploaded on 9/12/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q15.



School Comments 2020-2021	The school was not required to provide a response to this information.
School Comments 2019-2020	The school was not required to provide a response to this information.
School Comments 2018-2019	The school was not required to provide a response to this information.

Schools are invited but not required to comment on any aspect of the demographic data above in section 1.2.

N/A

1.3. Approved Minor and Major Modifications

The table lists any approved minor and/or major modifications over the course of the school's current charter term.

Q16.

Date	Modification Requested	Outcome
	Not applicable (No requests submitted during this charter term)	

Schools are invited but not required to comment on any aspect of the modification data above in table 1.3.


N/A

1.4. Enrollment Trends

Q17. Please review the School Enrollment Trends table (see Resources), complete the last column ("Current Waitlist for 2022-23"), and upload the revised document.


Upload Required File Type: excel Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 1

Resources



FSMA 1.4 School Enrollment Trends.xlsx

Applicant Evidence :



FSMA 1.4 School Enrollment Trends.xlsx

Uploaded on 6/22/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q18.

DOE Summary:
During the four years of the charter term, the enrollment average was at 98.6% of the school's approved enrollment. However, in 2021-2022, there was slight decline to 92% of the approved enrollment of 654. Declines in enrollment, however, during the COVID-19 pandemic were experienced universally throughout schools in the state and country.

School Comments 2020-2021	FSMA was scheduled to add a new classroom in 20-21 school year, but with approval from the Charter School Office, determined that delaying this planned growth was appropriate due to the pandemic.
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School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	Not applicable

Schools are invited but not required to comment on any aspect of the demographic data above in section 1.4.

N/A

1.5. Reenrollment Trends

Please review the following table with the school's reenrollment trends during the current term of the charter.

DOE Summary:
Over the first four years of this charter term, the reenrollment average was 90.1%The percentage of students reenrolled for the 2021-2022 school year is slightly lower than past years (87.68%). Specifically, the differential between 2020-2021 and 2021-2022, which is 4.54%.

Q19.

School Comments 2020-2021	FSMA continues to have strong retention rates overall. The one grade level that we consistently see a lower percentage is 6 th grade. Because our surrounding schools typically start middle school in 6 th grade, we do see students consider other options at this time. FSMA has created a plan to increase education about our middle school program in subsequent years.
School Comments 2019-2020	FSMA carefully evaluates our enrollment patterns each year. We are seeing strong retention numbers in all grades, except 6th. We know that specialized middle schools will still be appropriate for some of our students and will work with families to ensure every child is in the best place for them. Of our students leaving in 6th grade, about 1/3 went to a specialized middle school, about 1/3 went back to their district feeder school, and about 1/3 moved out of state. In order to help educate our families on our unique middle school program, we now have a transition plan for our 5th and 6th graders, host Information Sessions, and provide lots of opportunities for families to see the Middle School Program in action. We also identified that the lower grades had more attrition. As families are determining the right path for their child, we sometimes have families try out different models. That said, we find that once our families are here for a few years, they are very likely to stay.
School Comments 2018-2019	As FSMA is still in the early phases of adding our Middle School Program, we are still seeing attrition at these grade levels. We believe that once we have data to support the strength of our program, more families will choose to remain at FSMA for the entire k-8 experience. We know that specialized middle schools will still be appropriate for some of our students and will work with families to ensure every child is in the best place for them. That said, we only had 4 students leave after 7 th grade, but since the cohort is so small, this impacts the percentage greatly. It is interesting to note that of those 4 that left, 3 of them had only joined us in 7 th grade and were only at FSMA for one year.

Describe the school's plans to monitor and minimize attrition rates. Provide information about why students are choosing to enroll in different schools.

FSMA carefully reviews student retention data each year. Overall, our anticipated annual retention rate for the 22-23 school is about 92-95%. We have very low retention rates in our K-5 program (for the 22-23 school year, less than 3%. We do lose students at some of the common grade configuration change years - (6th grade for students attending a 6/7/8 program and 7th grade for students competing our Upper Elementary program. In our 6th grade group, the majority of students we lose go to a specialized charter school. For example, FSMA supports our students in applying to specialized schools for specific programs and with a very creative program and student body, Cab Calloway can be a great choice. This year, FSMA will lose 6 (out of 65) students going into 6th grade to other Delaware schools and 50% are attending Cab Calloway.

Resources

FSMA 1.5 Reenrollment Trends.xlsx



2. Academic Performance

Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF)

Delaware operates under the belief that all schools benefit from continuous improvement – including those that receive exceeds expectations ratings – to best support all students. The Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF) (https://education.delaware.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/dssf_one_pager_final.pdf) outlines the accountability standards by which all Delaware public schools are measured. This state- and school-level data helps identify each school's needs and determine how best to support students across the state.

DSSF measures the following areas to determine school success. This annual data is publicly available on the Delaware Report Card (<https://reportcard.doe.k12.de.us/>).

- Academic achievement – Proficiency for ELA and math (grades 3-8 and 11)
- Academic progress – Growth in ELA and math (grades 4-8); includes growth of the lowest and highest performing students in a school
- School quality/student success – On-track attendance (K-12), science proficiency (grades 5, 8 and biology), social studies proficiency (grades 4, 7 and 11), college/career preparedness (grades 9-12), and on-track in 9th grade
- Graduation rates – 4-year, 5-year and 6-year adjusted cohort graduation rates
- English language proficiency (ELP) – Progress toward English language proficiency (grades 1-12)

2.1. Delaware School Success Framework

Q20.Overall Academic Ratings Elementary (grades K-5)/Middle School (grades 6-8)

Indicator	2018-2019			2021-2022		
	Points	Point Earned	Percent Point	Points	Point Earned	Percent Point
Academic Achievement	150.00	89.00	59% Meets Expectations	150.00	81.00	54%
Academic Progress	200.00	125.00	63% Meets Expectations	50.00	19.00	38%
School Quality/Student Success	50.00	48.00	96% Exceeds Expectations	50.00	40.00	80%
Progress Toward English Language Proficiency	n/a	n/a	Not Applicable	n/a	n/a	Not Applicable
Overall	400.00	262.00	66% Meets Expectations	250.00	140.00	56%



DOE Summary:
FSMA earned an overall rating of "Meets Expectations" in SY 17/18 and SY 18/19. Due to COVID, all SY 19/20 and 20/21 assessment accountability requirements were waived by the U.S. Department of Education.

Based on the table above discuss the school's:

- overall academic achievement results,
- major challenges,
- and accomplishments

School Comments 2020-2021	FSMA has analyzed the data on the state report card. The attached document (state report card comparison) shows how FSMA ranks in comparison to other New Castle County schools. FSMA recognizes the limits of the state report card data as less than 50% of our students completed the assessment. FSMA has reviewed our local data as well in order to have a full understanding of how our students have been impacted by the pandemic and progressed over the 20-201 school year. FSMA has reviewed the assessment results of hybrid and virtual students and did not see any notable difference.
School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	Growth continues to be the goal. We want every child to make progress in every area and as we determine each child's individual needs and develop strategies and programs to address this, we will continue to support each child in meeting their greatest potential.

In summarizing the overall academic ratings, there is missing information that makes telling the story based on this data alone difficult. FSMA students continue to make strong progress academically in all areas. Through our own nationally normed formative and summative assessments, we track individual student progress and overall progress in a variety of ways.

Academic achievement results show growth each year for FSMA as a school and for individual grade levels and students. Our challenges with utilizing this data to draw conclusions is that it was either not completed (2020) or not completed by all students (2021). FSMA must rely on classroom based assessments for our yearly data review and decision making.

Although the data is insufficient, what we know about FSMA is that our students are growing year after year. We have more teachers trained in Montessori and and children are receiving an authentic Montessori education that is rooted in individualization, flexibility, rigor and mastery. Individual student data shows progress for all sub-groups and the integrity with which everything is approached by our educators is to be noted.

Similar to all schools, the pandemic required us to think in new ways about our method of delivery. Montessori was never designed to be an online program nor one that students could do with distance between them. The FSMA team responded and thought in new ways about how to stay true to our mission and make sure we were providing solid instruction during this time. Both our in-person program and our virtual program received position feedback from families and staff and our data showed that children continued to make gains throughout this 2 year situation.

Q21. Performance Agreement Academic Performance Expectations First State Montessori Academy's 2017-2018 overall academic ratings are: **Meets Standard**

- Academic Achievement: Meets Standard
- Growth: Exceeds Standard
- On Track to Graduation: Exceeds Standard
- College and Career: Meets Standard

By September 2022, our expectation is to achieve overall ratings of "Meets" or "Exceeds" standard as measured by the Delaware School Success Framework. Each year, we will show growth within our overall rating putting us on track to achieve our academic performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.



DOE Summary:

Due to COVID-19, all SY 19/20 and SY 20/21 assessment and accountability requirements were waived by the U.S. Department of Education.

Discuss the school's academic performance based on its approved Performance Agreement (see above).

School Comments 2020-2021	FSMA is on track to meet our goal as we have consistently received "meets" or "exceeds" on the above measures.
School Comments 2019-2020	FSMA is meeting our academic performance expectations. We will work to maintain the ratings of exceeds and grow in the areas that are meets to increase all of the areas to exceeds. FSMA has high expectations for our student and staff and will continue to build upon the solid foundation we have created.
School Comments 2018-2019	FSMA is meeting our academic performance expectations. We will work to maintain ratings of exceeds and grow in the areas that are meets to increase all of the areas of to exceeds. FSMA has high expectations for our students and staff and will continue to build upon the solid foundation we have created.

FSMA has met or exceeding all academic performance expectations during this charter term. Our growth has been consistent and strong since we opened and our proficiency data has allowed us to meet/exceed expectations throughout our years as a school. We will continue with our current practices for academics to ensure growth and proficiency continue to meet/exceed the standard and for on track to graduation standards, we will continue to utilize our current attendance expectations and communication in our next charter term.

2.2. Academic Achievement

Metric	2018-2019			2021-2022		
	Value	Points	Points Earned	Value	Points	Points Earned
Proficiency – ELA	66.01%	75	50	65.27%	75	49
Proficiency – Math	51.71%	75	39	42.36%	75	32

DOE Summary:

Due to COVID-19, all SY 19/20 and SY 20/21 assessment and accountability requirements were waived by the U.S. Department of Education. However, in 2018-2019, FSMA earned a "Meets Expectations" rating for Academic Achievement.

Q22. Academic Achievement ratings over the course of the charter term

School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
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School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	FSMA is rooted in the belief that we must help a child develop socially, emotionally, physically, and cognitively. Our Montessori approach requires our incredibly talented teachers to prepare children to be focused, independent, and innovative leader learners as well as responsible, respectful, and mindful individuals. We go beyond just teaching the academics and through Montessori, we teacher children to think critically, work collaboratively, and act boldly- all skills that are needed in the 21 st century. FSMA is committed to whole child development, which we believe is the key to raising test scores the right way.

FSMA continues to believe in our comments from the 18-19 school year -

*FSMA is rooted in a belief that we must help a child develop socially, emotionally, physically and cognitively. Our Montessori approach requires our incredibly talented teachers to prepare children to be focused, independent and innovative learners as well as responsible, respectful and mindful individuals. We go beyond just teaching the academics and through Montessori, we teach children to think critically, work collaboratively, and act boldly – all skills that are needed in the 21st century. FSMA is committed to **whole child development**, which we believe is **the key to raising test scores the right way.***

Assessment results such as SBAC tell much more than just a child's academic ability. In order for children to be ready to learn, they must be healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged. FSMA believes that we must ensure that the whole child is not only ready to learn but is also given the opportunity to flourish by putting strategies in place to make this happen for every child in every classroom, every day. Our results do not just tell us about student academic abilities but also gives us insight into each child's overall wellness.

But, we always remind ourselves that behind each of these data points is a child with a story. The stories are often of tremendous growth and an individual journey that may or may not show up on SBAC data. We know there is powerful anecdotal evidence about each child's experience and will continue to tell these stories alongside the picture our numbers represent.

Q23.Expected outcomes for Academic Achievement

School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	<p>Assessment results such as SBAC tell much more than just a child's academic ability. In order for children to be ready to learn, they must be healthy, safe, engaged, supported and challenged. FSMA believes that we must ensure that the whole child is not only ready to learn but is also given the opportunity to flourish by putting strategies in place to make this happen for every child in every classroom, every day. Our results do not just tell us about student academic abilities but also gives us insight into each child's overall wellness.</p> <p>But, we always remind ourselves that behind each of these data points is a child with a story. The stories are often of tremendous growth and an individual journey that may or may not show up on SBAC data. We know there is powerful anecdotal evidence about each child's experience and will continue to tell these stories alongside the picture our numbers represent.</p> <p>What's Next – How do we translate our data into meaningful action?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A deeper look for any specific trends in regard to race, socio-economic status, ELL, special education • Interpret the data in regards to instruction and review our professional development plan to ensure they are aligned. • Review state averages and discuss how they relate to FSMA data • Plan professional development based on trends and areas that have greatest need for improvement

FSMA will continue to review SBAC scores over time and find ways to ensure we are growing in our teaching and learning. FSMA's review of our data over time shows positive trends and scores consistently above the state average but for us, while this is good, we want to ensure that every child is being given individualized instruction in a way that allows them to meet thier full potential.

Q24.Progress measures to track expected Academic Achievement outcomes



School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	FSMA continues to review our data to look at our trends over time. We analyze areas for improvement and identify goals each year to ensure we are meeting our expected outcomes. The FSMA staff reviews school-wide data twice a year and individual teams review data continuously throughout the year. The intent is to identify areas of strength to continue and determine if there are areas that need to be further developed.

Reviewing and analyzing data occurs multiple times and in many ways throughout a typical school year.

- FSMA reviews data and presents academic achievement data to the FSMA Board.
- FSMA MTSS Academic Team meets 4 times a year to review data and respond/plan accordingly.
- FSMA Staff does a mid-year and end-of year data review day where whole school data is presented and grade levels review grade level data and classrooms review individual data

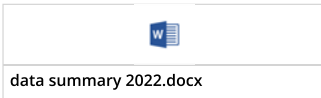
Additional information can be found in our MTSS overview document and 21-22 Data Summary document (uploaded to Q25).

Q25. The table above lists the school's available Academic Achievement ratings. Respond to the following questions. a. Based on the school's Academic Achievement ratings over the course of the charter term, discuss the school's current performance and provide explanations/root causes (positive and negative) for the results.

Please see attached Data Summary for the 21-22 School Year that includes information from the most recent testing year as well as a comparison to past years. This Data Summary includes information about our academic performance over our charter term. Our Academic Achievement ratings are green in all areas meaning FSMA is meeting the expectations.

FSMA believes that the number one reason our students are performing at this level is because of our Montessori-trained staff and Montessori-based classrooms. The methodology drives everything from academics to culture. By having trained teachers, we can implement the Montessori curriculum with integrity and ensure that it is a part of everything we do.

Applicant Evidence :



Uploaded on 9/8/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q26.b. Looking ahead, what are the school's expected outcomes for Academic Achievement and what steps will the school take to achieve them?

FSMA will continue to review data to ensure we continue to make positive growth in all areas and in all subject areas. Our hope is to not just increase our scores but truly look at each individual child, a Montessori basic principle, and collect information about their individual growth over time.

In the Data Summary, attached in Q25, pages 5 and 6 show an "apple to apples" comparison, looking at the same students over time. Reviewing this data allows us to identify areas that are an opportunity for growth. In addition, pages 7, 8, and 9 are a closer look at students over the course of the year. Looking at data in this way allows us to determine what student specific needs there are but also, what content areas or grade levels might need additional support.

Expected outcomes for Academic Achievement include:

- Science - While our proficiency rate is in the top 4 of charter schools in Delaware, our proficiency level of 33% requires more attention to science instruction at all levels. We will continue to use the science kits on a cycle that works with our multi-age classrooms as well as the Montessori cultural curriculum, to ensure that we are teaching the NGSS Standards and that students are gaining a strong understanding of all concepts. In addition, we will continue to actively participate in the Science Coalition in order to gain knowledge about curriculum and resources.
- Math - FSMA has seen a decline in proficiency when looking at the same group of students over time. While this is similar to statewide data, it is something we see a need to address. FSMA has selected a different Middle School Math Curriculum for the 22-23 school year and will be reviewing the impact of this change over time. In addition, our staff will review the most recent data to determine if there are certain areas/content specific areas that students seem to be struggling with. From this, our team will provide resources, both Montessori and other, that will address any gaps identified. (This is different from past years as the data during covid impacted school years was skewed due to participation rates).
- All other areas, continue to make positive progress on overall Academic Achievement at all grade levels.



Q27.c. Describe how the school will measure progress to determine whether the school is on track to meet the school's expected Academic Achievement outcomes.

As a school, a yearly data review is completed and presented to the staff and board. (The most recent data summary is attached in Q25). FSMA will continue to do this to do an overall review of both year to year data as well as over the course of the school year data.

Science - Measuring Progress:

- FSMA will ensure participation at the Science Coalition meetings.
- FSMA will review science kit rotations and align them with our current learning cycles.
- FSMA will review grade level summative data throughout the year to determine if we are on track with mastery of scientific concepts.

Math - Measuring Progress:

- FSMA will use our mid-year "Data Day" to review current school data and determine if gaps are identified.
- FSMA will use our MTSS process to look for trends in mathematical deficiencies across the grade levels.
- FSMA will review our MTSS data to determine if we are on track to meeting individual student goals and collect data on positive progress throughout the school year.

In general, FSMA will continue to measure progress through our strong MTSS process for ELA, Math and SEL. We have found great success in using this process to not only support students but to identify areas that there are commonalities in lower scores or errors. FSMA will also review data in the Fall, Winter and Spring as a staff to determine specific needs (and celebrate successes).

2.3. Academic Progress

Metric	2018-2019			2021-2022		
	Value	Points	Points Earned	Value	Points	Points Earned
Proficiency - Science	N/A	N/A	N/A	34.28%	25	9
Proficiency - Social Studies	N/A	N/A	N/A	40.71%	25	10
Growth - ELA	61.54%	75	46	N/A	N/A	N/A
Growth - Math	64.08%	75	48	N/A	N/A	N/A
Growth of Highest Quartile - ELA	56.79%	12.5	7	N/A	N/A	N/A
Growth of Highest Quartile - Math	70.43%	12.5	9	N/A	N/A	N/A
Growth of Lowest Quartile - ELA	59.36%	12.5	7	N/A	N/A	N/A
Growth of Lowest Quartile - Math	65.05%	12.5	8	N/A	N/A	N/A

DOE Summary:



English Language Arts

- 61.5% of FSMA students met growth targets in English Language Arts, which was greater than the State average (60.92%). From SY 17/18 to SY 18/19 performance regressed from 71.97% to 61.54%
- 56.79% of FSMA students in the highest quartile met growth targets in English Language Arts, which was less than the State average (62.32%). From SY 17/18 to SY 18/19 performance regressed from 71.33% to 56.79%.
- 59.36% of FSMA students in the lowest quartile met growth targets in English Language Arts, which was 3.14% lower than the State average (62.5%). From SY 17/18 to SY 18/19 performance decreased from 66.29% to 59.36 %

Math


- 64.08% of FSMA students met growth targets in math, which 4.98% greater than the State average (59.1%). From SY 17/18 to SY 18/19 performance regressed from 70.63% to 64.08%
- 70.43% of FSMA students in the highest quartile met growth targets in math, which was 8.11% greater than the State average (62.32%). From SY 17/18 to SY 18/19 performance remained consistent with only a slight (1.5%) decrease.
- 65.05% of FSMA students in the lowest quartile met growth targets in math, which was 2.55% greater than the State average (62.5%). From SY 17/18 to SY 18/19 performance improved from 64.87% to 65.05%, respectively.

Q28.School's Academic Progress ratings for all students over the course of the charter term

School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	For a comprehensive response, please use the School Comment Link (https://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib/DE01922744/Centricity/Domain/368/FS%20Montessori%20Annual%20Report%202017-18.pdf)

Document attached summarizes our ratings over this charter term.

Applicant Evidence :



data over charter term.docx

Uploaded on 9/26/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q29.Expected outcomes for Academic Progress for all students

School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	For a comprehensive response, please use the School Comment Link (https://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib/DE01922744/Centricity/Domain/368/FS%20Montessori%20Annual%20Report%202017-18.pdf)

FSMA's expected outcomes include:

- Tracking students over time and ensuring that individuals/grade level cohorts are showing progress as measured by the number of students meeting or exceeding both the SBAC as well as FSMA specific nationally normed assessments.
- Continue to provide Montessori training for teachers so that students receive an authentic Montessori education. We strongly believe that a Montessori education positively impacts student learning and will lead to positive results on all measures.
- Utilize the MTSS process for reading, math and SEL in order to identify learning needs of individuals as well as overall gaps and use this information to support all students in making positive academic progress.

Q30.Progress measures to track Academic Progress for all students



School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	FSMA reviews our formal and informal data as a team twice throughout the year. We will continue to do this to determine if we are on track to meet our academic progress goals. Montessori, by nature is rooted in observation and assessment. Teachers have been trained to effectively identify who needs additional support and plan accordingly to ensure that every child has the opportunity to meet their greatest potential

At FSMA a range of different data collection tools are used to help track student progress and growth including formal and informal assessments, student work samples, and observations. One of the cornerstones of the Montessori philosophy is using targeted observations to learn about students' strengths and needs. Montessori teachers are trained in observational skills so they can look for specific skills that students are using or confusing so they know the next step in planning for individual student needs. Universal screeners are used three times a year with all students as the backbone of our MTSS process. (Please see attached MTSS document.) When students fall below an expected benchmark level, a plan is created for them in our tiered system of supports. Using research-based instruction, teachers monitor their progress every 1-2 weeks to look for adequate progress. In addition, teachers used informal assessments and work samples matched against standards to track progress.

Applicant Evidence :



Uploaded on 9/9/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q31. The table above lists the school's available Academic Progress ratings. Respond to the following questions.

a. Based on the school's Academic Progress ratings for all students over the course of the charter term, discuss the school's current performance and provide at least three explanations/root causes (positive and negative) for the results. (Note: We invite the school to provide information about all students including those below, at and above proficiency.)

Root causes for FSMA's academic performance over the course of the charter term.

- The global pandemic impacted all schools. Statewide data shows decreases and FSMA's data is similar in trend to the statewide data. FSMA was impacted in a unique way as our curriculum is meant to be hands-on, individualized and includes students and teachers working closely together. While we were able to create a format that worked, Montessori learning is not meant to be virtual and thus, the format of the teaching/learning over the past years had an impact on our overall ratings.
- Although there was a negative impact on our overall scores, the Montessori approach allowed us to make progress in some areas and show stronger gains than many schools around us. FSMA educators continued to use the Montessori curriculum and teaching methodology, even when virtual, to ensure all children were receiving an authentic Montessori education.
- FSMA students receive an individualized education. Students are taught at the academic level they are ready for. FSMA has two teachers in each K - 6 classroom during all instructional time. The instructional model greatly impacts student learning. Most academic lessons are taught in a small group or 1 on 1 and Montessori is based on mastery, so students move on when they are ready. The Montessori approach focuses on rigor, relevance, mastery and flexibility and includes extended learning periods, teachers as guides, and the use of Montessori materials. This approach is what makes FSMA unique and drives all teaching and learning which thus impacts all outcomes.

Q32.b. Looking ahead, what are the school's expected outcomes for Academic Progress for all students and what steps will the school take to achieve them?

FSMA's expected outcomes and plans for ensuring students achieve them include:

- Tracking students over time and ensuring that individuals/grade level cohorts are showing progress as measured by the number of students meeting or exceeding both the SBAC as well as FSMA specific nationally normed assessments.
- Continue to provide Montessori training for teachers so that students receive an authentic Montessori education. We strongly believe that a Montessori education positively impacts student learning and will lead to positive results on all measures.
- Utilize the MTSS process for reading, math and SEL in order to identify learning needs of individuals as well as overall gaps and use this information to support all students in making positive academic progress.

Our current processes are showing positive progress in most areas and thus we will continue to do what we are doing but also, review and evaluate each peice throughout the year to identify opportunities for growth. FSMA does a school-wide data review twice a year, presents our data to the board annually, and conducts classroom assessment reviews quarterly. There are multiple ways we assess our effectiveness and then can address both in the moment and for the long-term.



Q33.c. Describe how the school will measure progress to determine whether the school is on track to meet expected Academic Progress outcomes for all students.

FSMA tracks progress in multiple ways:

- SBAC data provides an overall picture and is analyzed in multiple ways (as seen in each year's Data Summary).
- MTSS process collects data and measures progress multiple times throughout the year in ELA/Math/SEL. These assessments are nationally normed and reviewed by the MTSS team to identify what is needed to ensure students are making progress.
- Classroom assessments are reviewed by teams and reteaching, planning, adjustments are made.
- FSMA Board reviews school-wide data each year and asks questions, make suggestions, etc.

Overall, there are multiple ways we are measuring progress and using the data throughout the year to make decisions that increase the likelihood that all students will meet their goals.

2.4. School Quality/ Student Success

Metric	2018-2019			2021-2022		
	Value	Points	Points Earned	Value	Points	Points Earned
On-Track Attendance	95.54%	50	48	80.00%	50	40
Proficiency - Science	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Proficiency - Social Studies	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

DOE Summary:
In SY 17-18 and SY 18-19, 95% of FSMA students demonstrated on-track attendance, which was 6.1% higher than the State average (87.55%). The State assessments for social studies and science were not administered in SY 17/18 and SY 18/19.

Q34.School's School Quality/ Student Success ratings over the course of charter term

School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	FSMA has strong attendance metrics. One reason we believe this occurs is that our classrooms are rooted in being joyful communities. Students want to be at school and value the time spent in their classroom each day.

Over our charter term, FSMA has had strong attendance rates. We believe that in creating a school where children want to be and by providing transportation throughout New Castle County, positively impacts our attendance rates. When families have had attendance concerns, we have met with them to identify any challenges and have worked with them to resolve any issues that are impacting their attendance.

Q35.Expected outcomes for School Quality/ Student Success

School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
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School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	FSMA expects to continue to have strong attendance metrics.

FSMA's data is not complete due to the Covid-19 pandemic. As we continue to track data this year and in future years, we expect to have strong outcomes in regard to school quality/student success as we have historically had positive data in this area.

Q36. Progress measures to track School Quality/ Student Success

School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	FSMA will continually monitor our attendance reports and work with families who do not have the same positive attendance record/history to identify barriers and support as needed.

FSMA will continue to monitor our internal attendance reports. We review data monthly to determine if there are any student cases we should focus on. When there are student cases, we follow our procedures and state regulations to work with families and address any challenges or barriers.

Q37. The table above lists the school's available School Quality/ Student Success ratings. Respond to the following questions.

a. Based on the school's School Quality/ Student Success ratings for all students over the course of the charter term, discuss the school's current performance and provide at least three explanations/root causes (positive and negative) for the results. (Note: We invite the school to provide information about all students including those below, at and above proficiency.)

While FSMA's does not have overall ratings in the chart above, we can identify the rationale for our performance.

In regard to our school attendance, our goal is to have children in school. We have a robust attendance policy and we education our families on this policy in a variety of ways. As attendance issues come up, we meet with families to determine the root cause and identify solutions.

Science and Social Studies proficiency is at the heart of a Montessori program. Our Great Lessons, integrated curriculum and early focus on many rich concepts is something that we ensure is a part of our program as early as Kindergarten. We refer to this as our Cultural Curriculum and our teachers work hard to ensure that not only the standards are covered but also Montessori standards that go much deeper than what is required.

Montessori overall is another reason for our positive School Quality/Student Success data. It creates an inclusive environment where children want to be and this not only increases attendance but the format of the curriculum greatly impacts engagement in a positive way.

Q38.b. Looking ahead, what are the school's expected outcomes for School Quality/ Student Success for all students and what steps will the school take to achieve them?

FSMA will continue to create a community feel that is inclusive and welcoming. This is a core component of a Montessori school and something that positively impacts all aspects of the school day.

One specific step that FSMA has taken and will continue to take is to offer Montessori training to all interested staff and host the training on-site. We strongly believe that Montessori increases engagement and learning and thus, the more teachers we have fully trained, the stronger the impact. Along these lines, FSMA will continue to recruit and retain strong teachers as we recognize that the work they do in their classrooms is essential to student attendance.

FSMA expects to continue to have strong attendance data (over 90%) and increase the number of staff trained in Montessori.

Q39.c. Describe how the school will measure progress to determine whether the school is on track to meet expected School Quality/ Student Success outcomes for all students.

FSMA will track the number of teachers trained in Montessori and look for an increased overall percentage year after year.

FSMA will continue to review student attendance data and review any individual cases that are identified as areas of concern. When these are identified, we will continue with our process of family meetings and track if those meetings have a positive impact on attendance.

FSMA will continue to review formative and summative data in both science and social studies to determine if our students are making growth and will use this data to identify opportunities for additional training or staff.

2.5. Progress toward English Language Proficiency (ELP)

Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, every school was measured on student "Progress toward English language proficiency (ELP)" This metric is an index calculation that measures the percentage of all current English Learners (ELs) who make annual progress toward ELP as measured by the statewide ELP assessment. ELP is defined as scoring a PL of 5.0 on the statewide ELP assessment. Attainment has been defined in Delaware as a PL of 5.0 and a level in which a student is considered to have met a proficiency level comparable to their native English speaking peers. **Therefore, a PL of 5.0 is considered a student's Attainment Target (AT).**



Metric	2018-2019			2021-2022		
	Value	Points	Points Earned	Value	Points	Points Earned
Progress Toward English Language Proficiency	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

DOE Summary:

Due to COVID-19, all SY 19/20 and SY 20/21 assessment and accountability requirements were waived by the U.S. Department of Education. In SY 17-18 and SY 18/19, FSMA did not have a sufficient number of English learners required to calculate this metric.

Q40. English language proficiency (ELP) ratings over the course charter term

School Comments 2019-2020	<i>Not applicable</i>
School Comments 2019-2020	<i>Not applicable</i>
School Comments 2018-2019	<i>Not applicable</i>

FSMA continues to have low numbers of EL students but does support them as required. FSMA has trained staff to do the assessment and has contracted with EL teachers as needed.

Q41. Expected outcomes for Progress toward English language proficiency (ELP)

School Comments 2020-2021	<i>Not applicable</i>
School Comments 2019-2020	<i>Not applicable</i>
School Comments 2018-2019	<i>Not applicable</i>

FSMA's data is based on a small number of students and thus expected outcomes are student specific.

Q42. Progress measures to track English language proficiency (ELP) outcomes

School Comments 2020-2021	<i>Not applicable</i>
School Comments 2019-2020	<i>Not applicable</i>
School Comments 2018-2019	<i>Not applicable</i>

N/A

Q43. The table above lists the school's available English language proficiency (ELP) ratings. Respond to the following questions.

a. Based on the school's English language proficiency (ELP) ratings for all students over the course of the charter term, discuss the school's current performance and provide at least three explanations/root causes (positive and negative) for the results. (Note: We invite the school to provide information about all students including those below, at and above proficiency.)

FSMA does has N/A in the ELP table above due to the low enrollment of English Language Learners. At the end of the 2022 school year we had 3 students in the program. Due to the low numbers, it is difficult to make generalizations about the program. Currently all 3 of those students have received 1:1 instruction in a pull out model, as well as having the EL instructor work in collaboration with the classroom teachers. 2 of the students have shown progress from prior years, and the other student took the assessment for the first time this year.



Q44.b. Looking ahead, what are the school's expected outcomes for English language proficiency (ELP) for all students and what steps will the school take to achieve them?

FSMA screens all students for EL proficiency and creates a personalized plan for each student who is identified as an English Learner. Goals are set for each student, and progress is reviewed regularly to ensure that adequate instruction is given. FSMA expects students to meet their growth targets each year.

Q45.c. Describe how the school will measure progress to determine whether the school is on track to meet expected English language proficiency (ELP) outcomes for all students.

The Education Director, EL Teacher, and classroom teachers review each student's ELP outcome and growth. If adequate growth is not made, a change in the program is made so that the student reaches an adequate growth measure the following year.



3. Organizational Performance

The Organizational Performance Framework reflects expectations the charter school is required to meet through state and federal law and the charter performance agreement, and seeks to provide information regarding these key questions:

- Is the school organizationally sound and well operated?
- Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations and sound public stewardship?
- Is the school meeting its obligations and expectations for appropriate access, education, support services, and outcomes for students with disabilities?

3.1. Mission Specific Goal(s)

Is the school faithful to its mission as defined in its current charter, including approved mission-specific academic goals if applicable?

Mission	Measure	Meets Standard
To create successful, contributing, life-long learners in a Montessori public educational program for students in Kindergarten through 8th grade.	FSMA is intent on being an authentic Montessori school as measured by:	(1) Every classroom (100%) has a Montessori certified teacher who will complete the training process during the current school year; (2) Classrooms are multi-age (more than one grade level grouped together); (3) Every classroom has 80-100% if the essential materials (essential materials were determined by Montessori teachers prior to our opening); (4) The daily schedule incorporates at least one 2-hour work period into each day for every classroom.

DOE Summary:

FSMA has earned a "Meets Standard" rating for its mission-specific goal for the past four years of its current charter term.

Q46. Rate the school's performance according to the criteria established by the school for its mission specific goal(s).


School Comments 2020-2021	All data to support FSMA's meeting mission specific goals has been submitted to the charter office.
School Comments 2019-2020	FSMA has met all of the above criteria and submitted evidence to the Delaware Department of Education.
School Comments 2018-2019	FSMA has met all of the above criteria and submitted evidence to the Delaware Department of Education.

FSMA believes it is essential that our school utilizes the Montessori learning model with authenticity and fidelity. Each year, FSMA submits evidence of how we meet the foundational principles of Montessori. This includes teacher training documentation, class schedules, material lists, etc. In order to show our faithfulness to our Montessori mission on a deeper level, FSMA is submitting a self-reflection on the National Center for Montessori in the Public Sector's Essential Elements Rubric. This shows that FSMA is exemplary or satisfactory in our adherence to the 25 standards characterizing high fidelity Montessori implementation in the public sector.

Q47. Provide as Appendix 1 the results (data source) of the school's mission specific goal(s). Remember not to include any personally identifiable information (PII).

Upload Required File Type: pdf, excel, word Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 30

Applicant Evidence :


essential elements rubric.pdf

Uploaded on 6/17/2022 by Courtney Fox

3.2. Organizational Performance

Note: Please utilize the hyperlink in this sentence for more information about the Organizational Performance Framework.

SUMMARY AND OVERALL RATING



Year	Education Program				Governance & Reporting			Students & Staff			OVERALL RATING
	Mission Fidelity	Applicable State & Federal Requirements	Students with Disabilities	English learners	Governance & Public Stewardship	Oversight of School Management	Reporting Requirements	Students Rights	Req. on Teacher Certification & Hiring Staff	Facilities, Transportation, Health & Safety	
Year	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	3a	3b	4a	OVERALL RATING
2018-2019	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard
2019-2020	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard
2020-2021	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard
2021-2022	M	M	AS	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard

DOE Summary:

FSMA has achieved the rating of "Meets Standards" for all corresponding measures for the past four years of its charter term.

Q48. School's organizational performance over the current charter term

School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
School Comments 2019-2020	FSMA continues to have strong operational processes and procedures in place to ensure compliance with all requirements.
School Comments 2018-2019	FSMA met the standard in all areas.

FSMA's Organizational Performance is due to the strong operational standards that have been in place during our charter term. FSMA will continue with our current practices to ensure our future performance is as strong as our past performance.

It is important to note that the FSMA Governing Board is active in all operations and has a high standard for their compliance with all board related topics.

Q49. Changes to organizational practices that the school has implemented to improve the school's organizational outcomes

School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable



School Comments 2018-2019	Not applicable
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N/A

Q50. Indicator measure where school did not meet standard or is approaching standard

School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	Not applicable

N/A

Q51. Describe the school's organizational performance over the current charter term. (This section is for the school to address any overall rating where the school has not met standards. The school will be able to address individual metrics in the sections below.)

N/A

Q52. Identify changes to organizational practices that the school has implemented to improve the school's organizational outcomes.

Our general organizational practices and procedures have remained consistent during this charter terms. However, as FSMA has grown, we have added positions that make sense for our organization. Key positions we have added since our last renewal include a Director of Special Education, Student Support Specialist, and a Business Manager. These positions have each tightened procedures and protocols, created new programs, and have enhanced our school operations overall.

Q53. Address any measure where school did not meet standard or is approaching standard.

N/A

Q54. Performance Agreement Organizational Performance Expectations FSMA's overall organizational rating is "Meets". By September of 2022 our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of meets as measured by the Organization Framework. Each year we will be on track to demonstrate performance aligned with those organizational performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

DOE Summary:
FSMA has earned overall ratings of "Meets Standard" for the past four years of its current charter term.

School Comments 2020-2021	FSMA is on track to meet our goals as we have consistently received "meets" or "exceeds" on the above measures.
School Comments 2019-2020	FSMA has met our goal and continues to have strong operational performance in all areas.
School Comments 2018-2019	FSMA has met the standard each year and thus in accordance with our Performance Agreement. This standard will continue as FSMA has strong processes and procedures set up to ensure all of our Financial obligations are met.

Discuss the school's organizational performance based on its approved Performance Agreement.

FSMA's has consistently met or exceeding the standard on the organization performance framework. We ensure that strong operational processes are in place and create timelines and checklists to ensure we are compliant with all requirements. FSMA's administration and governing board work closely to ensure that we are meeting the standards for our educational program, governance and reporting, and students/staff expectations.

3.3. Educational Program



Q55. Describe any changes to the education program or curricula the Board plans to make prior to the renewal.

N/A

Q56. As appendices, provide the following documents as evidence of curriculum alignment to Delaware Content Standards: Appendix 2 Provide an electronic copy of curricula including scope and sequence documents, units, assessments and content covered per core content area (Mathematics, English Language Arts, Social Studies, Science, Visual/Performing Arts, World Languages, Health and Physical Education) for each grade level the school serves. The documents should demonstrate clear alignment with the Delaware Content Standards (including Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics, and Next Generation Science Standards) in all content areas. Evidence to establish adherence to the state's expectations regarding **ELA standards and instruction** through the grade bands should include the following:

- Evidence of the adoption of a high quality instructional resources as defined by EdReports.org., which includes the scope and sequence documents showing units of study with their corresponding anchor texts and culminating tasks with the intended pacing for each grade/course; **OR** curricular resources/documents that meet the criteria of the appropriate IMET from achievethecore.org, including additional resources selected to support areas where the curriculum materials were weak per EdReports.org (yellow or red). Scope and sequence documents must include:
 - featured anchor texts of knowledge building units around topics of inquiry/exploration and intended pacing for each grade/course. These should reflect the distribution of text types and genres required by the standards as outlined in Appendix B.
 - a set of targeted grade-level CCSS ELA/Literacy standards for each unit.
 - alignment to the foundational reading skills and intended pacing for each grade must be included for grades K-5.
- Sample learning experiences (lesson/unit) and assessments with their corresponding rubrics.
- Opportunities provided and embedded within curriculum for professional learning and strategic use of curricular resources.
- In addition, there needs to be a well-articulated academic MTSS process for reading that includes screening, diagnostics, evidence-based interventions, and progress monitoring.
- For grades 9-12, English course sequences/programs of study should be provided. No curricular documents are required for Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate SL or HL, or dual enrollment courses.

Evidence to establish adherence to the state's expectations regarding **Health Education standards and instruction** in grades K-8 and 1/2 credit in high school (grades 9-12) should include the following:

- Curriculum map or scope and sequence showing the National Health Education Standards/Delaware State Standards targeted and attention to the specific learning concepts for each grade.
- One sample document outlining adherence to the hours requirements for specific health concepts in Regulation 551.
- One sample assessment and accompanying scoring rubric aligned to state standards – intended to provide evidence of student achievement of standards – for each grade level in the school.

Evidence to establish adherence to the state's expectations regarding **Math standards and instruction** through the grade bands should include the following:

- Evidence of the adoption of a high quality, standards aligned instructional resource as defined by EdReports.org. This includes the scope and sequence documents showing alignment to standards and intended pacing for each grade/course; **OR** curricular resources/documents that meet the criteria of the appropriate IMET from achievethecore.org including additional resources selected to support areas where the curriculum materials were weak per EdReports.org (yellow or red). Scope and sequence documents showing alignment to standards and intended pacing for each grade/course must be included in this documentation.
- Sample learning experiences (lesson/unit) and assessments
- Opportunities provided and embedded within the curriculum for professional learning and strategic use of curricular resources.
- In addition, there needs to be a well-articulated academic MTSS process for mathematics that includes screening, diagnostics, evidence-based interventions, and progress monitoring.
- Additionally, for grades 9-12, Mathematics course sequences/programs of study should be provided. No curricular documents are required for Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate SL or HL, or dual enrollment courses.

Evidence to establish adherence to the state's expectations regarding **Physical Education standards and instruction** in grades K-8 and 1 credit in high school (grades 9-12) should include the following:

- Curriculum map or scope and sequence showing alignment to the Delaware physical education standards and grade level expectations.
- One sample assessment and accompanying scoring rubric aligned to state standards – intended to provide evidence of student achievement of standards –for each grade level in the school (example: state physical fitness assessment data and programming provided by the Delaware Department of Education)
- No curricular documents are required for elective Physical Education courses, which should not exceed 1 credit to fulfill graduation requirements.

Evidence to establish adherence to the state's expectations regarding **Social Studies standards and instruction** through the grade bands should include the following:

- Scope and sequence showing standards targeted and major topics for each grade/course in the school.
- One sample assessment aligned to state standards – intended to provide evidence of student achievement of standards - for each grade/course in the school.
- No curricular documents are required for AP, IB, or dual enrollment courses.
- Schedule of time allotted for social studies instruction in each grade



Evidence to establish adherence to the state’s expectations regarding **Science standards and instruction** through the grade bands should include the following:

- Evidence of the adoption of a high-quality instructional resource as defined by EdReports.org or curricular resources that meet the criteria of the EQulP rubric from nextgenscience.org, reviewed by an external evaluator that is not the materials publisher.
- The LEA must provide a scope and sequence for each grade level that includes the unit topic, the unit phenomenon, standards that are covered in that unit, what the students do and figuring out in the unit, and include a lesson and sample assessment from K-2, 3-5, 6-8, 9-12, depending on the structure of the school.
- Schedule of time allotted for science instruction in each grade
- A Response to the following questions:
 - What is the professional development plan to support continuous three-dimensional learning along with your instructional resources?
 - Describe how you ensure accessibility for all students in science.
 - Describe how your administrators are monitoring science instruction to ensure the shifts in science are occurring.

Evidence to establish adherence to the state’s expectations regarding **Visual/ Performing Arts standards and instruction** through the grade bands should include the following:


- Scope and sequence showing National Core Arts Standards/Delaware State Standards targeted and major topics for each grade/course in the school.
- One sample assessment and rubrics aligned to state (NCAS) standards – intended to provide evidence of student achievement of standards - for each grade/course in the school.
- Schedule of time allotted for arts instruction in each grade band.
- No curricular documents are required for AP, IB.

Evidence to establish adherence to the state’s expectations regarding **World Languages standards and instruction** in grades 9-12 should include the following:

- Curriculum map or scope and sequence showing the targeted Delaware World-Ready Standards for Learning Languages, state proficiency targets and major learning contexts (themes) for each level of language instruction.
- One sample assessment and accompanying scoring rubric from one learning context–intended to provide evidence of student growth in proficiency–for each level of language instruction.
- No curricular documents are required for AP, IB.

Upload Required File Type: pdf, image, excel, word, text Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 100

Applicant Evidence :



curriculum statement of completion.d...

Uploaded on 7/29/2022 by Courtney Fox

3.4. At-risk students, Students with Disabilities, and English Language Learners

	Education Program			
	Mission Fidelity	Applicable State & Federal Requirements	Students with Disabilities	English learners
Year	1a	1b	1c	1d
2018-2019	M	M	M	M
2019-2020	M	M	M	M
2020-2021	M	M	M	M
2021-2022	M	M	AS	M



Q57.If applicable, describe any changes or enhancements the school has made based on findings from audits, investigations, or other administrative proceedings related to at-risk students, students with disabilities, or English Language Learners.

N/A

Q58.Describe any changes or enhancements to the process by which at-risk students are identified and the evidence that the school was able to provide the right resources and services for these students.

FSMA created a Director of Special Education position in 2019 to have oversight of our programming for students with disabilities.

For the 2021-2022, FSMA revised what used to be called our Response to Intervention/Student Support System process. The DDOE passed regulation 14 DE Admin. Code 508 - Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS), and we spent the summer of 2021 reviewing and revising our existing procedures and policies to create an enhanced MTSS system. We conducted an assessment of our existing Tier 1 (Universal instruction), Tier 2 (Targeted), and Tier 3 (Intensive) framework, and determined areas the leadership team felt was working and identified areas of need. The leadership team consisted of a variety of staff including administration, general education teachers, special education teachers, counselors, and our school psychologist. The area of improvement that made the biggest impact was implementing a Universal Screener that provided data regarding students Social-Emotional and Behavioral needs. After researching several screening tools, we chose one that focused on eight key social and emotional competencies aligned with CASEL standards and that was strength based. Teachers were asked to complete the screener and if a student showed up at risk, they were directed to conduct the next level of assessment which provided more specific areas of need. The tool has intervention strategies that can be used classroom wide, if several students were identified with similar needs in a particular classroom, as well as in small groups or on an individual basis.

We are now able to look at each student to identify academic, behavioral and social emotional needs in a more systematic way and implementing intervention for those students who are struggling and need additional support prior to making referral for a special education evaluation.

Q59.Describe any changes or enhancements to the process by which English Language Learners are identified and the evidence that the school was able to provide the right resources and services for these students.

Prior to the 2021-2022 SY, First State Montessori Academy (FSMA), revised what used to be called our Response to Intervention/Student Support System process. The DDOE passed regulation 14 DE Admin. Code 508 - Multi-tiered System of Support (MTSS), which called for expanding the framework that schools use to identify struggling learners. FSMA created a leadership team and spent the summer of 2021 reviewing and revising our existing policies and procedures to create an enhanced MTSS system. The leadership team consisted of a variety of staff including administration, general education teachers, special education teachers, counselors, and our school psychologist. We conducted an assessment of our existing Tier 1 (Universal instruction), Tier 2 (Targeted), and Tier 3 (Intensive) framework, and determined areas that were working and identified areas of need. The area of improvement that made the biggest impact for at-risk students was implementing a Universal Screener that provided data regarding students Social-Emotional and Behavioral needs. After researching several screening tools, we chose one that focused on eight key social and emotional competencies aligned with CASEL standards and that was strength based called the Devereux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA).

Teachers are asked to complete the screener, three times a year, and if a student shows up at-risk, they are directed to conduct the next level of assessment which provides more specific data related to areas of need. The tool has intervention strategies that can be used classroom wide, if several students are identified with similar needs in a particular classroom, as well as in small groups or on an individual basis.

We are now able to look at each student to identify academic, behavioral and social emotional needs in a more systematic way and implement intervention for those students who are struggling and need additional support prior to making referral for a special education evaluation.

FSMA uses MTSS to screen all students and aims to address academic and behavioral needs by intervening as early as possible.

Q60.Describe any changes or enhancements to the process by which students with disabilities are identified and the evidence that the school was able to provide the right resources and services for these students.



Similar to the response to Q59, FSMA revised our student support system, now called MTSS, and enhanced our ability to identify students with social/emotional and behavioral needs as well as in the areas of listening comprehension and oral expression.

As the MTSS process was revised, we also enhanced the referral system in order to provide teachers with a clear procedure for referring students. After interventions are implemented, the MTSS team is able to make a data driven decision whether or not to make a referral for a special education evaluation.

In addition, if a current special education student needs support in an area not already identified on their IEP, they are able to receive additional intervention through the MTSS process. Progress monitoring data is collected and if the student is not making sufficient progress after moving into Tier 3, the student's IEP team is able to make a data driven decision regarding adding a goal, in that academic area, to the student's IEP.

Lastly, we also enhanced our MTSS system to include a two prong screening system for oral expression and listening comprehension because they are essential to academic achievement in all content areas. The initial screening is conducted by the teacher(s), then our speech language pathologist conducts a second more specific screening to determine whether or not intervention will be provided. Those additional screenings are the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals® – Fifth Edition Screening Test, language sampling, and a speech sampling. If the students does not pass the second screening, then intervention is provided, in small groups, one time a week for 20 minutes, using Story Champs, which is a Tier 2 oral language intervention. The interventionist also provides consultation with the teachers in order for them to enhance the Tier 1 instruction within the classroom.

There were 36 students referred for a screening:

-47% of those students were ruled out by the secondary screening

-53% received Tier 2 intervention

-27% of students who received Tier 2/Tier 3 interventions were referred for a full speech/language evaluation

-80% of those students qualified to receive school based speech language services.

-88% of students who were not referred for a full evaluation made progress based on their STAR reading standardized assessment results.

3.5. Governance and Reporting Requirements

	Governance & Reporting		
	Governance & Public Stewardship	Oversight of School Management	Reporting Requirements
Year	2a	2b	2c
2018-2019	M	M	M
2019-2020	M	M	M
2020-2021	M	M	M
2021-2022	M	M	M

Q61. Provide information regarding how the Board of Trustees effectively evaluates the School Leader(s), including any policies or procedures related to such evaluation(s).

FSMA Board uses the DPAS for Administrators model to evaluate the Head of School. Similarly, the Head of School evaluates the other administrators using this process as well.

Q62. Provide information regarding how the Board of Trustees effectively evaluates its own success. Include examples of any corrective actions, if applicable, the Board of Trustees implemented as a result of its evaluation.



The First State Montessori Academy Board of Directors consistently evaluates our success on a regular basis. We are a dedicated and inquisitive team who each have a passion to help support and advance the mission and philosophy of FSMA. Examples of processes are outlined below:

- One on one meetings are conducted between the board chair and head of school to discuss performance (individual and school), relevant school updates, what's working well, and identify areas of opportunity or where additional support may be needed. These meetings are occurring, at minimum, monthly – additionally, if needed.
- One on one meetings are conducted by the board chair with all board members. This allows board members to share what is working well, opportunities for improvement, ideas, committee updates, requests for new assignments, etc. It is important that each board member feels that the time spent is meaningful and impactful. These meetings are conducted quarterly, with additional sessions scheduled as needed.
- Monthly board meetings include robust discussion, head of school updates, and applicable guest speakers to aid in evaluating our progress against our goals. If any opportunities are identified, immediate action is taken, in partnership with the head of school, to implement.
 - An example of this is the 27 pay process for the 2022-2023 school year
 - Our committee structure allows us to easily identify opportunities for improvement in an ongoing manner. A few examples of this include:
 - Development Strategies: To streamline and create a more efficient process for grant requests, annual fund outreach efforts, and other development opportunities, the Development committee met with the Head of School to create a calendar to document and assign ownership to these tasks.
 - Board Member Onboarding: The Governance committee identified a gap in our board member interviewing and onboarding processes. The group came together to develop and implement a new recruit-to-onboard strategy to create a better candidate experience, while implementing an inclusive application process that removed potential barriers of entry.
 - Improved Financial Narratives: The board identified an opportunity improve the format of the or the monthly financial narrative and worked with our school's business manager to implement. This has resulted in a more effective overview of the information and makes it easier to see month over month progress.
 - In late 2022, the board is excited to introduce anonymous board member surveying to establish quantifiable, data-driven benchmarks around member preparedness, efficacy, and general sentiment.

Q63. Identify the school's plan to ensure the effectiveness of its Board of Trustees, including governance training and new member induction.

The First State Montessori Academy Board of Directors has a multi-step process in place to recruit, interview, and onboard new board members. The steps are outlined below:

Recruit

Potential candidates can come to the board through a variety of ways – applying via our school website, board member outreach, teacher outreach, parent solicitation, etc.

Interview

1. Interested candidates are asked to complete an online application
2. Upon receipt, a tour of FSMA is scheduled with the candidate and includes the board chair, head of school, and at least one member of the Governance Committee
3. Following the tour, an interview is conducted which includes members of the Governance Committee, member(s) of the Executive Committee and an optional invitation to the head of school
4. All feedback is shared with the full Board and put to a vote at the next board meeting

Onboard

1. Once a new board member is voted to join the board, a welcome call is conducted with the board chair
2. A letter and new board member package is sent from the board secretary outlining required training, background check process and any other applicable information (ie. Contact information, board calendar, bylaws, etc...)
3. New board members are asked to select at least one committee to support
4. Regular check-ins are conducted during the onboarding process

FSMA continues to work with the Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement (DANA) for governance training which is conducted one time every three years. All board members have completed governance training, facilitated by DANA, as of September 2022.

Q64. Describe the school's process for succession planning including identification, development and retention of school leaders.

FSMA was built by an exceptional group of leaders who have a passion for Montessori education and making it accessible to children in Delaware. Our Head of School has an incredible team and staff, each with a love for our school, our children, and our community and with a shared goal and vision of FSMA providing Montessori education in the City of Wilmington for years and years to come.

Our staff invests in their collective development through furthering their education, certificate programs, and by attending the American Montessori Conference on an annual basis. We have cross-trained our administrative team to be able to support one another in all areas to reduce single point of failure. Should immediate/unforeseen succession be necessary, our Director of Education, Liz Madden, would assume Head of School duties until a successor is identified.

Q65. Share how the Board supports the school. Speak to the Board's involvement in events, operations, and fundraising activities.



The FSMA board members support the school through time, talent, and treasure.

- **Time:** Board members are asked to attend all board meetings, board events inclusive of training and strategic planning, as well as serving on at least one committee. Board members are also asked to attend schoolwide events, when they are able, to support FSMA such as 8th grade graduation, first day of school and Happy Hearts.
- **Talent:** Our board brings a variety of experience and expertise such as legal, strategy implementation, talent development, change management, nonprofit development, nonprofit leadership, and education policy. Additionally, each board member has a passion for FSMA and Montessori education. Board members volunteer additional time to support committee work such as a finance, governance, and development. Lastly, board members often offer their support in other ways such as supporting the PTO, photographing events, helping to set up or clean up events, etc.
- **Treasure:** Board members are asked to contribute financially to support FSMA. This can be done in a variety of ways such as participating in the DoMore24 fundraiser, sharing opportunities within their networks to support FSMA, standalone donations.

Q66. Appendix 3: Current Organizational Chart

Upload Required File Type: pdf, image, excel, word Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 10

Applicant Evidence :



organizational chart 2022.docx


Uploaded on 6/24/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q67. Complete/Update the Board Financial and Governance table (see Resources) with the necessary information.

- In accordance with Del. 14 §512 (15), the school shall have a satisfactory plan to ensure the effectiveness of its board of trustees, including governance trainings conducted for any new board members and at a minimum of once every 3 years.
- Please list only the most recent training date.


Upload Required File Type: excel Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 1

Resources



FSMA Board Financial and Governance...

Applicant Evidence :



FSMA Board Financial and Governance...

Uploaded on 6/22/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q68. Board Financial and Governance Members and Training (review the file you uploaded above)

DOE Summary:
Avery Stewart is the only current board member in need of Board Governance and Financial training. This has been noted above by the school.

School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	FSMA's Board went through governance training in the summer of 2019.

N/A

Q69. Complete/Update the Citizen Budget Oversight Committee Membership and Training table (see Resources) and upload your finished copy here.

Upload Required File Type: excel Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 1


Resources



FSMA CBOC.xlsx



Applicant Evidence :


cboct training doc.docx

Uploaded on 6/21/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q70. Citizen Budget Oversight Committee Membership & Trainings (review the file you uploaded above)

DOE Summary:
All CBOC members at FSMA are compliant with their required financial training.


School Comments 2020-2021	The school was not required to provide a response to this information.
School Comments 2019-2020	The school was not required to provide a response to this information.
School Comments 2018-2019	The school was not required to provide a response to this information.

N/A

Q71. Appendix 4: Board Governance Training Certificates and/or Documentation

Upload Required File Type: pdf, image, excel, word, text Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 50

Applicant Evidence :


FSMA Board Training Certification.pdf

Uploaded on 9/22/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q72. Appendix 5: Board member and school leader succession plans

Upload Required File Type: pdf, image, excel, word, text Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 10

Applicant Evidence :



Succession Plan.docx

Uploaded on 9/29/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q73. Appendix 6: Current board bylaws

Upload Required File Type: pdf, excel, word Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 10

Applicant Evidence :


FSMA Bylaws – May 28 2022 amended ...

Uploaded on 9/22/2022 by Courtney Fox

3.6. Students, Employees and School Environment



Governance & Reporting			
	Governance & Public Stewardship	Oversight of School Management	Reporting Requirements
Year	2a	2b	2c
2018-2019	M	M	M
2019-2020	M	M	M
2020-2021	M	M	M
2021-2022	M	M	M

Q74. Provide information about any metric where the school did not meet standards including how the school addressed this deficiency.

N/A

Q75. Provide information about the best practices the school uses to meet standards in the above noted areas.

FSMA has a strong team that is well versed in all compliance activities. FSMA approaches all compliance items with a team approach, ensuring that more than one person understands the expectations and procedures that must be followed. FSMA allows has created a timeline of compliance items to ensure that we are timely with our deadlines. From the start, we made sure that our administration understood all processes and procedures so that we could not only staff them appropriately but also so that we would understand the tasks and responsibilities associated with each operational area.

FSMA also works closely with the other charter schools and has relationships with many districts/schools. We participate in weekly School Leader meetings to ensure that we are on track with any upcoming expectations and that we are taking advantage of any opportunities. FSMA works with other charter schools to create programs, ensure compliance, refine procedures, etc. We share resources and collaborate often when any new regulations or requirements come up. FSMA is a part of a larger team of schools that help each other stay on track and in compliance.

FSMA has utilized outside consultants for areas that we feel needed an experienced person. For example, since we opened, we have contracted with a Business Manager who has experience in both the district and charter world. This person has been able to guide our financial and human resources related decisions and has been an invaluable resource. FSMA is committed to finding the right people and/or resources and is comfortable outsourcing when necessary to ensure we are functioning at a high level with experienced personnel.

Q76. Appendix 7: Please upload an up-to-date Certificate of Occupancy

Upload Required File Type: pdf, image, excel, word, text Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 10

Applicant Evidence :

1376_001.pdf

Uploaded on 9/6/2022 by **Stephany Pachowka**



Q77. Appendix 8: Please upload an up-to-date Fire Inspection Certificate

Upload Required File Type: pdf, image, excel, word, text Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 10

Applicant Evidence :

12061340 - First State Montessori Acad...	First State Montessori Academy SPK A...	First State Montessori 920 - 13246680 -...	First State Montessori Academy SPK A...
Uploaded on 9/13/2022 by Stephany Pachowka	Uploaded on 9/13/2022 by Stephany Pachowka	Uploaded on 9/13/2022 by Stephany Pachowka	Uploaded on 9/13/2022 by Stephany Pachowka
First State Montessori 920 - 13246680 -...	First State Montessori Academy SPK A...	First State Montessori Academy SPK A...	
Uploaded on 9/13/2022 by Stephany Pachowka	Uploaded on 9/13/2022 by Stephany Pachowka	Uploaded on 9/13/2022 by Stephany Pachowka	

Q78. Appendix 9: Please upload an up-to-date Insurance Certificate(s)

Upload Required File Type: pdf, image, excel, word, text Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 10

Applicant Evidence :

First State Montessori Academy COI.pdf
Uploaded on 6/22/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q79. Appendix 10 ERIP: Please upload report for SY20/21 and SY21/22

Upload Required File Type: pdf, image, excel, word, text Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 10

Applicant Evidence :

19-22 Drills.pdf
Uploaded on 6/28/2022 by Courtney Fox

3.7. Teacher Retention

2018-2019			2019-2020			2020-2021			2021-2022		
% of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers ELIGIBLE	% of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers ELIGIBLE	% of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers ELIGIBLE	% of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers ELIGIBLE
85%	35	41	86.7%	39	45	81.3%	26	32	97%	38	39

DOE Summary:

There has been a slight decline in the percentage of teachers retained between SY 19/20 and SY 20/21. Over the four years of FSMA's charter term the average percentage of teachers retained in 86%.



Q80.2021-2022 PERCENT of Teachers RETAINED

97%

Q81.2021-2022 NUMBER of Teachers RETAINED

38

Q82.2021-2022 NUMBER of Teachers ELIGIBLE

39

Q83.School's plans to monitor and minimize teacher attrition rates

<p>School Comments 2020-2021</p>	<p>FSMA has 60 teachers who work in full and part-time capacity. Of this number, 54 remained at FSMA. Our teacher retention rate, when including all teachers, is 90%. Of the teachers who left FSMA the reasons for leaving were- moving out of state (2), retirement (2), and resignation (2). FSMA understands the need to value our teachers and thus our board of directors recently approved a new salary scale that puts FSMA ahead of all charters and all but one district in Delaware. We believe that a positive work environment in conjunction with competitive pay will greatly minimize teacher attrition and attract teachers to FSMA</p>																														
<p>School Comments 2019-2020</p>	<p>FSMA teacher retention rates are typically between 85 – 95%. As a school with different teaching positions, (full time and part time) and a school that requires additional training (Montessori) within 2 years, there is a uniqueness to our teaching positions that impacts our retention rates.</p>																														
<p>School Comments 2018-2019</p>	<p>Teacher Retention Review</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>School Year</th> <th>% Returned</th> <th>N Overall</th> <th>N Returned</th> <th>Statewide Overall</th> <th>Charters Overall</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>15-16</td> <td>84%</td> <td>32</td> <td>27</td> <td>83.4%</td> <td>74%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>16-17</td> <td>85%</td> <td>40</td> <td>24</td> <td>88.8%</td> <td>84.4%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>17-18</td> <td>94%</td> <td>47</td> <td>44</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>18-19</td> <td>91%</td> <td>54</td> <td>49</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	School Year	% Returned	N Overall	N Returned	Statewide Overall	Charters Overall	15-16	84%	32	27	83.4%	74%	16-17	85%	40	24	88.8%	84.4%	17-18	94%	47	44			18-19	91%	54	49		
School Year	% Returned	N Overall	N Returned	Statewide Overall	Charters Overall																										
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17-18	94%	47	44																												
18-19	91%	54	49																												

FSMA reviews teacher retention data each year and presents it to the FSMA Board. We look for information regarding and trends or feedback from staff that can be used to positively impact teacher retention. An example of this is our salary scale that has been updated to be competitive with surrounding districts.

Q84.School's professional development plans support teachers and leadership.

<p>School Comments 2020-2021</p>	<p>FSMA supports the interest of all staff in obtaining their Montessori certification and Responsive Classroom training. FSMA provides funding for teachers to attend these trainings and releases them as need. In addition, FSMA's PTO financially supports sending staff member to the American Montessori Conference each year.</p>
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<p>School Comments 2019-2020</p>	<p>FSMA's Professional Development plan contains 2 constant comprehensive programs – Montessori and Responsive Classroom. All full-time teachers are required to be Montessori certified and part-time teachers are provided the option of completing certification. In addition, ALL staff participate in Responsive Classroom training and are certified at Level 1, with many having additional certifications. FSMA Professional Development Plan Summary: High-quality and ongoing professional development is essential in a school to address the everchanging needs of all learners. Research shows a strong correlation between teachers' instructional strategies and student success and that a teacher's repertoire of classroom strategies depends upon the quality of professional development that the teacher receives. Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all classrooms have a Montessori trained teacher who is also state certified thus having a combination of skills to integrate Montessori and CCSS curriculum • Ensure all classroom teachers are trained in Responsive Classroom • Create opportunities for teachers to learn new differentiation techniques and utilize the expertise of the special education teacher. <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that professional development be extended to anyone who works with teachers to support student achievement. This will require us to identify possible staff and invite them to professional development activities. • Inform staff of professional development plan and goals for the upcoming school year. • Seek opportunities for training both locally and nationally in Montessori, CCSS, Responsive Classroom and other programs that support the individual needs of FSMA students. • Identify substitute teachers who have an alignment of philosophy and hire them so that teachers may attend meetings and professional development during the school day • Create a school calendar that allows teachers to attend the local MTAD conference and the national AMS conference each year.
<p>School Comments 2018-2019</p>	<p>FSMA's Professional Development plan contains 2 constant comprehensive programs – Montessori and Responsive Classroom. All full-time teachers are required to be Montessori certified and part-time teachers are provided the option of completing certification. In addition, ALL staff participate in Responsive Classroom training and are certified at Level 1, with many having additional certifications. FSMA Professional Development Plan Summary: High-quality and ongoing professional development is essential in a school to address the everchanging needs of all learners. Research shows a strong correlation between teachers' instructional strategies and student success and that a teacher's repertoire of classroom strategies depends upon the quality of professional development that the teacher receives. Goals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure all classrooms have a Montessori trained teacher who is also state certified • Ensure all classroom teachers are trained in Responsive Classroom • Create opportunities for teachers to learn new differentiation techniques and utilize the expertise of the special education teacher. <p>Activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that professional development be extended to anyone who works with teachers to support student achievement. This will require us to identify possible staff and invite them to professional development activities. • Inform staff of professional development plan and goals for the upcoming school year. • Seek opportunities for training both locally and nationally in Montessori, CCSS, Responsive Classroom and other programs that support the individual needs of FSMA students. • Identify substitute teachers who have an alignment of philosophy and hire them so that teachers may attend meetings and professional development during the school day • Create a school calendar that allows teachers to attend the local MTAD conference and the national AMS conference each year.

FSMA's Professional Development Plan has been consistent during our charter term (as per comments above). In addition to Montessori and Responsive Classroom being the core of our PD Plan, FSMA provides individualized training for teachers in the areas they choose or are selected for them. This individualized approach to growth mirrors how we approach student growth.

Q85. Review the table above with the school's teacher retention trends. Describe the school's plans to monitor and minimize teacher attrition rates. Provide information about why teachers leave the school.

FSMA staff retention rate is high for full-time staff. FSMA does have some different data for our part-time teachers but often this is because they move into full-time roles at FSMA or somewhere else. We strongly believe that having two teachers in the classroom positively impacts teacher retention. There is collaboration and a true team effort so that no one teacher has to be everything to every child. This allows them to do the things they love and are passionate about which positively impacts morale and thus staff retention.

Montessori teachers have specialized training and while this can be applied to any classroom, there are a limited number of Montessori public schools in Delaware. Teachers who are passionate about public Montessori are much more likely to remain at FSMA as it is one of the only options for a school-wide implementation of the Montessori philosophy. In addition, as a part of their training, Montessori teachers are coached in a collaborative approach that lends itself to working well with others. Because of this, the adults at FSMA are professional and embody a positive adult culture.

When teachers do leave FSMA, it is often for different roles or positions. We find that our staff are highly valued and often recruited by nearby schools for leadership positions.



Q86. Describe how the school's professional development plans have evolved over the course of the charter term to support teachers and leadership.

FSMA's professional development plan has always included two components - Montessori certification and Responsive Classroom training. We continue to expect all teachers to complete these two items in their first few years at FSMA. We have been able to fund more of the training for our staff and offer more opportunities during this charter term.

In addition to our foundational components, Montessori and RC, we have allowed staff to pursue other areas of interest and bring their work back to our staff. One of our strongest areas during this charter term has been the creation of an Anti-Bias, Anti-Racism team (which at times has included over 30 staff members). This committee has attended training, led workshops, created staff book clubs and much more. It has been a strong area of growth for our staff and one that continues to be at the forefront of the work we do each day.

Q87. Describe how the school's completion of educator evaluations has evolved over the course of the charter term.

FSMA has always used DPAS for our educator observations and will continue to do so. We have participated in training, grown our team of evaluators, and continue to stay up to date with our certifications in order to observe and provide feedback to our teachers.

3.8. Closure Requirements

Q88. Describe the school's plan for procedures it will follow in the event of the closure or dissolution of the school. The plan should, at a minimum, address each of the following areas:

- **Current balance of contingency reserve funds to be used to cover accrued expenses including summer pay obligations (identify estimated amount for the 2016-17 school year), final audit (identify estimated cost), and other expenses typically incurred by June but paid in July or thereafter.**
- **If the current contingency reserve balance is insufficient to cover the estimated costs identified above, discuss the school's plan for ensuring the required funds are set aside, including the timeframe for meeting this requirement.**
- **Identification of the individuals responsible for handling the school's final closeout activities after closure or dissolution (i.e., who will process any final payments, coordinate the final audit, etc.).**

The school's current reserve of \$1,452,762.00 is a sufficient amount to cover our summer pay obligations. Summer 2022 pay obligations were \$1,228,295.50. In addition we carried over \$3,659,061.00 in local funds into FY23. This is a sufficient amount to pay any outstanding invoices, salaries, and final audit in the event of a closure or dissolution of the school. FY22 total invoices & purchase orders were \$2,463,378.00. Courtney Fox, head of school, and Stephany Pachowka, business manager, are the individuals that would be handling the school's final closeout activities, payments, and final audit.



4. Financial Performance

4.1. Financial Performance

Note: Please utilize the hyperlink in this sentence for more information about the Financial Performance Framework (<https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2626>).

Financial Performance Framework Ratings	Near Term Indicators				Sustainability Indicators				Financial Management and Oversight	Overall Rating
	Current Ratio	Days Cash	Enrollment Variance	Default, Loan Covenants, & Debt Service Payments	Total Margin	Debt Asset Ratio	Cash Flow	Debt Service Coverage Ratio		
Year	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	2d	3	
2018-2019	M	M	M	M	M	M	AS	N/R	M	Meets Standard
2019-2020	M	M	M	M	M	M	F	N/R	M	Meets Standard
2020-2021	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard
2021-2022										

DOE Summary:

FSMA has received overall ratings of "Meet Standard" in all reporting categories each year since 2017-2018. The only specific indicator that did not meet expectations was 2c-cash flow, which received the rating of AS (Approaching Standard) in 2017-2018 and F (Far Below Standard) 2018-2019.

Q89.School's financial performance over the current charter term

School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	Not applicable

N/A

Q90.Financial practices that the school has implemented to improve the school's financial outcomes

School Comments 2020-2021	In purchasing our buildings, FSMA has been able to positively impact our financial outlook. In addition, FSMA continues to conservatively budget and spend in order to ensure we can meet all of our financial obligations.
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School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	Each year FSMA does a review of our Financial/Accounting procedures and updates as needed. In addition, we have a strong CBOC and finance committee that meets monthly to dig deep into our financials and identify any areas of concern and/ or areas of improvement. In addition, FSMA works closely with our auditing firm to truly understand their findings.

Instituted monthly review of financial performance versus budget with detailed explanation of material variances. Measure expenses versus staff, student, and revenue to ensure efficient expense ratios. reviews key financial metrics vs peers to ensure expenses are in line with both district and charter schools.

Q91. Below is the measure(s) where the school did not meet the standard. You are invited to make a response.

School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	FSMA continues to meet the standards and the only area that was identified is based on planned financial strategy that was implemented this year. FSMA had set the money aside for a large renovation and completed that renovation this year. While at first glance it might appear that our expenditures were greater than our revenue, this was intentional. FSMA did not incur any debt while conducting a costly project due to our prudent spending in the previous year and strong financial planning

N/A

Q92. Describe the school's financial performance over the current charter term. (This section is for the school to address any overall rating where the school has not met standards. The school will be able to address individual metrics in the sections below.)

N/A

Q93. Identify changes to Financial practices that the school has implemented to improve the school's financial outcomes.

The school has come in favorable to budget targets for revenues and expenses during the initial charter term and is in a health financial position. The school was in a strong enough financial position to raise financing and purchase its facilities instead of paying rent.

Q94. Address any measure where the school did not meet the standard or is approaching standard.

N/A

Q95. Performance Agreement FSMA overall financial rating is "Meets". By September 2022, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of "Meets" standard as measured by the Financial Performance Framework. Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate economic viability and achieve our finance performance expectation. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

DOE Summary:
FSMA has made outstanding strides in meeting this goal by consistently achieving this goal each year since 2017-2018.

School Comments 2020-2021	FSMA is on track to meet our goal as we have consistently received "Meets" or "Exceeds" on the above measures.
School Comments 2019-2020	FSMA has met this standard each year and will continue with the same financial oversight to ensure this viability and stability remains over time.
School Comments 2018-2019	FSMA has met the standard each year and will continue with the same financial oversight to ensure this viability and stability remains over time.

N/A

Q96. How the school developed and implemented a corrective action plan in response to audit findings (if applicable)



DOE Summary:
FSMA was not under a corrective action plan during this charter term.

School Comments 2020-2021	Not applicable
School Comments 2019-2020	Not applicable
School Comments 2018-2019	Not applicable

N/A

Q97. Discuss the school's financial performance based on its approved Performance Agreement.

First State Montessori has met all financial performance areas during 2019-2021. On a monthly basis the school monitors budget vs actuals and projects the year end cash flow balance. Thus providing an opportunity to continuously monitor and adjust school activities and expenses to meet the requirements of the bond covenants and retain a positive cash flow. Additionally, our board finance team is very knowledgeable and involved during the budgeting and monitoring processes.

Q98. Describe how the school developed and implemented a corrective action plan in response to audit findings (if applicable).

N/A

Q99. Appendix 11: Upload a Summary of Findings from Independent Audits (if applicable)

Upload Required File Type: pdf, image, excel, word, text Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 10


Applicant Comments :

No findings were found in recent years.

Q100. Appendix 12: Upload a Final Fiscal Year 2022 Revenue & Expenditure Budget Report in the prescribed Department format

Upload Required File Type: pdf, image, excel, word, text Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 10

Applicant Evidence :


Unaudited Financial StatementOperati...

Uploaded on 8/4/2022 by **Stephany Pachowka**

Q101. Appendix 13: Upload an Approved Preliminary Fiscal Year 2023 Budget in the prescribed Department format

Upload Required File Type: pdf, image, excel, word, text Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 10

Applicant Evidence :


Renewal Preliminary Budget.xlsx

Uploaded on 8/25/2022 by **Stephany Pachowka**

Q102. Appendix 14: Upload a Fiscal Year 2022 Audited Financial Statements (if final report is not available, a draft version is acceptable until final version is completed)


Upload Required File Type: pdf, image, excel, word, text Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 10

Applicant Comments :

The FY22 financial audit will be finalized in early October. We will supply a finalized copy once it is completed.



Applicant Evidence :


audit statement.docx

Uploaded on 9/29/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q103. **Appendix 15: Upload A list of all due process settlements (if applicable) and financial impact.**

Upload Required File Type: pdf, image, excel, word, text Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 20

Applicant Evidence :


settlement summary.docx

Uploaded on 6/22/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q104. **If the projected enrollment is increasing or decreasing by 5% or more over the term of the charter, please include a separate written justification for the modification request as well as budget documents reflecting the new enrollment figures.**

N/A



5. Innovation

Q105.School's innovative practice(s) that could be replicated at other schools in Delaware

<p>School Comments 2020-2021</p>	<p>FSMA has fully implemented a Montessori Elementary (ages 6-9) and (ages 9-12) as well Montessori Middle School (ages 12-14). These programs utilize multi- age classrooms and individualized instruction because we know that each child learns at his/her own pace and will be ready for any given lesson on his/her own time, not on the teacher's schedule of lessons. In a mixed-aged class, children can always find peers who are working at their current level. Children normally stay in the same class for two years. With half of the class returning each year, the classroom culture tends to remain quite stable. Also, working in one class for two years allows students to develop a strong sense of community with their classmates and teachers. FSMA has created a unique 6th grade program that transitions students from elementary to middle school by giving them experiences with some of the social and academic components they will encounter in Middle School. FSMA's staffing model is unique. FSMA has 2 certified teachers in every classroom and within that, at least one (and in many cases, both) are Montessori trained and certified staff members. FSMA ensure that every educator is delivering an authentic Montessori education and provides support, guidance and professional development throughout the year. FSMA classrooms are designed with purpose, in alignment with Montessori core values. The prepared environment of the Montessori class is a learning laboratory in which children are allowed to explore, discover, and select their own work. The independence that the children gain is not only empowering on social an emotional basis, but is also intrinsically involved with helping them become comfortable and confident in their ability to master the environment, ask questions, puzzle out the answer, and learn without needing to be "spoon-fed" by an adult. FSMA teachers are trained in the Responsive Classroom Approach. Aligned with Montessori, this training helps teachers respond appropriately to individual student needs both academically and socially. FSMA utilizes this approach in our proactive and reactive approach to discipline to ensure consistency, fairness, and equity for everyone. FSMA's Anti-Bias, Anti-Racism team has not only responded to national current events but has created a curriculum for our staff to use. Each classroom is exploring identity, racism, and other age-appropriate topics.</p>
<p>School Comments 2019-2020</p>	<p>For a comprehensive response, please use the School Comment Link (https://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib/DE01922744/Centricity/domain/368/annualreports/FS%20Montessori%20Annual%20Report%202018-19.pdf)</p>
<p>School Comments 2018-2019</p>	<p>For a comprehensive response, please use the School Comment Link (https://www.doe.k12.de.us/cms/lib/DE01922744/Centricity/domain/368/annualreports/FS%20Montessori%20Annual%20Report%202018-19.pdf)</p>

Describe the school's innovative practice(s) that could be replicated at other schools in Delaware. Please include the data that supports the success of these practice(s).

FSMA continues to utilize the innovative practices listed for the 20-21 school year. As we moved into the current school year, it is important to continue these practices and grow them where possible. FSMA's strongest innovative practice, and what makes us unique is our commitment to providing an authentic Montessori education. We do this through our Montessori Curriculum, Peace Education, Responsive Classroom Practices, Inclusive Focus and dedication to hiring strong, effective educators and providing them with ongoing training in both Montessori and Responsive Classroom.

FSMA is the first public Montessori charter school in Delaware but Montessori exists in the public school system in almost every other state. While public Montessori is not necessarily innovative, having it in Delaware is. In order to do this with integrity and authenticity, while abiding by the regulations and expectations of the Delaware Department of Education, FSMA works alongside other charter schools, districts and with members of the DOE team to ensure we are not only in compliance but always doing all we can to contribute positively to the educational landscape in Delaware.



6. Five-Year Planning

6.1. Projected Enrollment

Q106. Fill out the five-year enrollment chart by grade level (see Resources). Ensure that the chart allows for the natural progression of students from year to year.


- Note: This will become the school's authorized enrollment for the new charter term.
- Note: An increase or decrease in enrollment exceeding 5%, but less than 15%, is considered a minor modification of the school's charter. 14 Del. Admin. C. § 275.9.9.1.4. An increase or decrease in enrollment exceeding 15% is considered a major modification of the school's charter, which requires a review by the Charter School Accountability Committee and the assent of the State Board of Education. See 14 Del. C. § 511(b)(2); 14 Del. Admin. C. § 275.9.8.1.3. As such, if the projected enrollment is increasing or decreasing by 5% or more over the term of the charter, the school is required to submit a Charter Modification Application (<https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/4361>) including budget sheets, and a budget narrative reflecting the new enrollment figures.

Upload Required File Type: excel Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 20

Resources


FSMA Projected Enrollment.xlsx

Applicant Evidence :


FSMA Projected Enrollment.xlsx

Uploaded on 6/21/2022 by Courtney Fox

6.2. The school's plans for the next five years of the charter


(Note: The school's responses to the next 4 questions in this section will be used to populate the Academic Performance section of the school's new Performance Agreement.)

Q107. Explain how the school's Board and School Leadership Team will measure and evaluate the academic progress of individual students, student cohorts, and the school as a whole throughout the school year, at the end of each academic year, and for the term of the charter contract.

The FSMA Administration provides an annual report to the board (an example from 20-21 is attached). This data is presented and reviewed during our June/July board meeting. From this, the board is able to ask questions, provide feedback and help create direction for future data collection and anticipated results. This information is also review with staff and the same feedback is sought to provide future direction and plans. FSMA has done this every year since opening and will continue to do so during the next charter term.

In addition to the full data review, our team will review the goals set for the upcoming charter. Each year, the goals will be reviewed and plans will be evaluated to see if they are being effective. The goals and plans are attached in question 108.

Applicant Evidence :



data summary 2022.docx

Uploaded on 9/27/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q108. Outline the clearly measurable annual performance status and growth goals that the school will set over the course of the next charter term in order to monitor and evaluate its progress accelerating student achievement. Include information about proposed school's student performance goals and the DSSF.

See attached document

Applicant Evidence :


5 year plan and goals.docx

Uploaded on 9/29/2022 by Courtney Fox



Q109. Describe the student performance standards for the school as a whole.

FSMA is committed to an individualized approach that supports student growth in all areas. As we look at student performance, we know that test scores are just one part of the story. When we think about our student performance standards as a whole, we are looking at behavioral data, academic data, retention data, etc. We recognize that there is no one size fits all in terms of expectations for children and that all goals need to be individualized. At FSMA we recognize that children learn at different paces, and thus we have multi-age classrooms and a more open approach to curriculum. This allows us to ensure all children are getting what they need and can meet their own performance goals and feel confident about themselves as a student. Dr. Montessori's approach also acknowledges that focusing on the individuality of each child results in better learning outcomes. Thus, our student performance standards are rooted in a strong focus on the individual growth of each child at FSMA.

Additional information about FSMA's Foundation and Goals for Performance can be found in the attachment of Q 108.

Q110. In addition to the State's mandatory assessments, identify the primary interim assessments that the school will use to assess student learning needs and demonstrate academic progress throughout the year. Explain how these interim assessments align with the school's curriculum, performance goals, and Delaware Content Standards (Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Next Generation Science Standards).

FSMA uses a number of different types of assessments throughout the year to collect data, measure growth, and identify instructional goals for students.

As part of the Multi-Tiered System of Supports, teachers use universal screenings are quick assessments that are used to identify immediate needs of students. They take place 3 times/year for ALL students. When students are found to be below the benchmark or below the 25th percentile on a universal screening, they will be identified as a student in need of intervention through MTSS.

Reading - STAR, DIBELS are both aligned to CCSS and test for the key foundational skills in reading.

Math - STAR is also aligned to CCSS and tests for the key foundational standards at each grade level.

Social/Emotional - Deveraux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA)- mini, assesses the core social emotional competencies identified in CASEL

Behavior - Deveraux Student Strengths Assessment (DESSA)- mini, analysis of behavioral referrals

Listening Comprehension - Teacher questionnaire, for those who are identified as having concern, speech/language therapist performs the CELF-5 Screening Test

Oral Expression - Teacher questionnaire, for those who are identified as concern, speech/language therapist performs a Language Sampling.

Additionally, teachers use teacher created classroom-based assessments that focus on the grade level standards. These assessments align with the curriculum units of study in all content areas and is aligned with the Delaware Content Standards. Using pre, mid, and post unit assessments allows teacher to look at progress throughout the unit, and to determine which skills students still need to master, which guides a teacher's instruction.

Montessori teachers are all trained to use targeted observations as an assessment tool. By identifying specific content standards or skills, teachers can observe what standards or skills the students have mastered, or still need more time to master. These targeted observations serve to direct the teachers instruction with individual students.

Q111. Explain how the school will collect and analyze student academic achievement data, use the data to refine and improve instruction, and report the data to the school community. Identify the person(s), position(s), and/or entities that will be responsible and involved in the collection and analysis of assessment data.


FSMA's administration will collect and analyze school wide data in a variety of ways. FSMA will utilize our MTSS process to collect data throughout the year on student academic achievement in Math, ELA and SEL. FSMA will also use the state assessment to compare data over years, among cohorts, and by grade level. Reviewing this data throughout the year will allow us to immediately identify and respond to situations/learning gaps.

This data will be presented in a full Data Summary (sample has been submitted). From this data, plans will be made to refine and improve instruction. The Head of School and Director of Education will be responsible for collecting the data and presenting it to the teaching staff and board. The board presentation will be recording and accessible to families. The actual data summary will be distributed virtually and in print to staff and families. FSMA's data summary will be shared with all of the FSMA Stakeholders.

Q112. Describe the corrective actions the school will take, pursuant to 14 Del. C. § 512(5), if it falls short of student academic achievement expectations or goals at the school-wide, classroom, or individual student level. Explain what would trigger such corrective actions and who would be responsible for implementing them.

FSMA will review the goals set forth in the attachment as well as the corrective action information included in this document (page 7)

Applicant Evidence :


5 year plan and goals.docx

Uploaded on 9/29/2022 by Courtney Fox



Q113. Describe how state data systems will be used and monitored to support informed decision-making in the areas of academic performance, organizational management, and financial viability. Include any coordinated professional development intended to sustain these processes.

FSMA will work alongside the Delaware Charter School Office to provide any requested data for our frameworks. Historically, we have used reports from DataServices to review information in all areas. For example, our Finance Committee views different reports throughout the year and an example of this is an annual review of the Vendor Cross Tab. Another example would be for Organizational Management as our board reviews the website monitoring tool at each monthly meeting.

FSMA has always used statewide reports and data to inform our decision making. We will utilize any resources that are available ensure that we are in compliance in all areas.

Q114. Describe how the School Leadership Team will oversee and monitor compliance with statutory requirements as measured by the Organizational Framework. Include any additional organizational goals and targets that the school will have. State the goals clearly in terms of the measures or assessments that the school plans to use.

FSMA has historically shown strong results in the items recorded on our organizational framework.

Education Program - FSMA's Director of Education, who is required to be trained in Montessori, will ensure that we are implementing our mission with fidelity by ensuring that teachers are implementing Montessori with integrity. The school schedule that allows for extended work periods, multi-age classrooms, training requirements for staff and approach to learning will continue to be non-negotiables at FSMA.

Governance and Reporting - FSMA's Board has always been an integral part of the school. We will continue to foster this relationship and utilize board training, website monitoring tools, and board committee feedback to ensure we are meeting our oversight expectations, reporting requirements, and governance responsibilities.

Students and Staff - FSMA has high expectations for our teacher training and certification and will continue to require dual certification (Montessori and state) for our full-time classroom teachers.

Overall, one thing the FSMA Administrative Team has created a compliance calendar with all required dates as well as timelines for completion. These have been shared so all administrators have access and can work together to ensure FSMA's compliance. Our administration reviews these and works together to ensure all items are completed in a timely manner and that FSMA is aligned to all expectations.

Our goals to refine this process will be:

- create an online shared calendar for compliance items/tasks with who will complete/timeline for completion, etc.
- review website monitoring and framework documents to identify any areas of improvement and create a system to ensure all tasks are completed and any processes that need adjusting are fixed.
- formalize monthly meetings focused on reviewing compliance items (share what is completed, what is coming up and review items with the team to grow everyone's experience with items outside of their assigned items).

Q115. Provide detailed information on the school's plan for any changes or improvements to its facility for the five years of the next charter renewal term. The plan should include an adequate and detailed financial arrangement and timeline for the proposed facility improvements.

FSMA does not intend to have any facility changes. Both FSMA buildings have been fully renovated and meet our planned student population/grade configurations.

Q116. Provide detailed information on the board's plan to assess its performance annually and hold itself accountable for achieving its goals and govern effectively.

The First State Montessori Academy Board of Directors consistently evaluates our performance. As noted throughout the board overview, we are a dedicated and inquisitive team who each have a passion to help support and advance the mission and philosophy of FSMA. We believe in assessing our performance throughout the year. Some of the ways in which we do this are:

- One on one meetings are conducted by the board chair with all board members. This allows board members to share what is working well, opportunities for improvement, ideas, committee updates, requests for new assignments, etc. It is important that each board member feels that the time spent is meaningful and impactful. These meetings are conducted quarterly, with additional sessions scheduled as needed.
- Monthly board meetings include robust discussion, head of school updates, and applicable guest speakers to aid in evaluating our progress against our goals. If any opportunities are identified, immediate action is taken, in partnership with the head of school, to implement.
- Our committee structure allows us to easily identify opportunities for improvement in an ongoing manner. A few examples of this include:
 - Development Strategies: To streamline and create a more efficient process for grant requests, annual fund outreach efforts, and other development opportunities, the Development committee met with the Head of School to create a calendar to document and assign ownership to these tasks.
 - Board Member Onboarding: The Governance committee identified a gap in our board member interviewing and onboarding processes. The group came together to develop and implement a new recruit-to-onboard strategy to create a better candidate experience, while implementing an inclusive application process that removed potential barriers of entry.
 - Improved Financial Narratives: The board identified an opportunity improve the format of the or the monthly financial narrative and worked with our school's business manager to implement. This has resulted in a more effective overview of the information and makes it easier to see month over month progress.
- In late 2022, the board is excited to introduce anonymous board member surveying to establish quantifiable, data-driven benchmarks around member preparedness, efficacy, and general sentiment.

Additionally, the board participates in training together, as needed. We are also working on scheduling our next all day strategic planning session which would include our board and administrative team.

Q117. Number of school attendance days (2023-2024)

For 22-23 school year, FSMA will be open for students 167 days.



Q118.Number of full days (2023-2024)

(22-23) 167 full days

Q119.Number of half days (2023-2024)

(22-23) - 3 half days

Q120.Number of instructional hours in a day (2023-2024)

(22-23) 6.67 instructional hours

Q121.Number of hours in a full day (2023-2024)

(22-23) 7.33 hours

Q122.Number of hours in a half day (2023-2024)

(22-23) 4.5 hours



7. Compliance certification statement

Q123. The Board of Directors of this charter school certifies that it will materially comply with all applicable laws, rules, regulations, and provisions of the charter relating to the education of all students enrolled at the school. We have reviewed the Delaware Charter Law (14 Del. C. Ch. 5) and 14 DE Admin. Code § 275 in Department of Education regulations (Regulation 275), and have based the responses in this renewal application on the review of these documents. Signature of the Chairperson of the Board of Directors (or designated signatory authority)

Signature

Q124. Name of the Chairperson of the Board of Directors (or designated signatory authority)

Meghan Newberry

Q125. Title (if designated)

Board Chair

Q126. Date of Signature

Fri Sep 30 2022 (Eastern Daylight Time)





8. Renewal Application Certification Statement

Q127.I hereby certify that the information submitted in this application for renewal 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; and that, if awarded a renewed charter, the school shall continue to be open to all students on a space available basis, and shall not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, creed, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, mental or physical disability, age, ancestry, athletic performance, special need, proficiency in the English language or a foreign language, or prior academic achievement. This is a true statement, made under the penalties of perjury. Signature:

Chairperson of Board of Directors (or designated signatory authority)

Signature

Q128.Date of signature

Fri Sep 30 2022 (Eastern Daylight Time)



Q129.Name of Chairperson of Board of Directors (or designated signatory authority)

Meghan Newberry

Q130.Title (if designated)

Board Chair

Q131.Date of approval by board of directors

Fri Sep 30 2022 (Eastern Daylight Time)






9. Performance Agreement Template


Q132. Complete the Performance Agreement Template (see Resources) in conjunction with the Department of Education should the school be renewed by the Secretary with the assent of the State Board of Education.

Upload Required File Type: pdf, word Max File Size: 30 Total Files Count: 1

Resources


FSMA Performance Agreement Templ...

Applicant Evidence :


FSMA Performance Agreement.docx

Uploaded on 9/29/2022 by Courtney Fox

Q133. I have completed this renewal application to the best of my ability and to the extent of my knowledge.

I agree

Final Status

Reject Approve

Approver Comments