

# **CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE**

**DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**



## **FIRST STATE MONTESSORI ACADEMY RENEWAL APPLICATION FINAL REPORT**

Final Meeting: November 30, 2022

By September 30, 2022, First State Montessori Academy submitted an application to renew its charter. Consideration of this application is in accordance with the applicable provisions of 14 Del. C. § 514A and 14 DE Admin. Code § 275. Written renewal application guidance is provided by the Delaware Department of Education (DOE) on its website. The renewal application template developed by DOE is aligned to measures and targets within the Performance Framework, which outlines the academic, organizational and fiscal standards by which all Delaware charter schools are evaluated. The evaluation of the school's performance as measured by the Framework is a major component of the decision on the renewal application.

This report serves as a summary of the strengths, areas of follow-up and/or concerns identified by members of the Charter School Accountability Committee (CSAC) during their review of the charter applicant's renewal application, performance review reports, annual reports and performance agreements and during CSAC meetings.

The following individuals attended the final meeting of CSAC on November 30, 2022:

**Voting Committee Members of the Charter School Accountability Committee**

- Kim Klein, Associate Secretary of Operations Support and CSAC Chairperson
- Aimee Beam, Education Associate, School Support
- Gregory Fulkerson, Education Associate, Academic Support
- Tiffany Green, Education Associate, Workforce Support
- Brook Hughes, Education Associate, Operations Support
- Joyce Leatherbury, Education Associate, Academic Support
- April McCrae, Education Associate, Academic Support
- DeAnne Wimbish, Education Associate, Office of Equity, and Innovation

**Ex-Officio Members (Non-voting)**

- Kendall Massett, Executive Director, Delaware Charter School Network
- Deborah Stevens, Delaware State Board of Education

**Staff to the Committee (Non-voting)**

- Leroy Travers, Director, Charter School Office
- Carla Jarosz, Deputy Attorney General
- Faye Schilling Education Specialist, Charter School Office

**Representatives of First State Montessori Academy**

- Courtney Fox, Head of School
- Liz Madden, Education Director
- Meghan Newberry, Board Chair
- Stephany Pachowka, Business Manager

**Discussion**

Ms. Klein stated that CSAC held its initial meeting on October 25, 2022 and issued its initial report on November 1, 2022. The school was provided an opportunity to submit a response to the initial report by November 16, 2022 and the school submitted a timely response. Ms. Klein stated that DOE and State Board of Education held a public hearing on November 15, 2022. Ms. Klein stated that the purpose of the final was for the CSAC to continue its review of the renewal application, pursue any areas of ongoing concern through a discussion with the applicant, and issue recommendations on the application.

Mr. Travers asked if any individual voting and non-voting member of CSAC had any questions or concerns regarding the application that require further discussion.

Kendall Massett: Thanked First State Montessori Academy for serving its students so well.

**Conclusion**

Ms. Klein asked if there was a motion to recommend that First State Montessori Academy has met the standard for charter operations under the charter school law and, therefore, its charter should be renewed for a five-year term beginning on July 1, 2023 with or without conditions. The motion was made and seconded to recommend approval without conditions and was carried unanimously.

**Next Steps:**

- The public comment period will close on December 8<sup>th</sup>.
- The Secretary of Education will announce his decision at the December 15<sup>th</sup> State Board of Education meeting and ask for the assent of the State Board.