

# **FIRST STATE MILITARY ACADEMY**

**ANNUAL REPORT**

**2021-2022**



*Learning Today. Leading Tomorrow.*

**355 W. Duck Creek Road,  
Clayton, DE 19938  
Phone:(302) 223-2150**

## I. OVERVIEW

### 1.1 School Overview:

Review the following chart with the school's basic information. (Note: This table will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy. **Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.**)

BASIC INFORMATION	
Name of School	First State Military
Year School Opened	2015
Enrollment 2021-2022 <sup>1</sup>	456
Approved Enrollment	475
School Address	355 W. Duck Creek Road, Clayton, DE 19938
District(s) of Residence	Smyrna School District
Website Address	<a href="http://www.fsmilitary.org/">http://www.fsmilitary.org/</a>
Name of School Leader	Dr. Lilyana Auster
School Leader Email and Phone Number	lauster@fsmilitary.k12.de.us (302) 223-2150
Name of Board President	Scott Kidner
<b>Mission Statement:</b> The mission of the First State Military Academy is to provide an educational experience that focuses on developing the intellectual, physical and emotional growth of our cadets through the cultivation of an environment that rewards honesty, integrity, teamwork and commitment. With a strong focus on academic rigor, military discipline, citizenship and through the application of strong moral values, graduates will develop respect ensuring successful entry into life.	

## 1.2 School Demographic Data:

Please review the following table for accuracy and complete the second row (“# of Students on Waiting List”) for 2021-2022. (Note: The remaining sections of the table will be completed by the Charter School Office. **Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.**)

ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION	
	2021-2022 <sup>1</sup>
Total Enrollment	456
# of Students on Waiting List	NA
Gender	
% Male	65.57%
% Female	34.43%
Ethnicity/Race	
% African American	25.66%
% American Indian	
% Asian	1.54%
% Hispanic/Latino	16.23%
% White	54.39%
% Multiracial	2.19%
Special Populations	
% Special Education <sup>2</sup>	18.64%
% English Language Learners	3.51%
% Low-Income	15.13%

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

We do not have lottery and do not have a waiting list.

### 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.

(Note: This table will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review the following table for accuracy. **Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.**)

Date	Modification Requested	Outcome
11.16.2018	FSMA requested to decrease enrollment from 500 to 475 students	Approved

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

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**1.4 School Enrollment:**

Please review the following chart with the school’s enrollment trends during the current term of the charter. (This table will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy. **Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.**)

<b>School Enrollment Trends</b>		
<i>Cells highlighted in grey were grade levels not serviced by this school</i>		
	<b>2021-2022</b>	
	<b>Approved Enrollment</b>	<b>30-Sep Enrollment Count</b>
K		
Grade 1		
Grade 2		
Grade 3		
Grade 4		
Grade 5		
Grade 6		
Grade 7		
Grade 8		
Grade 9		181
Grade 10		101
Grade 11		98
Grade 12		76
<b>Total</b>		456

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

The number of freshmen accepted in school year 2021-22 was 130. FSMA does not building capacity to accommodate 180 freshmen.

**1.5 Reenrollment:**

Reenrollment Rate<sup>2</sup> is the % of students continuously enrolled in the school from one year to the next.

Review the following chart with the school’s reenrollment trends during the current charter term. (This table will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy. **Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.**)

School Reenrollment Trends		
<i>Cells highlighted in grey were grade levels not serviced by this school</i>		
	First State Military	
	Number of Students Reenrolled Count	Percentage of Students Reenrolled %
K		
Grade 1		
Grade 2		
Grade 3		
Grade 4		
Grade 5		
Grade 6		
Grade 7		
Grade 8		
Grade 9	42	
Grade 10	82	52.90%
Grade 11	93	78.15%
Grade 12	75	72.12%
<b>Total/Avg</b>	292	77.25%

\*\* School entry grade level. Reenrollment data not collected for this grade level.

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

The number of reenrolled freshmen who enter the sophomore year does not represent a correct percentage. In year of 2021-22. This number is based on the enrollment of 181 students. Therefore, it is not correct.

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## II. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

### 2.1 Delaware School Success Framework

#### Overall Academic Ratings

**Due to the impact of COVID-19 on learning and learning environments, accountability ratings for school year (SY) 21/22 were not issued. The school's assessment data for SY21/22 is available at: [First State Military Academy School Report Card](#)**

a) Based on the data available on the Delaware Schools Report Card website and data compiled by the school discuss:

- overall academic achievement,
- major challenges,
- and accomplishments over the course of the school year.
- You may also use this space to share the results of school-based data.

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#### School Comments:

During the 2020-2021 school year, the school implemented the four-phased hybrid learning plan. The plan to increase academic performance outlined in the 2020-21 school year focused on several action steps, including improving teacher-cadet-parent communication, assigning Fridays as workdays, and providing families with resources to address students' mental health. These measures helped cadets adjust to a full schedule of in-person learning in the 2021-22 school year. As a result of actions taken during the pandemic year of 2020-21 and the following year, 2021-22, academic performance increased in ELA from 37 % to 42%, while SAT math scores declined from 19% to 14% of proficient students. Low scores in mathematics in 2021-22 are attributed to the scope of unfinished learning in the previous year, the nature of the subject being sequential, and poor teacher attendance due to post-COVID issues in the teachers' families.

Additionally, many students felt the need for mental health services to address the trauma stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. Providing adequate support for mental health was one of the challenges FSMA faced last year. Another challenge was a teacher and student attendance. FSMA managed to cover all classes for teachers' absenteeism using a large pool of substitutes, including former FSMA cadets. However, the lack of instructional time with a regular certified teacher affected student learning, especially in STEM areas. One more challenge FSMA faced during the 2021-22 school year was the performance level of incoming 8th graders who exhibited significantly lower mathematics scores than in ELA.

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Although all students were offered transportation, the on-track attendance indicator is lower than the state one by 23%. This factor contributed to student performance in STEM subjects.

One of the achievements of FSMA during 2021-22 was a smooth transition to in-person learning in terms of providing cleanness and safety for all students. The procedures for cleanness and safety maintenance were well established.

Comparing our data with the Delaware report card, it is visible that FSMA students outperform the State in ELA by about 2 %. Mathematics performance remains a significant concern because it is lower by 15% than state performance. However, the graduation rate is higher at FSMA by 5 % than the state average, 92% vs 87%.

Thus, even though FSMA is below expectations in the indicator of academic performance for STEM subjects, the school has shown growth in the areas indicated above, according to the Delaware School Success Framework ( DSSF).

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## Performance Agreement

### Academic Performance Expectations

*By September 2023, our expectation is to achieve an overall rating of “Meets” or “Exceeds” on the Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF). Each year, we will show growth within each metric area, putting us on track to achieve our academic performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.*

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

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#### School Comments:

The proficiency level of FSMA cadets in ELA is higher than the same indicator in the state average. However, the proficiency level in mathematics is significantly lower than the state average. Due to the high weight of academic achievement, the school is rated below expectations. Taking into consideration the challenges of school year 2021-22 predetermined the action plan for school year of 2022-23:

- Reset building positive culture and address mental issues among both staff and cadets
  - Reinforce Multi-Tiered Student Support ( MTSS) to address unfinished learning
  - Focused mathematics instruction; building procedural fluency on conceptual understanding
  - Start introducing project-based learning using NewTech Framework for all mathematics courses
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### III. 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?

- a) Rate the school's performance according to the criteria established by the school for its 2021-2022 mission specific goal(s).

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School Comments:

The mission of the First State military Academy is to provide an educational experience that focuses on the intellectual, physical, and emotional growth of the child. Our school will provide a structured learning environment and a strong culture of academic rigor, military discipline, citizenship, and leadership. And application of strong moral values. The goal is to enable your son or daughter to acquire not only the subject matter knowledge, but also the skills and attributes needed to succeed and thrive in life, college, and the careers of tomorrow.

Purpose: To ensure that FSMA continues to stay loyal and faithful to its mission through ongoing evaluation of teaching and learning environment.

Measure: First State Military Academy will provide a structured learning environment and a strong culture of academic rigor, military discipline, citizenship, and the application of strong moral values.

Method: Staff, cadets, and FSMA families will participate in the School Climate Survey and Culture Data Survey, measuring responses in the following areas:

- Teacher to student relations
- Student to student relations
- Student schoolwide engagement
- Clarity of Expectations
- Fairness to Rules
- School Safety
- Bullying
- Staff Relations
- Home communication

The results of the survey in 2021 are not available due to the COVID 19 pandemic.

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The overall result for the 2022 year measured as 101.04 (approaching). See the details in section b).

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- b) 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).

Teacher to Student Relations – 99.64  
Student to Student Relations – 100.75  
Student engagement Schoolwide – 97.23  
Clarity of Expectations – 101.99  
Fairness to Rules – 99.0  
School Safety – 101.75  
Bullying – 102.61  
Staff Relations – 110.25  
Teacher - Home Communication – 96.75

**Results: FY 2017-112.42 – Met**

**FY 2018 – 112.79- Met**

**FY 2019 – 112.77 – Met**

**FY 2020 – 105.60 – Approaching**

**FY 2021 - Unavailable due to hybrid learning**

**FY 2022 – 101.04 – Approaching**

Data Source: Independent Survey conducted by the University of Delaware.

### 3.2 Organizational Performance

Note: Please utilize the hyperlink in this sentence for more information about the [Organizational Performance Framework](#).

The following tables will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy.

## SUMMARY AND OVERALL RATING

### First State Military

Year	Education Program				Governance & Reporting			Students & Staff		Facilities, Transportation, Health & Safety	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		
	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	3a	3b		
2021-2022	AS	M	AS	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Approaching Standard

a) Describe the school’s organizational performance over the current school year (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.)

School Comments:

The results of the indicators outlined in 1a and 1b are measured as approaching standards. Mission Fidelity indicator should be a priority for the following year.

The students with Disabilities indicator is related to the 95% participation rate on the standardized tests. We are approaching these standards and will improve this indicator by collaboratively working with the Special Education Coordinator and the standardized testing schedule to embrace all students with disabilities for testing.

c) Identify changes to organizational practices that the school has implemented to improve the school’s organizational outcomes.

School Comments:

- attention to staff PD planning as it relates to mental wellness
- providing teachers with spiritual uplifting (teacher recognition gifts, catered food)

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- attention to staff input using surveys and discussions in relevance to embedding technology in daily instruction
  - giving teachers opportunities to work from home if necessary (COVID 19 sickness, family sickness)
  - increasing opportunities for teacher-parent interaction by conferencing, providing timely communication
  - reinforcing classroom practices addressing mental wellness
  - weekly emails from school
  - postings on website
  - mentorship for new teachers
  - communicating parents and students' rights
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d) Address any measure where school did not meet standard or is approaching standard.

After COVID-19, in-person learning brought the necessity to reset teacher-student interactions. Students needed reassurance that they were welcomed to class and that it was safe to make mistakes after several months of virtual or hybrid learning. The belief that all students can succeed was partially lost during the COVID year because many students came to in-person learning with several academic deficiencies. Teachers were overwhelmed with providing several communication channels.

The attendance of students with disabilities was poor due to multiple mental health issues. Since high schools are excluded from the mental health grant, FSMA faces a financial challenge to ensure the mental health of all cadets, especially those with disabilities. It was challenging to organize standardized testing on one day and provide appropriate attendance due to the frequent sickness, especially for students with disabilities.



## Performance Agreement

### Organizational Performance Expectations

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

*By September 2023, our expectation is to achieve an overall rating of "Meets," as measured by the Organizational Performance 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.*

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

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School Comments:

Annual performance review will help us monitor demonstrating performance aligned with the organizational framework. We should be on track to demonstrate the category of MEET standards.

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### 3.3 Board Financial and Governance Members and Training

a) Please complete the chart below 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.

#### Board Financial and Governance Training

First Name	Last Name	Term Begin Date	Term End Date	Role/Title	Financial Training Date	Board Governance Training Date*
James	Berg	12/31/2020		Treasurer	3/30/2017	
Reggie	Capitan			Member	11/27/2018	
Gratteri	Len			Member	4/2/2020	
Heather	Contant		12/31/2024	Member		
C. Scott	Kidner			Chairman	9/29/2014	
Christopher	Martin			Parent Rep	3/30/2017	
Hans	Reigle			Member	4/24/2020	
Leslie	Stapleford			Secretary	4/29/2020	
Katherine	Stark			Teacher Rep	8/20/2021	
Verity	Watson			Member	4/23/2020	
Kevin	Yencer	12/31/2021	12/30/2023	Chair, Facilities	12/28/2017	
Ryan	Payus		12/31/2024	Member		
Raymond	Ott		12/31/2024	Member		

\*Please list only the most recent training date.

**Please attach all certificates or evidence of Board Governance Training for active board members that have joined the Board since December 1, 2021.**

School Comments:

The Board members have a plan to complete Board Governance Training.

b) Please complete the chart below with the necessary information. Pursuant to [14 Del. Admin. Code 736](#) 6.1 Each member of a Citizen Budget Oversight Committee shall attend and receive a Certificate of Completion for the Citizen Budget Oversight Committee training within the allotted timeframe of his/her appointment to a Citizen Budget Oversight Committee. Provided further, additional training may be required from time to time as determined by the Department.

**Citizen Budget Oversight Committee Membership & Trainings**

First Name	Last Name	Term Begin Date	Term End Date	Role/Title	Financial Training Date
Renee	Bailey			Member	1/2/2019
James	Berg			Member	3/30/2017
Kraig	Ford			Parent Rep	
C. Scott	Kidner			Chairman	9/8/2014
Justin	Reed			Business Rep	
Richard	Riggs			DOE Representative	11/30/2015
Katherine	Stark			Teacher Rep	8/20/2021

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School Comments:

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**3.4 Teacher Retention: Is the school monitoring and minimizing teacher attrition rates and maintaining a stable teaching staff?**

2021-2022		
% of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers ELIGIBLE
76%	19	25

Review the table above with the school's teacher retention trends and answer the following questions.

- a) Describe the school's plans to monitor and minimize teacher attrition rates. Provide information about why teachers leave the school.

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School Comments:

FSMA plans to conduct exit interviews and support teachers to minimize attrition rates.

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- b) Describe how the school's professional development plans support teachers and leadership.

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School Comments:

FSMA plans to continue partnership with the New Tech Network and customize professional development for teachers to revitalize project-based learning and raise awareness of the leadership team about leveraging the use of New Tech Framework.

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## IV. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

### 4.1 Financial Performance

Note: Please utilize the hyperlink in this sentence for more information about the [Financial Performance Framework](#).

The following tables will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy.

Financial Performance Framework Ratings	Current Ratio (Working Capital Ratio)	Debt to Asset Ratio	Days Cash	Debt Service Payments / Loan Covenants	Aggregated Three-Year Total Margin	Cash Flow	Debt Service Coverage Ratio	Enrollment Variance	Student Retention	Financial Management and Oversight	Overall Rating
Year	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
2021-2022	M	AS	M	AS	M	AS	F	M	Not Rated	AS	Approaching Standard

a) Describe the school's financial performance over the current school year (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.)

School Comments:

School Comments:

In overall rating, FSMA holds the place of approaching standard because three indicators in the framework were identified as approaching standard and one as far below standard. FSMA conducted inevitable construction projects that negatively affected the indicators, rated approaching standards and far below standards.

b) Identify changes to financial practices that the school has implemented to improve the school's financial outcomes.

School Comments:

A significant change in the financial practice should be made to monitor spending and revenue. For January 2022, spending exceeded the expected 52% because of the parking lot project. The Carryover of the financial debt from FY 2021 to FY 2022 was \$400 000, and the gap in revenue and expenses was not narrowed during FY 2022. The plan in changing financial practices includes strategies to diminish the Carryover from the previous fiscal year.

Another significant change is to allocate expenses using correct appropriation codes.

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c) Address any measure where school did not meet standard or is approaching standard

The sustainability indicator, Debt to Asset Ratio, is stated as approaching standard (greater than 0.9, but less than 1.0). In the 2021-2022 school year, the significant expense was to build a parking lot that increased the debts of FSMA.

The debt service payment /Loan Covenants indicator is far below standards. The net revenue and the interest were less than the principal and interest payments. The net revenue could be increased by increasing the number of students because FSMA did not reach the maximum capacity of 475 students as of September 30, 2021.

Cash flow is rated as approaching standards, indicating a positive three-year cumulative cash flow. Still, more is needed because of exceeding spending over revenues and carryover from the previous years.

In a few cases, financial management and Oversight indicators are rated as approaching standards because of not meeting deadlines.



## Performance Agreement

### Financial Performance Expectations

*By September 2023, our expectation is to achieve an overall rating of "Meets" or "Exceeds on the Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF). Each year, we will show growth within each metric area, putting us on track to achieve our academic performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.*

- a) Discuss the school's financial performance based on its approved Performance Agreement.

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#### School Comments:

- Based on the financial status of FSMA in 2021-22 and carryover to FY 2023 of \$400,000, FSMA may improve, but not exceeds or meets expectation on debt service payments/Loan Covenants due to a high balance of the mortgages and diminished carryover from FY 23 to FY 24.

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

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#### School Comments:

FSMA developed the plan for implementation during FY 23 and 24 to close the gap in revenue and spendings. The plan includes:

- Monitoring expenditures as it relates to a specific year spending percentage.
  - Apply expenditure to correct appropriations
  - See opportunities for grants other than the consolidated grant.
  - Increase student enrollment
  - Submit documentation/reports timely to meet the deadline
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## V. INNOVATION

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).

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### School Comments:

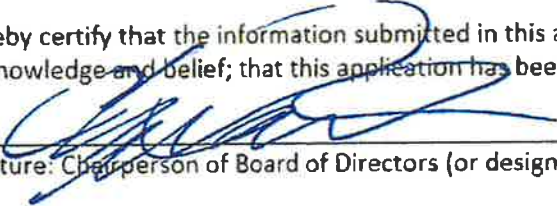
FSMA is the only charter school in the State of Delaware that implements a project-based learning approach using the New Tech Innovative Framework. While FSMA is still working on continuous improvement of instructional practices, the curricula that include projects aligned with the common core standards in cross disciplines could be utilized in any school willing to partner with us. A potential partnership with a Delaware school will allow us not only to gather and analyze more data on student performance but also regularly collaborate on the impact project-based learning has on student performance indicators.

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**VII. ANNUAL REPORT CERTIFICATION STATEMENT**

<b>Name of School:</b>	First State Military Academy
<b>Location:</b>	355 W. Duck Creek Rd, Clayton, DE 19938

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

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

31 JAN 2023  
 Date

<b>Print/Type Name:</b>	Scott Kidner
<b>Title (if designated):</b>	Board Chair
<b>Date of approval by board of directors:</b>	January 31st, 2023

## References:

<sup>1</sup> Based on September 30<sup>th</sup> Unit Count

<sup>2</sup> Pursuant to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (34 CFR §99), the DDOE applies the following statistical methods to avoid disclosure of personally identifiable information in aggregate reporting.

1. For all data, counts for groups or subgroups with 15 or fewer students are suppressed and represented by “-” in data reports. Complementary suppression of one or more non-sensitive cells in a table may be required so that the values of the suppressed cells may not be calculated by subtracting the reported values from the row and column totals.
2. Only report percentages for grade level reporting within a school and district.
3. Percentages are suppressed when the underlying student counts can be derived for groups or subgroups with 15 or fewer students (i.e., if the number tested and proficient are reported, then the percentage may need to be suppressed).
4. Any percentage above 95 or below 5 will be reported as >95% and <5%, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> Graduation rate data is lag data by one school year to include all students that have completed their high school diplomas during that year including summer graduates.

