In The Matter Of:

Department of Education

Majo Modification Application - Newark Charter School

Hearing February 10, 2020

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STATE OF DELAWARE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CHARTER SCHOOL OFFICE

IN RE: MAJOR MODIFICATION APPLICATION NEWARK CHARTER SCHOOL

Delaware Department of Education Charter School Office Townsend Building 401 Federal Street Dover, Delaware

Monday, February 10, 2020 5:20 p.m.

BEFORE: LEROY TRAVERS,

Lead Education Associate, Charter School Office

ALSO PRESENT: CANDICE FIFER,

Delaware State Board of Education

DARYL A. PARSON, ESQ., Deputy Attorney General for the State Board of Education

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1	MR. TRAVERS: Good evening,
2	everyone. I declare the public hearing for
3	Newark Charter School to be open.
4	My name is Leroy Travers. I'm
5	the lead education associate with the
6	Charter School Office and I've been
7	appointed by the Secretary to conduct this
8	public hearing.
9	Newark Charter School has filed
10	an application to modify its charter to
11	increase its approved enrollment beginning
12	in the school year 2022-2023 and reaching
13	full enrollment by the year 2025 and 2026.
14	The school has also requested to build a
15	junior high school on currently owned land
16	and renovate current facilities.
17	As is required by law, the
18	matter was referred to the Charter School
19	Accountability Committee for investigation
20	and report. This joint public hearing is
21	being held by the Department of Education
22	and the State Board of Education.
23	I'll now ask the others at the
24	table to introduce themselves.



1	MS. FIFER: Candice Fifer with
2	the State Board of Education.
3	MR. PARSON: Darryl Parson,
4	Department of Justice.
5	MR. TRAVERS: I would like the
6	report to reflect that the notice of the
7	time, date and place of today's public
8	hearing was published at the Charter School
9	Office Accountability Committee's official
10	place of business, on the Department of
11	Education's official website, and on the
12	State Public Meeting Calendar on the
13	State's official website.
14	A court reporter is present so
15	that a record of this hearing can be made.
16	It will be necessary for each speaker to
17	clearly identify his- or herself before
18	beginning to speak so the court reporter
19	will be able to note who you are. Again,
20	please, if you speak, have a seat at one of
21	the chairs at the end of the table.
22	The record of this hearing will
23	be provided to the Secretary of Education
24	and the members of the State Board of

1	Education, together with any written or
2	electronic comments received during the
3	renewal decision process. To date,
4	comments received on this renewal
5	application are posted on the Charter
6	School Office's website.
7	We will proceed in the
8	following manner. First we will hear from
9	representatives of the charter school who
10	wish to comment on the renewal application.
11	Next we take comments from the
12	public. There are sign-up sheets in the
13	back. If there's anyone that wishes to
14	sign up that hasn't done so, please
15	indicate so now.
16	Okay. I reserve the right to
L7	impose reasonable time, place and manner
18	restrictions if the speakers prevent this
19	hearing from accomplishing its goal in a
20	reasonable manner. This hearing's purpose
21	is strictly to collect public comment.
22	Questions of the Department of Education or
23	the State Board of Education are not
24	permitted and will not be acknowledged.



1	At this point the Committee
2	will accept comments from any school
3	representatives.
4	DR. NEWTON: Good evening.
5	Thank you.
6	My name is Franklin Newton.
7	I'm the school director for Newark Charter
8	School.
9	Let me start by saying our
10	board chair, Adrian Soyer, wanted to be
11	here, but he had a work commitment that he
12	couldn't reschedule. So he wanted to make
13	sure that his lack of presence here was not
L4	perceived as a lack of support. That is
15	not the case.
16	It is my honor and pleasure to
17	talk with you. I want to say thank you for
18	allowing us to put in the modification
19	request and have that entertained and have
20	people really spend time looking through it
21	and spending time exploring that. So we
22	are grateful to the Department of Ed, the
23	Charter School Office, CSAC, as well as the
24	State Board of Ed.



1	We at Newark Charter School are
2	happy to share our school's story with you
3	at this public hearing as you consider our
4	request for modification.
5	We at Newark Charter are proud
6	to be part of the Delaware public education
7	landscape for the past 19 years and leaders
8	in the success of charter schools in our
9	state. As this committee is no doubt aware
10	that, effective on July 1st, 2019, our
11	charter was renewed for a ten-year term and
12	is in effect until June 30th, 2029. It's
13	an honor for us to have been recognized and
14	to be one of only two charter schools to
15	receive a ten-year renewal.
16	Having been involved at Newark
17	Charter School for the past 13 years as a
18	parent, a board member, chair of the board,
19	and now as head of school, I've seen the
20	positive impact that Newark Charter has had
21	on our families individually and
22	collectively our community. I have
23	witnessed firsthand the hard work and
24	dedication of our students, parents and



1	teachers and staff who took our school from
2	an idea to a middle school spending its
3	first two years in rented trailers to a
4	three-building, multicampus school of
5	2412 students in kindergarten through
6	Grade 12. Like our other charter schools
7	in Delaware, Newark Charter School
8	demonstrates what can be accomplished when
9	autonomy, accountability and the school
10	and choice excuse me combine with
11	inspiration, innovation and commitment to
12	meet the needs of the communities we are
13	chartered to serve.
14	During the previous
14 15	During the previous modification and renewal processes, our
15	modification and renewal processes, our
15 16	modification and renewal processes, our school has done what we said we would do,
15 16 17	modification and renewal processes, our school has done what we said we would do, did it to the best of our ability and
15 16 17 18	modification and renewal processes, our school has done what we said we would do, did it to the best of our ability and delivered positive results, excellent
15 16 17 18	modification and renewal processes, our school has done what we said we would do, did it to the best of our ability and delivered positive results, excellent outcomes and performance. Our track record
115 116 117 118 119	modification and renewal processes, our school has done what we said we would do, did it to the best of our ability and delivered positive results, excellent outcomes and performance. Our track record since our initial charter approval
15 16 17 18 19 20	modification and renewal processes, our school has done what we said we would do, did it to the best of our ability and delivered positive results, excellent outcomes and performance. Our track record since our initial charter approval April 20th of 2000, which, for the record,

1	positions us well for continued success
2	during the next decade.
3	To see some of the strongest
4	evidence to support this modification
5	request, one need only look to the
6	objective data of our organizational
7	stability, consistently high levels of
8	community demand, our demonstrated track
9	record of fiscal and managerial fidelity
10	and, most importantly, our students'
11	academic success. A review of these
12	metrics predicts a continued bright and
13	promising future and encourages positive
L4	support of our modification request.
15	Our percentage of minority
16	students has increased every year for
L7	19 consecutive years. Our student
18	diversity is more than representative of
19	the Newark area and closely mirrors the
20	population of New Castle County, Delaware.
21	When we opened our doors in 2001, our
22	student body was 84.5 percent Caucasian.
23	This year it was 61.4 percent. As stated
24	previously, due to our commitment and



1	outreach, our entering classes continue to
2	become more diverse and fully
3	representative of our communities. This
4	year the entering kindergarten class cohort
5	was 50.8 percent Caucasian, which is more
6	than representative of the area that we
7	serve.
8	Our students are representative
9	of the area we are chartered to serve and
10	also represent a range of learning
11	abilities. Our population of students with
12	intense or complex diabilities has grown
13	steadily every year, and we are educating
14	students in A, B and C settings throughout
15	our grade levels. We are proud that the
16	National Association of Special Education
17	Teachers has named Newark Charter School an
18	"Exceptional Charter School in Special
19	Education" for the last several years.
20	What distinguishes NCS is
21	evident to anyone who has visited. We are
22	a community of learners who share a common
23	vision of what excellence looks like for
24	each and every student. We pull together

1	in the same direction every day to achieve
2	that vision. We've never strayed from our
3	mission and our core values, which are as
4	vital today as when the school was first
5	conceived.
6	As I said, we are grateful to
7	the Department of Education and the State
8	of Board of Ed for having faith in Newark
9	Charter School from the start and for being
10	an essential part of our growth and
11	continuing success over the last 19 years.
12	Working together, we have created something
13	special. And in doing so, we have changed
14	the lives of literally thousands of young
15	people. Authorizing our current request
16	will allow more Delaware children the
17	opportunity to benefit from all that we
18	have created together.
19	High quality public schools are
20	exactly what Delaware is working hard to
21	accomplish. Expansion of enrollment in
22	high quality charter schools like NCS is
23	one of the easiest, low-risk, low-cost ways
24	to do that. This opinion is shared by the

1	U.S. Department of Education, the National
2	Governors Association, the National
3	Association of Public Charter Schools and
4	many others.
5	I urge you to approve Newark
6	Charter School's modification application
7	and allow us to provide a high quality
8	experience for more students.
9	Thank you.
10	MR. TRAVERS: At this time we
11	have no public comment, so I want to thank
12	you all for participating today. The
13	Secretary will consider your comments in
14	deciding, at the conclusion of the renewal
15	process, what decision to submit to the
16	State Board for assent.
17	The hearing for Newark Charter
18	School is now closed.
19	Thank you.
20	(The hearing adjourned at
21	approximately 5:28 p.m. this same day.)
22	
23	
24	



1	CERTIFICATE
2	
3	STATE OF DELAWARE :
4	KENT COUNTY :
5	
6	I, Robert Wayne Wilcox, Jr.,
7	Registered Professional Reporter and Notary
8	Public, do hereby certify that the
9	foregoing record, Pages 1 to 11 inclusive,
10	is a true and accurate transcript of my
11	stenographic notes taken on February 10,
12	2020, in the above-captioned matter.
13	IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto
14	set my hand and seal this 10th day of
15	February, 2020, at Wilmington, Delaware.
16	
17	
18	
19	
20	Robert Wayne Wilcox, Jr., RPR
21	
22	
23	
24	



	2:14 9:10	beginning (2)	10:13
A	anyone (2)	2:11 3:18	Charter (27)
	4:13 9:21	being (2)	2:3,6,9,10,18 3:8
abilities (1)	application (4)	2:21 10:9	4:5,9 5:7,23 6:1,5,8,
9:11	2:10 4:5,10 11:6	believe (1)	11,14,17,20 7:6,7,20
ability (1)	appointed (1)	7:24	9:17,18 10:9,22 11:3,
7:17	2:7	benefit (1)	6,17
able (1)	approval (1)	10:17	chartered (2)
3:19	7:20	best (1)	7:13 9:9
academic (1)	approve (1)	7:17	children (1)
8:11	11:5	Board (10)	10:16
accept (1)	approved (1)	2:22 3:2,24 4:23	choice (1)
5:2	2:11	5:10,24 6:18,18 10:8	7:10
accomplish (1)	approximately (1)	11:16	class (1)
10:21	11:21	body (1)	9:4
accomplished (1)	April (1)	8:22	classes (1)
7:8	7:21	bright (1)	9:1
accomplishing (1)	area (3)	8:12	clearly (1)
4:19	8:19 9:6,9	build (1)	3:17
Accountability (3)	assent (1)	2:14	closed (1)
2:19 3:9 7:9	11:16	business (1)	11:18
achieve (1)	associate (1)	3:10	closely (1)
10:1	2:5		8:19
acknowledged (1)	Association (3)	C	cohort (1)
4:24	9:16 11:2,3		9:4
adjourned (1)	Authorizing (1)	Calendar (1)	collect (1)
11:20	10:15	3:12	4:21
Adrian (1)	autonomy (1)	Candice (1)	collectively (1)
5:10	7:9	3:1	6:22
Again (1)	aware (1)	case (1)	combine (1)
3:19	6:9	5:15	7:10
ago (1)		Castle (1)	comment (3)
7:22	В	8:20	4:10,21 11:11
allow (2)		Caucasian (2)	comments (5)
10:16 11:7	back (1)	8:22 9:5	4:2,4,11 5:2 11:13
allowing (1)	4:13	chair (2)	commitment (3)
5:18	become (1)	5:10 6:18	5:11 7:11 8:24
almost (1)	9:2	chairs (1)	Committee (3)
7:24	before (1)	3:21	2:19 5:1 6:9
also (2)	3:17	changed (1)	
		6-m (/	Committee's (1)

	reaction Trewarm Charter School		10014417 10, 2020
3:9	5:23	7:8	2:5,21,22 3:2,23
common (1)	current (2)	Department (7)	4:1,22,23 6:6 9:16,19
9:22	2:16 10:15	2:21 3:4,10 4:22	10:7 11:1
communities (2)	currently (1)	5:22 10:7 11:1	Education's (1)
7:12 9:3	2:15	diabilities (1)	3:11
community (3)	_	9:12	effect (1)
6:22 8:8 9:22	D	direction (1)	6:12
complex (1)		10:1	effective (1)
9:12	Darryl (1)	director (1)	6:10
conceived (1)	3:3	5:7	electronic (1)
10:5	data (1)	distinguishes (1)	4:2
conclusion (1)	8:6	9:20	encourages (1)
11:14	date (2)	diverse (1)	8:13
conduct (1)	3:7 4:3	9:2	end (1)
2:7	day (2)	diversity (1)	3:21
consecutive (1)	10:1 11:21	8:18	enrollment (3)
8:17	days (1)	done (2)	2:11,13 10:21
consider (2)	7:22	4:14 7:16	entering (2)
6:3 11:13	decade (1)	doors (1)	9:1,4
consistently (1)	8:2	8:21	entertained (1)
8:7	decades (1)	doubt (1)	5:19
continue (1)	7:24	6:9	essential (1)
9:1	deciding (1)	DR (1)	10:10
continued (2)	11:14	5:4	evening (2)
8:1,12	decision (2)	due (1)	2:1 5:4
continuing (1)	4:3 11:15	8:24	every (4)
10:11	declare (1)	during (3)	8:16 9:13,24 10:1
core (1)	2:2	4:2 7:14 8:2	everyone (1)
10:3	dedication (1)	4.2 7.14 6.2	2:2
	6:24	E	
couldn't (1)	Delaware (5)		evidence (1)
5:12	6:6 7:7 8:20 10:16,	each (2)	8:4
counting (1)	20	3:16 9:24	evident (1)
7:22	delivered (1)	easiest (1)	9:21
County (1)	7:18	10:23	exactly (1)
8:20	demand (1)	Ed (3)	10:20
court (2)	8:8	5:22,24 10:8	excellence (1)
3:14,18	demonstrated (1)	educating (1)	9:23
created (2)	8:8	9:13	excellent (1)
10:12,18	demonstrates (1)	education (13)	7:18
CSAC (1)	ucinonstrates (1)	education (13)	Exceptional (1)

9:18	G	his- (1)	J
excuse (1)	G	3:17	J
7:10	1 (1)	honor (2)	• • • • • •
Expansion (1)	goal (1)	5:16 6:13	joint (1)
10:21	4:19	т	2:20
experience (1)	Good (2)	I	July (1)
11:8	2:1 5:4		6:10
exploring (1)	Governors (1)	idea (1)	June (1)
5:21	11:2	7:2	6:12
_	Grade (2)	identify (1)	junior (1)
${f F}$	7:6 9:15	3:17	2:15
	grateful (2)	impact (1)	Justice (1)
facilities (1)	5:22 10:6	6:20	3:4
2:16	grown (1)	importantly (1)	K
faith (1)	9:12	8:10	K
10:8	growth (1)	impose (1)	
families (1)	10:10	4:17	kindergarten (2)
6:21		increase (1)	7:5 9:4
idelity (1)	Н	2:11	L
8:9		increased (1)	
FIFER (2)	happy (1)	8:16	lack (2)
3:1,1	6:2	indicate (1)	5:13,14
filed (1)	hard (2)	4:15	·
2:9	6:23 10:20	individually (1)	land (1)
First (3)	head (1)	6:21	2:15
4:8 7:3 10:4	6:19	initial (1)	landscape (1)
firsthand (1)	hear (1)	7:20	6:7
6:23	4:8	innovation (1)	last (2)
iscal (1)	hearing (10)	7:11	9:19 10:11
8:9	2:2,8,20 3:8,15,22	inspiration (1)	law (1)
	4:19 6:3 11:17,20	• • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • • •	2:17
Collowing (1)	hearing's (1)	7:11	lead (1)
4:8	4:20	intense (1)	2:5
Franklin (1)	held (1)	9:12	leaders (1)
5:6	2:21	introduce (1)	6:7
full (1)	herself (1)	2:24	learners (1)
2:13	3:17	investigation (1)	9:22
fully (1)	high (5)	2:19	learning (1)
9:2		involved (1)	9:10
future (1)	2:15 8:7 10:19,22	6:16	Leroy (1)
8:13	11:7		

ajo Modification Applic	eation - Newark Charter School		February 10, 202
2:4	metrics (1)	10:2	other (1)
levels (2)	8:12	New (1)	7:6
8:7 9:15	middle (1)	8:20	others (2)
literally (1)	7:2	Newark (13)	2:23 11:4
10:14	minority (1)	2:3,9 5:7 6:1,5,16,	outcomes (1)
lives (1)	8:15	20 7:7 8:19 9:17 10:8	7:19
10:14	mirrors (1)	11:5,17	outreach (1)
look (1)	8:19	NEWTON (2)	9:1
8:5	mission (1)	5:4,6	over (1)
ooking (1)	10:3	Next (2)	10:11
5:20	modification (6)	4:11 8:2	owned (1)
looks (1)	5:18 6:4 7:15 8:4,	note (1)	2:15
9:23	14 11:6	3:19	
low-cost (1)	modify (1)	notice (1)	P
10:23	2:10	3:6	
low-risk (1)	more (5)		parent (1)
10:23	8:18 9:2,5 10:16	0	6:18
	11:8		parents (1)
\mathbf{M}	most (1)	objective (1)	6:24
	8:10	8:6	PARSON (2)
made (1)	multicampus (1)	Office (3)	3:3,3
3:15	7:4	2:6 3:9 5:23	part (2)
make (1)		Office's (1)	6:6 10:10
5:12	N	4:6	participating (1)
managerial (1)		official (3)	11:12
8:9	name (2)	3:9,11,13	past (3)
manner (3)	2:4 5:6	one (4)	6:7,17 7:23
4:8,17,20	named (1)	3:20 6:14 8:5 10:23	people (2)
many (1)	9:17	only (2)	5:20 10:15
11:4	National (3)	6:14 8:5	perceived (1)
matter (1)	9:16 11:1,2	open (1)	5:14
2:18	NCS (2)	2:3	percent (3)
meet (1)	9:20 10:22	opened (1)	8:22,23 9:5
7:12	necessary (1)	8:21	percentage (1)
7:12 Meeting (1)	necessary (1) 3:16	8:21 opinion (1)	percentage (1) 8:15
			-
Meeting (1)	3:16	opinion (1)	8:15
Meeting (1) 3:12	3:16 need (1)	opinion (1) 10:24	8:15 performance (1)
Meeting (1) 3:12 member (1)	3:16 need (1) 8:5	opinion (1) 10:24 opportunity (1)	8:15 performance (1) 7:19

Majo Mounication Appl	ication - Newark Charter School		Tebluary 10, 2020
3:7,10 4:17	11:7	3:15,22 7:19,21 8:9	8:11
please (2)	provided (1)	referred (1)	right (1)
3:20 4:14	3:23	2:18	4:16
pleasure (1)	public (12)	reflect (1)	
5:16	2:2,8,20 3:7,12	3:6	S
pm (1)	4:12,21 6:3,6 10:19	renewal (6)	
11:21	11:3,11	4:3,4,10 6:15 7:15	said (2)
point (1)	published (1)	11:14	7:16 10:6
5:1	3:8	renewed (1)	same (2)
population (2)	pull (1)	6:11	10:1 11:21
8:20 9:11	9:24	renovate (1)	saying (1)
positions (1)	purpose (1)	2:16	5:9
8:1	4:20	rented (1)	School (28)
positive (3)	put (1)	7:3	2:3,6,9,12,14,15,18
6:20 7:18 8:13	5:18	report (2)	3:8 4:6,9 5:2,7,8,23
posted (1)		2:20 3:6	6:1,17,19 7:1,2,4,7,9,
4:5	Q	reporter (2)	16 9:17,18 10:4,9
predicts (1)		3:14,18	11:18
8:12	quality (3)	represent (1)	schools (6)
presence (1)	10:19,22 11:7	9:10	6:8,14 7:6 10:19,22
5:13	Questions (1)	representative (4)	11:3
present (1)	4:22	8:18 9:3,6,8	school's (2)
3:14	R	representatives (2)	6:2 11:6
prevent (1)	K	4:9 5:3	seat (1)
4:18	(1)	request (5)	3:20
previous (1)	range (1)	5:19 6:4 8:5,14	Secretary (3)
7:14	9:10	10:15	2:7 3:23 11:13
previously (1)	reaching (1)	requested (1)	serve (3)
8:24	2:12	2:14	7:13 9:7,9
proceed (1)	really (1)	required (1)	settings (1)
4:7	5:20	2:17	9:14
process (2)	reasonable (2)	reschedule (1)	several (1)
4:3 11:15	4:17,20	5:12	9:19
processes (1)	receive (1)	reserve (1)	share (2)
7:15	6:15	4:16	6:2 9:22
promising (1)	received (2)	restrictions (1)	shared (1)
8:13	4:2,4	4:18	10:24
proud (2)	recognized (1)	results (1)	sheets (1)
6:5 9:15	6:13	7:18	4:12
provide (1)	record (5)	review (1)	sign (1)
provide (1)		TEVIEW (1)	

4:14	strong (1) 7:23	7:4	10:4
sign-up (1) 4:12	strongest (1)	throughout (1) 9:14	W
something (1)	8:3	today (2)	
10:12	student (3)	10:4 11:12	wanted (2)
Soyer (1)	8:17,22 9:24	today's (1)	5:10,12
5:10	students (7)	3:7	ways (1)
	, ,		10:23
speak (2) 3:18,20	6:24 7:5 8:16 9:8, 11,14 11:8	together (4) 4:1 9:24 10:12,18	website (3)
speaker (1)	students' (1)	took (1)	3:11,13 4:6
3:16	8:10	7:1	who's (1)
			7:22
peakers (1)	submit (1)	track (2)	wish (1)
4:18	11:15	7:19 8:8	4:10
Special (3)	success (5)	trailers (1)	wishes (1)
9:16,18 10:13	6:8 7:24 8:1,11	7:3	4:13
spend (1)	10:11	TRAVERS (4)	witnessed (1)
5:20	support (3)	2:1,4 3:5 11:10	6:23
spending (2)	5:14 8:4,14	two (3)	work (2)
5:21 7:2	sure (1)	6:14 7:3,24	5:11 6:23
tability (1)	5:13	U	Working (2)
8:7	T	_	10:12,20
taff (1)		unswervingly (1)	written (1)
7:1	table (2)	7:23	4:1
tart (2)	2:24 3:21	until (1)	
5:9 10:9	talk (1)	6:12	Y
State (9)	5:17	up (1)	
2:22 3:2,12,24 4:23	teachers (2)	4:14	year (6)
5:24 6:9 10:7 11:16	7:1 9:17	urge (1)	2:12,13 8:16,23 9:4,
tated (1)	ten-year (2)	11:5	13
8:23	6:11,15	11.5	years (6)
State's (1)	term (1)	V	6:7,17 7:3 8:17
3:13	6:11		9:19 10:11
teadily (1)	themselves (1)	values (1)	young (1)
9:13	2:24	10:3	10:14
tory (1)	There (1)	vision (2)	
6:2		9:23 10:2	1
trayed (1)	4:12	visited (1)	
10:2	thousands (1)	9:21	12 (1)
strictly (1)	10:14	vital (1)	7:6
4:21	three-building (1)		

Majo Modification Application	THE WATER CHAPTER BEHOOF	
13 (1)		
6:17	6	
19 (3)		
6:7 8:17 10:11	61.4 (1)	
1st (1)	8:23	
6:10	7	
2	7 225 (1)	
2000 (1)	7,235 (1) 7:22	
2000 (1)		
7:21 2001 (1)	8	
8:21		
2019 (1)	84.5 (1)	
6:10	8:22	
2022-2023 (1)		
2:12		
2025 (1)		
2:13		
2026 (1)		
2:13		
2029 (1)		
6:12		
20th (1)		
7:21		
2412 (1)		
7:5		
3	-	
-	-	
30th (1)		
6:12		
5		
5:28 (1)	-	
11:21		
50.8 (1)		
9:5		
,		