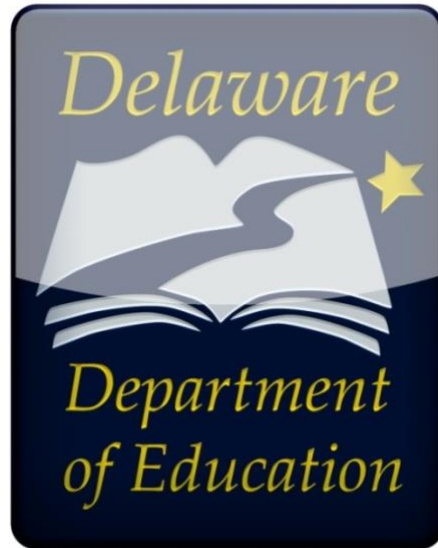


# CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION (DDOE)



## **GATEWAY LAB SCHOOL MAJOR MODIFICATION APPLICATION FINAL REPORT**

CSAC Final Meeting: March 25, 2021  
CSAC Report Published: April 1, 2021

By December 31, 2020, Gateway Lab School (GLS) submitted an application for a major modification of its charter. The following individuals attended the final meeting of the Charter School Accountability Committee (CSAC) on March 25<sup>th</sup>:

**Voting Members**

- Kim Klein, Chairperson of the Charter School Accountability Committee and Associate Secretary of Operations Support, DDOE
- April McCrae, Ed.D., Education Associate, Science Assessment, DDOE
- Brian Moore, Education Associate, School Climate and Discipline, DDOE
- Caitlin Gleason, Education Associate, Alignment and Professional Development, DDOE
- Catherine Oravez, Education Associate, Federal Funds and Cost Recovery, DDOE
- Gregory Fulkerson, Ph.D., Education Associate, World Languages and International Education, DDOE
- James Pennewell, Education Associate, Capital Project Management, DDOE
- Joyce Leatherbury, Education Associate, General Supervision IDEA, DDOE
- Tiffany Green, Education Associate, Mentoring and Induction, DDOE
- Tierra Fair, Community Member
- Ted Molin, Community Member
- Charles Taylor, Community Member

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

- Kendall Massett, Executive Director, Delaware Charter Schools Network
- Vincent Lofink, Delaware State Board of Education

**Staff to CSAC (non-voting)**

- Leroy Travers, Lead Education Associate, Charter School Office, DDOE
- Alicia Balcerak, Administrative Secretary, Charter School Office, DDOE
- Brook Hughes, Education Associate, Finance Office, DDOE
- John H. Carwell Jr., Education Associate, Charter School Office, DDOE
- Darryl Parson, Deputy Attorney General

**Members of the Gateway Lab School (GLS)**

- Catherine Dolan, Head of School
- Pamela Draper, Business Manager, Lead Founder
- Joyce Henderson, Board Chair
- Marlin White, Principal
- Dorcell Spence, Financial Consultant
- Devie Smith, Board Member
- Heidi Shanus, Board Secretary

## Discussion

Ms. Klein shared that this was the final meeting of CSAC relative to the major modification application submitted by GLS, which included requests to:

- Change grade configuration from grades three through eight to include grades kindergarten through two.
- Increase enrollment by a total of 48 students (an increase of 22.2%).
- Change locations.
- Change the name of the school.

Note: the proposed modifications would begin November 2021. Enrollment modifications would begin during the 2022/2023 school year, with the addition of kindergarten.

Ms. Klein stated that the initial CSAC report was issued on February 7<sup>th</sup> and the school submitted a timely response to that report. The initial public hearing was held on February 15<sup>th</sup>. Ms. Klein announced that the final report would be issued no later than April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Ms. Klein stated that the purpose of the meeting was for CSAC to continue its review of the major modification application with the applicant, review any areas of continuing concern through a discussion with the applicant, and issue its recommendation on the application.

Ms. Klein stated that, in the initial report, CSAC requested the following information:

1. English/Language Arts (ELA) aligned curriculum.
2. Math:
  - scope and sequence
  - rationale for utilizing “Math in Focus”
3. Social studies curriculum: confirm or verify membership in the Social Studies Coalition or provide a social studies curriculum that has a scope and sequence aligned to standards.
4. Provide a visual and performing arts curriculum for kindergarten through second grade students.

Ms. Klein asked if there were any additional questions or comments regarding the items submitted by the school or any further questions regarding the application that require discussion.

Dr. Fulkerson provided the following overview of the curriculum information submitted by GLS:

For math, the additional documents provided evidence of matching each lesson/unit of the materials to the content standards. There is no alignment shown for the practice standards, and there is no description of which practice standards will be of focus for each lesson/unit. Additionally, there is no information shown about the intended pacing for the lessons/units. The majority (at least 65%) of the materials, when implemented should address the major clusters of

the grade. Without pacing information, it is impossible to determine whether instruction will be sufficiently centered on the major clusters of the grade and therefore aligned fully and appropriately to standards.

Gateway is to reach out to Renee Parsley, Education Associate for Elementary Mathematics within the Department, to develop a plan to address the practice standards in math curriculum documents. Dr. Fulkerson seeks to make this a condition of approval.

Gateway has submitted evidence of a signed memorandum of understanding with the Social Studies Coalition and thus is found to meet expectations for alignment to social studies standards.

Gateway submitted evidence in the visual arts that show alignment to the core arts standards and clear assessment models. In music, Gateway provided Model Cornerstone unit documents that show clear alignment to the arts standards as well as embeds all four artistic processes into the unit of instruction. This evidence meets full expectations for alignment.

Mr. Molin asked how CSAC would know when the conditions were met. Mr. Travers responded that if a condition was approved, the Charter School Office would work with GLS to monitor and ensure that any such condition is met. The school may not proceed with its modification until the condition is met. It is possible that the school may meet the condition before the Secretary's decision on April 22<sup>nd</sup>.

Ms. Klein asked if there was a motion to recommend approval of GLS's application to modify its charter. The motion was made and seconded to recommend approval, with the condition that the school collaborates with the Department to develop a plan to address the practice standards in math curriculum documents. This motion carried unanimously. Ms. Klein reminded the school that CSAC's recommendation was just that, a recommendation to the Secretary of Education on the major modification application.

**Conclusion:**

The criteria for approving a modification to a charter are set forth in 14 Del. C. § 512. The criteria include that the charter school's educational objectives are consistent with the legislative intent of and restrictions set forth in 14 Del. C. c. 5; the charter school's educational program has the potential to improve student performance; the plan for the charter school is economically viable; the charter school's financial and administrative operations meet or exceed the same standards, procedures, and requirements as a school district; and the charter school's procedures to assure students', employees', and guests' health and safety are adequate.

**Next Steps**

- The public comment period ends on April 9th.
- The Secretary of Education will announce her decision at the April 22<sup>nd</sup> State Board of Education meeting and ask the State Board for assent.