



1. Overview

FIRST STATE MILITARY ACADEMY



Learning Today. Leading Tomorrow.

1.1. School Profile

Review the following information for accuracy.

Q1. Name of School

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

Q2. Year School Opened

- 2015
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q3. Fill in the School's "Current Enrollment" at the time of application submission.



440

Q4.Approved Enrollment

- 475
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q5.School Address

- 355 W. Duck Creek Road | Clayton, DE 19938
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q6.District(s) of Residence

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

Q7.Website Address

- <https://www.fsmilitary.org>
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q8.Name of School Leader

- Mr. Blair Newman
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q9.School Leader Email

- Blair.Newman@fsmilitary.k12.de.us
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q10.School Leader Phone Number

- (302) 223-2156
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q11.Name of Board President

- Mr. C. Scott Kidner
- Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q12.Board President Email

- csk@kidner.com



Other [Please Add Correct Info in the Comment]

Q13.Mission Statement: 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.

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

Q14.Approved Minor and Major Charter Modifications: The table lists any approved minor and/or major modifications over the course of the school's current charter term.

Date	Modification Request	Outcome
	Not applicable	

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



2. Student Demographics

Q15. Review the Student Demographics 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

	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Total Enrollment	452	458	456	439	440
% Male	64.47%	68.34%	65.57%	66.29%	66.36%
% Female	30.53%	31.66%	34.43%	33.71%	33.64%
% African American	28.32%	27.73%	25.56%	24.37%	26.59%
% American Indian	0.22%	0.22%	0.00%	0.00%	0.02%
% Asian	2.21%	1.75%	1.54%	2.28%	2.73%
% Hispanic/Latino	13.05%	14.63%	16.23%	14.58%	11.59%
% White	54.20%	53.93%	54.39%	54.90%	55%
% Multiracial	1.99%	1.75%	2.19%	2.96%	3.18%
% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.91%	0.07%
% Special Education ³	15.71%	17.90%	18.64%	20.50%	17.95%
% English Language Learners	1.11%	2.62%	3.51%	3.19%	4.77%
% Low-Income	18.14%	19.65%	15.13%	16.40%	19.77%



3. School Enrollment Trends

SCHOOL YEAR	AUTHORIZED ENROLLMENT	ACTUAL ENROLLMENT	PERCENT ACTUAL ENROLLMENT	GRADES SERVED
2019-20	480	452	94.17%	9-12
2020-21	480	458	95.42%	9-12
2021-22	480	456	95.00%	9-12
2022-23	480	439	94.46%	9-12

Q16. Explain successes or challenges of implementing the school's recruitment plan.

Over the last four years FSMA has had many successes when it comes to the recruitment of new cadets. FSMA has utilized sending mailers including school information and open house dates to all 8th grade students within Kent and New Castle Counties. FSMA has also utilized radio, newspaper, and social media advertisements. FSMA has offered more opportunities for open house events utilizing different days and times of the week all while showing off our cadets and their leadership abilities. Some challenges that FSMA has faced over the last four years with recruiting students have first been a reflection of COVID. The inability to offer in person open houses, student shadow visits, and have families tour the FSMA campus and experience our unique atmosphere and educational environment significantly decreased the number of applications for FY22 from 384 in FY21 to 296 in FY22. Through the school's recruitment efforts, FSMA has increased the number of applications to 370 for FY24. Moving forward, we have contacted all K-8 Charter Schools in Delaware and have begun attending high school fairs at the middle schools. In addition, we are also attending individual schools to meet with current 8th grade students. We will continue to cultivate our relationships with the K-8 Charter Schools and continue our radio, newspaper, and social media campaign. Moving forward, FSMA is also reinstating the shadowing program to allow protentional students the opportunity to experience FSMA's culture.



4. School Reenrollment Trends

SCHOOL YEAR	NUMBER OF STUDENTS REENROLLED	PERCENT OF STUDENTS REENROLLED
2019-20	292	83.19%
2020-21	321	84.47%
2021-22	292	77.25%
2022-23	292	76.84%

Q17. Explain successes or challenges of implementing the school's retention plan.

FSMA carefully reviews and analyzes student retention rate data at the end of each year. While the retention rate at FSMA hovers around 80% for the previous charter term, FSMA has indicated a number of reasons for students who do not return. Since FSMA recruits students from Kent and New Castle County, some students cite the distance to and from school as reasons for not returning as well as difficulties getting to hub stops. With FSMA being a full time MCJROTC program that specializes in Project Based Learning (PBL), some students decide not to return as they do not like the structure of the MCJROTC program or the educational delivery through Project Based Learning. Of the nearly 80% of students who return to FSMA each year, the vast majority of those students cite the positive school culture, strong discipline, academic rigor, and the uniqueness and innovation of Project Based Learning as their primary reasons for returning.



5. Academic Performance

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://doewebmaster.wpenginepowered.com/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)

Due to COVID-19, all school year 2019-20 assessment and accountability requirements were waived by the U.S. Department of Education. Additionally, due to the impact of COVID-19 on learning and learning environments, accountability was waived for school years 2020-21 and 2021-22. The school's assessment data is available below (see also Charter School Report Card Link (<https://reportcard.doe.k12.de.us/detail.html#aboutpage?scope=school&district=9607&school=4055>)). Attached are the school's annual reports (see also Annual Reports (<https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2654>)). **Note: Assessment data is provided in lieu of DSSF results for the years impacted by COVID-19. School year 2022-23 DSSF preliminary results will be provided to renewing charter schools by September 15, 2023.**

5.1. Delaware School Success Framework

	2019-20			2020-21			2021-22		
	Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations			Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations			Percent of Students Meeting or Exceeding Expectations		
	FSMA	District ¹ %	State %	FSMA	District %	State %	FSMA	District %	State %
English Language Arts	<i>Due to COVID-19, all SY 19/20 assessment and accountability requirements were waived by the U.S. Department of Education.</i>			<40.00%**	40.00%	42.00%	44.74%	39.04%	42.26%
Mathematics				*	22.00%	26.00%	7.89%	26.05%	29.48%
Science				<36.00%**	19.00%	22.00%	*	18.00%	19.00%
Social Studies				*	26.00%	31.00%	*	29.00%	28.00%
4-Year Graduation Rate (Class of 2021)				88.66%	88.74%	87.02%	91.18%	89.51%	87.02%
5-Year Graduation Rate (Class of 2020)				88.66%	89.18%	83.14%	88.66%	89.18%	88.42%
6-Year Graduation Rate (Class of 2019)				88.66%	89.18%	N/A	75.45%	89.94%	88.7%
Chronic Absenteeism ²				46.77%	10.60%	20.31%	41.84%	20.63%	24.77%

*This data has been suppressed for student privacy.

** This figure represents the percentage of students who met expectations. The percentage of students who exceeded expectations has been suppressed for student privacy.]

¹ Smyrna School District is First State Military Academy's district of residence.

² Chronically absent students are those students who are missing 10% or more of school days throughout the school year. Absences may be excused or unexcused, which are determined by local board policy.



2022-23 Preliminary DSSF Results

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2018-19 DSSF Results

High School (grades 9-12)

Indicators	Weight	Points	Points Earned
Academic Achievement	30%	150	24 Well Below Expectations
School Quality/Student Success	40%	150	91 Meets Expectations
Graduation Rate	20%	n/a	n/a
Progress toward English Language Proficiency	10%	n/a	n/a
Total	100%	300	115
Overall Percentage / Rating			38% Well Below Expectations

FIRST STATE MILITARY ACADEMY (High School)				
Indicators/Measures	Weight	Metric Value	Points Possible	Points Earned
Academic Achievement	30%		150	39 Well Below Expectations
Proficiency ELA (grade 11)	15%	41.79%	75	31
Proficiency Math (grade 11)	15%	10.45%	75	8
School Quality/Student Success	40%		200	142 Meets Expectations
On Track Attendance (grade K-12)	5%	67.15%	25	17
Proficiency Science (Biology)	5%	15.84%	25	4
Proficiency Social Studies (Grade 11)	5%	23.88%	25	6
College and/or Career Preparedness (9-12)	15%	100.45%	75	75
On Track in 9th Grade	10%	80.39%	50	40
Graduation Rate	20%		100	90 Meets Expectations
4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	15%	89.32%	75	67
5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	3%	95.10%	13	12
6-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	2%	88.66%	12	11
Progress toward English Language Proficiency	10%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total			450	271
Overall Percentage / Rating				60% Approaching Expectations

By September 2023, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of “Meets” or “Exceeds” standard as measured by the Academic Performance Framework (DSSF). 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. |

Q18. Reflect on your school’s academic performance in relation to the goals set forth in the performance agreement. Please reference the specific Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF) measures listed below. Highlight successes, challenges, root causes, and describe how the school will address the challenges.

- a. Academic Achievement
- b. Academic Progress
- c. School Quality/Student Success
- d. Graduation Rate (if applicable)
- e. Progress toward English Language Proficiency












While FSMA is not yet back to our pre-pandemic numbers for academic achievement, most year’s test scores have improved at a higher rate than the state average. On the SAT in ELA, for example, between the 2019-2020 and the 2020-2021 school years, the state mean score increased by 3.36 points and FSMA increased by 8.54 points. From the 2020-2021 to 2021-2022 school years, the state dropped by 10.22 points and FSMA decreased by 3.06 points. From 2021-2022 to 2022-2023, the state dropped 2.14 points and FSMA increased by 8.44 points. On the SAT in Math during the same time period, between the 2019-2020 and the 2020-2021 school years, the state mean score increased by 3.9 points and, unfortunately, FSMA decreased by 4.01 points. However, from the 2020-2021 to 2021-2022 school years, the state dropped by 17.48 points and FSMA only decreased by 4.15 points. From 2021-2022 to 2022-2023, the state dropped 2.28 points and FSMA increased by 4.1 points. FSMA’s academic passing rates have also followed a similar pattern of overall improvement each year since the pandemic. In order to continue improving academic outcomes, and ideally increase the rate of improvement, FSMA has recently taken several steps to better support FSMA teachers and cadets to achieve the academic performance goals. The curriculum has undergone significant revisions, particularly in math which has been the strongest area of need. The math curriculum was completely replaced this summer with a problem-based framework that better aligns with the curriculum the rest of the school uses. The new curriculum also relies heavily on Illustrative Math, providing teachers with high quality materials and resources. FSMA has also restructured the professional learning plan. By adding 5 Virtual/PLC days, there is more dedicated time and resources to support content areas in content specific PD and PLC time. FSMA also added monthly grade level meetings so teachers have the opportunity to work with other content areas around curriculum and best practice that they are seeing with their specific cadet populations. While in the past teachers were encouraged to participate in structured protocols to get lesson plan feedback, review culminating products and data, and to visit classrooms during planning, this year these activities have been worked directly into our PD/PLC calendar for the year. This takes the planning and logistics of participating in these valuable activities away from the teacher and ensures all teachers participate.

5.2. Supplemental Academic Performance Data

Q19. Provide any academic performance-related evidence, supplemental data, or contextual information. In this section, you may provide graphs and/or charts to supplement your narrative as Appendix 1.

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

Applicant Evidence : The following documents are available here.

 SAT Math Mean Scores.pdf	 DeSSA SOC Proficiency Gra...	 DeSSA Sci Proficiency Grap...	 Sept. Parent University Fly...
Uploaded on 9/18/2023 by Blair Newman	Uploaded on 9/18/2023 by Blair Newman	Uploaded on 9/18/2023 by Blair Newman	Uploaded on 9/18/2023 by Blair Newman
 SAT ELA Mean Scores.pdf	 Enrichment	 PSAT 10 Math Mean Scores...	 Passing Rates 2019-2023.pdf
Uploaded on 9/18/2023 by Blair Newman	Uploaded on 9/18/2023 by Blair Newman	Uploaded on 9/18/2023 by Blair Newman	Uploaded on 9/18/2023 by Blair Newman
 PSAT 10 ELA Mean Scores.p...			
Uploaded on 9/18/2023 by Blair Newman			



Q20. Reflect on other aspects of the school's academic performance that may not be captured by the DSSF.

Highlight successes, challenges, root causes, and describe how the school will address the challenges.

FSMA has had an Advisory period every year dedicated to extra support, RTI/MTSS, teacher tutoring, peer tutoring, and extra work time. Over the years, the Advisory expectations and productive learning activities have not lived up to its intent. After collecting staff feedback and evaluating FSMA policies and expectations, Advisory has been renamed Enrichment and a team of teachers and support staff are providing a more structured program to return it to its intended purpose. Each week all teachers are provided a short lesson with activity on a different topic. Examples of topics: AI Policy, Gradebook Reflections, Social/Emotional Activities, Test Prep, Grade Level Specific Activities. FSMA has also re-established the MTSS plan to better align with classroom practices and utilize Enrichment to help support Tier 2 and 3 interventions without taking away valuable classroom time. In addition to better utilizing the Enrichment period to support cadet academic outcomes, FSMA is implementing a new "Parent University" to help educate parents on all the resources and programs we have available so they are better equipped to support their cadet's academic progress. There will be monthly meetings, both virtual and in person, that cover a different topic. Examples include how to navigate our LMS as a parent, how to access and navigate Home Access Center for attendance and report cards, and how to monitor cadet Chromebook usage through Securely. The virtual sessions will also be recorded and posted on the school website for reference and review.

Q21. Provide and reflect on additional information regarding academic-related indicators your school would like the Accountability Committee to consider. (This could include social and emotional development, attendance and retention, student engagement, student discipline, and others as appropriate.) Highlight successes, challenges, root causes, and describe how the school will address the challenges.

One challenge that directly impacts academic success is cadet attendance. Some of the root causes are that cadets come from across the state, if they miss their bus, there is no way for them to get here as some travel over an hour one way every day. In addition, since Covid, some families have put less emphasis on making sure their cadets get to school regularly because they believe they can simply do the work online from home, even though they miss valuable instructional time. As a result, FSMA has assigned a new truancy officer and has a plan in place to improve our communication with families so that policies and cadet attendance status are clear and consistent. This is to include emails, phone calls, certified letters, and in person meetings.

Another area that has been a struggle in the past is cadet participation in non-academic activities. Recently, there have been requests and proposals for clubs and academic teams when previously there was little to no interest in by the student body. This trend is encouraging as it shows cadets are becoming more engaged and interested in the wider school community outside their 8 class periods. Discussions and planning are underway to determine the best way to accommodate and support these requests to ensure maximum cadet participation. Hurdles that must be overcome are time, transportation, and funding. Overcoming these challenges in order to accommodate these requests is important to build a sense of community and ownership in our school so that cadets feel invested in their academic experience.



6. 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?

6.1. Organizational Performance Framework

SUMMARY AND OVERALL RATINGS

YEAR	Education Program				Governance & Reporting			Students & Staff			OVERALL RATING
	Mission Fidelity	Applicable State & Federal Requirements	Students with Disabilities	English Learners	Governance & Public Stewardship	Oversight & School Management	Reporting & Requirements	Student Rights	Teacher Certification and Hiring Requirements	Facilities, Transportation, Health, & Safety	
	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	3a	3b	4a	
2019-20	M	M	AS	M	AS	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard
2020-21	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard
2021-22	AS	M	AS	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Approaching Standard

M: Meets Standard
AS: Approaching Standard
F: Far Below Standard

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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.

Q22. 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.)



FSMA continues to work towards having strong operational processes and procedures meeting standard two out of the three years. FSMA realizes there are two areas in which the school needs to create and implement corrective action plans to correct some inadequacies that have caused approaching standards ratings. In 2020-2021, FSMA did meet standard in all categories and in 2019-2020 did receive an overall rating of meets standard.

Q23. Discuss management and operations successes and challenges during the current contract term. Areas you may want to consider as appropriate:

- **School leadership**
- **Day-to-day operations including: transportation; facilities; food service; staffing (hiring, retention, professional development, evaluation); health and safety; community engagement**

During this charter term, FSMA has faced many challenges they have had to adapt to and overcome to continue to be successful. The biggest challenge for FSMA during this time has been the in change school leadership. FSMA's founding school leader retired at the end of the 2021-2022 school year. In August of 2022, FSMA Board of Directors hired a new school leader with no overlap between outgoing leadership and incoming. In March 2023, the Board of Directors implemented a leadership change in the best interest of the school. With three leadership changes in an eight month period, it created both challenges and successes. One of the challenges that FSMA has faced with regards to school leadership has been the responsibility of duties. With the change in leadership, the school needed to reorganize the administrative staff to optimize the effectiveness of each administrator and provide better support for our families, staff, and students.

Within day-to-day operations, FSMA has routinely faced transportation challenges. While FSMA has built positive and productive relationships with bus contractors, the transportation budget has always plagued FSMA. Each year, FSMA runs a transportation deficit (between what the state provides and what our contractors charge) and in FY23 that deficit was \$207,281.88. This creates a significant financial constraint on the overall budget as this money is being taken away from being utilized for students within the classroom.

Staffing at FSMA has been successful but challenging. Each year FSMA has lost staff to other schools, retirement, or those pursuing other areas of employment. FSMA attempts to attract new teachers by attending career fairs, various methods of advertisement, and even offering signing bonuses for high need areas. Unfortunately like most schools, the candidacy pool of teachers has been extremely slim. FSMA has utilized the hiring of certified teachers, as well as teachers enrolled in the ARTC program and starting in FY24, J-1 Visa teachers from other countries.

Q24. Address any measure(s) where the school did not meet standard or is approaching standard.



During the last charter term, FSMA earned Approaching Standard twice for Students with Disabilities. In looking at the data, in SY 2019-2020, FSMA earned that rating based on IDEA monitoring of students' special education records by the department's Exceptional Children Resource workgroup. During that time, FSMA had two personnel changes as Supervisor of Special Education in two years. With the many moving parts in personnel, FSMA was engaged in a Corrective Action Plan to address the individual student special education records that were out of compliance. In SY 2021-2022, as addressed in FSMA summary of overall ratings, again FSMA earned an approaching standard for students with disabilities as relation to 95% participation rate on standardized testings. FSMA is working diligently to address this indicator by working collectively with students, families, and FSMA's Special Education Coordinator to embrace all students with disabilities for testing. To achieve the goal of meets standard, it is a team effort amongst staff, students, and families.


During SY 2021-2022, FSMA earned an approaching standard for Mission Fidelity. FSMA's purpose continues to be to stay loyal and faithful to its mission and purpose by evaluating our teaching and learning environment as defined by the current charter. During SY 2021-2022, FSMA earned a score of 101.04, approaching standard. FSMA will continue to work towards fulfilling our mission by creating a positive learning environment through School Climate Surveys and Culture Data Surveys to measure: teacher to student relations, student to student relations, student school wide engagement, clarity of expectations, fairness to rules, school safety, bullying, staff relations, and home communication. FSMA will create and deliver professional development related to improving on these areas and strengthen our Mission Fidelity. The professional development plan includes our participation in Cohort 1 of the Comprehensive Induction Program, utilizing the work done with mentees to benefit the entire staff. FSMA will also create leadership committees that utilize students, families, and faculty to focus on ways to improve the climate and culture at First State Military Academy. During the 2022-2023 school year, FSMA Alumni and parents created a Parent and Alumni Organization to support student programs and teacher initiatives. PAO fundraisers fund dances, clubs, and specialized project supplies such as video cameras, a laminator, and art supplies.

6.2. Educational Program

Q25. Mission-Specific Goal(s): As Appendix 2, provide the results (data source) of the school's mission specific goal(s). Remember not to include any personally identifiable information (PII).

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Applicant Evidence :


Mission Specific Goals 22.pdf

Uploaded on **8/2/2023** by

Blair Newman

Q26. Curriculum, Instruction, and Professional Development As Appendix 3, provide the following documents as evidence of curriculum alignment to Delaware Content Standards: 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.
- Description of the professional learning structures for the ELA teachers and how the vision for professional learning adheres to the state's standards for professional learning. Please provide sample professional learning goals for the ELA department since the last renewal.

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.
- Description of the professional learning structures the mathematics teachers engage in and how the vision for professional learning adheres to the state's standards for professional learning. Please provide sample professional learning goals for the mathematics department since the last renewal.
- 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 **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.

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 **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.

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

Applicant Evidence :

		
First State Military Academ...	Professional Learning Plan...	FSMA Driver Diagram.pdf
Uploaded on 9/26/2023 by Blair Newman	Uploaded on 9/26/2023 by Blair Newman	Uploaded on 9/26/2023 by Blair Newman

6.3. At-Risk Students, Students with Disabilities, and English Language Learners

Q27.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, gifted and talented students, or Multilingual Learners.

First State Military Academy has made some enhancements regarding data collection for initial evaluations when requested due to a special education audit for the 2019-2020 school year. A communication log will be completed once the request has been made, we then send the appropriate paperwork out for signatures, when we receive it back from the parent we begin the process of testing if the parent agrees. The data will get documented and 45 or 90 calendar days will be counted and a meeting will be scheduled. This is done ahead of time to allow for any cancellations so that we are still in the guidelines of the law. (Indicator 11)

We have also enhanced support for multilingual learners and special education students providing them with small group advisory time so that they can receive additional assistance with work. FSMA has sent letters home to families with the most recent access scores for families. Multilingual students have received individualized meetings as well as newsletters being sent home in families home languages to explain up to date policy's and procedures.

Q28.Describe any changes or enhancements to the process by which at-risk students, students with disabilities and gifted and talented students are identified and the evidence that the school was able to provide the right resources and services for these students.



First State Military Academy has made some enhancements regarding MTSS- at risk students and special education identification. Our at-risk students are monitored by staff using STAR testing, baseline (SEL), PSAT, and teacher input surveys, and class progress and grades. If we find a student that needs more assistance we have the ability to provide additional staff to join classes to support these students. If struggling continues it is brought up to the MTSS team to review. If at this time they believe this student needs more support the referral will go to our special education coordinator to review and parent contact to communicate the process if the parent wishes to proceed this route. Procedural Safeguards booklets are provided to parents to educate them on their rights of the law.

First State Military Academy ensures that the right resources and services are provided for each student.

Q29. Describe any changes or enhancements to the process by which Multilingual Learners are identified and the evidence that the school was able to provide the right resources and services for these students.

FSMA has had no changes to the process in which multilingual learners are identified. All new students to FSMA receive a language survey that they complete during new enrollment and on the first day of new student orientation.

6.4. Governance and Reporting Requirements

Q30. Describe how the board has provided oversight in the areas of academics, finance, and operations, including legal compliance.

The FSMA Board meets monthly to review financials/Web Report, academic reports and operational issues as presented by the Principal and Commandant and other leadership (as needed) of the school. Financial oversight also includes members of the Board's Executive Committee (Board Chair and Treasurer) meeting every other month during the CBOC meetings to review in greater detail the budget of the school and P-card statements. FSMA has met 75 days cash requirement since inception. FSMA has never been sued and faces no outstanding legal complaints or issues. The school conducts annual audits with third party with no issues presented.

Q31. Discuss board-related successes and challenges during the current charter term. Areas you may want to consider as appropriate include:

- Membership and recruitment
- New member induction and ongoing governance training
- Meeting attendance
- Board self-evaluation
- Progress on particular board-level projects



School year 2022-2023 was the first year without the school's founding principal, and with his retirement announced in late April of '22, the condensed process to seek new leadership was difficult and time consuming. However, as the new school principal, onboarded by August '22, continued to operate more independently, issues around management style, communication with our teachers, and in some cases our parents, emerged. By January 2023, the Board recognized listening sessions with the faculty and staff was needed. As these issues continued to manifest with the new principal, it was becoming clear a leadership adjustment was needed soon. The Board, based upon numerous discussions with various senior staff, teachers and some parents, re-assigned the principal to more operational tasks without any forward-facing duties, and promoted the director of operations to become Acting Principal. By the end of school all duties were transferred to Mr. Blair Newman as Principal of FSMA.

This is recounted to illustrate the action the Board took in unison to rectify a problem that was impacting our teachers and our cadets. It also took our attention away from the academics and the other needs of our school. Of the many issues facing FSMA over the years, this change in leadership was the most difficult.

The Board recruitment and retention meets internal and legal requirements with one parent and one teacher representative seated as a Board member participating since inception. The Board has maintained membership as detailed in by-laws not dropping below 7 members at any time since inception. The Board recruitment is ongoing.

The Board has met all required Board Finance and Governance training.

The Board has met CBI requirements.

The Board has only once not met quorum requirements during this renewal period.

The Board conducted strategic planning session last year to evaluate strengths and weaknesses while examining opportunities and threats within the last 12 months. We identified facility shortcomings, academic shortcomings, while recognizing our greatest strength is our culture of perseverance, respect, and duty, among others. The Board recognizes Covid impacted our existing and incoming students in many ways, and those gaps in learning still are unmet though we have seen consistent improvement.

The Board continues to identify various physical plant/facilities that need repair and/or expansion to meet our current cadet population as well as the expansion of after school sports and extra-curricular programs. This included the donation and installation of over \$15,000 in evergreens along our western edge as a buffer from the local neighborhood.

Q32. Describe the process used by the board to evaluate school leadership.

The Board's approach has been consistent and straightforward with the senior leadership of the school. The Principal, Mr. Blair Newman, and the Commandant Col Robert Wallace, oversee various aspects of daily operations of the school, but through their direction, management, and implementation, the vision of the school is achieved.

Aspects under constant review are enrollment, our fiscal health, academics, the Marine Instructors, school climate and culture, teacher retention, and engagement of our parents and community at large.

Q33. Describe the school's process for succession planning including identification, development and retention of school leaders.



The Board remains committed to preserving the culture of FSMA as originally envisioned over nine years ago when the school was founded. During the most recent search for a new principal (as outlined in Q31), the school sought someone who would not only understand the culture and what a Marine JROTC Academy is, and how it functions, but to endorse this model of education. We were not looking for someone to bring the newest techniques in management or modeling, but to strengthen our school. This narrows the field of applicants.

Therefore, based upon the above, the Board looks at Senior Management routinely seeking their opinions and review of staff that may be able to advance into different positions within the school. However, succession planning for anyone other than the Principal or the Commandant of the school remain the complete domain of those two individuals.

Q34. Share how the Board supports the school. Speak to the Board's involvement in events, operations, and fundraising activities.

The Board attends various events to include sports/games, drill meets, Open House (each has at least one Board member in attendance to welcome parents), Induction Day, and the Marine Ball.

The Board has 100% giving for this calendar year.

The Board during this renewal period raised in excess of \$50,000 for the new construction of the maintenance building that included resurfacing and expansion of the parking lot.


Identified and completed the donation of over \$100,000 in pavers that included all the support work, grading and installation of the pavers.

Identified and completed the donation of \$20,000 in pavers designed to represent the Marine Corps crest.

Q35. Appendix 4: Current Organizational Chart


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

Applicant Evidence :



FSMA Organizational Chart...

Uploaded on **9/18/2023** by
Blair Newman




Board Org Chart.xlsx

Uploaded on **9/25/2023** by
Blair Newman

Q36. 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 :



Board Member and School ...

Uploaded on **9/18/2023** by
Blair Newman



6.5. Students and School Environment

Q37. Describe how the school solicits feedback from parents and students regarding satisfaction with the school. Provide summary data and reflect on the feedback. How does the school use this information to inform ongoing school improvement?

FSMA solicits feedback from parents in many different ways. FSMA sends out an annual school climate survey to parents, students, and staff that is provided by the Delaware Department of Education in conjunction with the University of Delaware. Through the data collected in this survey, the leadership team along with a committee of teachers analyzes the data to determine the areas of improvement and growth that need to happen at FSMA. Moving forward, FSMA plans to implement quarterly parent council meetings starting in FY24. In addition, FSMA has started a "Parent University" once a month both virtually and in-person, in order to educate parents on how to support students through our LMS, internet filtering and monitoring, and other programs that are used by students every day. The goal of Parent University is to open communication and solicit parent help with providing the skills and knowledge students need to succeed at FSMA and beyond.

Q38. Appendix 6: 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 :


Fire Inspection.pdf

Uploaded on **8/2/2023** by
Blair Newman

Q39. Appendix 7: 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 :


COI - TWIMC First State Mili...


Uploaded on **8/2/2023** by
Blair Newman

Q40. Appendix 8: Please upload Navigate report for SY21/22 and SY22/23.

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



Applicant Evidence :



Navigate Reports.pdf

Uploaded on **8/2/2023** by
Blair Newman

6.6. Teacher Retention

Is the school monitoring and minimizing teacher attrition rates and maintaining a stable teacher staff?

SCHOOL YEAR	% TEACHERS RETAINED	# OF TEACHERS RETAINED	# OF TEACHERS ELIGIBLE
2019-20	80.00%	16	20
2020-21	95.80%	23	24
2021-22	76.00%	19	25

Q41. Enter 2022-2023 PERCENT of Teachers RETAINED

75%

Q42. Enter 2022-2023 NUMBER of Teachers RETAINED

21

Q43. Enter 2022-2023 NUMBER of Teachers ELIGIBLE

28

Q44. Explain successes or challenges of implementing the school's teacher retention plan.

Over the course of the charter term, FSMA has implemented many strategies to improve teacher retention. FSMA has increased the salary scale to be competitive with those districts in close proximity. FSMA has increased the autonomy of our teachers by giving them a voice in making school level decisions and creating various committees to work together on school issues, policies, and procedures. FSMA has given teachers a bonus (FY23) to match what other school districts in proximity to FSMA were offering. FSMA has supported teachers with the necessary resources, training, and development needed to be successful using the New Tech Network model of Project Based Learning. Some of the challenges FSMA has faced in retaining teachers is that with so many educational opportunities within the state, it is a teachers market and we are losing some to higher paying positions while others have left education in search of other professions.

Q45. Describe how the school's professional development plans have evolved over the course of the charter term to support teachers and leadership.



Since 2019, FSMA has taken several steps toward strengthening the Professional Development plan to support teacher and leadership growth. As part of the New Tech Network (NTN) partnership, leadership regularly meets with a school success coach to review and reflect on the school success framework, PBL curriculum implementation, and PD support provided by NTN. We also have sent groups of teachers to their annual National Conference each summer. In 2020, FSMA hired a full-time Instructional Coach after she completed a two-year Coach Development Program through NTN to directly support teachers in building curriculum and strengthening instruction to improve cadet outcomes through customized PD and individual coaching cycles. In 2022, FSMA joined Cohort 1 of the Comprehensive Induction Program (CIP) pilot to redesign the mentorship program to align and support DTGSS as well as FSMA's unique teaching strategies and culture. The new program emphasizes the need for continuing support after the four-year mentor program to improve teacher retention. Monthly after-school PD focused on best practices and DTGSS are now offered, required for year 1 and year 2 teachers, and open to all staff. Seven staff members attended the first session in September that focused on 1.1- Structures for Learning.

FSMA is also in the process of formalizing content and grade-level PLC groups. In previous years, conversations among teachers around curriculum, best practices, and classroom management were allowed to happen organically with no direction and limited follow-through. Now, PLCs are required to meet each month and are assigned a topic to be discussed, and minutes are provided to the admin team so concerns and requests can be tracked and addressed. PD time is also set aside for content-specific topics, including ELA text alignment, Illustrative Math training, Next Gen Science Standards, etc.

Q46. Describe how the school's completion of educator evaluations has evolved over the course of the charter term.

Over the course of the charter term, FSMA has evolved from the use of DPAS II to utilizing DTGSS as its system for evaluating teachers. FSMA was one of the first schools in Delaware to pilot the new educator evaluation system. One challenge that FSMA has faced with completion of teacher evaluations is the change of administration and administrators over the past three years. Since the implementation of DTGSS at FSMA, there has been a different administrator/evaluator each school year. This has been difficult in creating continuity amongst staff and teachers and understanding the effectiveness of DTGSS. We acknowledge that in past years we have not completed all teacher observations; however, to date, we have completed observation 1 and debrief meetings for all 24 teachers and are on track to complete the second and third observations and the mid- and end-of-year conferences for all teachers.

6.7. Closure Requirements

Q47. 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 2023-24 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.).



- At the end of FY23, the school's unencumbered cash balances were local funds of \$1,524,400 state funds of \$0. The combined unencumbered cash balance was \$1,524,400.
- At the close of FY23, the combined summer payroll accrual for state, local, and federal funds was \$989,190. Additionally, as of June 30, 2023, the school had accounts payable of \$8,408. The estimated cost of the final audit (audit, Single Audit, and Form 990) would be \$23,650.
- Our current unencumbered cash balances are sufficient to cover the combined cost of the estimated summer payroll obligations in FY24, accounts payable, and the cost of the final audit.
- 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.
 - N/A
- Identification of the individuals responsible for handling the school's final closeout activities after closure or dissolution (i.i., who will process any final payments, coordinate the final audit, etc.)
 - The schools principal, business manager and financial assistant will coordinate all final payments and final audit. All activities will be supervised and authorized by the Board of Directors president and treasurer.



7. Financial Performance

The Financial Performance Framework is a reporting tool that provides the Department of Education with the necessary data to assess the financial health and viability of charter schools in its portfolio for the purposes of an annual review. The framework summarizes a charter school's financial health while taking into account the school's financial trends over a period of three years. Please utilize the hyperlink in this sentence for more information about the Financial Performance Framework (<https://www.doe.k12.de.us/Page/2626>).

7.1. Financial Performance Framework

SUMMARY AND OVERALL RATINGS

YEAR	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 & Oversight	OVERALL RATING
	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	2d	3	4	
2021-22	M	AS	M	AS	M	AS	F	M	Not Rated	AS	Approaching Standard

M: Meets Standard
AS: Approaching Standard
F: Far Below Standard

Note: On June 18, 2020, the State Board of Education approved the updated Financial Performance Framework. Below is the school's historical data.

Historical Financial Framework Data

YEAR	Near Term Indicators				Sustainability Indicators				OVERALL RATING	
	Current Ratio	Days Cash	Enrollment Variance	Default, Loan Covenants, & Debt Service Payments	Total Margin	Debt to Asset Ratio	Cash Flow	Debt Service Coverage Ratio		Financial Management & Oversight
	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	2d		3
2019-20	M	M	M	F	AS	F	M	M	M	Meets Standard
2020-21	M	M	M	F	M	AS	M	M	M	Meets Standard



PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT

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.

Q48. Using the results contained in the Financial Performance Framework, 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.)

First State Military Academy has risen to meets standards from not meeting standards and approaching standards in all categories over the term with the noted exception of “default, loan covenants & debt service payments” and has improved to the high end of approaching standard in Debt to Asset Ratio category just short of meeting standards. Debt to asset ratio has remained at the edge of approaching standards just under the meets standards classification the past two years and the school is working to improve that to meets standards.

Q49. Identify changes to financial practices that the school has implemented to improve the school’s financial outcomes.



Over the past year since change in school leadership, First State Military Academy has made several changes to the financial practices to improve the school's financial outcome. First, FSMA brought accounting into the building by hiring a full-time financial assistant to process payments and correctly code transactions. In past years, coding and expenditures have been inconsistent on the schools budget which has led to percentages being in excess of or far below budget. To help correct this issue, FSMA has hired a contractual employee (retired supervisor of finance from Red Clay) to work on the schools' budget, help correct the coding issue, and to train our new financial assistant.

FSMA has also created and implemented new internal controls. This includes purchase orders, vouchers, payments, PCard usage, and compensation. All staff are now aware of the process and policy when placing orders.

Q50. Address any measure(s) where the school did not meet the standard.

In looking at FSMA's financial framework, there are two areas in which fall below standard. First, measure 1d as it relates to default, loan covenants, & debt service payments. FSMA secured construction loans through the USDA to purchase and renovate the school. Part of the loan requirements are to set up two Escrow accounts. The board of directors at FSMA has decided against fulfilling this requirement as it would consume a large amount of funding that could not be used for other school expenses. Despite not meeting this requirement, FSMA has never been late or missed a payment to USDA.

FSMA also earned an approaching standard rating on measure 2b, debt to asset ratio. Over the course of this charter term, FSMA as improved its rating for 2b from far below standard to approaching standard and on the cusp of meeting standard by continuing to increase the amount of cash saved year over year.

Q51. Describe how the school developed and implemented a corrective action plan in response to audit findings (if applicable).

Not Applicable

Q52. Appendix 9: 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

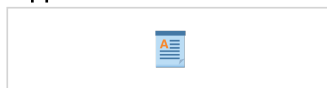
Applicant Comments :

Not Applicable

Q53. Appendix 10: Upload a Final Fiscal Year 2023 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 :



Budget Narrative June 30, ...

Uploaded on **7/30/2023** by **Debbie Roberts**



Financial Report June 2023....

Uploaded on **7/30/2023** by **Debbie Roberts**


Q54. Appendix 11: Upload an Approved Preliminary Fiscal Year 2024 Budget in the prescribed Department format. The budget narrative should make clear the assumptions on which the school bases its key revenue



and expenditure projections. In addition, the budget and narrative should describe any anticipated changes to the school's financial position and clearly articulate the financial impact of any proposed modifications on other aspects of the school's education program and operations (e.g., new curriculum or instructional materials, modified staffing structure, decreased or increased enrollment, etc.).

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

Applicant Evidence :



Copy of Budget FY 24.xlsx....

Uploaded on **9/11/2023** by
Blair Newman

Q55. Appendix 12: Upload a Fiscal Year 2023 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 Evidence :


First State Military Academ...

Uploaded on **9/28/2023** by
Blair Newman



8. Innovative Practices

Q56.

Describe effective systems, structures, and/or processes that have led to significant school improvement that could be replicated at other schools. Please include the data that supports the success of these practices.

Areas you may want to consider, as appropriate:

- Leadership
- Professional Learning
- Instructional Transformation
- Equity
- Culture and Climate Shift
- Collaboration/Partnerships

FSMA is a full-time MCJROTC program for all students grades 9-12. This program focuses on development of leadership, character, and citizenship to provide the students at FSMA with an educational experience that develops the intellectual, physical, and emotional growth of each student through the cultivation of an environment that rewards honesty, integrity, teamwork, and commitment. Along with providing students with strong academics and preparing them for post-secondary education, the MCJROTC program focuses on developing the whole individual. FSMA is also the only school in Delaware who has adopted and implemented NewTech Network and full-time Project Based Learning. Through the utilizations of project based learning, students are developing 21st Century Skills as well as becoming the managers of their own learning process. FSMA is creating the leaders of tomorrow.

FSMA has always believed in the philosophy of culture over content. FSMA has prided itself on the creation of a positive school climate and culture that enables students to be successful in the classroom. While FSMA strives to create rigorous academics and high standardized tests scores, FSMA believes in creating a strong inclusive culture that empowers students through military discipline, citizenship, and the application of strong moral values.



9. Looking Forward: Plans for the Next Charter Term

This section provides the school with an opportunity to discuss plans for the next charter term. Schools should identify any anticipated changes to the school's educational program, governance model, and financial outlook and must identify any proposed changes that would require modification of a material provision in the school's charter contract or that are likely to impact the school's academic or organizational success or its financial sustainability. As a general rule, the school should identify any changes that are relevant or significant with respect to the performance outcomes that the school has agreed to meet or are otherwise relevant to the school's renewal and continued authorization and operation as a public charter school. The authorizer reserves the right to request additional information so that it may sufficiently assess the impact and planning for such changes. Even if proposed changes would occur several years into the next charter term, the authorizer strongly encourages applicants to outline them here.

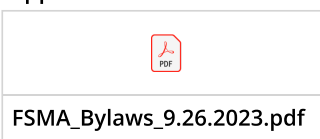
Q57. Describe any significant changes to the essential terms of the school's educational program, including but not limited to the school's mission, course of study, instructional program, grade levels served.

Over the course of the next charter term, FSMA is looking at additional academic offerings to give our students a more diverse course catalog. FSMA will be adding more honors and Advanced Placement courses as well as new and exciting electives such as Digital Media, Photography, and Functional Fitness. FSMA is also currently in the process of developing a new CTE pathway for the State of Delaware, Forensic Science. The goal is that this pathway will be approved for the 2024-2025 school year. FSMA has also added Early College (Wilmington University) courses for the FY24 school year in Computer Science for excelling seniors.

Q58. Describe any anticipated changes to the governance of the school, including but not limited to board composition, committee structure, and/or amendments to by-laws.

The Board's governance model has had some change since in inception to include updates to the by-laws. It was during one of the amendment processes conducted that the Board created a more robust committees structure. This committee structure was recently incorporated into a re-write of the by-laws, adopted by the Board effective 23 September 2023. The Board does not see any significant changes to structure of the school's leadership or how we are organized.

Applicant Evidence :



Uploaded on **9/28/2023** by
Blair Newman

Q59. 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 Board will seek to engage an outside consultant to assess the current performance of the Board and its members. This process will include how accountability of Board members can be achieved using metrics that can be measurable over time, while maintaining effective governance. The Board's current method is focused upon more short-term results. For example, a review of the monthly financials offers direct and important information about the health of the school at that point in time and can provide some projections into the future. However, a longer/strategic view of financials would be to secure significant or on-going grant funding from private sources to support the school's out year goals. The board of directors along with the school administration and staff have begun to create a strategic plan for the next five years. This plan includes areas of academic excellence, being organizationally sound, financial viability, and student health and support and is broken down into goals the school will accomplish each year.

Q60. Describe any anticipated changes to the school leadership or staffing model and any proposed changes to the management of the school, including any changes to the school's relationship with a third-party education service provider, if one exists. If the school does not currently contract with a Charter Management Company but intends to do so during the next charter term, if the school currently contracts with a Charter Management Company but does not intend to continue to do so during the next term, or if the school intends to make material modifications to its existing management agreement, the school must contact the authorizer for additional information prior to the submission of this application.

Not Applicable

Q61. 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 utilizes many of the statewide reports and systems to analyze data and to move forward with making the best decisions possible. Working alongside the Department of Education and the Charter School Office, FSMA will provide any information requested to complete the performance and organizational frameworks. For example, this past year FSMA has incorporated the use of and utilized Data Service Center for easier access to and further transparency with financial information, expenditures, and budget. FSMA will continue to work with the Department of Education and the Charter School Office to utilize any resources that are available and to make sure we are in complete compliance with regulations.

Q62. Describe the current status of the school facility and discuss any anticipated changes in facilities needs or location. Ensure that the budget narrative (Appendix 11) explains how the school's facilities plans are reflected in the budget.

At the current maximum enrollment of 475, the facility as it stands meets the needs of the students and facility. Over the last charter term, there have been minor modifications made to the facility at FSMA. Those improvements include the construction of a new maintenance building, expansion of the parking lot, and replacement of many of the HVAC units on campus. In looking at further needs and improvements, the Board of Directors along with the schools administration team is currently working at the creation of multipurpose space. This space could be the construction of either a pole building or Quonset hut. This space would be utilized by physical education classes, MCJROTC classes, athletics, and used for storage. In the planning stages, to pay for this new facility, the Board of Directors will capital campaign.

9.7. Projected Enrollment


Q63. 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


FS MIL_Projected Enrollme...

Applicant Evidence :


FS MIL_Projected Enrollme...

Uploaded on **9/13/2023** by
Blair Newman

9.8. Measuring Academic Progress

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.

Q64.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.

The First State Military Academy Board and School Leadership Team will measure and evaluate the academic progress of individual students and the school as a whole through the creation of the schools Academic Committee. This committee's member will include the Principal, Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction, Guidance Counselor, Supervisor of Special Education, and minimum of two general education teachers.

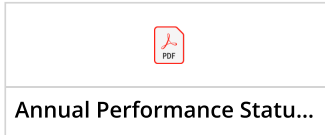
First State Military Academy will measure the success of its students using several indicators. The Academic Committee will create a database to include PSAT/SAT scores, college and career readiness, STAR testing, and AP enrollment and test scores.

As part of teacher professional development, grade level teachers will meet monthly in cohorts to discuss and share success and challenges as well as create strategies for improving the academic success of their students.



Q65. 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.

Applicant Evidence :



Uploaded on **9/26/2023** by
Blair Newman

Q66. 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 variety of additional assessments to gauge cadet learning needs and progress in addition to the mandatory assessments. The Renaissance Star test is given for ELA and Math three times a year and the data from these assessments are reviewed and discussed by content teams to determine areas of need and content areas to further develop. This data is also used by our MTSS team as one factor to determine cadet Tier placement. FSMA uses the Base Education assessment three times a year to determine SEL needs and supports for individual cadets. Along with using this data for MTSS, the guidance counselor and teachers use this data as a starting point for determining the social/emotional support needed by our cadets. In addition, all teachers, regardless of content, use the PBL structure to embed teacher-made assessments in their curriculum. Projects and Problem sets are broken sections called benchmarks that end in a benchmark assessment. Cadets must show mastery of each benchmark in order to progress to the next benchmark or problem set. Teachers also use many formative assessment techniques throughout each benchmark, using embedded tools such as Pear Deck, Deck.Toys, Kahoot, Gimkit, etc. within their lessons to continuously collect data about cadet learning. As part of the New Tech Network PBL framework, all courses use common teaching strategies and rubrics for teachers to provide instruction and feedback on five School Wide Learning Outcomes: Knowledge and Thinking, Agency, Collaboration, Written Communication and Oral Communication. The grade book used in the LMS provides a breakdown of cadet success in each learning outcome, providing valuable data that teachers, cadets, and parents can use to determine what areas a cadet needs improvement in. For example, two cadets may both have 80% in the same class, but by looking at the Learning Outcome breakdown, teachers can see that Cadet A struggles in both written and oral communication, but their content knowledge is strong, so Cadet A needs more support in communicating what they know to improve their grade. By contrast, Cadet B, who also has an overall grade of 80%, has strong communication skills but struggles with Knowledge and Thinking, so the teachers know that they need to work on content knowledge with that particular cadet.

Q67. 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 collects data through several means, including, but not limited to, Star testing, Base Education, SATs, PSATs, DeSSA, and teacher made assessments. The Supervisor of Curriculum and Instruction will collect all of the data from various sources in a centralized location and distribute the relevant data to staff. Content and Grade Level PLCs are expected to analyze and discuss data to determine areas success and need and to determine root causes. Results from these PLCs will be used to inform teaching and learning strategies on an individual teacher level as well as inform decision making on future PD offerings and support from the administrative team. MTSS will look at data on an individual basis to identify cadets that need additional support. Support staff will also look at data to determine how they can best support teachers and cadets in the classroom.

Within the Project and Problem Base Learning framework is routine self-reflection on performance and participation for cadets. The expectation is that each cadet reflect at each benchmark or section of a project or problem set to understand their progress, strengths, and weaknesses. This aligns with one of our School Wide Norms: Seek to solve and learn. Cadets are taught and expected to take ownership of their own learning, which includes monitoring their learning and taking actions to improve.

Finally, all courses heavily utilize our LMS, Echo, for all graded and non-graded activities. This ensures that all stakeholders have one central place to access course materials, grades, and progress. Built into the Echo gradebook are graphs and reports that allow teachers, cadets, and parents to pin point areas of strength and need. Parents are encouraged to regularly monitor cadet work and teacher feedback to help support cadets with their academic achievements.

Q68. 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.

At the end of every year, FSMA will conduct a thorough review of our data to determine whether we have met our goals or not. FSMA will involve the MTSS team responsible for school-wide data collection to identify any root cause for the areas that are not making expected progress and to celebrate areas we have met or exceeded expectations for. If FSMA falls below a performance goal, we will review our school-wide assessments to find if the findings are similar to statewide assessment scores. This analysis would help us identify the root cause of the problem.

Apart from the MTSS and administrative level review, we will also meet with grade level and content area teams to determine possible causes and other factors that may impact our data. As a staff, we will identify targeted interventions to implement and set a time from for additional data and review of that data to determine if the interventions are effective or not. FSMA's review process is on-going, and if required, our corrective action plan would include a thorough data review, identification of key areas to address, determining root causes, and proposing solutions and strategies to fix the problem. In this process, we will involve all necessary stakeholders and create checkpoints to ensure that our plan is working.



10. Compliance Certification Statement

Q69. 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


Q70. Name of the Chairperson of the Board of Directors (or designated signatory authority)

Scott Kidner

Q71. Title (if designated)

Chairman of the Board

Q72. Date of Signature

Tue Sep 26 2023 (Eastern Daylight 



11. Renewal Application Certification Statement

Q73. 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

Q74. Date of signature

Tue Sep 26 2023 (Eastern Daylight)

Q75. Name of Chairperson of Board of Directors (or designated signatory authority)

Scott Kidner

Q76. Title (if designated)

Chairman of the Board

Q77. Date of approval by board of directors

Tue Sep 26 2023 (Eastern Daylight)

