



GATEWAY CHARTER SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT

Report Date: January 15, 2024

Delaware Department of Education

Charter School Office

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I. OVERVIEW

1.1 SCHOOL PROFILE

Gateway Charter School 2501 Centerville Rd, Wilmington, DE 19808 http://www.gatewaylabschool.org/			
Year Opened	2011	District(s) of Residence	Red Clay Consolidated School District
2022-23 Enrollment	186	Approved Enrollment	198
Current Grade Span	K, 3-8	Approved Grade Span	K-8
School Leader(s)	Catherine Dolan	School Leader Phone & Email	(302) 633-4091 Catherine.dolan@gcs.k12.de.us
Board President	Gregory Jones	Board President Email	Gregory.Jones@gcs.k12.de.us
Mission Statement: The mission of Gateway Charter School is to provide an extraordinary educational opportunity for children who are struggling to achieve academic success in a traditional school environment, utilizing research-based intervention strategies and a highly tailored, arts-based learning environment that seeks to identify and capitalize on a student's strengths and interests. To become a resource to the community as a center for the professional development and education of teachers, parents and students by providing access to the latest research-based curriculum, technology and training.			

1.2 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

Enter the number of students on your waiting list (if applicable).

	2022-2023
Total Enrollment	186
Students on Waiting List	0
% Male	59.68%
% Female	40.32%
% African American	59.68%
% American Indian	0%
% Asian	0%
% Hispanic/Latino	12.9%
% White	19.89%
% Multiracial	7.53%
% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0%
% Special Education	41.4%
% English Language Learners	5.38%
% Low-Income	43.55%

1.3 APPROVED MINOR AND MAJOR MODIFICATIONS

Date	Modification Requested	Outcome
12/23/2021	Minor modification to decrease enrollment by 14.7%, effective school year 2022-23	Approved
12/18/20	Major Modification to change its grade configuration from 3-8 to K-8; increase total enrollment from 216 to 264; change its location; and change its name to Gateway Charter School.	Approved

1.4 SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

	Approved Enrollment	30-Sep Enrollment Count	% of Actual Enrollment
K		19	
1			
2			
3		8	
4		22	
5		23	
6		42	
7		31	
8		41	
Total	198	186	94%

1. Explain successes or challenges of implementing the school’s recruitment plan.

School Comments: There have been both successes and challenges for Gateway in implementing its recruitment plan following our 2021 approved modification to add grades KN, 1 and 2. . GCS was successful in filling its Kindergarten seats during the first year and retaining 100% of those students as they moved on to first grade. This achievement is a testament to the school’s effective recruitment strategies and high-quality educational offerings. Over the next two years, we anticipate that our plan to fully enroll students at the elementary level will come to fruition, further solidifying our success.

However, we have also faced challenges. Uneven enrollment remains an issue with the addition of grades KN, 1st, and 2nd due to the gaps in the available grades. This unevenness has required us to continually adapt our recruitment strategies. Additionally, the school

continues to combat the perception that we are a school that is focused on students with behavioral disorders. This perception can deter potential enrollees and requires us to work diligently to communicate the broad and inclusive nature of our educational mission.

1.5 SCHOOL REENROLLMENT

Reenrollment Rate is the percentage of students continuously enrolled in the school from one year to the next.

Grades	NUMBER OF STUDENTS REENROLLED	PERCENT OF STUDENTS REENROLLED
K	19	
1		
2		
3	8	
4	22	83.33%
5	23	80.95%
6	42	81.48%
7	31	62.07%
8	41	78.43%
Total/Avg	107	76.43%

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

School Comments: In terms of challenges, the school continued to experience attrition in the 2022-2023 academic year due to the financial impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on families. Many parents who either did not re-enroll their children did so due to relocating out of state or county to secure sustainable living arrangements with family or friends. Additionally, a shortage of bus drivers led to transportation challenges, prompting some parents to go back to their district schools. In total, 10 first-year students requested a release to return to their district schools due to transportation disruptions.

The school's retention plan has also seen successes. Parents have expressed that their children are flourishing at GCS, which is a positive indicator of the effectiveness of our retention strategies. We have focused our marketing efforts on helping parents to understand our model and its effectiveness with unique learners. The 7-Reasons Why Gateway may be Right for your Child provides an overview of the students we serve. (Appendix 1- 7-Reasons Why)

II. 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 \(DSSF\)](#) 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](#).

- 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)

2.1 DELAWARE SCHOOL SUCCESS FRAMEWORK – SY 2022-2023

Indicators	Weight	Metric Value	Points Possible	Points Earned
Academic Achievement	30%		150	12 Well Below Expectations
Proficiency ELA (grades 3-8)	15%	10.61%	75	8
Proficiency Math (grades 3-8)	15%	5.75%	75	4
Academic Progress	40%		175	76 Well Below Expectations
Growth in ELA (grades 4-8)	15%	39.60%	75	30
Growth in Math (grades 4-8)	15%	43.36%	75	33
Growth of lowest quartile ELA (grades 4-8)	2.50%	55.29%	12.5	7
Growth of highest quartile ELA (grades 4-8)	2.50%	27.50%	N/A	*
Growth of lowest quartile Math (grades 4-8)	2.50%	50.07%	12.5	6
Growth of highest quartile Math (grades 4-8)	2.50%	62.20%	N/A	*
School Quality/Student Success	20%		75	34 Well Below Expectations
On Track Attendance (grade K-12)	10%	67.98%	50	34
Proficiency Science (Grades 5 and 8)	5%	1.08%	25	0
Proficiency Social Studies (Grades 4 and 7)	5%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Progress toward English Language Proficiency	10%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	100%		400	122
Overall Percentage / Rating				30.50% Well Below Expectations

2.2 ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT

By September 2024, 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 expectation. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

3. 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) 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

School Comments:

Gateway’s Mission Specific Goal is to meet or exceed all of the standards set forth in the alternative framework established by the State Board of Education. By September 2024, our expectation is to achieve an overall rating of “Meets Requirements” 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.

GCS is a school dedicated to supporting students who may find conventional learning environments challenging. Our students often arrive with gaps in their education. For the 2022-2023 school year, GCS students fell well below expectations in both reading and math proficiency and progress. A substantial 43% of our students at Gateway have Individual Education Plans (IEPs).

To address these challenges, we have collaborated with experts in literacy and math to offer research-based guidance and coaching to our staff. The addition of a Math Coach to our team three years ago has already shown positive results in our student’s math progress. This coach has been instrumental in providing ongoing professional development to our teachers through in-class coaching and modeling.

Furthermore, GCS was recently awarded an Accelerate Learning grant. We are now working with a Literacy Specialist from the University of Delaware, who is offering similar reading training to our teachers. We are committed to improving our students’

learning outcomes and are optimistic about the progress we are making.

One the highlights to the Academic Progress of our students for SY2022-23, was the school-wide addition of the Illustrative Math Curriculum. Illustrative Math was recommended to us by DEDOE and fits in well with our arts-integrated model. We saw 43% of our students in grades 4-8 achieve growth in math, with the higher achieving math students growing the fastest. In reading, 52% of students met their growth goal. Another highlight for the school year was that the average participation rate for GCS students taking their Smarter Balance assessments was high:

- ELA – 153/158 or 98% of students were tested
- Math – 157/158 or 99% of students were tested
- Science – 52/56 or 93% of students were tested
- Social Studies – 55/57 or 98% of students were tested
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The cumulative results for all tests were 197/206 or 95.6%. (Appendix 2-MAP Scores)

The School's Quality/Student Success rating is Well Below Expectations. We recognize that 32% of GCS students were chronically absent. This percentage equates to 14 students. As a small school, these student's absences drastically affected our numbers. Ten students were on our rolls for a period although they transferred to other schools. We were unable to remove them because it took months in some instances to receive requests for transfers from their receiving schools. GCS administration has continued to work toward a solution to reduce absenteeism. Parents and Guardians receive regular phone calls when students are chronically absent and are ultimately taken to truancy court once their children reach the number of absences outlined in our code of conduct.

2.3 SUPPLEMENTAL ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE DATA

4. 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 3.

School Comments: In middle school, teachers are using standards based grading (particularly in the math curriculum). They are using Illustrative Math’s and HQIM assessments. Using the standards based grading rubric of:

- 4/A – Exceeds standard expectation
- 3/B – Meets standard expectation
- 2/C – Progressing toward standard expectation

We are collecting data to support the teachers to provide effective data-based instruction.

See Appendix 3-The Science of Reading

GCS is currently benefitting greatly from the coaching and instruction being provided by Dr. Jamie True Daley Ed.D through the Accelerate Learning grant from DEDOE. Her focus is on the Science of Reading. The Science of Reading is not curriculum. It is the scientific evidence that should inform our teaching practices and instructional material choices. The final piece of Dr. Daley’s work will be reviewing HQIM choices and training for the Fall.

See Appendix 4 – Literacy Leaps Agenda

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5. 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 below how the school will address the challenges.

School Comments: The combined GCS mission and vision is a holistic approach to the education of children. The main component parts of our mission and vision can be seen in the graphic located in *Appendix 3*.

As a school, we are charged with addressing the key components of the Culture & Environment, Instructional Core and Resources to support this model. But, the heart of our educational community is the teacher, content and relation to the students.

Successes

Some examples of our successes not captured by the DSSF include:

- Students like and are motivated by seeing their progress on the NWEA MAP tests.
- Significant growth in reading by students that participate in Wilson Reading and Failure Free reading supports.
- Civic and community service activities, including student government and participation in Youth in City government annually.

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- Arts enrichment through partnerships with the Delaware Division of the Arts (DDoA), Delaware Institute for Arts in Education (DiAE) and University of Delaware. Students attended performances at local theatres that coincided with visits from artists-in-residence to help students make connections to the performances (Black Angels over Tuskegee, Kings of Harlem and Suite Blackness).
 - Partnering with local schools and organizations to provide opportunities for students to perform (Delaware Music Educator’s Assn – Let’s Make Music festival at William Penn H.S., Wilmington Blue Rocks performance, workshop with Cab Calloway Steel band)
 - Providing opportunities for students to acquire background knowledge and share memorable moments through fun field trips, e.g. include Skyzone, roller-skating, Hersey Park, in-school staycation parties, Tennis in the streets.

Challenges and how we are addressing them.

- Low test scores on DESSA
 - o Implement IAB – Principal and Math Coach met with Katia Foret on how to implement IABs.
 - o Adding HQIM for ELA
- Parental involvement and understanding of their role in their child’s education/absentee rate
 - o Establishment of the role of Home/School Resource Coordinator, including homeroom parents and Parent Ambassadors
- Limited student background knowledge
 - o Expanding student horizons through arts-integration, Artist in Residence programs and continuing out of school experiences as listed above.

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6. 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.

School Comments: Our academic-related indicators have led to several notable achievements and also posed certain challenges.

Successes include:

- Reduction in incidences of behavior due to a school-wide focus on social-emotional learning and a character education through the school's Gladiator Expectations
- Promoting student wellness through hearing, vision, and dental screenings in collaboration with community partners
- Responsive Classroom SEL curriculum provides collaborative team building opportunities.
- Additional counseling support groups – Supporting Kidds – ran two grief support groups for 12 students that lost primary caregivers.
- Meeting the needs of LI students with free breakfast and lunch and the Food Bank of DE Backpack program
- Experiential learning opportunities through field-trips e.g. - Kalmar Nickle, JA Biztown, Youth in City Government, Let's Make Music Festival, Tennis in the Streets

Challenges:

- A large percentage of students are experiencing challenges in their home life and we see a decline in parenting skills. We have implemented the role of Home-School Resource Coordinator. The H-S Resource Coordinator's role is to provide opportunities for caregivers to engage in the life of their children and to identify and provide resources to GCS families.
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III. ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The Organizational Performance Framework reflects expectations the charter school is required to meet through state and federal law and the charter performance agreement, and seeks to provide information regarding these key questions:

- Is the school organizationally sound and well operated?
- Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations and sound public stewardship?
- Is the school meeting its obligations and expectations for appropriate access, education, support services, and outcomes for students with disabilities?

3.1 ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE FRAMEWORK

SUMMARY AND OVERALL RATINGS

YEAR	Education Program				Governance & Reporting			Students & Staff		Facilities, Transportation, Health, & Safety	OVERALL RATING
	Mission Fidelity	Applicable State & Federal Requirements	Students with Disabilities	English Learners	Governance & Public Stewardship	Oversight & School Management	Reporting & Requirements	Student Rights	Teacher Certification and Hiring		
	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	3a	3b		
2022-23	M	M	M	AS	M	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard

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

3.2 ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT

By September 2024, 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.

7. Describe the school’s organizational performance during school year 2022-23. (This section is for the school to address any overall rating where the school has not met standards. The school will be able to address individual metrics in the sections below.)

School Comments: Not Applicable

8. Discuss management and operations successes and challenges during the 2022-23 school year. 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
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9. Address any measure(s) where the school did not meet standard or is approaching standard (if applicable).

School Comments: Gateway was given an ‘Approaching Standard’ rating for its English Learners program. Following a consultation with the department responsible for English Learners, we recognized the need for more precise language in our parent communications. In September 2023, our MLL Coordinator, Doreen Rathmell, sent a letter to parents in both English and Spanish outlining MLL services. However, the letter lacked the necessary detail.

In addition to the letter, we also held Zoom meetings with parents. Ms. Rathmell conducted two of these meetings with the assistance of a Spanish interpreter. The meetings focused on maximizing the benefits of parent-teacher conferences and understanding the ACCESS test. Ms. Rathmell also participated in the parent-teacher conferences of MLL students.

Taking into account feedback from Cary Knight, an MLL Education Specialist at DEDOE, we plan to adopt the MLL department’s template for parent communications. Furthermore, we will annually report the graduation rate of GCS alumni students.

3.3 AT-RISK STUDENTS, STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES, AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

10. 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.

School Comments: As noted above, in a recent conversation with the MLL department at DEDOE, we will implement the additional requirements for our MLL students.

11. 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.

School Comments: At the beginning of SY2022-2023, we identified 12 students who lost primary caregivers over the last two years. Our counselor, principal and Dean of Students observed that these students were dealing with unresolved grief. The school contracted with Supporting Kidds to hold two 12-week support groups (one elementary and one middle school). For the second year, Out of the Ashes, a non-profit organization that addresses the effects of absent and incarcerated parents, gave a drama presentation to GCS students. The powerful presentation identified students that needed additional counseling support to deal with their feelings around having an absent parent(s).

A practice that continues to show success for our students is restructuring MTSS groups to focus more on skills/needs-based instruction. We also added clinics for students on grade level. Students who met grade level expectations received visual arts, music classes and sports clinics. All information, skills and lessons are set to each student's individual needs.

The evidence of the success of the resources that we provided to address the issues experienced by our students is the school-wide reduction in behavior disruptions and suspensions.

12. 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.

School Comments: Beyond the procedure outlined in question 9, our MLL Coordinator and assistant manage an International Club for MLL students, offering them further experiential learning opportunities. We held two virtual parent meetings during the academic year to clarify the purpose of ACCESS testing and to emphasize the significance of attending parent/teacher conferences. All sessions were provided with translators. Notably, last year, two of our MLL students successfully completed their MLL services.

3.4 GOVERNANCE AND REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

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

School Comments: Our board members provide oversight in academics, finance, operations, and legal compliance through their participation on the school's various board committees and task forces. These include the Citizen's Budget Oversight Committee (CBOC), Operations and Sustainability Committee (OSC), Fundraising Committee and the Expansion Task Force.

14. Discuss board-related success and challenges during school year 2022-23. 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 Comments: Successes related to the board encompass a high rate of board member participation in monthly meetings and the successful execution of a 5-year Strategic Plan. This plan was a result of a collaborative effort involving the board, administrators, teachers, and parents.

On the other hand, the challenges encountered include the recruitment of board members with a diverse range of expertise, as well as the recruitment of parent board members.

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

School Comments: Each year in the Spring, the board evaluates the Head of School using a 360-degree evaluation process that involves surveys completed by teachers and staff. A board committee reviews the staff responses and completes an evaluation and in-person review with the HOS.

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

School Comments: Gateway hired Meece & Associates in SY 2022-2023 to facilitate the completion of a new 5-year strategic plan. The strategic pillar: Leadership calls for the board to approve a succession plan for key staff members such as HOS, Principal, IT manager and business manager. The succession plan for the Business Manager is operational and the completion date for the other key positions is TBD.

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

School Comments: The school benefits greatly from the active involvement of its board members in fundraising activities. Annually, each board member makes a financial contribution that holds personal value to him or her and participates in yearly fundraising events such as Giving Tuesday and DoMore23. They extend their support by reaching out to their personal networks for additional donations.

Their commitment is further demonstrated by their presence at school events and performances, including the Meet and Greet, Winter Concert, and Spring Arts Festival. Beyond financial contributions and presence, board members leverage their professional and community networks to create beneficial opportunities for both students and staff.

Throughout the year, they have facilitated valuable connections with organizations like Tech Impact/IT Works and Capital One.

3.5 STUDENTS AND SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

18. 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?

School Comments: Each year the school conducts an online Parent Survey. The 2022-2023 parent survey showed that 58.3% of parents rated their overall satisfaction with their choice of GCS for their child as Very Satisfied, 33.3% as Satisfied and 8.3% rated their satisfaction of Neutral. Formal and unsolicited feedback has been very positive overall.

A student survey was not done in SY 2022-2023, however written and verbal feedback from parents is overwhelmingly positive that their children feel safe, secure, and valued at Gateway. Here are a few comments shared recently:

Happy mama tears flowed after dropping Chase off today. As a parent of a child who has needs, the only thing you want more than anything is for your child to be accepted by peers. This morning, Chase bolted out of the car (which is not typical at all! 😊😊 we call him personal pace chase) and ran to catch up with a peer. That peer gave him a side hug and was screaming Chase, Chase!!! My heart exploded! Thank you for this and kudos for being such a great school!!!!

Gateway is succeeding in giving children an education facility where everyone feels equal. Equally smart, equally appreciated, equally challenged, equally praised.

JAMES IS REALLY LOVING HIGH SCHOOL SO FAR. HE JUST MADE DISTINGUISHED HONORS!!! WE ARE SO PROUD OF HIM AND I KNOW THAT ALL OF YOU ARE PART OF THE REASON HE HAS BEEN SUCCESSFUL. HE HAS BEEN ADVOCATING FOR HIMSELF, MESSAGING HIS TEACHERS AND LEARNING SUPPORT COACHES FOR HELP AND REALLY STARTING TO WORK INDEPENDENTLY. HE MONITORS HIS GRADES HIMSELF ON HAC. HE EVEN JOINED THE DRUMLINE! THANKS SO MUCH FOR THE ACADEMIC, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL PREPARATION YOU GAVE JAMES.

All surveys are reviewed by administrators and shared with the School Leadership Team, staff, and the board of directors.

3.6 TEACHER RETENTION

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

Note: Complete the table below.

SCHOOL YEAR	PERCENT OF TEACHERS RETAINED	NUMBER OF TEACHERS RETAINED	NUMBER OF TEACHERS ELIGIBLE
2022-23	95%	16	17

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

School Comments: For SY 2022-23 there was 95% voluntary teacher retention. Two teacher positions were eliminated due to a reconfiguration of grades and one teacher moved out of state. The success of our teacher retention is found in the community that our administrators have created for teachers and staff. Teachers have expressed that our administrators provide strong leadership and encourage and provide opportunities for their professional development. We have seen several teachers leave GCS for higher paying teaching jobs in and out of state and return to GCS for less pay because of the school's supportive environment.

Teacher comments from a recent 360-degree evaluation include:

~This is the best group of administration (sic) that I have ever been a part of, hard to believe that I will ever find another group like this one anywhere else.

~Ms. Dolan encourages staff, creates a positive, inviting, supportive work environment, espouses lifelong learning, and works tirelessly to ensure everyone can grow and the school is safe for everyone. She also seeks workable solutions to challenges. She seeks to balance meeting individual needs with maintaining coherence across the building.

20. Describe how the school's professional development plans have evolved to support teachers and leadership.

School Comments: Gateway has enjoyed a multi-year relationship with teaching artists through the school's partnerships with the Delaware Division of the Arts, Delaware Institute for Arts in Education (DiAE), and Lynnette Overby, PhD, a Professor of Theatre and Dance at the University of Delaware. Each year, teachers are immersed in a specific art-form

(music, dance, drama, visual) which includes monthly professional development and lesson planning.

The school's professional development is a blend of continuity and fresh approaches. Building on the school's foundation of arts-integration and helping students develop social-emotional skills, teachers are provided professional development on both approaches annually. Teachers and Specialists new to Gateway attend four-days of Responsive Classroom (SEL) training over the summer. Existing teachers are provided the opportunity to take advanced RC courses in person or virtually.

During the school year, teachers received professional development and coaching in Illustrative Math, the math curriculum that was recently adopted for all grades. Teachers also benefitted from lesson planning and in-class coaching with our Math Coach. The result has been improved math scores for our students and a reduction in the number of students needing intervention. (See Appendix 5 – GCS NWEA MAP Results 2021-2023)

21. Describe how the school's completion of educator evaluations has evolved.

School Comments: GCS school administrators participated in five days of training for the new educator evaluation system – DTGSS. All teachers are being evaluated under the new system.

IV. 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.

4.1 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	
2022-23	M	M	M	M	F	F	AS	AS	Not Rated	M	Meets Standard

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

4.2 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT

By September 2024, our expectation is to achieve an overall rating of “Meets,” as measured by the Financial Performance Framework. Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate performance aligned with those financial performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

22. Using the results contained in the Financial Performance Framework, describe the school’s financial performance during school year 2022-23. (This section is for the school to address any overall rating where the school has not met standard. The school will be able to address individual metrics in the sections below).

School Comments: Gateway received an overall rating of Meets Standards for the 2022-2023 Financial framework.

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

School Comments: At the end of SY 2022-2023 GCS administration evaluated the school's transportation expense and decided to reduce the number of buses by more than half. This decision saved the school over \$300,000. Additionally, the school was able to renegotiate its lease resulting in a continuing 3-year lease with no changes to terms or cost.

24. Address any measure(s) where the school did not meet the standard (if applicable).

School Comments: Gateway failed to meet the standard in the Aggregated Three-year Total Margin and Cash Flow on its SY2022-2023 Financial Framework. This was primarily due to an unfunded transportation mandate. GCS received \$994.69 per student for transportation, while the actual cost per student was \$3,005.

Other factors contributing to this rating include the ongoing variability in the local per-pupil amount, as school districts have been spending less than in previous years. This has resulted in the use of one-time funds to bridge the gap where resources were insufficient. Lastly, the influx of ESSER funds resulted in a giveback of \$64,000 in IDEA-B funds under the MOE provision.

Gateway was rated as 'Approaching Standard' for Enrollment Variance. In December 2020, GCS sought and received approval to extend its services to grades K, 1 & 2, starting with kindergarten in the 2022-2023 school year. The kindergarten class was fully enrolled for that school year. The total enrollment of the school was adjusted or "right sized" during this modification, based on historical data. We are optimistic that by gradually filling in the early elementary grades, we will effectively address the school's enrollment challenges and achieve full enrollment within the next one to two years. GCS also received an Approaching Standard' for Debt Service Coverage Ratio, however, we have no debt.

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

School Comments: There were no findings for Gateway's FY 2022-2023 audit.

V. INNOVATIVE PRACTICES

26. 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

School Comments:

Gateway Charter School stands out as the sole public school in Delaware that utilizes the Wilson Reading System (WRS), a program typically found in private schools or offered by private tutors. Since our inception, we've incorporated Wilson Reading into our model. The success of our students in this program led us to invest in Wilson training and certification for one of our lead teachers. Wilson Reading is available to all students who have difficulties with decoding. The outcome has been remarkable, with students consistently showing significant growth and often surpassing their grade-level reading goals.

Another effective research-based reading intervention we've used is Failure Free Reading (FFR). This program, which focuses on comprehension, has led to substantial progress among our students. Most students begin the program several grade levels behind, with some at the pre-primer level and others starting as non-readers. Typically, they achieve improvements of one to two grade levels per year using one or both of these reading interventions.

Key strategies integral to the Gateway model, which could be adopted by other schools, include:

- Integration of arts into core subjects
- Small class sizes
- Individualized instruction tailored to each student's learning style
- Social/emotional learning through Responsive Classroom
- Providing support groups tailored to specific needs to address trauma experienced by students.
- Rigorous professional development for teachers and paraprofessionals on methods to teach and assist students with diverse needs
- Adding time for staff to receive resilience training and team-building opportunities

-
- A school-wide Success Block, a 45-minute period when all students receive MTSS services

About 41% of our students have an Individualized Education Plan (IEPs). Traditional testing methods don't fully capture our students' educational achievements. Parents of Gateway students have shared that the school provides a safe and nurturing environment that helps students overcome their anxieties and fear of failure, fostering a love of learning. The support and care our students receive from our teachers and staff lay the groundwork for them to build confidence in their abilities and advocate for themselves as they transition to high school and college.

VI. ANNUAL REPORT CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Name of School:	Gateway Charter School
Location:	2501 Centerville Rd. Wilmington, DE 19808

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

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

Date

Gregory W. Jones

1-16-24

Print/Type Name:	Gregory Jones
Title (if designated):	Board President
Date of approval by board of directors:	1/16/2024



7 REASONS WHY GATEWAY CHARTER SCHOOL MAY BE RIGHT FOR YOUR UNIQUE LEARNER

1. My child's grades do not accurately represent his/her capabilities.

Unique learners can be challenged academically due to multiple obstacles they may face in the classroom. Many children retain information better through experiential (hands-on) learning versus learning linguistically (reading and lecture), which is the predominant method of instruction in a traditional classroom environment. The technological age in which we live allows students to explore areas of interest independently through the internet; however what is missing is learning how to apply what they are learning to their academics and real life. Furthermore, some students require accommodations like modified text, preferred seating arrangements, or use of a keyboard to help close the learning gap. At Gateway, every teacher is equipped to assess the unique needs of each student, identify their individual learning potential, and put into action a tailored plan.

The following video provides an overview of the Gateway model: <https://youtu.be/msl8kD0p5sA>

2. My child performs better in small group settings.

The small class size enjoyed by students at Gateway provides an environment for teachers to get up close and personal with their students. The average teacher to student ratio at Gateway is 1:15 in the regular classroom with smaller groups of 1:2 to 1:6 during schoolwide Success Block. Gateway teachers receive the on-going professional development that they need to address our student's specific needs. In addition to our teachers, there are para-professionals in the classroom that assist our students in their small groups.

3. My child retains information better with “hands-on” learning.

Teachers at Gateway receive on-going training and support on ways to make their lesson plans engaging and relevant to students through the use of hands-on, arts-infused, interactive instruction. Whether using technology to create a paperless classroom with dynamic educational apps or good, old-fashioned dress-up and role-play, Gateway students are learning in an experiential way that helps to connect theory and application of the subject matter. This type of learning goes beyond rote memorization and helps students to use critical thinking skills that are necessary for the retention of information long term.

See the following information about Kinesthetic Learners: [What Is A Kinesthetic Learner? \(bau.edu\)](http://bau.edu)

4. My child is socially awkward or shy and struggles making friends.

At Gateway Charter School, we have utilized the Responsive Classroom© curriculum for all our grades for over 12 years. The Responsive Classroom© approach blends students’ social and emotional growth right into their academic learning. We’re firm believers that the best kind of learning happens when students get to interact with each other and when they’re taught social and emotional skills hand in hand with their academic lessons. It’s all about creating a holistic learning experience!

Our students kick-start their day by building a sense of community with their peers and homeroom teacher during a daily Morning Meeting. During these meetings, students collaborate to establish classroom rules and engage in team-building activities that foster respect and trust among classmates, encouraging them to take responsibility for their actions. This social/emotional methodology enables our teachers to understand their students on a deeper level and creates a learning environment with consistent expectations for the students.

Moreover, Gateway provides students with opportunities to connect over shared interests through participation in various school sports and clubs. We offer a range of in-school and after-school activities, including but not limited to, Running Club, Volleyball, Basketball, Drumming Club, Chorus, Youth in City Government, Student Leadership, and Coding Club.

5. My child needs focused intervention with reading and/or math.

Multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) strategies are used at GCS with a focus on assisting each student to bridge any existing gaps in reading and/or math. At the start of the school year, every student undergoes an assessment to identify if any interventions are necessary. Following this, students are grouped with peers of similar abilities during the Success Block.

Teachers monitor each student’s progress regularly and conduct NWEA MAP assessments. The intervention curriculum comprises IXL Math, Wilson Reading System®, and Failure Free Reading™. Besides the mandatory annual statewide Smarter Balanced assessment for Delaware students, we measure our students’ progress up to three times a year through the NWEA Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) assessment.

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302-633-4091

The data from the MAP assessment enables teachers to identify any deficiencies during the year and promptly address them. Visit the Wilson Reading System® website to learn more about this approach to help struggling readers: <http://www.wilsonlanguage.com/programs/wilson-reading-system/>

6. My child has lost his/her motivation to attend school.

As a unique learner progresses through elementary school, they might start to feel out of place or lost in their classroom. They could face challenges in maintaining focus and attention, or struggle with understanding concepts, causing them to lag behind their peers. They might sense the frustration of teachers and parents who are trying to help them overcome their learning barriers through extra time, tutoring, and accommodations. When a child starts to feel anxious or develop negative emotions around their learning difficulties, they might “check out” and lose interest in engaging at school, a place where they feel unsuccessful and unsure about how to meet the expectations of teachers and parents.

At Gateway Charter School, our focus is on identifying what each of our students needs to succeed, based on their unique abilities and strengths. We use proven, research-based strategies in a nurturing, safe, and secure environment. Our teachers use teaching methods that work for each student, empowering them to understand their strengths and challenges. This understanding helps them advocate for themselves and articulate what they need to succeed as they move on to high school, college, or work.

7. My child is doing well academically but requires lots of help in maintaining focus and staying organized.

Even the most academically gifted student can have their progress hindered by an inability to stay focused and organized. In a traditional classroom setting, teachers often find it challenging when a student can't remain seated for extended periods or frequently gets off task and fails to complete assignments. Parents of students with attention deficits may face similar frustrations while trying to help their child stay organized. This includes locating lost or misplaced assignments and supplies, keeping track of homework and project due dates, and maintaining communication. Often, it may seem like the child is “not trying hard enough” because their academic performance doesn't reflect their true capabilities.

Gateway teachers use a variety of teaching methods to engage students who struggle with attention. Hands-on, experiential lessons help pique the student's interest in the subject matter. The small class size ensures that each student is within the teacher's view, allowing for timely redirection as needed.

Read more about strategies for students with ADHD in and out of the classroom at Additudemag.com: [Strategies for Students with ADHD: Ideas to Help Kids Shine \(additudemag.com\)](http://additudemag.com/Strategies-for-Students-with-ADHD-Ideas-to-Help-Kids-Shine)

If you felt yourself nodding in agreement with any of these “reasons” for considering Gateway for your child, give us a call at 302-633-4091 or visit our website at www.gatewaycharterschoolde.org for more information. Gateway is a public, tuition-free charter school open to Delaware students in grades KN-8, located in suburban Wilmington, DE. We invite you to visit during one of our scheduled open houses, or give us a call to set up a personalized tour. We are ready to answer all your questions about Gateway Charter School and discuss how we can support your unique learner in their journey to success!

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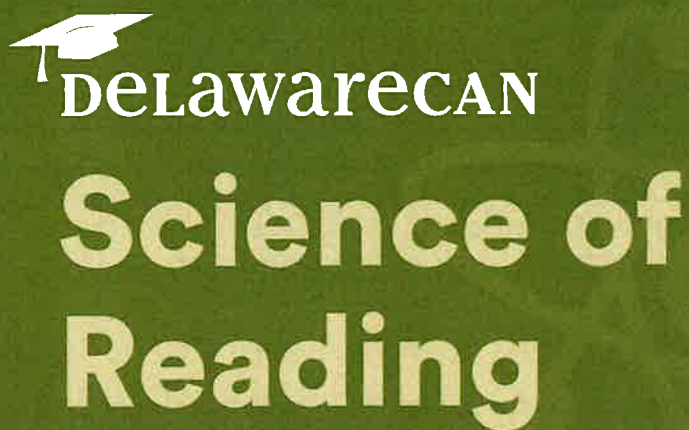
Below are the MAP scores for students who began the year in green.

2022-2023 Reading Data

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Students who met their growth goal</u>	<u>Students that met grade level</u>
<u>3</u>	6/8	50%
<u>4</u>	8/20	15%
<u>5</u>	8/21	14%
<u>6</u>	9/38	34%
<u>7</u>	13/30	37%
<u>8</u>	11/39	26%
<u>Total</u>	55/156 or 41%	28%

2022-2023 Math Data

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Students who met their growth goal</u>	<u>Students that met grade level</u>
<u>3</u>	6/8	0%
<u>4</u>	10/20	0%
<u>5</u>	11/21	9%
<u>6</u>	20/38	16%
<u>7</u>	16/30	17%
<u>8</u>	21/39	15%
<u>Total</u>	84/156 or 52%	12%



DELAWARECAN

Science of Reading



What is the “Science of Reading?”

The “science of reading” refers to the wealth of evidence-based research that demonstrates how children learn to read and the type of instructional practices that can get them there.

Structured Literacy is the instructional practice that children need to become strong readers. Explicit systematic teaching of Structured Literacy means that concepts (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension) are clearly explained and modeled. The actions of the teacher are clear, direct and visible. Systematic teaching means lessons are carefully planned and sequenced. It also means that the lessons build on what students have already learned and move from simple to complex. This approach is helpful for all students and can be beneficial not only for students with reading disabilities, but also for other at-risk students including English learners.

The “science of reading” is not a curriculum. It is the scientific evidence that should inform our teaching practices and instructional materials choices.

Want to learn more about what good instructional practices look like? Watch this [video](#) that breaks down the Structured Literacy concept.

How have we veered away from the Science of Reading?

In the early 1990’s, Balanced Literacy became popular in classrooms and teacher preparation programs in an attempt to “blend together” aspects of whole language instruction and phonics. Although Balanced Literacy includes phonics, it is often not systematically incorporated nor taught explicitly, leaving students to guess when they come across unfamiliar words. Over 68% of educators reported using balanced literacy in their classrooms in a 2019 survey conducted by EdWeek.

Want to see what poor instructional practices look like in action? Watch these Purple Challenge videos that explain how balanced literacy can show up in your child’s books and reading assignments.

[The Purple Challenge Part 1](#)
[The Purple Challenge Part 2](#)

How is Delaware Improving Early Literacy?

In August 2022, House Bill 304 was signed into law. This legislation seeks to improve Delaware's approach to reading instruction, aligning it to the science of reading and building a strong foundation in literacy for students in kindergarten through third grade. This legislation also seeks to ensure that struggling readers are identified early through high-quality reading screeners then provided the instruction they need to get on track. Arguably most critically, teachers will be provided with professional development and coaching opportunities to transform policy into practice (i.e. Structured Literacy).

This legislation will dramatically change the student experience for students in grades kindergarten through three. All students will participate in universal reading screening three times a year to identify potential reading deficiencies. The outcome of this screening process will allow for early intervention and prevention.

Parents of students in grades kindergarten through three will experience these changes when their school notifies them of their child's reading screening results. Notification may be done through existing communications like progress reports. Additionally, schools must report, by grade, the number of students in kindergarten through grade three determined to have potential reading deficiencies and the intervention approaches being utilized.

How Can I Get Involved?

Parents of early learners will now have more information on the reading progress of their students. Hold your child's teacher accountable to sharing not only the results of the reading screeners, but more importantly to sharing with you how they are changing practice to get your child on track to reading on grade level by the end of third grade. Even before your student participates in the reading screening process, email your child's principal and ask if the school is using materials aligned with structured literacy. Ask your child's teacher if they are using the three-cueing system, and if the answer is "yes," follow up with your teacher and school administrators and ask them to consider transitioning to structured literacy.

Literacy Leaps @ Gateway Charter School

Jaime True Daley, Ed. D.
Assistant Director
School Success Center



Agenda

When	What	How
Nov. 13 8:00-8:30 11:30-2:30	Introductions and a summary of the science of reading and writing	Interactive presentation and group practice Needs and interest inventory survey Good will tour
Dec. 4 8:00-8:30 8:45-12:00	Microcredentials Overview and Credential 1	Demonstrations and Practice Coaching, co-teaching, co-planning
Dec. 18 8:00-8:30 8:45-12:00	Microcredential 2 & Coaching HQIM Review	Demonstrations and Practice Coaching, co-teaching, co-planning
Jan-May 2024 2* month	Microcredentials & Coaching HQIM Review	Demonstrations and Practice Coaching, co-teaching, co-planning
Summer 2024	HQIM Review and Training	Professional Learning Structures



Session Objectives

By the end of this session, participants will be able to:

- Review self-determined learning and the cognitive model of reading and writing
- Share interests in learning and acquiring literacy microcredentials
- Preview the Phonological Awareness microcredential and requirements
- Define and explore resources for teaching phonological awareness



Professional Learning Standard

CURRICULUM, ASSESSMENT, AND INSTRUCTION

Professional learning results in **equitable and excellent outcomes for all students** when educators prioritize high-quality curriculum and instructional materials for students, assess student learning, and understand curriculum and implement through instruction.

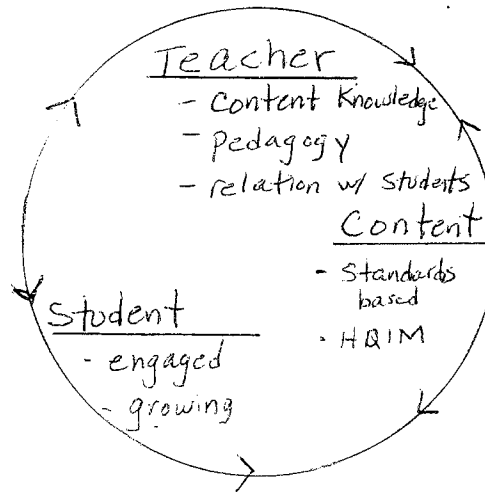


[Link to revised Professional Learning Standards.](#)

Mission + Vision of GCS

Culture / Environment

- title I
- 50% IEP
- 90%+ attendance



Instructional Core

- systems / Curriculum
 - measurement of progress
 - MAP* : norm reference data
 - DSSF : criterion reference data
- * At least 80% meet expected growth goal
90% exceeds expectation
- Show 60% improvement between fall + Spring administrations

Resources

- human capital
- financial
- instructional
- behavioral supports

Appendix 6

Gateway Charter School NWEA MAP Results 2021-2023

Percentage of Students in need of Instructional Intervention (Tiers 3 and 2)* vs. Classroom regular instruction only (Tier 1)*

Subject	Spring '21	Fall '21	Spring '22	Fall '22	Spring '23	Fall'23
Instructional Level (Tier)	3 2 1	3 2 1	3 2 1	3 2 1	3 2 1	3 2 1
Math	70 15 15	59 23 18	72 16 12	66 19 15	63 22 15	57 26 17
Reading	53 22 25	49 28 23	49 22 29	41 26 33	45 25 30	38 26 36

Statistical Conclusion:

Students needing Tier 3 Intervention dropped in Math from 70% to 57%

Students needing Tier 3 Intervention dropped in Reading from 53% to 38%

Students needing Tier 2 Instruction increased in Math from 15% to 26%.

Students needing Tier 2 Instruction increased in Reading from 22% to 26%

Students in regular Tier 1 instruction needing no intervention in Math increased from 15% to 17%.

Students in regular Tier 1 instruction needing no intervention in Reading increased from 25% to 36%

*Tier 1- Regular classroom instruction sufficient to move students to grade level performance. These are students who score in the 41 percentile and above on MAP or similar testing.

*Tier 2- Small group interventional instruction supplemented in MTSS to bridge the gap on grade level performance. These are students who score in the 21-40 percentile on MAP testing.

*Tier 3-Very small group/individualized instruction supplemented in MTSS to decrease the gap on grade level performance. These are students who score in the 1-20 percentile on MAP testing.