

CHARTER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY COMMITTEE

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



**ASPIRA - Georgetown
New Charter Application
Final Report
CSAC Final Meeting- December 19, 2024**

Members of the Charter School Accountability Committee (CSAC) met with representatives from ASPIRA-Georgetown on December 19, 2024, for the CSAC final meeting to address the approval criteria set forth in 14 Del Code 512.

The following attended the final meeting of CSAC on December 19, 2024:

Voting Committee Members

- Kim Klein, Associate Secretary, Operations Support
- Aimee Beam, Education Associate, School Support
- Gregory Fulkerson, Education Associate, Academic Support
- Tiffany Green, Education Associate, Workforce Support
- Brook Hughes, Education Associate, Operations Support
- Ted Molin, Community Member
- Preston Shockley, Education Associate, Academic Support

Ex-Officio Members (Non-voting)

- Shawn Brittingham, Delaware State Board of Education
- Kendall Massett, Executive Director, Delaware Charter School Network

Staff to the Committee (Non-voting)

- Alicia Balcerak, Administrative Assistant III-I, Charter School Office
- John Carwell, Education Associate, Charter School Office
- Leroy Travers, Director, Charter School Office

Representatives of Aspira Charter School

- Jose Aviles-Rivera, Head of School
- Kelli Cruz, Director of Finance
- Guillermina Gonzalez, Board President
- Margie Lopez-Waite, Chief Executive Officer
- Debbie Panchisin, Chief Academic Officer
- Greg Panchisin, Chief Operating Officer
- Kim White, Director of Educational Enrichment

Ms. Klein stated that the purpose of this meeting was to discuss the new charter application with the applicant, ask any follow-up questions, and explore remaining areas of concern based on CSAC's final review of the written application.

Ms. Klein asked CSAC if there were any final questions for the school. Mr. Fulkerson asked where they anticipated most of their students to come from and how ASPIRA planned to address their needs, particularly those unmet by their home district.

The school collected 273 interest petitions. Those were collected with zip codes, but without home districts. These petitions were collected from community events within the town of Georgetown and throughout the county. Many of the petitions collected within the town of

Georgetown were from Hispanic families, however, those collected from other events were from a diverse population.

The team has spoken with families that are happy that an immersion program that is available in their district, however, the demand outweighs the capacity of the program, and many families cannot get it. ASPIRA-Georgetown will provide additional opportunities to families that wish to have their students in a dual immersion program.

Kendall Masset thanked the school for identifying a need within the community and looking to meet the need for additional dual-language opportunities.

Ms. Lopez-Waite thanked CSAC for their thoughtful review of the application. She also stated that their team continues to meet with families in Georgetown. Additionally, Ms. Lopez-Waite is scheduled to meet with the superintendent of the Indian River School District next month. ASPIRA-Georgetown is looking to complement the great things happening in other schools in Sussex County.

Conclusion:

Ms. Klein asked if there was a motion to recommend that ASPIRA-Georgetown had met the standard for charter operations under the charter school law and should be approved to open, without conditions. The motion was made, seconded, and approved unanimously to recommend the approval of the application.

Next Steps

- On or before December 23rd, CSAC will issue a final report.
- The second and final public hearing will be held on January 7, 2025.
- The Secretary of Education will announce his decisions at the January 16th State Board of Education meeting and ask the State Board for assent.