



KUUMBA ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT

Report Date: January 15, 2025

Delaware Department of Education

Charter School Office

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I. OVERVIEW

1.1 SCHOOL PROFILE

Kuumba Academy Charter School 1200 North French Street Wilmington, DE 19801 https://www.kuumbaacademy.org/			
Year Opened	2001	District(s) of Residence	Christina School District
2023-24 Enrollment	599	Approved Enrollment	700
Current Grade Span	K-8	Approved Grade Span	K-8
School Leader	Natakie Chestnut-Lee	School Leader Phone & Email	(302) 736-0403 nchestnutlee@kacsde.org
Board President	Herb Broadwater	Board President Email	Herbbroadwaterii@yahoo.com
Mission Statement: Kuumba Academy's mission is to provide an innovative learning environment focused on the whole child, in kindergarten through eighth grade. Kuumba Academy directors, staff, and parents share a core belief that parents are the primary educators of their children. Our parents, in partnership with teachers and administrators, believe that every child can maximize his or her learning potential given the opportunity to do so.			

1.2 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

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

	2023-2024
Total Enrollment	599
Students on Waiting List	93
% Male	45.74%
% Female	54.26%
% African American	90.65%
% American Indian	1.17%
% Asian	0.00%
% Hispanic/Latino	4.67%
% White	0.67%
% Multiracial	2.84%

% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.00%
%Special Education	15.19%
% English Language Learners	0.83%
% Low-Income	60.1%

1.3 APPROVED MINOR AND MAJOR MODIFICATIONS

Date	Modification Requested	Outcome
	Not applicable	

1.4 SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

	Approved Enrollment	30-Sep Enrollment Count	% of Actual Enrollment
K		73	
1		83	
2		70	
3		56	
4		82	
5		64	
6		65	
7		56	
8		50	
Total	700	599	86%

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

School Comments:

Kuumba Academy Charter School is proud to reflect on our progress, challenges, and continued commitment to delivering a high-quality, arts-integrated education to the diverse

student body we serve. Each year, our journey as an institution highlights the resilience and determination of our staff, students, and families.

One of the defining characteristics of Kuumba Academy Charter School is our transient student population. Serving families from various districts of residence across the region, we embrace the diversity that enriches our community. However, this mobility presents challenges in maintaining continuity of instruction and academic progress for students who often transition between schools during the academic year. To address this, we have implemented robust onboarding and intervention programs to meet each student's unique needs upon arrival. These initiatives ensure that new students integrate smoothly and are supported academically and socially.

Another significant challenge we face is the persistent lack of equitable funding. Like many charter schools, Kuumba Academy receives less per-pupil funding compared to traditional public schools, despite our responsibility to provide comparable services. This funding disparity is compounded by the increasing costs of special education services, transportation, and facilities maintenance. Nevertheless, we remain steadfast in our mission to provide a nurturing and stimulating educational environment. Our creative budgeting strategies and partnerships with community organizations have allowed us to offer critical programs that would otherwise be unattainable with our limited resources.

Our students come from a wide variety of districts, which brings a wealth of cultural perspectives but also creates logistical challenges. Managing the complexities of district-of-residence reporting, transportation coordination, and varying levels of district support requires diligent planning and continuous collaboration with local education agencies. Despite these hurdles, we are committed to ensuring that every child, regardless of their background, receives the high-quality education they deserve.

This year, we have also prioritized addressing the socio-emotional and academic gaps exacerbated by the pandemic. Our dedicated teachers and staff have worked tirelessly to provide tailored support to students and families, particularly those navigating economic hardships and other adversities. Programs like our arts-integrated curriculum and targeted intervention services have proven instrumental in re-engaging students and fostering their love for learning.

Looking ahead, we are focused on strengthening partnerships with local businesses and organizations to bridge the funding gap and provide enriching opportunities for our students.

Additionally, we will advocate for more equitable charter school funding at the state level to ensure our students have access to the resources they need to thrive.

Kuumba Academy Charter School remains a beacon of hope and opportunity for families across the region. Despite the challenges we face, we are inspired by the resilience and achievements of our students. It is with this unwavering determination that we move forward, committed to our mission of empowering students to become confident, creative, and compassionate leaders.

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	7	
1	73	79.35%
2	65	98.48%
3	52	78.79%
4	80	90.91%
5	61	84.72%
6	63	84.00%
7	56	86.15%
8	48	88.89%
Total/Avg	505	87.37%

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

School Comments:

At Kuumba Academy Charter School, our mission is to create a nurturing, arts-integrated learning environment where every student feels a deep sense of belonging and is empowered to reach their full potential. While we celebrate a student retention rate of 90%, we recognize there is room for improvement, and we are committed to addressing the factors that influence a family's decision to continue their child's education with us.

Our retention strategy is rooted in proactive engagement and thoughtful reflection. Each year, we conduct exit interviews with families who choose not to return. These conversations provide invaluable insights into the challenges we can control and areas where we can improve. Common themes from these discussions include shifting family needs or competing educational options. By understanding these factors, we have taken actionable steps to strengthen our retention efforts.

Our robust arts-integrated curriculum remains a cornerstone of our success. Families consistently express appreciation for how the arts enhance their child's academic and social-emotional development. This unique approach fosters creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration—qualities that resonate with our students and their families. Additionally, our community school model has been pivotal in addressing barriers that might otherwise impede student success. From providing wraparound services to connecting families with resources that support mental health, housing, and nutrition, we have created a holistic environment that supports students and families beyond academics.

We have also prioritized family engagement through initiatives such as flexible scheduling for parent-teacher conferences, workshops, and school events. This approach ensures families can actively participate in their child's education, regardless of their work or personal commitments. By accommodating their needs, we have fostered stronger family-school partnerships and a shared commitment to student success.

Looking ahead, we are implementing targeted initiatives to boost retention further. These include expanding mentorship programs that connect families with experienced Kuumba parents, enhancing our student leadership opportunities, and increasing visibility of the transformative impact of our arts-integrated approach through showcases and exhibitions.

Kuumba Academy Charter School retention plan is a dynamic process of celebrating our successes while addressing our challenges with intention and care. The 90% retention rate reflects the strong sense of belonging and commitment within our school community, and we remain steadfast in our mission to ensure every family feels valued, supported, and confident in their decision to stay with Kuumba Academy Charter School.

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 2023-2024

Indicators	Weight	Metric Value	Points Possible	Points Earned
Academic Achievement	30%		150	31 Well Below Expectations
Proficiency ELA (grades 3-8)	15%	26.45%	75	20
Proficiency Math (grades 3-8)	15%	14.56%	75	11
Academic Progress	40%		200	106 Well Below Expectations
Growth in ELA (grades 4-8)	15%	57.63%	75	43
Growth in Math (grades 4-8)	15%	49.94%	75	37
Growth of lowest quartile ELA (grades 4-8)	2.50%	75.89%	12.5	9
Growth of highest quartile ELA (grades 4-8)	2.50%	25.97%	12.5	3
Growth of lowest quartile Math (grades 4-8)	2.50%	63.06%	12.5	8
Growth of highest quartile Math (grades 4-8)	2.50%	45.06%	12.5	6
School Quality/Student Success	20%		75	40 Well Below Expectations
On Track Attendance (grade K-12)	10%	78.86%	50	39
Proficiency Science (Grades 5 and 8)	5%	3.01%	25	1
Proficiency Social Studies (Grades 4 and 7)	5%	N/A	N/A	N/A

<i>Progress toward English Language Proficiency</i>	<i>10%</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>N/A</i>
Total	100%		425	177
<i>Overall Percentage / Rating</i>				41.65% Well Below Expectations

2.2 ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT

By September 30, 2028, 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.

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:

Kuumba Academy Charter School (KACS) was founded more than two decades ago to serve children and families with the greatest need and to advocate for all children receiving an ineffective education. KACS board and staff are closely bound together by a shared belief – that all students can produce high-quality work that demonstrates academic, professional, and artistic excellence. Children at risk of academic failure can indeed be high achievers and change agents in low-income communities when parents and teachers engage students in a culturally relevant, community education model.

KACS is committed to ensuring that we demonstrate consistent improvement over the course of the charter term on all metrics measured by the DSSF Framework including academic progress, school quality/student success to improve student proficiency outcomes.

Kuumba students will increase their overall Smarter Balanced proficiency to at least 50% in ELA and at least 40% in Math. Over the course of the charter term we will reduce by half the percentage of students scoring *Below* or *Well Below* on the SBAC. Thus, reducing the achievement gap.

At least 70% of students over the growth of the charter will meet their projected growth target in reading and math as measured by NWEA MAP test. At least 70% of students will make 3 or more microphases of growth as measured by EL Skills Benchmark Assessments.

70% of all students, when assessing our annual goals, will demonstrate growth in Reading and math as measured by SBAC. 70% of students at PL2, PL3, and PL4 will meet growth targets in ELA and math as measured by SBAC.

[DSSF Data 2023-2024 Annual Report](#)

KACS utilizes EL Benchmark assessments to monitor reading proficiency and growth for our K – 3 students. We use NWEA’s MAP assessment in all grades (K-8) in reading and math as our benchmark screening tool for MTSS. Additionally, this assessment is used to track student growth. This norm referenced test allows us to compare our students’ performance to their peers nationwide and provides valuable information for parents. This data has proven useful in planning ways to support students in small group settings and to identify priority standards for reteaching when necessary. In Science, KACS uses curriculum-based assessments to monitor student progress towards Next Generation Science Standards. (Amplify K-5 and OpenSciEd 6-8).

Academic Achievement

KACS has set ambitious targets to increase overall proficiency on the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) to at least 50% in English Language Arts (ELA) and 40% in Math. Over the past charter term, we have seen consistent improvement in ELA proficiency due to our culturally relevant, arts-integrated curriculum. Students are not only mastering standards but also demonstrating creativity and critical thinking in their work.

In Math, while the proficiency rates have shown slower growth, there has been significant progress among students performing within the highest quartile. By focusing on foundational skills and integrating real-world problem-solving into our instruction, we are closing critical

gaps.

The achievement gap remains a persistent issue, particularly for students scoring Below or Well Below on SBAC. Addressing this gap requires sustained and targeted intervention strategies. Several factors contribute to this challenge, including the wide range of academic preparedness students bring to the classroom and the external barriers they face, such as economic instability and limited access to resources at home.

We are intensifying our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), leveraging NWEA MAP data to identify struggling students early and provide targeted interventions. Additionally, professional development for teachers is centered on best practices for differentiated instruction and high-impact strategies to support all learners.

Academic Progress

Academic growth is a central focus at KACS. Our data shows that many students are meeting or exceeding their projected growth targets in both ELA and Math as measured by the NWEA MAP assessments. Furthermore, our use of EL Skills Benchmark Assessments in the early grades has been instrumental in fostering foundational literacy skills, with many students achieving three or more microphases of growth annually. Ensuring consistent growth across all grade levels remains a challenge, as growth data varies significantly between subgroups and grade bands. Variability in instructional quality and the effectiveness of intervention practices across classrooms has created inconsistencies in student progress.

To address this, we have introduced an instructional coaching model that supports teachers in implementing evidence-based strategies and ensures alignment with the Delaware State Standards. We are also investing in small-group instruction to provide personalized support that meets the needs of individual students.

School Quality/Student Success

KACS has cultivated a strong sense of belonging and community through its community school model, which integrates wraparound services to address barriers outside the classroom. This model, combined with our arts-integrated curriculum, has positively impacted on student engagement, social-emotional development, and overall school culture.

Our focus on arts integration has been particularly impactful, as it engages students creatively and provides them with tools to express themselves while mastering academic standards. One challenge is chronic absenteeism, which continues to impact overall school quality metrics and student outcomes. We have identified the root cause of chronic

absenteeism as external factors such as family instability, health challenges, and socio-economic barriers.

We have strengthened our family engagement initiatives, offering flexible scheduling for conferences and workshops to build stronger connections with parents and guardians. Attendance incentive programs are also being expanded to recognize and reward students and families for consistent attendance.

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 1.

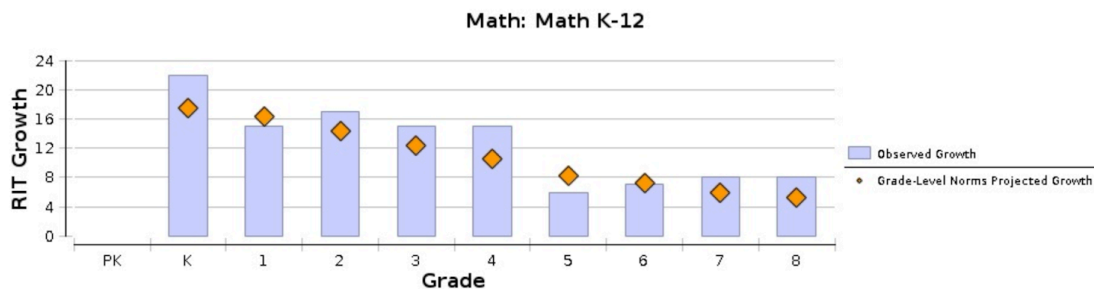
School Comments:

During the 2023-2024 school year, KACS served 599 students across grades K to 8, all of whom are considered “at-risk.” Kuumba Academy remains committed to changing the trajectory for our high needs student population, many of whom are coming to school one to two grade levels behind and are facing two or more adverse childhood experiences, placing them at further risk for academic failure. In ELA and MATH from 22-23 to 23-24, KACS demonstrated a 4% increase in the percentage of students meeting growth targets in both ELA and Math overall as measured by SBAC. Our most notable progress was with our lowest quartile students in ELA who demonstrated a 7% increase from 22-23, and with our highest quartile students in math who demonstrated a 13% increase from 22-23 on the 2024 Spring SBAC.

KACS also relies on NWEA MAPs data to track student growth and proficiency in ELA and Math. Our most recent MAPs data from Spring 2024 saw slight increase in proficiency in ELA from 23% to 26% across grades K to 8 from Spring 2023. Math MAPS data from Spring 2024 demonstrate more promising growth with 77% of students within one growth index of meeting MAPs growth targets and overall K to 8 math proficiency up 13% points from 14% to 27% proficient across grades K to 8.

Academic Performance Highlights 23/24:

- 8th grade students outperformed the state by 8% points in ELA as measured by SBAC
- 3rd grade ELA proficiency nearly tripled from spring 2022 from 12% to 33% proficient; this grade band was also highlighted by DOE for their literacy gains over time <https://delawarelive.com/state-test-scores-show-33-proficient-math-40-ela/>
- 3rd grade MATH proficiency nearly tripled from 21-22 from 10% to 28% of students proficient
- 4th grade MATH proficiency nearly quadrupled from 21-22 to 23-24 from 6% to 22% proficient as measured by SBAC
- 7th grade cohort proficiency by 8% points in ELA and 11% points in Math in Spring 2024 as compared to this cohort's 6th grade performance in Spring 2023
- KACS student growth in math as measured by NWEA MAPs assessment outperformed the norm group in grades KN, 2, 3, 4, 7 and 8 as highlighted in following graph:



Supplemental Data:

- DSSF 2018 through 2024 - all students (updated Dec 2024).xlsx
- Kuumba's Mission Specific Goals-2023-2024
- DSARA_Public_Table_State.xlsm

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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:

While Kuumba Academy Charter School's overall rating on the DSSF is Well Below Standard for the 23/24 school year, it is our expectation that we will earn a rating of “meets standards” by 2028 as measured by the Delaware School Success Framework.

Challenges/Root Causes:

Since March 2020, our students and families have been significantly impacted by increased violence in our community, job loss, multi-layered changes in home environments, heightened housing insecurity, and trauma due to isolation, family illnesses, and death as a result of the impact of COVID-19 and extended school closures. In order to overcome the challenges our students and families face on a daily basis, it is critical that our students have access to active and challenging learning, high-quality SEL support, targeted academic interventions to address academic learning gaps exacerbated by COVID-19 as well as extended academic and arts based enrichment activities to keep them engaged and connected to learning and in a safe and encouraging environment beyond the school day.

Despite these expanded resources and laser focus, Kuumba still has its challenges when working to eliminate the achievement gap that persists for many black, brown and low-income students in Wilmington and across the state. While KACS has been fortunate enough to secure additional grant funding to bring additional resources to support our students and families, the resources available are still not sufficient enough to meet the needs of the student population. In order to eliminate the achievement gap, KACS students and other black, brown and low-income students across the state must grow at a rate twice that of their white and middle to high income peers. This requires a concerted and coordinated effort of talent and resources - an effort which Kuumba is committed to making.

Accomplishments:

Kuumba Academy Charter School is proud of its continued persistence and commitment towards excellence in overcoming the opportunity gap that exists for many of the students that we serve.

KACS remains committed to being the top performing charter school in the city of Wilmington. The increased needs of students and families and the impact of teacher shortages in a post pandemic world have created challenges for the organization that we remain committed to resolving. Through Wraparound Grant funding (and additional supplementary sources), we have been able to significantly expand the summer and afterschool services provided to our students as families as well expand the reach of our school based health center testablished in partnership with Christiana Care. Highlights of these Summer and Out-of School Time programs include:

- **95% attendance rate** during our summer 2024 program, with an average daily attendance of 411 students helped to eliminate the summer slide and ensure our at-risk student population was engaged in safe, meaningful programming during the summer months
- **746 hours of additional academic learning** for grades K-8. Morning sessions focused on English Language Arts (ELA) and Math, while the afternoons featured **17 diverse arts programs**, creating a well-rounded and enriching experience for our scholars.
- **25% reduction in disciplinary incidents** compared to previous years demonstrates the program's positive influence on student behavior and engagement.
- **356 students actively participatig in our School Based Health Center.** Visit Breakdown by Discipline
 - 161 medical visits
 - 103 mental health visits
 - 62 dietitian visits

While we are proud of the increased support and services that we have been able to provide to students and families to address their social-emotional and mental health needs , we have a significant number of students who are performing below or well below grade level who despite progress, have not demonstrated adequate growth to achieve proficiency, particularly in our lower grades. Our focus over the 24-25 school year and beyond is to ensure these students demonstrate adequate gains to achieve grade level proficiency.

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:

At Kuumba Academy Charter School, we understand that academic success cannot be separated from the social and emotional well-being of our students. To support the development of the whole child, we have implemented the *Second Step* Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) program and restorative practices, which have been instrumental in creating a safe and supportive school environment. These initiatives have positively impacted attendance, retention, and discipline, transforming our school culture and helping our students thrive.

The *Second Step* program has played a pivotal role in fostering students' emotional intelligence, self-awareness, and interpersonal skills. By embedding SEL lessons into our daily routines, students have developed greater emotional regulation, stronger relationships, and the ability to resolve conflicts constructively. Teachers and staff have observed how these skills contribute to a more positive and inclusive classroom atmosphere, where students are engaged and feel a sense of belonging.

Restorative practices have complemented these efforts by reshaping how we address discipline and resolve conflicts. Rather than focusing solely on punitive measures, our approach centers on dialogue, accountability, and repairing relationships. Through restorative circles and conferences, students are encouraged to reflect on their actions, understand their impact on others, and take meaningful steps to make amends. This process not only addresses the root causes of misbehavior but also empowers students to take ownership of their choices and learn from their experiences.

Together, these initiatives have contributed to several key outcomes. Attendance has improved as students feel more connected and supported within the school community. Chronic absenteeism has declined, with families recognizing that our commitment to social-emotional learning directly benefits their children's overall development. Retention rates have also increased, as parents appreciate the holistic approach we take to education and trust that their children's emotional and academic needs are being met. Moreover,

student infractions have significantly decreased. Misconduct is now more likely to be resolved proactively, and restorative interventions have proven effective in preventing repeat offenses.

While these successes are encouraging, we acknowledge that challenges remain. Consistency in implementing SEL and restorative practices across all grade levels can be difficult, as some staff require additional training to integrate these strategies seamlessly into their routines. Time constraints within the instructional schedule also present a challenge, as we balance the need for academic instruction with the importance of social-emotional development. Additionally, while we have made progress in engaging families, some parents and guardians are still unfamiliar with the benefits of SEL and restorative practices and may not yet feel equipped to reinforce these strategies at home.

To address these challenges, we are investing in professional development to ensure all staff have the tools and confidence to facilitate SEL and restorative practices effectively. We are also working to optimize our schedules, carving out dedicated time for these initiatives without compromising academic instruction. Finally, we are strengthening our outreach to families by hosting workshops and providing resources that highlight the connection between social-emotional well-being and academic success. These efforts aim to empower parents to support their children's growth both at school and at home.

At Kuumba Academy, we are deeply committed to creating an environment where students feel valued, supported, and empowered to succeed. The integration of the *Second Step* program and restorative practices has not only enhanced our school culture but has also reinforced our belief in the transformative power of addressing the whole child. As we continue to refine our efforts, we remain steadfast in our mission to ensure that every student has the tools they need to excel both academically and personally.

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 Requirements		
	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	3a	3b	4a	
2023-24	M	M	M	M	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 30, 2028, our expectation is to achieve an overall rating of “Meets,” as measured by the Organizational Performance Framework. Each year, we will be back on track to demonstrate performance aligned with those expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

7. Describe the school's organizational performance during school year 2023-24. (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:

Kuumba Academy Charter School met all the standards therefore, this section is not applicable.

8. Discuss management and operations successes and challenges during the 2023-24 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

School Comments:

As a result of intentional data analysis and strategic planning, KACS implemented changes to our organizational and leadership structures to better meet the needs of a constantly changing student body. Over the course of the last annual report and in response to student needs in a post-COVID learning environment, we have added several new positions including full-time instructional coaches, a restorative practices coordinator, and a Mental Health Integrated Manager.

All these positions share a focus on ensuring a positive school climate, on insisting on and monitoring strong academics and creating parent and community partnerships to better serve our students. By adding these positions, the head of school and principal will be better able to provide strategic oversight of the entire organization ensuring consistency and unity across the lower and upper schools.

9. Address any measure(s) where the school did not meet standard or is approaching standard (if applicable). N/A

School Comments:

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:

N/A

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 Kuumba Academy Charter School, we recognize the importance of identifying and supporting the unique needs of every student, particularly those who are at risk, have disabilities, or are identified as gifted and talented. Over the past year, we have made

significant enhancements to our identification processes and the delivery of targeted resources and services, ensuring that all students receive the support necessary to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally.

For at-risk students, we have refined our Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) framework to improve early identification and intervention. This involves the use of comprehensive screening tools, such as the NWEA MAP assessments, to regularly monitor academic progress and identify students who may be struggling. In addition, classroom teachers receive professional development on recognizing early warning signs of academic or behavioral challenges, such as inconsistent performance, attendance issues, or social-emotional difficulties. Once identified, at-risk students are provided with tailored interventions, including small group instruction, academic coaching, and access to counseling services. Evidence of success in this area is seen in improved academic growth and reduced behavioral incidents among identified students.

For students with disabilities, we have enhanced our individualized education plan (IEP) process to ensure timely and accurate assessments of their needs. We have strengthened collaboration between general education teachers, special education staff, and related service providers to deliver a cohesive and inclusive educational experience. The use of assistive technologies differentiated instruction, and targeted support services, such as speech therapy and occupational therapy, has allowed students with disabilities to meet their IEP goals and demonstrate measurable progress. Parental feedback and progress monitoring data affirm that our interventions are making a meaningful impact on student outcomes.

In the area of gifted and talented education, we have expanded our approach to identifying and nurturing advanced learners. By incorporating multiple measures, including academic performance data, teacher recommendations, and student portfolios, we ensure a more comprehensive and equitable identification process. Once identified, gifted students have access to enrichment programs, project-based learning opportunities, and advanced coursework designed to challenge and engage them. Evidence of success includes increased student engagement and achievement, as well as participation in regional competitions and showcase events that highlight their talents.

Our ability to provide the right resources and services is supported by ongoing monitoring and evaluation. Through regular data analysis and feedback from teachers, parents, and students, we continuously assess the effectiveness of our interventions and make necessary

adjustments. This cycle of reflection and improvement ensures that every student, regardless of their starting point, has access to the tools and support they need to succeed.

Kuumba Academy remains committed to serving all students with excellence, equity, and empathy. By enhancing our identification processes and delivering targeted resources, we are empowering students to overcome barriers and reach their fullest potential.

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:

N/A

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:

At Kuumba Academy Charter School, the board of directors plays a pivotal role in providing oversight across academics, finance, and operations, ensuring the school maintains its reputation as a student centered, and compliant institution. Over the course of the annual

report, KACS has consistently met the standards outlined in the organizational framework each year. This achievement reflects our unwavering commitment to excellence and compliance with all Department of Education requirements.

In the area of academics, the board regularly reviews student achievement data and progress toward established goals, such as proficiency targets in ELA and Math and growth benchmarks measured by assessments like NWEA MAP. The board collaborates with school leadership to monitor the effectiveness of instructional strategies and ensure alignment with state standards. By supporting investments in professional development and instructional resources, the board ensures that Kuumba continues to provide a high-quality, arts-integrated education to all students.

From a financial perspective, the board provides diligent oversight to ensure fiscal responsibility and sustainability. Regular financial audits, budget reviews, and adherence to best practices in financial management are integral to the board's operations. The board works closely with the leadership team to allocate resources effectively, prioritizing investments that directly support student achievement and organizational growth. This commitment to sound financial stewardship has enabled KACS to maintain its financial health while meeting the diverse needs of its students.

Operationally, the board ensures that the school adheres to all legal and regulatory requirements. This includes overseeing policies and procedures related to staff hiring, student enrollment, safety protocols, and data reporting. The board's focus on operational excellence is evident in Kuumba's ability to consistently meet or exceed expectations in the organizational framework. Additionally, the board plays an active role in strategic planning, ensuring that the school's mission and vision are reflected in every aspect of its operations.

KACS is fortunate to have a strong leadership team, a dedicated board, and committed staff who work collaboratively to uphold high standards in all areas of the organization. Together, they strive to ensure that Kuumba Academy is recognized as an exceptional institution, deeply committed to serving its students, families, and community. Looking ahead, the board remains focused on maintaining this legacy of excellence by continuing its proactive and strategic oversight in academics, finance, and operations. Through this shared commitment, Kuumba Academy is well-positioned to achieve its goals and sustain its positive impact for years to come.

14. Discuss board-related success and challenges during school year 2023-24. 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:

During the 2023-24 school year, the Kuumba Academy Charter School board demonstrated exceptional leadership and governance, achieving notable successes across all key areas of its responsibilities. The board operated efficiently and effectively, with no significant challenges encountered during this period. This success is a testament to the board's strong organizational structure, dedication to the school's mission, and commitment to continuous improvement.

Membership and recruitment efforts were seamless, ensuring the board maintained a diverse group of skilled and committed individuals who brought expertise in education, finance, law, and community engagement. New members were onboarded through a well-structured induction process that included comprehensive governance training. This process ensured that incoming members were fully prepared to fulfill their roles and responsibilities and contribute meaningfully to the board's work.

Meeting attendance remained consistently high throughout the year, reflecting the members' dedication and commitment. Board members regularly participated in discussions, provided valuable insights, and collaborated with the leadership team to make informed decisions that advanced the school's mission.

The board also conducted a self-evaluation during the school year to assess its performance and identify areas for growth. This reflective process reaffirmed the board's strengths, including its ability to provide strategic oversight, maintain fiscal responsibility, and uphold high standards of accountability. The self-evaluation demonstrated that the board is functioning at a high level and remains focused on continuous improvement.

Progress on board-level projects was another area of success. The board worked closely with school leadership to support initiatives that directly benefited the students and school community, including monitoring academic outcomes, strengthening community partnerships, and overseeing facility improvements. These projects aligned with Kuumba Academy's strategic goals and contributed to the school's ongoing success.

The 2023-24 school year was a period of strong governance and notable accomplishments for the Kuumba Academy board. The absence of challenges reflects the board's commitment to proactive planning, effective collaboration, and a shared dedication to the success of the school and its students. As the board looks ahead, it remains steadfast in its mission to support Kuumba Academy in delivering a transformative education to all its students.

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

School Comments:

The Board of Directors employs a structured and transparent process to evaluate school leadership, ensuring alignment with the school's mission, strategic goals, and performance expectations. This evaluation process is rooted in collaboration, accountability, and continuous improvement, fostering a strong partnership between the board and school leadership.

The evaluation begins with a review of clearly defined performance criteria, which are established at the start of each school year. These criteria encompass key areas of leadership, including academic achievement, operational efficiency, financial management, stakeholder engagement, and adherence to the school's mission. The board works closely with the leadership team to ensure that these criteria are specific, measurable, and aligned with the school's overall objectives.

Throughout the year, the board regularly monitors progress through formal reports, data reviews, and leadership presentations. School leaders provide updates on academic outcomes, financial health, operational effectiveness, and initiatives that support student

success. This ongoing dialogue allows the board to assess how well the leadership team is executing its responsibilities and to provide constructive feedback in real time.

The formal evaluation process typically occurs at the end of the school year and includes a comprehensive review of performance against the established criteria. The board gathers quantitative data, such as student achievement metrics, financial reports, and operational benchmarks, as well as qualitative feedback from staff, parents, and other stakeholders. This holistic approach ensures that the evaluation reflects both measurable outcomes and the broader impact of school leadership on the community.

During the evaluation, the board conducts a reflective discussion with the leadership team, providing an opportunity to review successes, address challenges, and identify areas for growth. This conversation is collaborative and forward-looking, emphasizing professional development and strategic planning for the upcoming year.

Once the evaluation is complete, the board shares its findings in a formal written document that highlights strengths, areas for improvement, and actionable recommendations. The process concludes with a mutual agreement on priorities and goals for the next school year, reinforcing a shared commitment to continuous improvement and student success.

By employing this structured and transparent evaluation process, the Kuumba Academy board ensures that school leadership remains accountable, effective, and aligned with the school's mission. This process not only supports the professional growth of school leaders but also strengthens the board's ability to guide and support the organization in achieving its goals.

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

School Comments:

At Kuumba Academy Charter School, we recognize that the success of our school is deeply tied to the strength and continuity of our leadership. To ensure sustained excellence, we have

developed a comprehensive succession planning process that focuses on the identification, development, and retention of school leaders. This process is designed to create a pipeline of qualified and committed individuals who are prepared to lead the school forward while maintaining its mission and values.

The first step in our succession planning process is the identification of potential leaders. This begins with a thorough evaluation of current staff members to identify individuals who exhibit strong leadership potential. We look for key traits such as vision, effective communication, the ability to inspire and motivate others, and a commitment to educational equity. Feedback from supervisors, peer reviews, and performance evaluations is also considered, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of each candidate's strengths and areas for growth.

Once potential leaders are identified, we invest in their development through targeted professional learning opportunities. This includes providing access to leadership training programs, mentoring relationships with experienced school leaders, and opportunities to take on expanded roles and responsibilities. For example, aspiring leaders may lead school initiatives, participate in strategic planning sessions, or shadow members of the leadership team to gain firsthand experience. These opportunities allow emerging leaders to develop the skills and confidence necessary to transition into leadership roles.

The final component of our succession planning process is the retention of high-quality leaders. At Kuumba, we strive to create a professional environment that values and supports our leaders, fostering a sense of purpose and belonging. This includes offering competitive compensation, providing access to resources that enable leaders to perform their roles effectively, and maintaining a culture of collaboration and innovation. We also prioritize open communication and regular feedback, ensuring that leaders feel valued and supported in their professional growth.

Our succession planning efforts are further strengthened by a clear and intentional alignment with the school's mission. Every step of the process is designed to ensure that future leaders understand and embody the values that have defined Kuumba Academy for over two decades: a commitment to educational excellence, equity, and the holistic development of our students.

Through this structured and intentional approach to succession planning, Kuumba Academy is well-positioned to sustain strong leadership that drives continued success. By identifying,

developing, and retaining talented individuals, we ensure that our school remains a beacon of opportunity and a model of excellence for years to come.

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

School Comments:

At Kuumba Academy Charter School, the board of directors plays a vital role in supporting the school's mission and ensuring its success. The board's involvement extends beyond governance and oversight to active participation in events, operations, and fundraising activities, demonstrating their commitment to the school community and its continued growth.

The board is deeply engaged in school events, regularly attending and participating in activities that celebrate student achievements and foster a sense of community. Whether its arts showcases, family engagement nights, or student performances, board members make it a priority to be present and interact with students, families, and staff. Their active involvement reinforces the strong partnership between the board and the school, building trust and demonstrating their shared commitment to Kuumba's success.

In operations, the board works closely with the leadership team to ensure that the school operates efficiently and effectively. While the leadership team manages the day-to-day activities, the board provides strategic guidance and support in areas such as academic planning, policy development, and compliance with state and federal regulations. Their expertise in areas such as health, finance, and law help to strengthen the school's operational foundation, enabling Kuumba to maintain high standards of excellence.

Fundraising is another key area where the board plays an essential role. Understanding the importance of supplemental funding to support the school's programs and initiatives, the board actively participates in fundraising efforts. This includes leveraging their networks to secure donations, identifying potential grant opportunities, and hosting or supporting

fundraising events. Their efforts have been instrumental in providing resources for arts programming, technology upgrades, and other critical needs that enhance the educational experience for Kuumba's students.

The board's dedication to Kuumba Academy goes beyond fulfilling governance responsibilities; their active involvement in the school's events, operations, and fundraising activities reflects their unwavering commitment to its mission. This hands-on approach strengthens the school community and ensures that Kuumba continues to thrive as a model of educational excellence and equity. Through their support, the board helps create an environment where students, families, and staff can achieve their highest potential.

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:

At Kuumba Academy Charter School, we are deeply committed to fostering an inclusive environment where the voices of parents and students are valued and used to drive continuous improvement. To ensure we understand the needs, experiences, and satisfaction of our community, we have developed a comprehensive process for soliciting feedback from both parents and students. This ongoing dialogue allows us to celebrate our strengths, identify areas for growth, and refine our practices to better serve our school community.

Soliciting Feedback

Feedback is gathered through multiple channels to ensure accessibility and inclusiveness. Parents are invited to share their perspectives through annual satisfaction surveys, parent-teacher conferences, focus groups, and informal conversations during school events. For students, we conduct age-appropriate surveys and host student forums where they can

openly discuss their experiences, share concerns, and suggest improvements. These efforts are designed to encourage honest and meaningful input, ensuring that all voices are heard.

Summary Data

Recent survey results indicate high levels of satisfaction among parents and students, particularly in areas such as the quality of the arts-integrated curriculum, the dedication of the teaching staff, and the school's strong sense of community. Parents have consistently highlighted the school's commitment to nurturing the whole child and providing individualized support for students. Students have expressed appreciation for the creative and engaging learning environment, as well as the positive relationships they share with teachers and peers.

However, feedback has also revealed areas for growth. For example, some parents have requested enhanced communication regarding academic progress and opportunities for more personalized updates about their child's performance. Additionally, students have expressed a desire for expanded extracurricular options, such as clubs and sports, to complement their academic experience.

Using Feedback to Inform Improvement

Kuumba Academy takes this feedback seriously and uses it to inform school improvement initiatives. In response to parent feedback, we have strengthened our communication strategies by implementing a user-friendly parent portal, providing more frequent progress updates, and hosting additional workshops to engage families in their children's learning. Similarly, based on student feedback, we have worked to expand our extracurricular offerings, introducing new clubs and activities that align with student interests and encourage broader participation.

Reflecting on this feedback helps us align our efforts with the needs and expectations of our community. By addressing identified areas for growth, we not only improve satisfaction but also deepen the trust and partnership between the school, families, and students. This cycle of feedback and action ensures that Kuumba Academy remains responsive, adaptive, and committed to excellence in serving our students and families. Through this collaborative approach, we continue to build a school community that is united in its mission to empower every student to achieve their highest potential.

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
2023-24	80%	45	56

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

School Comments: The impact of COVID-19 impacted educators in a profound way. Educators nationwide have experienced extreme stress and myriad mental health challenges while trying to help students recover from the impact of extended school closures and subsequent loss. Despite these challenges, KACS was able to retain a high percentage of teachers over the course of the charter term and during the most critical years of the pandemic. Kuumba Academy works to ensure that our teachers are provided with ongoing support and professional development through coaching and weekly data meetings. We work to build a school culture where teachers are viewed as leaders and champions of the school's mission and goals.

Kuumba school leaders believe, if we foster an environment where all members of our Village are "all in" and have an asset based mindset towards all members of the school community, then staff will be able to implement evidence based practices that lead to increased student achievement, have courageous conversations, and thrive in a loving environment that challenges them to do more than they think possible. This enables us to effectively unite staff, students, and the broader community around our inspirational vision thus increasing the likelihood that teachers will remain invested in remaining at the school to see the vision become a reality.

School leaders work to intentionally build trust so that educators can take risks, show vulnerability, and explore new practices that lead to increased student achievement. School leaders support this growth-oriented and impact-focused professional collaboration by creating professional communities where adults bring their whole selves to work and where they continually improve their ability to work productively with each other. School leaders prioritize growth for educators and implement an asset-based orientation toward all members of the school community. School leaders work intentionally to foster an environment where all staff members feel safe, valued, and productive in a culture that respectfully challenges them to do more than they think possible.

Over the past several years, our board of directors continues to work hard to ensure that teacher salaries are on par with local school districts. We believe that equitable pay, meaningful professional development and a supportive school culture lead to higher rates of teacher retention. Please note, our retention data also includes staff members who moved out of state or who were not offered a position to return for the 23-24 school year.

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

School Comments:

Kuumba Academy employs a comprehensive coaching model to develop and support our teachers. Please find additional details around our [coaching model](#). This coaching model is focused on ensuring that our coaching cycles and professional development sessions are explicitly aligned to and build capacity of teachers in order to meet the school-wide goals established within our [EL Work plan](#). KACS requires a summer institute for all staff members. New hires attend 3 weeks of intense professional development, while returning staff commit to two weeks of professional development prior to the start of school year. Our primary driver(s) for ongoing professional development over the course of the charter term is the use of our internal, non-evaluative, coaching model and our implementation of the Teaching Excellence Framework as well as our Learning Walks, weekly data meetings and regular school wide data analysis days.

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

School Comments:

At Kuumba Academy Charter School, the process for evaluating educators has evolved significantly to ensure that it aligns with our mission and vision of fostering academic, professional, and artistic excellence while supporting the holistic development of our students. The adoption of the Delaware Teacher Growth and Support System (DTGSS) has been a transformative step in this evolution, providing a framework that emphasizes professional growth, accountability, and alignment with our school's goals.

The DTGSS evaluation system is built on principles that resonate deeply with Kuumba's mission. It prioritizes instructional quality, student engagement, and continuous improvement—values that are central to our arts-integrated, community-focused approach to education. By utilizing DTGSS, we have established a structured and transparent process that not only assesses teacher effectiveness but also fosters meaningful professional development.

The system's focus on evidence-based evaluation allows us to ensure that all educators are meeting the high standards expected at Kuumba. Observations, student performance data, and educator reflections are key components of the process, offering a comprehensive view of each teacher's impact on student learning. This approach enables us to identify areas of strength and opportunities for growth, which align with our commitment to cultivating a culture of excellence and accountability.

Moreover, the DTGSS framework aligns seamlessly with Kuumba's vision of empowering educators to be lifelong learners and leaders in their field. The emphasis on professional growth plans within DTGSS encourages teachers to set goals that are both ambitious and reflective of their unique strengths and aspirations. Our leadership team works closely with teachers to provide personalized coaching, access to professional development opportunities, and resources that support the achievement of these goals.

This system also reinforces our collaborative school culture. By fostering open communication between teachers and administrators, the evaluation process has become a tool for building trust and promoting shared ownership of student success. Teachers feel supported in their professional journey, and administrators gain valuable insights that inform broader school improvement efforts.

Since implementing DTGSS, we have observed a positive shift in both instructional practices and teacher morale. Educators are more reflective, intentional, and aligned with Kuumba's mission of providing transformative education for all students. This evolution in our evaluation process ensures that our teachers remain at the forefront of innovative and effective practices, ultimately enhancing the educational experiences of our students.

The adoption of the Delaware Teacher Growth and Support System has strengthened Kuumba Academy's ability to evaluate and support its educators in a manner that aligns with our mission and vision. By prioritizing growth, accountability, and alignment with our values, this system ensures that our teachers are empowered to excel, and our students are positioned for success.

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

	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	
YEAR	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	2d	3	4	OVERALL RATING
2023-24	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	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 30, 2028, our expectation is to achieve an overall rating of “Meets,” as measured by the Financial Performance Framework. Each year, we will be back on track to demonstrate performance aligned with those 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 2023-24. (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:

KACS has earned an overall rating of “Meets Standard” on the Financial Performance Framework. We expect this trend to continue.

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

School Comments:

N/A

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

School Comments:

N/A

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

School Comments:

Kuumba Academy Charter School had zero audit findings therefore, No corrective action plan was needed.

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:

Kuumba Academy Charter School has implemented a range of effective systems, structures, and processes that have contributed to significant school improvement. These practices are deeply rooted in our mission to provide high-quality, arts-integrated education while fostering a strong sense of community and equity. The success of these initiatives is evident in the data and outcomes achieved, and they represent replicable strategies that other schools can adopt to drive improvement.

Leadership

Our leadership model emphasizes collaborative decision-making and data-driven strategies to promote accountability and continuous growth. School leaders regularly analyze academic performance, attendance, and behavior data to identify trends and develop targeted interventions. Leadership teams conduct biweekly progress reviews with teachers to ensure alignment with instructional goals. This proactive approach has contributed to consistent improvements in student growth and achievement, as demonstrated by steady gains in NWEA MAP scores in both ELA and math.

Professional Learning

Professional learning is a cornerstone of our school improvement efforts. Kuumba has created a culture of continuous professional development through targeted training sessions, instructional coaching, and peer learning communities. Teachers engage in regular workshops focused on evidence-based strategies, culturally responsive teaching, and differentiation. The results of these efforts are reflected in improved instructional quality and consistent teacher retention rates year after year.

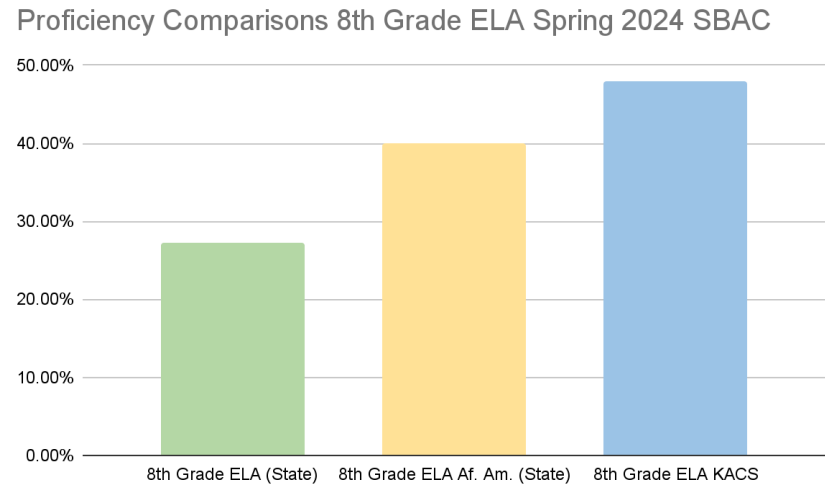
Instructional Transformation

Kuumba has adopted an instructional model that integrates arts into core academic subjects, creating an engaging and dynamic learning environment. This approach not only enhances student creativity but also reinforces content mastery. Data from student assessments shows that this instructional transformation has led to a 13% increase in math proficiency rates as measured by NWEA MAPS assessment from 2023 to 2024. The success of this model lies in its ability to make learning relevant and accessible for all students.

Equity

Equity is a guiding principle in all aspects of Kuumba's operations. We have implemented Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) to address the diverse needs of our students, providing targeted interventions for at-risk learners and enrichment opportunities for

advanced students. Our commitment to equity is also evident in our hiring practices, which prioritize diverse and representative staff. These efforts have helped narrow achievement gaps, particularly among students from historically marginalized backgrounds. This is demonstrated when comparing KACS 8th grade ELA performances against the state overall against African American ELA Performance statewide.



Culture and Climate Shift

Our focus on culture and climate has been transformational. Kuumba utilizes the *Second Step* SEL program and restorative practices to build a safe, inclusive, and respectful school community. These initiatives have led to a 30% decrease in disciplinary incidents and a 20% reduction in chronic absenteeism. Students and families consistently report high levels of satisfaction with the school environment, reinforcing our belief that a positive climate is essential for academic success.

Collaboration and Partnerships

Kuumba’s partnerships with community organizations have expanded access to resources and opportunities for our students and families. Collaborations with local arts organizations, universities, and businesses have enriched our curriculum and provided students with exposure to diverse career pathways. Additionally, partnerships with mental health providers and social service agencies have addressed barriers to learning, resulting in improved attendance and engagement metrics.

In conclusion, Kuumba Academy’s systems and structures for leadership, professional learning, instructional transformation, equity, culture, and collaboration have been instrumental in driving school improvement. The success of these initiatives, as evidenced by data on student achievement, teacher retention, and school climate, demonstrates their potential for replication in other schools. By prioritizing intentionality, inclusivity, and collaboration, Kuumba has created a sustainable model for success that can inspire and guide similar efforts in other educational settings.

VI. ANNUAL REPORT CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Name of School:	Kuumba Academy Charter School
Location:	1200 N French St Wilmington DE 19801

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)

1/9/2025
Date

Print/Type Name:	Natakie Chestnut- Lee, Ed.D
Title (if designated):	Chief Executive Officer
Date of approval by board of directors:	January 9, 2025