



NEWARK CHARTER SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT

Report Date: January 15, 2025

Delaware Department of Education
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I. OVERVIEW

1.1 SCHOOL PROFILE

Newark Charter School K-8 School: 2001 Patriot Way, Newark, DE 19711 High School: 200 McIntire Dr., Newark, DE 19711 https://www.newarkcharterschool.org/			
Year Opened	2001	District(s) of Residence	Christina School District
2023-24 Enrollment	3,047	Approved Enrollment	3,050
Current Grade Span	K-12	Approved Grade Span	K-12
School Leader(s)	Sam Golder	School Leader Phone & Email	(302) 369-2001 Sam.Golder@ncs.k12.de.us
Board President	James Dechene	Board President Email	James.dechene@ncs.k12.de.us
Mission Statement: The mission of the Newark Charter School is to promote high levels of student effort, achievement and decorum for children in grades K-12 in the Greater Newark community by providing continuous, engaging and rigorous academic challenges grounded in a sequential core of common knowledge, delivered in a community of students, educators and involved parents who value scholarship and appropriate behavior.			

1.2 STUDENT DEMOGRAPHICS

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

	2023-2024
Total Enrollment	3,047
Students on Waiting List	2983
% Male	49.82%
% Female	50.18%
% African American	14.47%
% American Indian	0.20%
% Asian	17.98%
% Hispanic/Latino	7.45%
% White	53.53%
% Multiracial	6.37%
% Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.00%
%Special Education	9.81%
% English Learners	2.95%
% Low-Income	9.65%

1.3 APPROVED MINOR AND MAJOR MODIFICATIONS

Date	Modification Requested	Outcome
May 2019	Major – Increase the maximum per grade to 242 (K-3) and 243 (4-12) over a four year period beginning in the 2023-2024 school year (year 3). Expansion would begin with the additions in grades K-9. At the end of a four year phase in (2025-2026 SY), this would bring the total maximum enrollment to 3,155.	Approved

1.4 SCHOOL ENROLLMENT

	Approved Enrollment	30-Sep Enrollment Count	% of Actual Enrollment
K	242	244	101%
1	242	241	99%
2	242	243	101%
3	242	244	101%
4	243	245	101%
5	243	244	101%
6	243	251	103%
7	243	243	100%
8	243	244	101%
9	243	255	105%
10	243	231	95%
11	190	190	100%
12	190	172	91%
Total	3,049	3,047	100%

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

School Comments:

Newark Charter School is experiencing no challenges to recruitment, as evidenced by its extensive wait list.

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	3	
1	233	95.49%
2	234	97.1%
3	240	98.77%
4	237	97.13%
5	237	97.53%
6	243	99.59%
7	240	98.36%
8	235	95.92%
9	218	89.34%
10	229	95.42%
11	190	95.96%
12	172	99.42%
Total/Avg	2,711	96.72%

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

School Comments:

With a 97% retention percentage, Newark Charter School is experiencing no challenges with student retention.

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/Measures	Weight	Metric Value	Points Possible	
Academic Achievement	20%		100	72 Meets Expectations
Proficiency ELA (grades 3-8 and 11)	10%	75.09%	50	38
Proficiency Math (grades 3-8 and 11)	10%	68.76%	50	34
Academic Progress	25%		125	87 Meets Expectations
Growth in ELA (grades 4-8)	10%	70.08%	50	35
Growth in Math (grades 4-8)	10%	68.02%	50	34
Growth of lowest quartile ELA (grades 4-8)	1.25%	85.14%	6.25	5
Growth of highest quartile ELA (grades 4-8)	1.25%	66.43%	6.25	4
Growth of lowest quartile Math (grades 4-8)	1.25%	79.21%	6.25	5
Growth of highest quartile Math (grades 4-8)	1.25%	66.46%	6.25	4
School Quality/Student Success	25%		125	102 Meets Expectations
On Track Attendance (grade K-12)	3%	91.55%	12.5	38
Proficiency Science (grade 8 and Biology)	5%	52.69%	25	13
Proficiency Social Studies (Grades 7 and 11)	5%	65.61%	25	16
College and/or Career Preparedness (9-12)	8%	100.41%	37.5	38
On Track in 9th Grade	5%	96.57%	25	24
Graduation Rate	20%		100	100 Exceeds Expectations
4-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	15%	99.45%	75	75
5-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	3%	98.86%	13	13
6-Year Cohort Graduation Rate	2%	100.60%	12	12
Progress toward English Language Proficiency	10%	49.62%	50	26 Well Below Expectations
Total	100%		500	391
Overall Percentage / Rating				78.2% Meets Expectations

2.2 ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT

By 2028, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of “Meets” or “Exceeds” standard as measured by the Academic Performance Framework. Each year, we will show growth within our overall rating putting us on track to achieve our academic performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

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:

By 2028, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating “Meets” or “Exceeds” standard as measured by the Academic Performance Framework. Each year, we will show growth within our overall rating putting us on track to achieve our academic performance expectations.

Reflections in each of the areas are as follows:

Academic Achievement-The Academic Achievement sub-scores (Math and ELA) continue to represent the high levels of performance that NCS has traditionally earned. Performance on the SBAC and SAT are true, accurate measures of student mastery. While a decline in participation rate and proficiency rate were observed during the years of the pandemic, scores have stabilized and are reaching pre-COVID levels in many measured areas. It is expected that NCS will maintain this level of participation and performance in subsequent years.

Academic Progress- While it is often difficult for the highest achieving students at NCS to show growth on the extreme upper end of the assessment scale, we demonstrate enough growth to meet the standard. Our growth of students in the lowest quartile (particularly in Math) is a higher scoring target. Our students in the lowest quartile will continue to be a point of emphasis as we identify them through the NWEA MAP assessment and provide MTSS unique to the student needs.

School Quality/Student Success-The School Quality/Student Success measures tend to be areas of strength for NCS. This is especially true for On-Track Attendance, College and Career Readiness, and On-Track in 9th Grade. These measures are consistently at the top of the scale. Of greater concern is the re-emergence of DeSSA Science and DeSSA Social Studies scores. As scores return to this metric after not being used in it due to field tests and the COVID-related waiver, they represent areas where NCS can raise achievement in the future. While our rank on these assessments remains high when compared to our peers statewide, there is significant room for growth in the points earned for this metric. As grades 4 and 6 SS is reinstated to the DSSF calculation this year (with grades 5 and 7 to follow next year), this provides an opportunity to achieve at higher levels.

Graduation Rate (if applicable)-Graduation Rate at NCS is a metric that NCS takes great pride in as it relates directly to our stated mission of being a college preparatory school. NCS meets annual performance targets in 4-year, 5-year, and 6-year graduation rates. It remains disappointing that students meet the IEP goals set forth for them and earn a Diploma of Alternate Achievement Standards are counted as “non-graduates”.

Progress toward English Language Proficiency-Progress towards EL proficiency serves as a “matter to be addressed” for NCS. Our current rating of “Well Below Expectations” is below our traditional ratings and can be directly attributed to our expansion in the Intermediate School, Junior High School, and High School. EL students are traditionally found in our elementary schools (primary and intermediate) and services are concentrated in those grades (K-5). Expansion in the secondary grades brought in student who are non-native speakers of English in the upper grades (6-10) in larger numbers. We staffed the schools in preparation for this, but this ACCESS testing performance demonstrated a decline expected with our expansion.

NCS will strive to meet all aspects of the Performance Agreement (“By 2028, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating “Meets” or “Exceeds” standard as measured by the Academic Performance Framework. Each year, we will show growth within our overall rating putting us on track to achieve our academic performance expectations.”)

The exception to the preceding statement is in the area of graduation rate. This exception is twofold: 1) When we attain a graduation rate of 100%, there will be no improvement 2) When students meet the IEP goals set forth for them and earn a Diploma of Alternate Achievement Standards are counted as “non-graduates”.

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:

NCS continues to fund, administer, and utilize internal measures such as DIBELS and MAP to assess student levels of assessment and growth. Growth targets are in place for each building, grade level, class, and student. This includes projected proficiency rates and ongoing monitoring of the linking of scores as determined by NWEA. We will continue to monitor our progress throughout the year, culminating in the DeSSA Assessments that make up the DSSF.

MAP All Students-Reading (Fall)

Subgroup	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
National Norms	155.93	172.35	186.62	196.67	204.48	210.17	214.2	218.01
2024-2025 (F)	158.3	176.4	193.2	206.1	211.9	216	218.8	225.4
2023-2024 (F)	156.7	177.8	194.5	206	210.1	213.1	221.4	222.5
2022-2023 (F)	161	179	194.4	203.9	208.6	218	219.6	225.1
2021-2022 (F)	162.7	180.2	193.4	202.2	211	216.1	221.7	226.8
2020-2021 (F)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
2019-2020 (F)	166.5	183	197.4	206	214	219.4	*	*
2018-2019 (F)	168.8	184.7	194.7	206.5	211.9	221.7	*	*
2017-2018 (F)	169.7	183.8	198.2	206.7	217.7	224.7	*	*
2016-2017 (F)	166	189.5	198.8	210.9	219.1	222.9	*	*
2015-2016 (F)	169	185.6	201.2	213.4	218.9	225.7	229	232

MAP All Students-Math (Fall)

Subgroup	Kind	Grade 1	Grade 2	Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
National Norms	139.56	160.05	175.04	188.48	199.55	209.13	214.75	220.21	224.92
2024-2025 (F)	146.7	165	178.2	194.3	207.6	216.8	222.9	230.1	239.4
2023-2024 (F)	146.2	163.8	178.8	193.9	207	214.6	220.2	232.3	235.1
2022-2023 (F)	145.6	166.4	180.1	194.3	206.2	212.7	222.8	227.9	234.5
2021-2022 (F)	147.1	168.8	180	191.3	203.7	212.5	218.6	227.6	234.5
2020-2021 (F)	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
2019-2020 (F)	146	171.5	183.4	198.2	207.9	218.8	222.3	*	*
2018-2019 (F)	145.7	170.6	185.5	195.2	209.3	217.7	225.8	*	*
2017-2018 (F)	144.6	172.7	184.1	197.7	209.2	223.1	229.1	*	*
2016-2017 (F)	146.4	169.6	188.4	197.4	213.7	224.6	225.2	*	*

2015-2016 (F)	152.8	168.9	186.8	197.8	214.3	218.9	225.1	233.3	243.5
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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:

Success for NCS includes the community demand for seats at the school as evidenced by our extensive waitlist, our high retention rate of students and families, and our high rate of college admission (with a particular emphasis on admission to selective and highly selective schools).

In addition, NCS would like to draw attention to the external recognitions given to the school by the College Board and US News and World Reports. These competitive recognitions go directly to the heart of creating successful outcomes for all students, but specific recognition for Advanced Placement success for students from traditional under-represented populations.

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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:

NCS takes pride in our anti-bullying work in all of our schools. We have expanded social-emotional supports in all grades K-12. This includes a course where each student gets “face time” with their assigned guidance counselor built into the master schedule. NCS funds and supports 13 guidance counselors so that one is assigned to each grade level of students within the school. We have also added a locally funded Social Worker and DSCYF Family and Student Interventionist.

Student discipline at NCS remains committed to our original charter to “maintain excellence in Academics and Decorum”. The focus on decorum has resulted in a non-existent level of expulsion and a low rate of suspension as demonstrated by the DOE Comprehensive Discipline Report.

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	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

Newark Charter School's overall organizational rating is Meets Standard. By 2028, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of "Meets", as measured by the Organizational Performance Framework." Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate performance aligned with this organizational performance expectation. 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:

The school has met standard in all areas and is organizationally sound in the areas rated in the framework.

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:

School Leadership

In July 2023, the NCS Board of Directors successfully completed a comprehensive search and selected Sam Golder as the school's third Head of School. Upon his arrival, the organizational framework was thoroughly reviewed, and necessary adjustments were implemented. With the leadership team now solidified, any previous challenges related to governance and administration have been resolved, providing a strong foundation for growth and stability.

Day-to-Day Operations

Transportation

The contracted transportation vendor made notable strides in improving driver recruitment and retention. Although there were uncovered routes, the vendor mitigated these issues by utilizing spare drivers effectively. As a result, NCS achieved an impressive 97.2% success rate of buses being "On Time" or "Less than 5 minutes late," ensuring minimal disruption to students and families.

Health and Safety

Comprehensive Vulnerability and Risk Assessments were conducted throughout NCS, resulting in actionable steps to enhance safety. Federal and local grants were secured to address identified needs, which funded:

- Hiring of two constables to improve security presence.
- Installation of securable entrance gates and perimeter fencing.
- Upgrades to the quantity and quality of CCTV cameras.
- Addition of internal and exterior signage for improved navigation and safety.
- Renovations to the main office to establish a secured checkpoint.

These measures have significantly enhanced the safety and security of students and staff.

Facilities

Newark Charter School expanded its facilities in meaningful ways:

- **Fall 2023:** Opened a state-of-the-art athletic complex, featuring a lighted turf field, a track, and stadium seating for 1,200 spectators. This facility has provided students with new opportunities for athletic competition and community engagement.
- **Summer 2024:** Completed construction of a Performing Arts Center and an Auxiliary Gymnasium, addressing the long-standing absence of dedicated venues for the arts and extracurricular activities.

Despite these successes, challenges persist in meeting the facilities needs for certain athletics, particularly baseball, softball, and swimming.

Staffing

While other Local Education Agencies (LEAs) faced significant staff shortages, Newark Charter School maintained a fully staffed and exceptional faculty throughout the 2023-2024 school year. Key to this success was the conversion of the previously flawed merit pay system into a clear and easily understood retention bonus system, ensuring equitable and transparent rewards for staff loyalty.

Additionally, funds were allocated to extra responsibility contracts, which compensated employees for contributions beyond their primary responsibilities. These measures not only enhanced job satisfaction but also incentivized dedication and innovation among faculty and staff.

As a result, NCS achieved an impressive retention rate of 'X' from the 2023-2024 to the 2024-2025 school year, underscoring the effectiveness of these initiatives in fostering a supportive and committed workforce.

[PD / Evaluation Needed]

Food Service

Food service operations continued to meet the nutritional needs of students, with no significant disruptions reported.

Conclusion

The 2023-2024 school year at Newark Charter School showcased the institution's ability to overcome challenges and achieve substantial progress in leadership, operations, and facilities development. While some areas, such as athletic facilities for specific sports, remain a challenge, the proactive measures taken have laid the groundwork for continued success in the future.

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

School Comments:

The school met standard in all areas.

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:

Newark Charter has met compliance requirements across all Special Education Indicator reporting. Per our 2024 Annual Determination, the Department of Education determined that Newark Charter School **Meets Requirements** in implementing the requirements of the IDEA. There have been no findings this year. The school's current interventions are producing positive results.

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:

As in previous years, we have continued to build upon the strong foundation of proactive, data-driven student support that has always existed at Newark Charter by creating a distributed model of leadership for MTSS across all four school buildings, designating an MTSS Coordinator and MTSS Admin Lead at each building to implement MTSS systems to conduct data analysis, team-based problem solving, and intervention planning.

Newark Charter has continued to increase the capacity of our staff to support the diverse needs of all learners through our staffing models and through investing in the professional learning of our current staff. An interdisciplinary team participated in a year-long professional learning partnership with the DE-IEP project (an initiative of the DE MTSS Technical Assistance Center) to receive training on current best practices in IEP development and build a multi-year professional learning plan for our organization.

The additional staffing capacity, support, and MTSS leadership resulted in notable gains: the growth of our students in the lowest quartile in grades 4-8 on both Math and ELA exceeded the

growth of our students in the highest quartile in both domains. Students across all grades K-8 showed notable growth in both math and reading as measured by NWEA MAP assessments. Students across grades K-5 exceeded growth targets for oral reading fluency and accuracy as measured by DIBELS benchmarks.

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:

As in previous years, we have continued to build upon the strong foundation of proactive, data-driven student support that has always existed at Newark Charter by creating a distributed model of leadership for MTSS across all four school buildings, designating an MTSS Coordinator and MTSS Admin Lead at each building to implement MTSS systems to conduct data analysis, team-based problem solving, and intervention planning.

Newark Charter has continued to increase the capacity of our staff to support the diverse needs of all learners through our staffing models and through investing in the professional learning of our current staff. An interdisciplinary team participated in a year-long professional learning partnership with the DE-IEP project (an initiative of the DE MTSS Technical Assistance Center) to receive training on current best practices in IEP development and build a multi-year professional learning plan for our organization.

The additional staffing capacity, support, and MTSS leadership resulted in notable gains: the growth of our students in the lowest quartile in grades 4-8 on both Math and ELA exceeded the growth of our students in the highest quartile in both domains. Students across all grades K-8 showed notable growth in both math and reading as measured by NWEA MAP assessments. Students across grades K-5 exceeded growth targets for oral reading fluency and accuracy as measured by DIBELS benchmarks.

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:

The Board provides oversight in many areas. The Head of School gives a comprehensive report to the Board monthly, including information from the Chief Academic, Financial and Operations Officers. The Board recently added two committees, School Performance and Student Affairs. This allows the group respectfully challenge administrators in the areas of academics and organization. We have Board members serving on our CBOC, providing oversight in finance.

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:

The Board recently engaged in a process to change their bylaws. The Board routinely self-evaluates, participating in Board retreats. Meeting attendance is strong, with almost full participation in every meeting. Our Board recently voted to decrease their total membership from 12 to 11. Major Board projects include the opening of the Performing Arts Center, budgetary decisions, and the initiation of a new Strategic Planning process.

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

School Comments:

The Board collaborates in their evaluation of school leadership. The mid-year evaluation, goal setting process and the end-of-year evaluation are discussed directly with the Head of School in an executive session meeting.

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

School Comments:

Newark Charter School participates in the DOE sponsored Equity- Centered Leadership Pipeline program. Not only has professional learning been valuable, but it has helped to develop new teacher leader positions at the school. For example, Newark Charter now has subject area experts taking on leadership roles in across K-12 in the core areas, ML and literacy. NCS was asked to present at the 2024 Learning Forward Conference in Denver to share their work to, "Implement at Leadership Pipeline to Enhance Learning."

In addition to the growth of teacher leaders, Newark Charter School's Board of Directors approved the hire of a School Constable to partner with and support our School Safety Officer to enhance safety and security across our campuses.

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

School Comments:

The NCS Board of Directors is tremendously visible. They participate on the School Performance committee, the Governance committee and the Student Affairs committee. They are a “value add” in regards to fundraising initiatives and also serve as liaisons to local and state politicians. They are excellent ambassadors for the school.

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:

As a school established by parents, there is a high degree of parent involvement and parent satisfaction each year. Parent surveys consistently show that parents are satisfied with the school. Parents have authentic participation in school-wide decision making. They hold the majority of seats on the Board of Directors. The School Council, consisting of parent-elected parent representatives from each grade level, serves as a “sounding board” to management on issues. It traditionally conducts and monitors two formal parent satisfaction surveys annually. The Friends of NCS is an active and essential parent organization, providing volunteers, fund raising support, and programs to enrich the school. Several hundred different parent volunteers served the school this

past year. (book fair, fundraising, annual, auction, athletic boosters, classroom volunteers, Sunshine committees and more.)

Internally, the staff decision making process is modeled after management practices at large integrated companies. Each grade is represented by a team leader to provide a horizontal perspective that focuses on what the students in a particular grade experience and learn. Academic core content areas are representative by department heads to provide a vertical perspective, ensuring that each content area connects from one grade to the next. In the Jr./Sr. High School, a faculty-based Leadership Council ensures that shared decision making occurs through constant communication among academic departments, grades, and with administration. Additionally, staff members have positions on both the School Council and the Newark Charter School Board of Directors, so staff are integrally involved in the life and leadership of the school.

3.6 TEACHER RETENTION

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

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

School Comments:

SCHOOL YEAR	PERCENT OF TEACHERS RETAINED	NUMBER OF TEACHERS RETAINED	NUMBER OF TEACHERS ELIGIBLE
2023-2024	97.65%	207	212

Newark Charter School continues to have a high teacher retention rate. In the 21-22SY NCS experienced a large expansion, and the school was able to hire an additional 54 high quality educators and started the year full staffed with instructional staff in the classrooms. Even with this growth, NCS's retention rate increased from 95.5% in 21-22SY to 96.2% in the 22-23SY. Even with the high rate of 96.2% teachers retained in the 22-23SY, NCS continued to increase teacher retention to 97.65% in the 23-24SY.

The school also surveys teachers in March/April each year to assess their intention of returning the following year. Typically, this survey shows that 95-100% of the school's teachers and staff intend to return. When teachers do leave the school, the reasons are generally moving out of the area, seeking employment closer to home, or retiring. That continued to be true this year as noted above.

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

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School Comments:

NCS is in multi-year partnership with the Delaware Academy of School Leadership (DASL) and the Delaware Department of Education (DEDOE) to participate in the Equity Leadership Pipeline Self-study based on research from the Wallace Foundation and aligned with The Professional Standards for Educational Leaders.

In year one, the core team met monthly with our DASL facilitator, Dr. Connie Fisher, to conduct an in-depth self-study utilizing the nine Domains from the Wallace Foundation Research to develop a five-year strategic plan focused on our vision to: Strategically recruit, develop, support and retain highly effective leaders who are dedicated to Excellence in Academics and Decorum. ECPP Self-Study Summary- NCS While developing this plan, our core team met monthly at a state-wide Professional Learning Community (PLC) consisting of DEDOE staff, DASL staff and the Core Teams from NCS, Brandywine School District, Appoquinimink School District and Milford School District. DEDOE and DASL brought in national presenters from school systems that have had success with this work and provided us with support to collaborate and learn from each other.

During the 2022-23 school year, implementation of the Leadership Pipeline Plan began with an emphasis on teacher leadership. Teacher Leadership was integrated throughout the Leadership Pipeline plan. The leadership team participated in five professional learning days exploring various aspects of teacher leadership models with the statewide PLC. The leadership team worked collaboratively with stakeholder groups to develop a teacher leadership framework for NCS. The team determined teacher leadership development at NCS was essential to ensure the legacy of Excellence in Academics and Decorum continues by positively impacting teacher practice through 1. Ensuring Strong Core Instruction and Curricular Fidelity, 2. Supporting and Retaining Educators, 3. Establishing Systemic Leadership Capacity & Succession planning.

In the 23-24 School, the team continued with the Leadership Pipeline Plan to create a NCS Portrait of a Leader. The Portrait of a Leader is aligned with PSEL and Teacher Leader Model standards and is used to:

- Communicate the identity of our school
- Define skills for aspiring leaders
- Reflection for feedback tool for leaders
- Resource for job descriptions, interview questions, performance tasks
- Professional learning opportunities

Professional development is a strategy we use to ensure that educators continue to strengthen their practice and bring about further success in their students. The most effective professional development at Newark Charter School engages teachers to focus teacher collaboration to reflect on curricular alignment, pedagogical practices and student data to inform instruction. We utilize professional development days built into the school calendar, as well as sessions conducted before and after school, and during teacher's common planning periods.

Professional development delivered at Newark Charter School centers around the following:

- Science of Reading: CKLA rollout in the Primary School
- HB 198: Cross-walking K-12 Curriculum
- DOE Statewide Equity Day
- Analyzing data derived from MAP to serve the needs of all of our students
- Differentiating Instruction
- Diversity and Inclusion Training
- Implementing Love and Logic in the Classroom
- IEP development, accommodations, modifications, instructional strategies, and classroom interventions
- Inclusive environments and co-teaching
- Common assessments and instructional planning
- Utilizing Schoology within the classroom
- Incorporating Outdoor Education into the K-3 classrooms
- Mindfulness In and Out of the Classroom
- How to use Google Classroom and other Instructional Technology
- Collaboration to create comprehensive Curriculum Maps

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

School Comments:

The NCS administration also eagerly accepted the opportunity to be a year two pilot school for the implementation of the Delaware Teacher Growth and Support system. (DTGSS) DTGSS was designed to provide ongoing observation, feedback and support to drive teacher growth. In DTGSS, teachers consistently reflect on current practice as well as set new goals in a system of continuous improvement that ultimately benefits students. DTGSS connects teacher and student behaviors and practices to reflect culturally responsive teaching and learning and are aligned with the three Performance Areas in the Delaware Teacher Growth and Support System. The equitable classroom practices are researched-based, and the examples represent a repertoire of strategies that communicate high expectations to students, create high-quality learning environments, draw upon the assets learners bring to the classroom, engage learners in positive interactions and relationships, and support learners as they build autonomy towards success in college, career, and life.

NCS has contracted with the Delaware Academy for School Leadership to guide the NCS K-12 Instructional Leadership Team through a protocol to conduct "Teaching & Learning Calibration Learning Walks". This high-level strategy to enhance the instructional leadership skills of our team is aligned with DTGSS and focuses on looking for instructional trends as they related the each of our buildings identified DTGSS priority area indicators.

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	AS	AS	M	M	Not Rated	M	Meets Standard

M: Meets Standard

AS: Approaching Standard

F: Far Below Standard

4.2 FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE EXPECTATIONS

PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT

Newark Charter School's overall financial rating is "Meets Standard". By 2028, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of "Meets" standard as measured by the Financial Performance Framework. Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate economic viability and achieve our financial performance expectation. 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:

Newark Charter School's overall financial rating is "Meets Standard". Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate economic viability and achieve our financial performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review, annual audit and all compliance related financial metrics. The school has met these standards every year and financial performance is projected to remain strong in the future. Over the last year, during a major capital project, the school did not meet two of the criteria. The remainder of our near-term indicators met standard.

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

School Comments:

Newark Charter School continues to follow existing State of Delaware, OMB, Division of accounting and school's policies and procedures.

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

School Comments:

Newark Charter School was approaching standard this year on The Aggregate Three Year Margin and the Cash Flow metric. One significant financial event occurred that caused this variance of the last two years; 1) the school refinanced their 2012 Bond series to build a Fitness Center, Athletic

Complex and Performing Arts Center. The funds required to complete these projects exceeded the amount refinanced and the Board agreed to utilize the school's cash reserves to supplement the funding from the refinance to support the students. The Fitness Center and Athletic Complex were completed in FY 23 and the Performing Arts Center will be completed in FY 24. The school's reserves will continue to be utilized in FY 24 to complete the Performing Arts Center thus it is expected that Cash Flow in FY 24 will also be approaching or below standard. In FY 25, Cash Flow will resume to meet standards. This was a strategic Board approved investment.

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

School Comments:

Newark Charter School had a clean audit with no findings. No corrective action is necessary as there are no audit findings.

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:

The K-12 NCS Academic Council, established in the fall of 2021, is comprised of K-12 Principals, APs, Central Office administrators and building level teacher leaders continues to build momentum as a mechanism to:

Developing and Empowering Teacher Leaders to maximize student learning outcomes for all by ensuring...

- Our curriculum, instruction and materials are aligned to our Mission, Core Knowledge, state-standards and aligned to provide a culturally responsive educational experience for all students.
- We are utilizing HQIM and evidenced-based strategies with fidelity when delivering instruction to all students.
- All students have consistent access to high-quality core instruction in a culture with high expectations that align with the NCS Vision and is supported by research.

The NCS Instructional Leadership Team, established in the fall of 2021, is comprised of principals, APs, central office administrators and Senior Team Leaders to provide a capacity building professional learning experience connected to leading calibrations of teaching and learning. Paired with on-the-job support to effectively provide feedback and coaching to positively influence teacher practice to ensure all students experience Newark Charter's legacy of excellence in academics and decorum and continue to thrive. Through this capacity building experience, it is expected that building leaders will gain the necessary tools and skills to replicate the experience for an expanded community of teacher leaders in their respective buildings resulting in an exponential impact on NCS teacher leader capacity.

Our Senior Team Leads for Multilingual learners utilized Title III grant funds to begin our ML Council aligned with WIDA standards. The ML council provides K-12 teachers with a yearlong professional learning opportunity to collaborate and implement best practices in their classrooms to serve all learners at NCS.

VI. ANNUAL REPORT CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Name of School:	NEWARK CHARTER SCHOOL
Location:	NEWARK, DELAWARE

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.



12-19-25

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

Date

Print/Type Name:	SAM GOLDER
Title (if designated):	HEAD OF SCHOOL
Date of approval by board of directors:	1/21/25

