

Red Clay Consolidated School District

Charter Renewal Rubric

Charter School Of Wilmington

2023-2024

Accountability Committee Members

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Criterion 1.

The individuals and entities submitting the application are experienced and qualified to start and operate a charter school, and to implement the school's proposed educational program. Certified teachers, parents, and members of the community in which the school is to be located must be involved in the development of the proposed charter school. At the time at which the school commences its instructional program and at all times thereafter, the board of directors must include a teacher at the school and a parent of a student enrolled at the school as members.

Stated in the 1995 Charter School of Wilmington (CSW) charter application, the “application was prepared and is supported by a diverse group of local and multinational businesses and parents, teachers, and community members.”

The SY 2022-2023 board of directors includes a teacher at the school and a parent of a student enrolled at the school as members.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 1.

Criterion 2.

The chosen form of organization, identified in the articles of incorporation and bylaws, or or the membership agreement, conforms with the Delaware General Corporation Law.

The chosen form of organization, as identified in the CSW’s Certificate of Incorporation and bylaws, conforms to the Delaware General Corporation Law. Stated in the CSW’s 1995 charter application, the CSW was incorporated on September 29, 1995 as a non-profit corporation pursuant to the provisions of the general corporation law of the State of Delaware. One purpose of the corporation is “to organize and run a charter school under the Charter School Act of 1995 (14 Del.C. §§501 et seq.)”

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 2.

Criterion 3.

The mission statement, goals, and educational objectives are consistent with the description of legislative intent set forth in 14 Del.C. §501 and the restrictions on charter school operations set forth in 14 Del.C. §506.

According to the CSW website, the mission of the CSW is “to engage highly motivated high school students with an interest in math and science by providing a challenging college-preparatory curriculum in a safe, friendly, and nurturing environment that integrates practical learning opportunities, sets high expectations, develops social responsibility, and promotes a global perspective.”

Described in the CSW’s 1995 charter application, the goal of the CSW is “to enhance the quality of public education in Delaware by developing a unique, model school that utilizes the most effective educational techniques and ensures equal educational opportunity, thus meeting the needs of students, the business community, and society.”

The educational objectives identified by CSW believe that critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and collaboration promote innovation. We want to develop an ethical learning environment that leads to good decision-making, habits, and virtues. To appreciate all the unique differences within an interconnected and multicultural world community, CSW places a high priority on cultural awareness. Although our focus is on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, Charter students in collaboration with Cab Calloway School of the Arts, are enrolled in art, drama, concert band, jazz band, marching band, chorus, and other musical groups. Each year, Cab and CSW students collaborate on Culture Day to embrace,

share, and celebrate the diversity of our campus community with student performances, displays, and food representing a variety of cultures.

The CSW's mission statement, goals, and educational objectives are consistent with the description of legislative intent set forth in 14 Del.C. §501, which is "to improve student learning; encourage the use of different and innovative or proven school environments and teaching and learning methods; provide parents and students with measures of improved school and student performance and greater opportunities in choosing public schools within and outside their school districts; and to provide for a well-educated community." The CSW's mission statement, goals, and educational objectives are consistent with the restrictions on charter school operations set forth in 14 Del.C. §506.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 3.

Criterion 4.

The school has set goals for student performance and will utilize satisfactory indicators to determine whether its students meet or exceed such goals and the academic standards set by the state. The indicators shall include the assessments required for all students in other public schools, although the charter school may adopt additional performance standards or assessment requirements, and shall include timelines for the achievement of student performance goals and the assessment of such performance.

The CSW's performance on the state report card (DSSF) was reviewed by the committee from SY22 and SY23 (SY21 and SY20 were not available). The DSSF rates schools in the following categories: Overall Quality, Academic Achievement, School Quality/Student Success, Graduation Rate, and Progress Toward English Language Proficiency. In SY23 and SY22, CSW performed at the "Exceeds Expectation" level in all metrics with the exception of Progress Toward English Language Proficiency as this group lacked enough students to be a valid reporting group. This is the highest possible score that can be achieved.

The committee reviewed student performance on Advanced Placement (AP) scores throughout all grade levels. Enrollment in AP coursework and number of students increased over a five year period from 368 students in 2019 to 406 students in 2023. During this five year period students achieving a 3 or higher on the AP exam fell from 85.87% to 75.12%; however this pass rate is still significantly higher than the district, state and national averages. To give reference, 21.6% of students in the US scored a 3 or higher with 16.5% of Delaware seniors scoring a 3 or higher in SY22. In 2023, 58.4% of CSW seniors scored a 3 or higher on an AP exam.

A review of CSW SAT scores show CSW as the top performing school in Delaware on the SAT in both Math and ERW (English Reading and Writing). In 2022, 93.36% of students were proficient in ERW and 87.14% in math. CSW's performance on the SAT overall was an average score of 1216 (ERW606 and Math610) these scores are significantly higher than the state averages with a score of 991 (ERW474 and Math486).

CSW also provided PSAT results for grades 9, 10, and 11. CSW leads the state in scores on PSAT. (CSW requires all 9th graders to take the 10/11 grade version of the PSAT so state results are not comparable).

Graduation rate at CSW is 100 percent for SY22 and SY23. US News and World Report ranks CSW as the #1 high school in Delaware, 112th Nationally, #3 in the Philadelphia Metro Area, and #24 in Charter School Rankings Nationwide.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 4.

Criterion 5.

The school proposes a satisfactory plan for evaluating student performance and procedures for taking corrective action in the event that student performance at the charter school falls below such standards which are reasonably likely to succeed.

The committee reviewed the systems and structures present at CSW. Evidence of MTSS Systems was present for students who needed support with an emphasis on 9th grade support through career and college counseling and academic support when needed. CSW's instructional calendar is aligned with RCCSD's instructional calendar with assessment milestones and dates aligned to both state and district requirements.

CSW employs a Special Services Coordinator whose sole job is to support and coordinate support for students who are struggling academically. In 9th grade specifically, CSW employees Phase 3 college math prep course. Students are selected for this course through a series of assessments administered prior to the school year and during the beginning weeks of school. Supports, including a combination of both peer tutors and instructional staff tutoring, are built into the student day. CSW has a Instructional Intervention Team that also meets bi-weekly to review students data to match students with supports. A formal referral system is also in place that can be utilized by any staff member with concerns about a student's progress.

CSW also has a ML liaison who coordinates services for students with English Language Proficiency (ELP) needs. The state's Home Language Survey tool is used at the point of enrollment to identify student needs.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 5.

Criterion 6.

The school's educational program, including curriculum and instructional strategies, has the potential to improve student performance; and must be aligned to meet the Delaware Content Standards and state program requirements, and in the case of a charter high school, state graduation requirements. High school programs must provide driver education. The educational program at all charter schools must include the provision by the school of extra instructional time for at-risk students, summer school, and other services required to be provided by school districts pursuant to the provisions of 14 Del.C. §153. A previously approved charter school may continue to operate in compliance with the terms of its current approval, but its charter shall not be renewed unless the school shall submit an application for renewal in full compliance with the requirements of this subsection.

CSW's academic focus is Math, Science, and Computer Education. This focus is supported using a challenging college preparatory curriculum with a STEM focus. Students are grouped into "phases" based on assessment information obtained during the acceptance/entrance process. The three phases include College Prep (74th to 84th percentile), Accelerated College Prep (85th to 92nd percentile), and College Prep Honors (93rd to 99th percentile). The use of phases allows classroom instruction to be tailored to the abilities of students encouraging maximum growth and academic achievement. In addition to the college preparatory curriculum a variety of Advanced Placement choices are available to students. Performance on Advanced Placement assessments are the best in the state of Delaware and exceed national and state averages by at least double. CSW is a member of the National Consortium for Specialized Secondary Schools of Mathematics, Science and Technology. CSW is also a member of the Middle States Association of College and Schools. Both organizations require member schools to have a rigorous curriculum aligned to national standards.

In addition to a rigorous curriculum, CSW requires students to earn 24.5 credits for graduation. At least 10.5 of the required 24.5 credits must be earned in math, science, and computer science. This requirement includes: Math (4.0), English (4.0), Social Science (3.0), World Language (2.0), Computer Science Fundamentals (0.5), Math/Science/Computer Science Elective (1.0), Physical Education (1.0), Health (0.5), Electives (3.5), and STEM Research Project (0.5). Discussions are underway this year to increase the credit requirement to 26.5 by accumulating two credits in Math and Science.

CSW utilizes “VARK (Visual, Auditory, Reading, Kinesthetic): Knowing How to Learn Strategies” with a focus on guiding students to take ownership of their own learning by understanding their preferred learning styles. These systems are integrated into courses. Instructional staff use these systems to help students process complex, rigorous coursework leveraging the student’s preferred learning style.

CSW’s unique partnership with Cab Calloway School of the Arts also allows students to access some of the highest performing programs in the state. Cab Calloway is the number 2 performing High School in the State based upon SAT scores. 96 percent of students graduating from Wilmington Charter in SY22 attended a four year university with 3 percent attending a two year college and 1 percent entering the workforce directly.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 6.

Criterion 7.

The school’s educational program sets forth appropriate strategies to be employed to accommodate the needs of at-risk students and those needing special education services.

Committee Summary:

Eleven students with IEPs and sixty students with 504 Plans are currently enrolled. In the 2018 accountability review, seven students with IEPs and fifty students with 504 Plans were enrolled. While this is a slight increase over the last five years, CSW should continue recruitment efforts and make known that students with disabilities can apply for admission. CSW has a full-time Special Education Coordinator to facilitate IEP and 504 Plan meetings and work with staff to ensure student IEPs and 504s are implemented with fidelity. The committee reviewed the DOE Annual Determination for Special Education (IDEA) made public in June 2023, and CSW received a rating of “Meets Requirements.”

Regarding Multi-tiered Systems of Support (MTSS), CSW has created an Instructional Intervention Team (IIT) to meet the state requirements for Problem Solving Teaming for Tier 2 & 3 interventions as required per the 2018 accountability review. CSW also provided a description of evidence-based interventions including reading, math, “check and connect” as well as social/emotional interventions that are utilized for students in need of support. The committee appreciates CSW’s description of student well-being and Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) initiatives including the multiple partnerships to create a sense of community within the student body. CSW has also established a vision to establish equitable learning spaces, sharing core values with staff and students, to cultivate a sense of belonging. CSW has also engaged in monthly meetings with students to elevate student voice.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 7.

Committee Recommendations:

Thank you for providing the disaggregated AP & PSAT/SAT data. We recommend that consideration be given to increasing the number of Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students participating in AP courses and exams. Additionally, CSW should consider how to provide support to students regarding AP preparation and performance. For PSAT/SAT, we recognize the increased performance from Grade 10 to 11 for Black/African American and Hispanic/Latino students; however, CSW should consider how to

provide support to students regarding SAT test preparation. For example, how are students made aware of tutoring and support programs that could assist them with AP and SAT preparation or how could existing tutoring programs expand to offer AP and SAT support?

CSW should be aware of state regulations and legislative activity impacting curriculum requirements. In spring 2022, the legislature added requirements for Mental Health Curriculum ([HB 301](#); [Title 14 Section 508.3.3](#)) and SEL Curriculum ([Title 14 Section 508.3.2](#)) across all grades to be in place for the 23-24 school year. SEL Curriculum resources are available through the [DOE SEL site](#). Additionally, requirements for integration of Black History Education ([HB 198](#)) across the curricula and Holocaust & Genocide Education ([HB 318](#)) at least one time in each grade for grades 6-12 are now required. More information on CSW's implementation of these curricular requirements should be included in future renewal applications.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 7.

Criterion 8.

The plan for the school is economically viable, based on a review of the school's proposed budget of projected revenues and expenditures for the first three years, the plan for starting the school, and the major contracts planned for equipment and services, leases, improvements, purchases of real property, and insurance.

Committee Summary:

The committee reviewed the audited financial statement from FY 2022 and current and prior year budgets. The Charter School of Wilmington has consistently maintained a healthy and sufficient funds balance of \$3.6 million per the FY 2022 audit. The FY 2023 ending local funds balance in First State Financials was \$4.1 million. An audited FY 2023 Financial statement is not yet available. CSW's budgeted expenditures match available revenues allowing CSW to maintain their year-end funds balance. They have met the 75 days cash required by the State of Delaware for Charter Schools every year. Salary, including other employment costs (OEC) and benefit expenditures are the largest expenditure item in the budget and is a consistent percentage in the budget. The facility lease with the Red Clay Consolidated School District expires June 30, 2024 and the district will work with CSW to negotiate a new lease, contingent on the renewal of their charter.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 8

Criterion 9.

The school's financial and administrative operations meet or exceed the same standards, procedures and requirements as a school district. If a charter school proposes to operate outside the state's pension and/or benefits system, a specific memorandum of understanding shall be developed and executed by the charter school, the approving authority, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Controller General and the secretary of Finance to assure that the state's fiduciary duties and interests in the proper use of the appropriated funds and as a benefits and pension trustee are fulfilled and protected, the state's financial reporting requirements are satisfied, and the interests of charter school employees are protected. All charter schools shall operate within the Delaware Financial Management System (DFMS) and be subject to all of the same policies and procedures which govern other agencies operating with such system, except that

any charter school previously approved to operate outside of the DFMS may continue to so operate subject to the terms of its memorandum of understanding until such time as the school's charter is renewed pursuant to this chapter.

Committee Summary:

CSW operates within the State's financial system and employees are members for the state pension and benefits plans. The last 3 years of audited statements (FY 2020, 2021 and 2022) were reviewed as well as current financial documentation and reports from the First State Financial System (FSF). The auditors have concluded "no material reportable conditions" in the review and preparation of the CSW's Basic Financial Statements. CSW remains fully compliant with posting annual budgets and monthly reports of the Citizens Budget Oversight Committee. The audit reports are also available online.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 9

Criterion 10.

The assessment of the school's potential legal liability and the types and limits of insurance coverage the school plans to obtain are adequate.

Committee Summary:

CSW has a similar legal liability to any comparably sized public school in Delaware. CSW has reported they are not aware of any legal matters that propose a risk to the school. The CSW works with the same insurance broker as Red Clay Consolidated School District. This allows Red Clay and the CSW to coordinate coverage and mitigate risks that may affect either party in the shared facility arrangement. In reviewing coverages with our joint insurance broker, we believe that CSW carries adequate insurance.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 10

Criterion 11.

The procedures the school plans to follow to discipline students and ensure its students' adherence to school attendance requirements comply with state and federal law.

Upon the review of the CSW's student handbook, all policies and procedures are in alignment and meet the requirements of the Delaware Department of Education. The school's discipline procedures and policies support a safe school environment for students, staff, parents, and community members. A comprehensive attendance policy begins on page 18 and behaviors are outlined beginning on p. 24. They use a specific matrix of consequences for first and subsequent offenses. Additionally, CSW uses Red Clay's handbook for disciplinary policies and procedures not explicitly outlined.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 11.

Criterion 12.

The procedures the school plans to follow to assure the health and safety of the students, employees, and guests of the school while they are on school property are adequate and that the charter school will comply with the applicable provisions of local, state, and federal law, including the provisions of 11 Del.C. Ch. 85.

The CSW is in compliance with local, state, and federal requirements/laws which address the safety of students, staff, and community members. The school's plan and procedures are in compliance with the Delaware Department of Safety and Homeland Security. Also, the school has submitted all Incident Command Team information and works closely with Cab Calloway School of the Arts administration team to ensure that students, staff, and visitors are safe.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 12.

Criterion 13.

The school shall have a satisfactory plan for timely transferring student data and records to the Department of Education.

CSW has no outstanding complaints from the Department of Education regarding record keeping.

The Committee reviewed several documents outlining CSW's procedures regarding record keeping. The CSW is professional in their handling of Red Clay and Delaware Department of Education paperwork requests. The distribution of responsibilities at the school works well in completing assigned tasks.

The CSW has accurate written policies and procedures for the preparation of the September 30th Unit Count, which were implemented as early as the 2003-2004 school year.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 13.

Criterion 14.

The school's board of directors shall annually certify to the Delaware Department of Education, on a form to be provided by the Delaware Department of Education, that prior to the payment of any fees or other sums to any management company employed by the board, the board will insure that sufficient revenues of the school are devoted to adequately support the school's proposed educational program. Such a form of certification may require documentation of all actual or proposed expenditures by the school. Failure to provide sufficient funds to adequately support the school's proposed education program shall be grounds for revocation of the school's charter.

This criterion is not applicable since no management company is involved.

Criterion 15

The school shall have a satisfactory plan to ensure the effectiveness of its board of trustees, including governance training conducted for any new board members and at a minimum of once every 3 years.

CSW was able to provide training completion dates for all Board Members and is in compliance with governance training.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 15.

Criterion 16

The school shall have a satisfactory plan for procedures it will follow in the case of the closure or dissolution of the school, including a plan to set aside sufficient funds to cover the salaries owed to those employees who are paid over a 12-month period. For a new applicant granted under this chapter, the application shall include a reasonable plan to establish sufficient available balances pursuant to § 516(1) of this title.

The CSW will utilize the Red Clay Consolidated School District closure protocols in the case of closure or dissolution. Those protocols are published on the Red Clay Consolidated School District website and they have been made available for CSW leadership.

The CSW has met the standards of Criterion 16.