



**Department of Education
Charter School Accountability Meeting**

**October 7, 2013
Renewal Application Process
Initial Meeting - Minutes**

Kuumba Academy Charter School

Mr. Blowman called the meeting to order. For the purpose of the record, introductions were made:

Voting Committee Members

- David Blowman, Deputy Secretary, Delaware Department of Education (DDOE), Chair of the Committee
- Karen Field Rogers, Associate Secretary, Financial Reform & Resource Management, DDOE
- Rich Heffron, Senior Vice President Government Affairs, Delaware State Chamber of Commerce
- Paul Harrell, Director, Public & Private Partnerships, DDOE
- April McCrae, Education Associate, Education Associate, Science Assessment and STEM, DDOE
- Barbara Mazza, Education Associate, Exceptional Children Resources, DDOE
- Tasha Cannon, Deputy Officer Talent Recruitment, Selection and Strategy, Teacher & Leader Effectiveness Unit (TLEU), DDOE

Staff to the Committee (Non-voting)

- Chantel Janiszewski, Education Associate, Charter School Office
- Catherine Hickey, Deputy Attorney General, Counsel to the Committee

Ex-officio Members (Non-voting)

- Kendall Massett, Executive Director, Delaware Charter School Network
- Donna Johnson, Executive Director, Delaware State Board of Education

Representatives of Kuumba Academy Charter School

- Sally Maldonado, Head of School
- Michelle Lambert, Accountant
- Tamara Price, Assistant Head of School
- Raye Jones-Avery, Board Member
- Lynne Howard, Expansion Director

Meeting purpose: To review and discuss Kuumba Academy Charter School's renewal application, to take such further action thereon as the Charter School Accountability Committee deems appropriate including, without limitation, the drafting of a report on the application, and to give the applicant the opportunity to: present additional evidence beyond the data contained in the renewal application, supporting its case for charter renewal, describe improvements undertaken or planned for the school, and detail the school's plans for the next charter term.

Renewal Application Process Timeline: Mr. Blowman discussed the renewal application process timeline, identifying October 15, 2013 as the release date of the Charter School Accountability

Committee's (CSAC) Initial Report, October 23, 2013 as the date of the Public Hearing, October 30, 2013 as the deadline for the applicant's response to the Initial Report, November 4, 2013 as the final meeting of the CSAC and November 12, 2013 as the Delaware State Board of Education meeting at which the Department's decision on the application will be announced by the Secretary of Education.

Renewal Process: Mr. Blowman discussed the changes to the charter school renewal process as a result of changes to legislation, primarily HB 165, and the role of the Performance Framework in making high-stakes decisions around renewals.

Meeting between the CSAC and Kuumba Academy Charter School: Mr. Blowman invited Ms. Sally Maldonado, Head of School, to summarize for the CSAC each section of the application, highlighting key points. CSAC voting members asked clarifying questions directly of the applicant after each section was summarized. The sections of the application, identified below, were discussed. Various issues were explored, including those listed under applicable section headings.

1. Overview of the school

Ms. Massett pointed out that Kuumba Academy, along with East Side Charter School, Prestige Academy, and Thomas A. Edison Charter School, is implementing a new educator evaluation system as approved by the Delaware Department of Education. Ms. Johnson commended Kuumba Academy for its academic success and its proactive approach in addressing academic areas that have dipped.

2. Academic Framework

Mr. Blowman asked why Kuumba Academy saw a dip in math scores in 2012-13. Ms. Maldonado stated that 5th grade was the area of greatest need in mathematics, primarily due to an influx of new students. They have added math instructional specialists as part of their plan to help struggling students.

3. Organizational Framework

Ms. Cannon asked what steps Kuumba Academy is taking to diversify its student population, specifically its students with disabilities subgroup. Ms. Maldonado stated that most of their recruitment is by word of mouth and no additional marketing strategies have been needed so far. However, with the expansion of grade levels, Kuumba Academy is going to focus on making sure parents of students with disabilities know that Kuumba is an option for them.

4. Financial Framework

Ms. Field-Rogers asked for clarification of the "Other Funds" tab of the budget as it is not clearly delineated where these funds come from. Sources were clarified by Ms. Lambert.

Mr. Harrell asked if the school has ever considered a marketing plan given their academic success.

5. Five-Year Planning

Kuumba Academy confirmed that it is requesting a change in location from its previously approved location, which is considered a modification. In addition, Kuumba is requesting a change in its authorized enrollment, also considered a modification.

Conclusion of the meeting: Mr. Blowman asked the voting members of the CSAC if there was any additional information they required in order to inform their decision-making. The result was a unanimous "no". Mr. Blowman then asked the voting members of the CSAC if there were any sections of

the application that they felt warranted a “Does Not Meet Standard” rating at this time based on their review of the application and the discussions at the meeting. The result was a unanimous “no”. The meeting concluded at 11:33 a.m., however CSAC members remained until 11:45 a.m.