Delaware Charter School Annual Report

Campus Community School

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    Leroy M. Travers   December 1, 2016

Head of School   Date

    Harry Papaleo   December 1, 2016

Board President   Date

I. Charter School Program

Narrative:

Provide a Synopsis of the School's Mission and Educational Program, Including Key Components of the Education Model and Any Unique or Innovative Features of the School

Brief History

Campus Community School (CCS) founded by a group of local parents, in collaboration with the education faculty at Wesley College, opened CCS on the campus of Wesley College, September 9, 1998. At that time Wesley College provided a free multiple classroom facility (Bradford Street) and access to a gymnasium, cafeteria, library and additional office space. The school served 300 students in grade 1-8. In 2002, a second facility was purchased at 350 Pear St. With an approved charter modification, a small comprehensive high school was added enrolling up to 300 additional students. Students in grades 8-12 were located here. In 2009, Wesley College unveiled a "Campus Master Plan". CCS was given notice to vacate the Bradford Street building in June 2012. School: Campus Community School Report for Year: 2014 - 2015 Page 3 With the loss of the Wesley College facility in 2012 the board of directors sought approval to amend the charter to close the high school program located at 350 Pear Street, renovate this building to accommodate the relocation of the elementary & middle grades program, and add two kindergarten classes. The Board of Directors also initiated a process to bring changes to the administrative leadership including the hiring of a new Head of School and principal. In the spring of 2013 the final class of seniors graduated. In 2015-16 school year, CCS served 417 students in a K-8 school program located at 350 Pear St. Campus Community School has a diverse population. In the 2016-2017 school year CCS enrolled 413 students, a majority of whom live in Dover and its surrounding communities. Our students for the 16/17 school year are represented by 26.9% white, 52.4% African American, 10.7% Hispanic/Latino, 6.6% multi-racial, 2.1% Asian and less than 1% each American Indian and Hawaiian. Approximately 65% of

our students are from low income families as measured by eligibility to participate in the free and reduced school lunch program.

CCS Mission

Since the development and approval of its founding charter CCS has maintained a steadfast commitment to its mission: To create and maintain an environment for learning that allows each student to maximize his or her potential in developing habits of mind, acquiring knowledge and skills, and demonstrating individual and social responsibility

CCS Educational Program

The original CCS charter was written with specific philosophic assumptions in which to design the **educational program**. They included (1) a belief in a constructivist approach to teaching and learning; (2) Choice Theory as a theory of motivation for learning; (3) strong school community/ parental involvement; (4) site-based management/shared decision-making; and (5) a university-based collaborative support/partnership with Wesley College.

Developing an educational program designed to create a culture of a learning organization as a school, has been both challenging and rewarding. Over the years, CCS has experimented with a variety of strategies activities and practices. The forces of social, economic, political and technological change have had an impactful influence over these choices, the most pronounced of which is for CCS to become a more focused data driven results oriented organization embracing the rigor and expectations of Common Core academic standards and standards based assessments and grading.

Key components of the educational model include a school that is organized as a collaborative

community of learners committed to the success of all students; an inquiry- based approach to learning; an emphasis on students taking personal responsibility for their education and behavior; a focus on project-based, hands-on learning, creating a highly positive learning environment where students are expected to work toward their potential; embedded on-going staff development; community service learning; and parent/community involvement. The ultimate goal is to provide all students with the foundational knowledge and skills they need to achieve their dreams.

Creating a culture of learning within the CCS school community naturally lends itself to **innovation and unique features**. Foremost, there is an overall raising expectation that everyone and everything is constantly evolving, growing with infinite capacity, where all students can be successful. Second, relationship building between and among teachers, students, families, and the larger community is essential to understanding the interconnectivity and interdependence of all learning. Fourth, a deepening appreciation, respect and understanding of the influences of poverty, race, ethnicity, culture on learning. Finally, develop in students the capacity to nurture passion creativity and intrinsic motivation to learn.

Professional Learning Communities

The school environment itself is learner-centered for both children and adults. Staff are organized into professional learning communities that meet weekly to reflect and improve upon the results of data analysis and classroom practice, with the goal of continuous improvement. Staff also meets one or more times per month to discuss and study academic focus areas. The focus area for 2015/2016 was Assessment. The focus area for 2016/2017 is science. Staff also meet regularly in workgroups to discuss academic programs, assessment initiatives and climate and culture issues that impact the whole school. Daily academic expectations include

collaborative team planning, use of differentiated instruction and moving students forward to become independent learners. Administrators and teachers leverage tools such as routine practices, supportive and consistent messaging, and modeling. These tools are used to develop and maintain a positive culture for critique and continuous improvement among peers and their students.

Student-led conferences

Another innovative practice at CCS is our student-led conference. A student-led conference is a meeting with the student and his or her family and the teacher to discuss school progress. The student has the leadership role in informing parents of their progress by sharing evidence of their learning in meeting state standards. Students use this time to discuss school expectations as well as personal growth goals. Student-led conferences help students develop ownership and accountability for their learning. These conferences are required and take place twice per year.

Habits of Mind

Habits of mind are an essential part of the environment at Campus Community School. Each quarter, students are graded in the areas of Citizenship, Reflection, Self-Direction, and Persistence. Campus Community has emphasized these traits throughout the school and teaches them to students along with the academic curriculum.

Responsive Classroom

Campus Community has adopted the Responsive Classroom approach to teaching and learning. Responsive Classroom is a researched based approach that focuses on the strong link between academic success and social/emotional learning. Responsive Classroom is structured around 4 domains; Engaging Academics, Positive Community, Effective Management, and Organizational

Awareness. The program has a set of seven guiding principles that Campus Community has adopted as school-wide guiding principles. These are:

- The social and emotional curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
- How children learn is as important as what they learn.
- Great cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
- To be successful academically and socially, children need to learn a set of social and emotional skills: cooperation, assertiveness, responsibility, empathy, and self-control.
- Knowing the children we teach—individually, culturally, and developmentally—is as important as knowing the content we teach.
- Knowing the families of the children we teach is as important as knowing the children we teach.
- How we, the adults at school, work together is as important as our individual competence: Lasting change begins with the adult community.

After School and Summer Enrichment Program

Campus Community School's 21st Century Community Learning Center offers an intensive after-school enrichment program to students in grades k-8 focused on increasing access to high quality Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math instruction. "S.T.E.A.M. into Learning: Explore, Discover, and Create" features standards-based, supplemental instruction along with integrated enrichment projects.

Throughout the school year, this program takes place every Monday through Thursday, after school for two hours. There is a S.T.E.A.M Enrichment Program that takes place in the summer as well. Collaboration with multiple community based organizations offers the opportunity for children to engage in high interest extensions of the curriculum in addition to supporting their social and emotional growth.

Academic Enrichment

All K-8 students participate everyday in Academic Enrichment, as part of Campus Community's day. The purpose of Academic Enrichment is to provide students with additional time to enhance their academic skills in the core content areas, especially reading, writing and math. Some students may need more support, while others may need more of a challenge. Whole class and individual needs were considered when designing this time. Additional time for students on RTI tier 2 and 3 is met through Academic Enrichment. Students also receive enrichment based around their interest through clubs, such as Robotics, Yearbook, and Cougars Reaching Out. Every educator in our building is assigned to a group of students to help support their needs.

Mentoring

Partnering with Communities in Schools, Campus Community School implements a mentoring program for at risk students. Students are identified by their teachers based on academic and behavioral concerns. Mentors are recruited from the community (Wesley College, local businesses, school board members, Delaware State University, etc.) and receive extensive training from our Site Coordinator. Mentors meet with their assigned mentees at least once a week to build relationships, provide a positive role model, and provide tutoring. Having this one-on-one relationship with a caring adult is critical to our students' success. Campus Community has also implemented a student mentoring program in which older students mentor younger students.

Discuss Key Accomplishments of the Charter School Program Over the 2015-16 School Year

In December of 2015, Campus Community School was renewed, without condition, for the next five years.

II. Performance Reflection

Please Complete the Questions that Match the Charter School's Performance Tier.

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
"Meets Standard" overall ratings on all of the following: - 2014-15 and 2015-16 Org Frameworks - 2014-15 and 2015-16 Financial Frameworks - 2015-16 Academic Frameworks	"Meets Standard" overall Ratings on one or more Performance Framework reports during 2014-15 and 2015-16 school years OR Opened in 2015-16 School Year, Never on Formal Review	At any point during 2015-16 school year: - Renewed with Conditions - Placed on Formal Review - Earned "Falls Far Below Standard" on any Framework Report

Tier 1 Narrative:

Academic Performance

What Are the Successful Academic Practices At Your Charter School that Other Schools Can Replicate?

Responsive Classroom:

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During the 2015/2016 school year the staff at Campus Community received a four day overview training in Responsive Classroom. The administrative team followed this up with in-house professional development throughout the course of the school year. During the 2016/2017 school year, the entire staff has received extensive training in Responsive Classroom techniques, including four full days of training at the beginning of the school year as well as a follow-up day in the spring.

Habits of Mind:

Habits of mind is an essential part of the environment at Campus Community School. Each quarter, students are graded in the areas of Citizenship, Reflection, Self-Direction, and Persistence. Campus Community has emphasized these traits throughout the school and teaches them to students along with the academic curriculum.

Cycles of Inquiry through Data and PLCs:

Core teachers, special education teachers, and administrators engage in focused 8 week cycles of inquiry in reading and math to monitor student progress and plan for differentiated instruction that targets students' areas of need. Data analysis and planning for differentiation/intervention is monitored through weekly data PLCs. All cycles of inquiry are documented in writing by the

teachers. All data collected through formal and informal progress monitoring is documented and kept by the teachers. As part of this focus on data and student growth, students are involved in knowing and understanding their own data. Each grade level decides how to best involve students in this process, but all students use data to reflect on their own growth. Cycles of inquiry that use data are a best practice because they help teachers, students and administrators make decisions based on evidence rather than assumptions.

Professional Development PLCs – In addition to our weekly data PLCs, each year for the last four years, we have identified a professional development need, tied to academics, as the basis of a PLC that involves all teachers, including Special Services and Related Arts. We began four years ago with Math PLC, then moved to Literacy PLC then Assessment PLC last year, and now science PLC. This type of PLC meets every other week for 70 minutes after school. It is facilitated by our Director of Curriculum and one teacher leader. The ultimate goal is to establish a vision for where we're headed within the focus area (math, literacy, assessment, etc.) by developing a common understanding and sense of urgency around "best practices". Teachers are expected to be active participants in the PLC, to be reflective of their current practices, and to show evidence of implementation. Professional Development PLCs are a best practice because they are specific to the needs of the school and because they are driven by goals and actions. Developing the teachers in the school is an essential step in improving learning.

Student Led Conferences - Student-led conferences take place twice a year, at the end of the first and third marking periods. This is a requirement for all students and families. Students create portfolios to showcase their work from the marking period, reflect on strengths/weakness, and create goals for the new marking period. The conference itself is really important because it is the student who is doing most of the talking and explaining of their accomplishments, work

habits, and goals. Student-led conferences are a best practice because they engage students in reflection and analysis about their learning and dispositions.

Readers and Writers Workshop –Students need ample opportunities to write authentic pieces about meaningful topics. They need time for explicit instruction, chances to see and dissect strong models, and time to delve into the writing process. Students spend a lot of time pre-writing, drafting and revising. Teachers act as a coach, providing students with different tools to use and providing students with opportunities to make purposeful decisions about their writing. We draw heavily on the work of Nancy Atwell and Lucy Calkins when setting up workshop. Students engage in Writer's Workshop every day. Within their units of study, students explore questions like *what techniques do writers use to develop powerful stories. What makes an essay compelling to read? What strategies do writers use for planning and revising their pieces?* Writer's Workshop is a best practice because it is process-based, not task-based. It helps students become invested in writing and provides students with skills and strategies that are transferable. It's about developing the writer, not the piece.

Enrichment – All 4$^{\text{th}}$ – 8$^{\text{th}}$ graders participate in Enrichment every day. Because we run on an A/B day schedule, students are scheduled for two enrichment classes each marking period. Each class meets an hour every other day. Enrichment serves two purposes, to provide extra math, reading and writing support to those who need it, and to provide enriching opportunities to those who are already performing well academically. Extra support is determined based on test scores and classroom performance. Elective classes are chosen and prioritized by students each marking period. Electives include both traditional opportunities like Yearbook and Band as well unique opportunities like Sign Language, G.I.R.L Talk, Robotics, and Community Ambassadors. Enrichment is a best practice because it is differentiated to students' needs and interests.

Book Challenge – The 40-Book Challenge is a requirement for all 6th - 8th graders. Over the course of the school year, students are challenged to read a minimum of 40 books. While there are a few requirements about pages and genres, the books are completely chosen by the students. When they finish a book, students record the book and rate it. The 40-Book Challenge is a best practice because it promotes habitual reading, an essential part of becoming a better reader.

<u>Organizational Performance</u>

What Are the Successful Organizational Practices at Your Charter School that Other Schools Can Replicate?

- CCS complies with all applicable state and federal requirements in a timely and thorough way including ensuring all board agenda, minutes and financial reports, as well as other required documents are placed on our web page;

- Our governing board is compliant with all laws, rules and regulations, attends required trainings and participates in board development by having a close and on- going relationship with the Head of School and administrative team;

- The administrative team, consisting of the Head of School, Curriculum Director, and Business Manager, holds weekly meetings to review all monitored activities to ensure compliance with areas such as health and safety requirements, discipline and student behavior, special education concerns etc. We prioritize our findings (developed by data analysis) and proceed to develop weekly targets for our work as an Administrative Team.

<u>Financial Performance</u>

What Are the Successful Financial Management & Stewardship Practices At Your Charter School that Other Schools Can Replicate?

Campus Community School (CCS) prides itself on successful financial management. Over the past few years Campus Community has made a major effort to work as a strong administrative team, which now includes the business manager. In previous years, it seemed as if the business department was a separate entity from the school. Although we are a school, we are also a business, a business which strives to educate children to the best of our ability. This change in our culture has made us a more cohesive team and increased our financial stability. The team approach allows all involved to have a greater knowledge of the school and the overall financial effects of decisions that are made. In addition, we have a strong CBOC committee, which meets monthly and a Board president, who is a licensed CPA.

Another key element to our success is employing staff members with the correct skill set within the business department. In addition, these employees are given support and guidance to ensure they are as successful as possible in their roles within the organization.

Campus Community School follows GAAP, along with (charter school) State required accounting practices. As per the State of Delaware regulations, CCS is audited by an outside firm on an annual basis. Due to the level of our Federal grant funding, our audits prior to the 2016 fiscal year have included a single audit. We have never had a finding noted in any of our audits and according to our current accounting firm, "the finance department at Campus Community Charter School is a good example of successful financial management and stewardship practices."   A few of the attributes that enable us to be effective financially are as follows:

- **Great attention to detail and recordkeeping**. It is important to CCS to employ individuals who have strong attention to detail and understand the importance of detailed recordkeeping. In addition, checks and balances are put into place to verify the accuracy of the functions being performed. I.e., reviewing the voucher register daily, to ensure that all vouchers have processed successfully and accurately.

- **Timely reconciliations of the accounting records**. Reconciliations are preformed within a timely manner in addition to always keeping in mind funding restrictions and deadlines. It is imperative that all functions are performed in a timely manner. In addition, processes are in place to reconcile work load to ensure the accuracy. I.e., invoices are processed within one week of being received. A detailed monthly finance report is created within days of information becoming available via Document Direct reports. All grants are reviewed on a monthly basis to ensure deadlines are met.

- **Monitoring the budget and expenditures on a monthly basis and making continuous adjustments as needed.** We look for effective cost saving measures so that we can provide the maximum benefit for each child. In addition, constant monitoring allows us to be aware and react to any changes in our expenses or revenue in a proactive manner.

- **The highest standards for record keeping in regards to federal compliance and all other financial activities**. The staff is highly trained in the areas of State and Federal rules and regulations. It is of the upmost importance to abide by all requirements.   Staff members are aware of the department's expectations.

- **Cross trained staff members who work well as a team**. A major part of Campus Community's success depends on having the right people, with the correct skill set, in the right positions.   Campus is always monitoring the job roles and responsibilities to ensure that the right people are working in the department, for which their skill set will

excel.   The finance employees work well as a team and have a vast amount to knowledge to share within the department. In addition, team members are cross trained. This practice allows all employees to have a better understanding of the department as a whole, in addition to having back up support.

- **Segregation of duties.** With a small staff it can be hard to ensure that we have segregation of duties. Campus has processes in place that ensure segregation of duties, along with checks and balances, which are part of all the accounting functions. I.e., one person processes payroll, while another person reviews the entries and ensures that the correct funding has been utilized. One person processes orders and verifies that we have been invoiced correctly, a different staff member enters the voucher in First State Financials and yet another staff member, puts the final approve on the voucher prior to payment.

- **A strong Citizens Budget Oversite Committee.** We have a well-rounded committee with varying areas of expertise.   Our Board president, who owns an accounting firm, and has over 30 years of accounting experience is a member of the committee. Other members include people with a back ground in the nonprofit world, the education world and parents.

Having a well-rounded administrative team, an exceptional business department staff, along with a CBOC committee and a Board President with a strong financial background enables us to successfully manage a limited budget with increasing demands.