

NETWORK NEWS

Volume I, Issue 1

Summer 2002

Welcome Parents!

Delaware's charter schools depend on our parents. After all, it was you who made the effort to research the educational options for your child and ultimately decide that a charter school would be the best fit for your student.

Parents are partners in the charter school world and we would like to welcome you as members of the Delaware Charter Schools Network. In order to keep you informed of the latest activities surrounding Delaware's charter schools, we'd like to introduce you to our first tri-annual newsletter.

Each newsletter will include current information on both the national and Delaware charter school scenes. A few of Delaware's charter schools will be highlighted in each edition, giving you an "insider's view" into what our member schools are doing

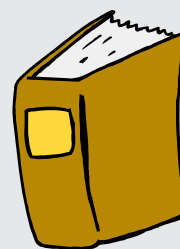
and the achievements they've accomplished in public education.

This first issue also includes contact information for all DCSN member schools and a brief bio of each. We'd like you to become familiar with all of Delaware's charter schools and their unique qualities.

DCSN represents and supports the efforts of all charter schools in Delaware, works with groups interested in starting charter schools, and is committed to improving the quality of education for all children in Delaware.

Delaware's charter schools have been started by parents, teachers, and community members. All share a common goal -- to create new educational choices for Delaware's families. We're so glad you've joined us! ✨

Avoid



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Keep your child's brain cells stimulated this summer!

- make a weekly visit to your local library
- investigate summer offerings and programs at community centers
- start a book club
- establish a family game/trivia night
- cook together
- get outside and learn about the great outdoors
- check out cool sites online:
www.si.edu (Smithsonian)
www.discovery.com
www.nationalgeographic.com

Number of Operating Delaware Charter Schools September 2002: 11

Number of Students Attending Delaware Charter Schools September 2002: 5100+

Charter Basics: What Every Delaware Charter Has In Common

Charter schools are independent, tuition-free public schools, serving students from kindergarten to 12th grade. The "charter" establishing each school is a contract which states the school's mission, program, and measurable goals. Charter schools may be authorized by the Delaware Department of Education or a local school district. They are accountable to their authorizer, parents and the public. Charter schools are different from traditional public schools in that they can only remain open as long as they deliver the results that they promise.

What makes charters different?

A board of directors, made up of parents, teachers and community members, governs and makes decisions for the school. Each charter school has its own academic program and unique character.

Why were charters created?

Delaware's charter school law was passed in 1995 so parents would have more public education choices for their children. Since every child is different, each one should have an opportunity to attend a school that best matches the way he learns.

Bright Ideas continued...

In the Eighth grade, students again present their portfolios to parents or outside reviewers who use a rubric to assess the student growth. In many cases these portfolios are digitized. In addition, homeroom teachers evaluate their students' portfolios twice a year.

SAAS - students, faculty, and parents - is learning more about and continually refining the portfolio process. These portfolios are, after all, about the school as a learning, literate community.

Where do charter schools get money to operate?

Delaware's charter schools get operating money from the state as well as from local school districts. Funding is allocated based on the number of students enrolled. However, Delaware currently does not provide money for charter school facilities, so each school must find and pay for its own building.

How do students attend a charter school?

Any child may attend a charter school. Students are not assigned to charter schools based on neighborhoods or where they live. Parents must choose to send their child to a charter school.

What about standards/testing?

Although each charter school has its own academic program, all curricula must align with the Delaware Content Standards. Like all other public school students, charter school students participate in the Delaware Student Testing Program. ✨

East Side Charter School

fourth graders culminated their spring Mini-Society Projects with Market Day at ESCS.

Mini-Society began in April, when the fourth graders voted on a name, a flag, and currency for their society. "Lil' Rascals" was the name chosen, with "Rascal Bills" the currency for their society.

Student applications were taken for the jobs such as bankers, bank guards, paymasters, decorators, class monitors, custodians, and money-cutters. Some children were paid for their jobs on a

Delaware's Charter Schools

Campus Community School

21 North Bradford Street
Dover, Delaware 19904
Phone: (302) 736-3300
www.campuscomm.k12.de.us
CCS is dedicated to project-based, hands-on activities, with opportunities for each child to seek out and discover. Currently serving grades 1-8, CCS will begin adding high school courses this school year.

The Charter School of Wilmington

100 North DuPont Road
Wilmington, Delaware 19807
Phone: (302) 651-2727
www.charterschool.org
CSW was founded to provide students in grades 9-12 with a college preparatory education with an emphasis on mathematics and science.

East Side Charter School

2401 North Thatcher Street
Wilmington, Delaware 19802
Phone: (302) 421-8270
ESCS was established to provide a strong learning atmosphere and educational program to at-risk students in grades K-5.

Kumba Academy Charter School

519 North Market Street
Wilmington, Delaware 19801
Phone: (302) 472-6450
KACS opened to provide an innovative K-5 learning environment in the City of Wilmington. The school's core educational foundation focuses on the whole child and rests on the belief that parents are primary educators of children.

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weekly basis, while others were paid either upon completion of their jobs or on Market Day.

Economic situations such as limited resources and unlimited wants, opportunity cost and cost-benefit analysis, and scarcity were in the plots of stories created and read by the students to explain their mini-society and economy.

Students sold their society's hand-made products to other students, staff, and parents on Market Day. ✨



Bright Ideas: Neat Things at Neat Schools

Campus Community School

was founded four years ago as a collaboration between parents and



Campus Community students integrate art and math by creating a geodesic dome.

Wesley College's Education Department. Located on Wesley's campus in Dover, the school currently has 300 students in grades 1-8. In the fall of 2002, a facility adjoining the campus will open to house the new CCS high school.

CCS has several areas that define its mission and have made it a success. One of the most unusual is a no-text-book, constructivist teaching approach: curricular activities rely heavily on primary sources of data and manipulative materials. Students are involved with research and projects, and directly witness the connections between various and multiple subjects.

Using the Choice Theory, created by William Glasser, provides CCS with an approach to working with students that promotes positive conflict-solving. Choice Theory encourages discussion between adults and students, which creates a very collegial learning atmosphere.

A team of parents, teachers, administrators, and Wesley College faculty meet biweekly to make management decisions for the school.

There is no top-down approach to management, and all groups feel like shareholders. Parents have direct input through their representatives and have a great deal of influence on programs and policies.

The close connection with Wesley provides support and opportunities for CCS students. Many of the college's facilities are open to students, such as the swimming pool, library, lunchroom, and classrooms. Education staff from Wesley provides

training and support to teachers and student teachers, enabling CCS to maintain a whole-school philosophy, curriculum, and an effective teaching approach.

Sussex Academy of Arts & Sciences

is committed to the academic principles of Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound. The ELOB model focuses on literacy, reflection, and interdisciplinary project-based learning. As a result, ELOB schools use portfolios to assess student progress and growth.

At SAAS, students are required to prepare and present their portfolios during each of their three years at the school. Each portfolio represents a collection of the student's work that illustrates what the student has been working on, learning to do, and thinking about.

Portfolios are unique, yet each shows some commonalities across the grade or team. Each portfolio contains work that showcases the student's best work and shows growth over time. The portfolios contain artifacts selected by both the student and the teacher, as well as "Reflections" completed by the student throughout the year.

The intent of SAAS portfolios is to



Sussex Academy students prepare their annual academic portfolios.

document mastery of the Delaware Content Standards, to highlight the ELOB principles, to chronicle student progress throughout the year, and to assess continuous student performance. Since portfolios chronicle growth over time, the expectations for students' portfolio presentations change throughout their three years in middle school.

Sixth grade students collect their work in a binder and present their portfolios to their parents. In the Seventh grade, students present their portfolios to outside reviewers. These reviewers are parent volunteers who have gone through a training session about the portfolio process. The reviewers use a rubric and checklist to evaluate student presentations.



East Side Charter fourth graders make handcrafts to sell on Market Day.

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Marion T. Academy Charter School

1121 Thatcher Street
Wilmington, Delaware 19802
Phone: (302) 575-1190
MTA, grades K-7, focuses on cultivating skills essential to academic success and excellence and preparing students to be creative, intuitive, and skillful analytical thinkers.

Newark Charter School

924 Barksdale Road
Newark, Delaware 19711
Phone: (302) 292-0980
www.k12.de.us/ncs
The mission of NCS is to promote high levels of student effort and achievement and to foster self-esteem through stimulating academic challenges, meaningful academic accomplishment, and a nurturing learning community. NCS serves students in grades 5-8.

Positive Outcomes Charter School

193 South DuPont Highway
Camden, Delaware 19934
Phone: (302) 697-8805
POCS opened in 1996 to serve at-risk students in grades 7-12.

Thomas A. Edison Charter School

2200 North Locust Street
Wilmington, Delaware 19802
Phone: (302) 778-1101
TAECs provides a strong educational program to a diverse student population, grades K-8, in the Wilmington area.

Sussex Academy of Arts and Sciences

21777 Sussex Pines Road
Georgetown, Delaware 19947
Phone: (302) 856-3636
www.sussexacademy.org
The mission of SAAS is to prepare middle school students, grades 6-8, for the new millennium by providing excellence in education within a small school environment.

MOT Charter School

1156 Levels Road
Middletown, Delaware 19709
Phone: (302) 376-5125
www.motcharter.com
MOT is dedicated to classical education emphasizing the humanities, technology, and our environment. MOT, serving grades K-6, believes that a strong partnership between school and home helps students become life-long learners.

Providence Creek Academy Charter School

355 West Duck Creek Road
Clayton, Delaware 19938
Phone: (302) 653-6276
www.providencecreekacademy.org
PCA is being established to provide students in grades K-6 with an education focused on linkages among academics, technology, and careers.

To find out more about the charter school movement, for charter school data and research, and for information regarding workshops and resources for starting your own charter school, please contact us!

Delaware Charter Schools Network

Phone: (302) 778-5999
Fax: (302) 778-5998
www.DEcharternetwork.org

*Our Vision:
To provide quality public education
for all students in Delaware*

*Our Mission:
To promote autonomy and choice
in public education*

The logo for the Delaware Charter Schools Network (DCSN) consists of the letters "DCSN" in a white, serif font, centered within a solid red square.

DELAWARE
CHARTER SCHOOLS
NETWORK

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