

2018-19 DDOE Charter School Annual Report
Charter Renewal



ODYSSEY CHARTER SCHOOL

**Barley Mill Plaza 4319 Lancaster Pike,
Wilmington, DE 19805**

Phone:(302) 516-8000

<http://odysseycharterschooldel.com/>

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

Discuss Key Accomplishments of the Charter School Program Over the 2018-19 School Year

(Excerpted from Renewal Application)

Odyssey Charter School is proud of its academic performance and student achievement, including its pioneering Modern Greek language acquisition programs. The school's deep belief that all students are welcome and can achieve at the highest levels is evidenced in the diversity and performance during the charter term. Odyssey's commitment to meeting students at their readiness level and challenging them appropriately has insured that students grow and learn.

The cornerstone to Odyssey Charter School's charter and mission is its commitment to infusing the Greek language and culture to students across Delaware. Odyssey is, in fact, the only school in the United States to offer two models of foreign language programming in Modern Greek. Attainment of the Greek language provides many benefits to Odyssey students. Throughout history, Greek has played an integral part in the development of the English language. From the structure of its alphabet, to the word derivations in the sciences, mathematics and beyond, the English language is directly linked to Greek. Students who learn Greek are able to make connections between English vocabulary and their Greek counterpart words by breaking apart and analyzing root words.

In addition to the cognitive and linguistic benefits, Greek culture also serves as a model for instruction. The concepts of democracy and citizenship, as well as the teaching of classical literature and art, provide students with a unique, well-rounded education and the basis for understanding the modern world. The skills associated with this dual-language acquisition, combined with high quality instructors using a focused curriculum, and strong parent support are credited with helping to enable Odyssey's students to exceed expectations in all required content and performance standards analyzed by the State DOE. Studies consistently associate early acquisition of a second language with equal and/or higher academic achievement than students who do not participate in any language programs.

The Foreign Language in the Elementary School (FLES) model has enhanced Odyssey's curriculum and is an integral part of our students' academic achievements. In grades Kindergarten through fifth grade, FLES students receive Modern Greek language and Math in Greek for approximately 90 minutes per day. The FLES curriculum is based on (a) the Common Core State Standards in ELA and Mathematics, (b) the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages (ACTFL), (c) the ACTFL can-do benchmarks which state the performance indicators for foreign language learners, and (d) the certification of attainment in Greek (Center for the Greek Language).

Now in its third year of implementation, students entering Kindergarten have the opportunity to be part of the immersion track. In the immersion classrooms, students receive instruction in Greek for approximately half of the instructional day. Immersion students learn Math and

Science primarily in the Greek, in addition to Greek Language Arts instruction, and English Language Arts and Social Studies primarily in English. The goal of the Greek immersion track is to provide improved learning outcomes in Greek language to our students, as well as the linguistic, academic, and cognitive benefits of foreign language immersion programs. Through innovative programs such as the “school within a school” model, positioning FLES and immersion side by side, the school accelerates achievement, both in the target and native language, for all Odyssey Charter School students.

This combination of collective efficacy and unique programming has delivered academic achievement for Odyssey Charter School students. The SY18-19 testing data reveals that 33% of Odyssey students are performing at the highest level (PL 4) in Smarter ELA. Further, 30% are earning a PL 4 in Smarter Math. Odyssey Charter High School students are excelling, as well. All three classes (Class of 2020, 2021, and 2022) performed above the state and national averages on the Spring 2019 PSAT/SAT. The first graduating cohort, the Class of 2020, has consistently improved their PSAT/SAT growth year to year, for a 137-point increase over five administrations.

In addition, the Greek program continued to improve and excel over the course of the charter term. As evidenced by the most recent Ellinomatheia exam results in May 2019, students at OCS who participated in this internationally recognized certification of Greek Language attainment ($n=22$) had a 75% success rate at the Novice and Intermediate levels. Longitudinally, our exam pass rate has climbed steadily with each administration, from 60% (SY16-17: 3/5

students) to 70% (SY17-18: 7/10 students) to this year’s 75% success (SY18-19: 18/24 students).

This steady improvement is a result of the curriculum refinement, educator preparation and support, and fidelity of implementation across the entire program.

II. Performance Reflection

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

Tier 1	Tier 2	Tier 3
<p>“Meets Standard” overall ratings on all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2017-18 and 2018-19 Org Frameworks - 2017-18 and 2018-19 Financial Frameworks - 2018-19 DE School Success Framework 	<p>“Meets Standard” overall Ratings on one or more Performance Framework reports during 2017-18 and 2018-19 school years OR Opened in 2018-19 School Year, Never on Formal Review</p>	<p>At any point during 2018-19 school year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Renewed with Conditions - Placed on Formal Review - Earned “Falls Far Below Standard” on any Framework Report

Tier 3 Narrative:

Academic Performance

Odyssey Charter School earned a “Meets Standard” in the most recent Academic Achievement ratings. Historically, the school has performed well above statewide proficiency rates in both ELA and Math Smarter Balanced testing. This longitudinal perspective reinforces the impact of the unique programming and quality faculty that reside at Odyssey.

In addition, Odyssey Charter School has met all growth targets in reading and mathematics, resulting in a “Meets Expectations” rating in the SY18-19, an improvement from the

“Approaching Expectation” rating in the SY17-18. The school’s focus on Greek language acquisition at the elementary level, along with rigorous, standards-based has allowed the school to offer a quality, comprehensive program to over 1,800 students in grades K-11.

Over the past several years, the rapid horizontal and vertical expansion affected the overall growth of Odyssey students. Acclimation to the “Odyssey Way” is a process that takes time, and the school instituted various measures to integrate our new students. The repertoire of services for new-to-OCS students include enhanced advisory periods, schoolwide training and implementation of Compassionate Schools strategies (addressing ACEs and social emotional learning), and the maturation of Restorative Practices efforts. These efforts serve to create a culture of trust and community among students, both veteran and new to Odyssey.

Odyssey Charter School has earned ratings of Exceed Expectations within the School Quality/Student Success rating for SY2018-2019. The school focuses on developing strong, honest, and meaningful relationships with its families, and that has aided the school in mitigating attendance issues. Further, guidance and support services are designed to work with families to find solutions to challenges that impede school attendance (i.e., work schedules, health concerns, etc.).

Odyssey Charter School earned an “Exceeds Expectations” rating on the SY18-19 results and in SY17-18 for Progress Toward English Language Proficiency. The school notes that more students

are entering OCS with a home language other than English. This increase in EL students presented a challenge for the school's teaching staff. To address this issue, the school adjusted schedules and staffing to provide appropriate services to the EL population. This resulted in an increase in ACCESS testing results.

Organizational Performance

The 2018-2019 school year was marked with significant enrollment growth and leadership changes taking place at Odyssey Charter School. Through this transition, school leadership has worked to improve organizational oversight of the educational program, student rights, staff hiring and certification, and operations departments. In addition, the Odyssey Charter School Board of Directors is working to improve in the areas of governance and oversight.

Odyssey Charter School's Education Program earned a rating of Meets Standard for all criteria within the section. School leadership has worked to improve programming and compliance with state and federal requirements. The special education department has instituted additional protocols for identifying students for services, and the Student Services department formalized procedures for the variety of English Learner supports provided throughout the school.

Furthermore, the school has improved processes to comply with guidelines and regulations addressing student rights, teacher certification and hiring, and facilities, transportation and health and safety measures. The Head of School and Campus Operations Officer work collaboratively to ensure that all areas of the school, both academics and operations, are successfully providing a safe environment conducive for learning.

As discussed in Odyssey Charter School's renewal application, SY18-19 reflected a rating of Far Below Standard in Measure 2a. The board intends to improve its effectiveness practices

including, but not limited to, those intended to address conflicts of interest, and address the conditions imposed as part of its Probationary status. The Board has formed committees to improve processes and compliance, and the Delaware Alliance for Nonprofit Advancement is supporting this process.

Financial Performance

Odyssey Charter School will complete this section of the Annual Report upon receipt of completed audit for SY18-19.