

Chartiers Valley School District

Dogwood Charter School Review
February 8, 2022

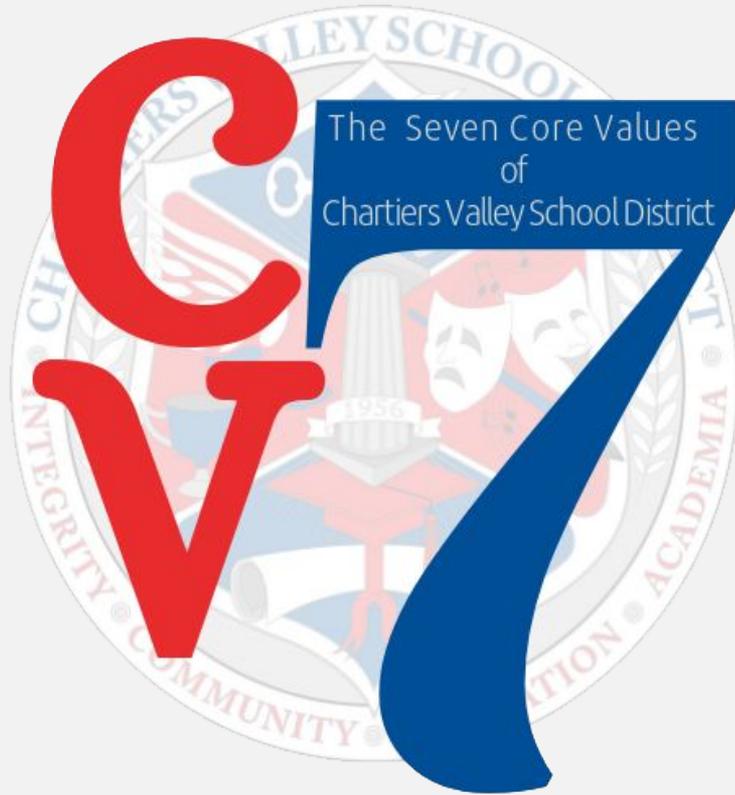
mission

The mission of the Charters Valley School District, a community dedicated to shared leadership, is to graduate students who achieve personal success by providing an exceptional academic foundation in a safe, nurturing environment that inspires creativity and innovation while embracing diversity.

vision

We will inspire excellence in instruction, learning and innovation to prepare our students to achieve personal success.





The Seven Core Values
of
Charters Valley School District

- Demonstrate genuine care, concern and fondness for students.
- Adopt an education-centered focus where students come first, followed closely by the needs of their parents.
- Develop and nurture healthy, productive and cooperative relationships with colleagues.
- Communicate regularly and clearly with students, their families and the community.
- Create and cultivate a district-wide learning community where all employees and educators are valued.
- Encourage innovation and creativity.
- Embrace community and regional partnerships.

Application Review Team UPDATE

- **Director Lisa Augustin and PPS Team**

Office of Charter Schools, Pittsburgh Public Schools

- **Patricia Connolly**

Interim Director of Finance & Operations, CVSD

- **Mikaela Duckstein**

Director of Communications & Strategic Partnerships, CVSD

- **Jason Gardner**

Director of Instructional Technology and Child Accounting, CVSD

- **Scott Seltzer**

Assistant Superintendent for School Leadership, CVSD

- **Johannah Vanatta, Ed.D**

Superintendent of Schools, CVSD

- **Mark Zidek**

Director of Facilities & Maintenance, CVSD

PA Charter School Law Criteria

Charter school applications shall be evaluated by the local board of school directors based on criteria, including, but not limited to the following:

		
I. The demonstrated, sustainable support for the charter school plan by teachers, parents, other community members and students including comments received at the public hearing held under subsection (d)		
II. The capability of the charter school applicant, in terms of support and planning, to provide comprehensive learning experiences to students pursuant to the adopted charter		
III. The extent to which the application considers the information requested in section 1719-A and conforms to the legislative intent outlined in section 1702-A of PA Charter School Law		
IV. The extent to which the charter school may serve as a model for other public schools		

PA Charter School Law Section 1702-A

Under PA Charter Law Section 1702-A, charter schools shall accomplish **ALL** of the following:

		
1. Improve pupil learning		
2. Increase learning opportunities for all pupils		
3. Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods		
4. Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site		
5. Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the school system		
6. Hold the schools established under this act accountable for meeting measurable standards and provide the school with a method to establish accountability systems		

PA Charter School Law Section 1719-A

Under PA Charter Law Section 1719-A, a charter application shall include **ALL** of the following:

		
1. The identification of the charter applicant		
2. The name of the proposed charter school		
3. The grade or age levels served by the school		
4. The proposed governance structure of the charter school, including a description and method for the appointment or election of members of the board of trustees		
5. The mission and education goals of the charter school, the curriculum to be offered and the methods of assessing whether students are meeting educational goals		
6. The admission policy and criteria for evaluating the admission of students which shall comply with the requirements of section 1723-A		

PA Charter School Law Section 1719-A (continued)

		
7. Procedures which will be used regarding the suspension or expulsion of pupils. Said procedures shall comply with section 1318		
8. Information on the manner in which community groups will be involved in the charter school planning process		
9. The financial plan for the charter school and the provisions which will be made for auditing the school under section 437		
10. Procedures which shall be established to review complaints of parents regarding the operation of the charter school		
11. A description of and address of the physical facility in which the charter school will be located and the ownership thereof and any lease arrangements		
12. Information on the proposed school calendar for the charter school, including the length of the school day and school year consistent with the provisions of section 1502.		

PA Charter School Law Section 1719-A (continued)

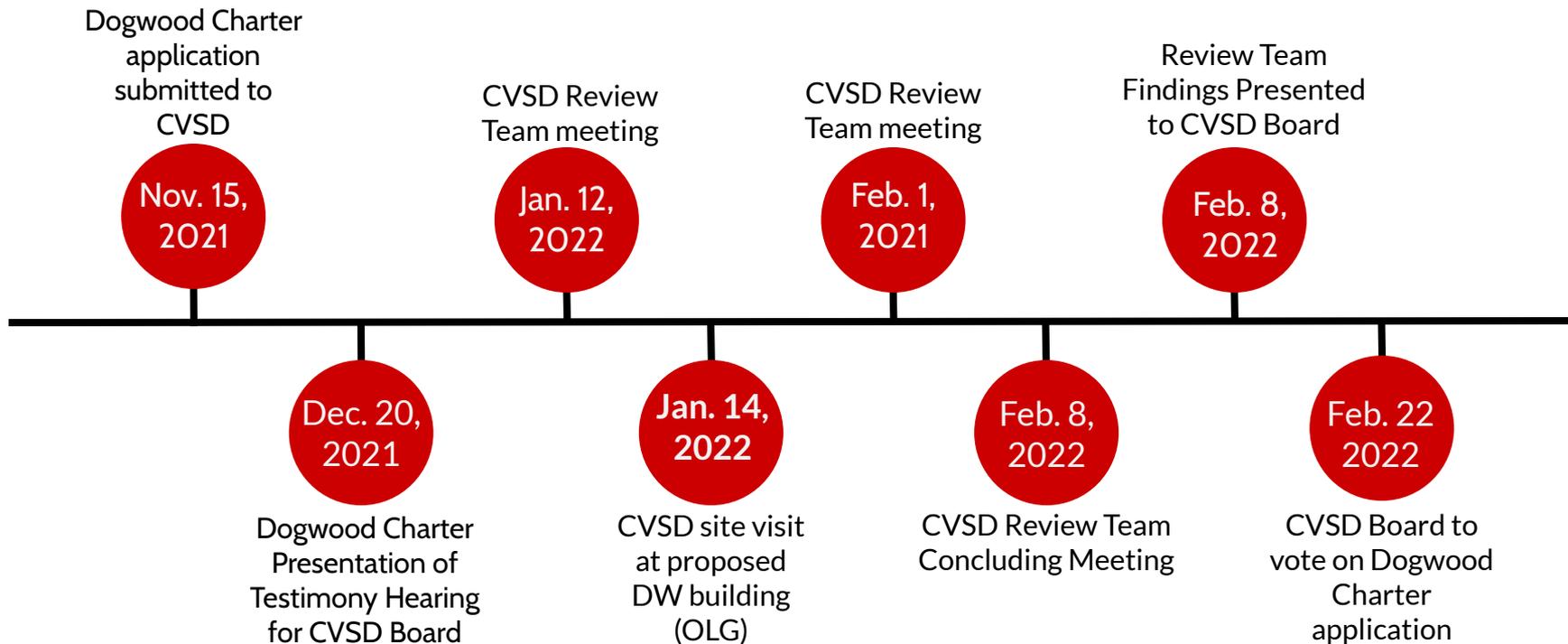
		
13. The proposed faculty and a professional development plan for the faculty of a charter school.		
14. Whether any agreements have been entered into or plans developed with the local school district regarding participation of the charter school students in extracurricular activities within the school district. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, no school district of residence shall prohibit a student of a charter school from participating in any extracurricular activity of that school district of residence: Provided, That the student is able to fulfill all of the requirements of participation in such activity and the charter school does not provide the same extracurricular activity.		
15. A report of criminal history record, pursuant to section 111, for all individuals who shall have direct contact with students.		
16. An official clearance statement regarding child injury or abuse from the Department of Public Welfare as required by 23 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63 Subch. C.2 (relating to background checks for employment in schools) for all individuals who shall have direct contact with students.		
17. How the charter school will provide adequate liability and other appropriate insurance for the charter school, its employees and the board of trustees of the charter school.		

Application Review Components

Charter schools are public schools that must follow the same rules, regulations and laws by which all PA public schools are governed. The Review Team has examined the following components of Dogwood's application as they pertain to the aforementioned PA Charter Law:

- Mission, Purpose, and Needs
 - Mission
 - Marketing Data
- Strategic Planning
 - Best Practices
 - Goals and Objectives
 - School Improvement Planning
- Management Plan
 - Admissions Policy and Criteria
 - Governance
 - Student Discipline & Expulsion Criteria
 - Staff/Parent/Community Involvement
 - Management
 - Staff Conditions, Work, and Professional Development
- Education Plan
 - Education Program
 - Accountability, Student Assessment, & Evaluation
 - Meeting the Needs of At-Risk, Bilingual Students, and Students with Disabilities
- Operations
 - Facilities
 - Transportation
 - Food Service
 - Liability, Insurance, Risk Management
- Personnel/Leaders
 - Key Personnel and Leadership

Application Review Process 2021-22

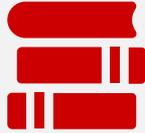


Chartiers Valley Accolades UPDATE



National & Regional Honors

- US News and World Report Best High Schools - top 17% in US
- Best Pittsburgh Suburban School, *Pittsburgh Magazine*
- NAMM Best Community for Music Education, 2019 and 2020
- Curriculum-based dance program ranked 8th in Nation



Advanced Courses

- 24 Advanced Placement Courses
 - Enrollment: 814
 - AP exams taken: 632
- 11 Project Lead the Way* Courses
- 15 College in High School Courses (college credits earned)
- 110 electives



Athletics & Clubs

- 50+ activities, clubs, and sports teams
- 15 WPIAL Titles
- 2 PIAA Titles



Miscellaneous

- Culturally diverse population with students representing 42 countries of origin
- 1-to-1 technology (all students have district-issued devices)

*Project Lead the Way

Project Lead the Way is a research based collaborative curriculum in which the Chartiers Valley participates.

- Elementary students have access to hands-on science projects and real-life experiences through *PLTW Launch*
- Middle school students explore engineering and robotics through *PLTW Gateway*
- High school students have an opportunity to study and graduate with certifications and college credits by their participation in:
 - Biomedical Science
 - Engineering

Learning and Growing by Investigating Medical Mysteries

Working with the same equipment and tools used by lab professionals, PLTW Biomedical Science students are empowered to explore and find solutions to some of today's most pressing medical challenges. Through scaffolded activities that connect learning to life, students step into the roles of biomedical science professionals and investigate topics including human medicine, physiology, genetics, microbiology, and public health. Students work together in teams to find unique solutions, and in the process, learn in-demand, transferable skills like critical thinking and communication.

PLTW Engineering Students Become Tomorrow's Problem Solvers Today

From launching space explorations to delivering safe, clean water to communities, engineers find solutions to pressing problems and turn their ideas into reality. PLTW Engineering empowers students to step into the role of an engineer, adopt a problem-solving mindset, and make the leap from dreamers to doers. The program's courses engage students in compelling, real-world challenges that help them become better collaborators and thinkers. Students take from the courses in-demand knowledge and skills they will use in high school and for the rest of their lives, on any career path they take.

PLTW Engineering courses are part of the AP + PLTW engineering pathway.





Who is Dogwood Charter School?

- Follows the Charlotte Mason Institute's paradigm of education
- Models after Gillingham Charter School in Pottsville, PA
- Projects enrollment of 195-295 students (5 years)
- Claims methodological distinctions:
 - Students are engaged, not bored
 - Learning is intriguing, challenging
 - Students build positive relationships
 - Students are proud of their school and contribute to their community

Mission, Purpose & Needs

Dogwood Charter School

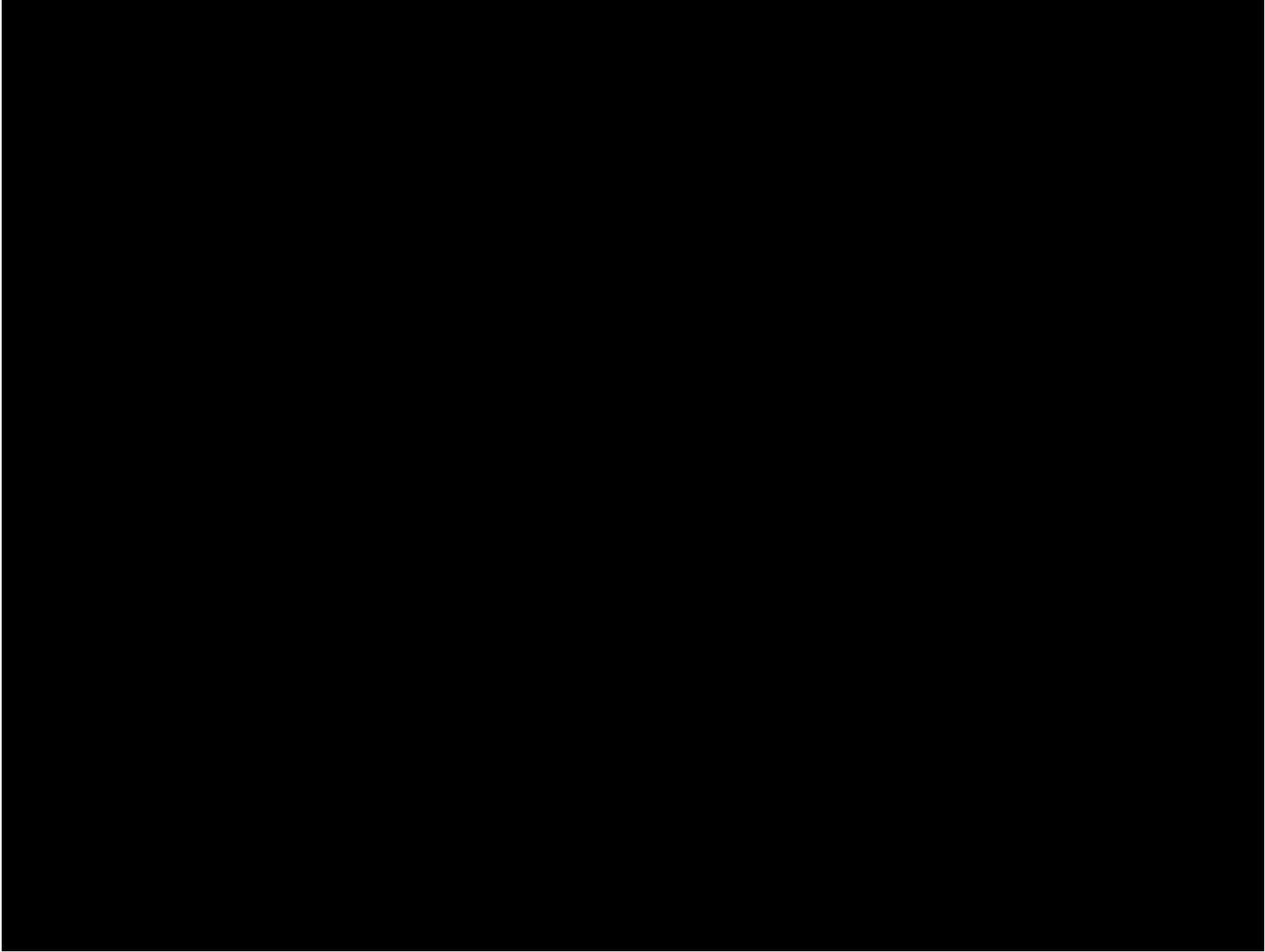
“This is key to Dogwood and makes it distinct from local schools...

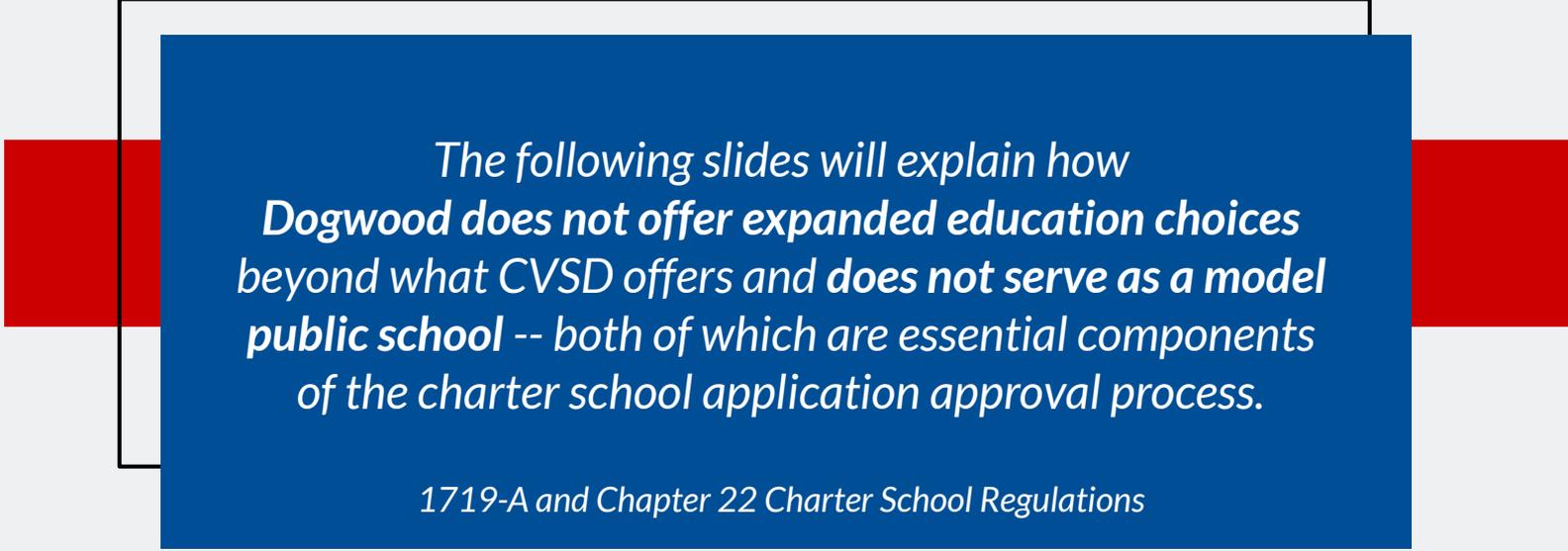
We want to be a school where students don't just have to go to but a place they want to go to. They want to go to a school because they are engaged, not bored. Learning is presented in a way that is delightful, challenging and intriguing, so students retain much for books and ideas. Positive, respectful relationships are built in school and in partnerships in the community. Consequently, our students grow to be proud of who they are, from whence they come, and what they do for this community and the world. We believe all students can and are willing to learn.”

(Dogwood Charter Application, p. 4)

Chartiers Valley School District

The mission of the Chartiers Valley School District, a community dedicated to shared leadership, is to graduate students who achieve personal success by providing an exceptional academic foundation in a safe, nurturing environment that inspires creativity and innovation while embracing diversity.





*The following slides will explain how
Dogwood does not offer expanded education choices
beyond what CVSD offers and **does not serve as a model
public school** -- both of which are essential components
of the charter school application approval process.*

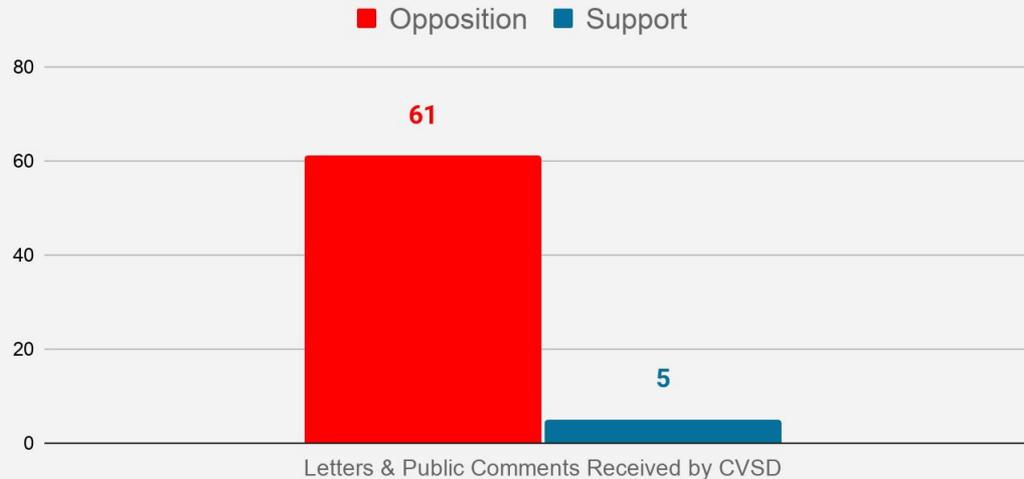
1719-A and Chapter 22 Charter School Regulations

I. Demonstrated Support (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

✗ did not exhibit **demonstrated, sustainable support** for the charter school plan by Chartiers Valley School District teachers, parents, students, and taxpayers, including comments received in writing and during public hearing.

CVSD Stakeholder Opposition and Support for Dogwood Charter School



I. Demonstrated Support (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

✘ **did not** exhibit **demonstrated, sustainable support** for the charter school plan by teachers, parents, other community members and students including comments received at the public hearing held under subsection (d).

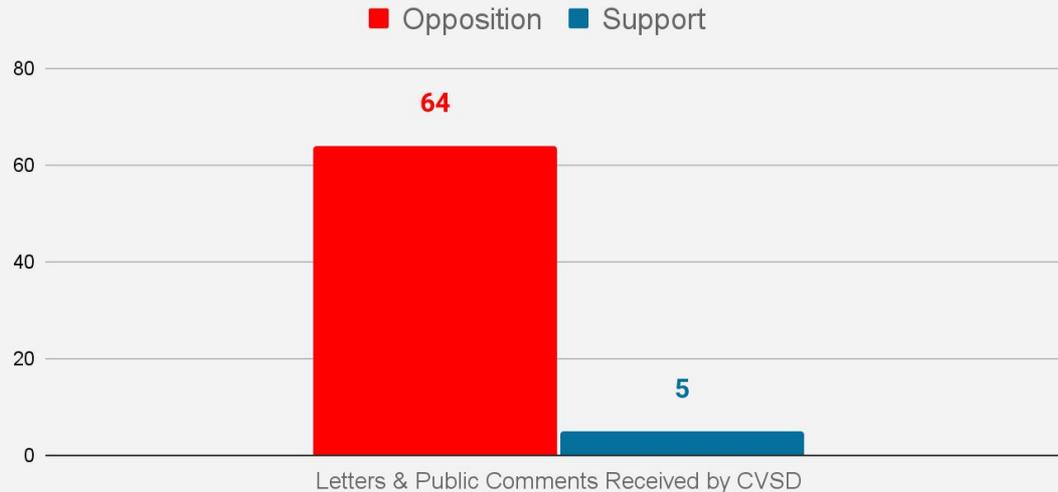
- Of the 154 electronic signatures submitted:
 - only 5% were from CVSD stakeholders
 - only 31% committed to send their children to Dogwood
 - 5% were duplicates of attached letters
 - 0 agreements from community organizations to work with or support the school

I. Demonstrated Support (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

✗ does not exhibit **demonstrated, sustainable support** for the charter school plan by Chartiers Valley School District teachers, parents, students, and taxpayers, including comments received in writing and during public hearing.

CVSD Stakeholder Opposition and Support for Dogwood Charter School



I. Demonstrated Support (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

✘ does not exhibit **demonstrated, sustainable support** for the charter school plan plan by Chartiers Valley School District stakeholders (teachers, students, parents, business owners, and other community members).

- Of the 321 letters and survey results submitted:
 - In total only 22 (6%) were from CVSD stakeholders
 - Of the 154 survey results only 47 (30% of survey total) have intent to enroll
 - Of the 47 only 7 CV families, only 1 with current school age children
 - 8 letters of support from businesses / organization
 - 0 within the CVSD community

II. Comprehensive Learning Experiences (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

✘ **did not** reference professional development and evaluative models, including Teacher Effectiveness Model, with which traditional public schools are mandated to comply (examples listed below). Charters are not required to comply, which makes assessing teacher performance nearly impossible.

- Teacher Effectiveness Model : Act 82
- Attendance Mandates: Act 138
- Safety and Security: Act 71
- Act 45 Professional Development hours

The only reference to DCS teacher professional development model:

- Japan's Professional Development Model is the same as Differentiated Professional Development. It is modeled in Danielson's Framework for Professional Development and a State requirement.

II. Comprehensive Learning Experiences (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

✗ does not include several required components, including ACT 44 requirements, despite having referenced the following mandates.

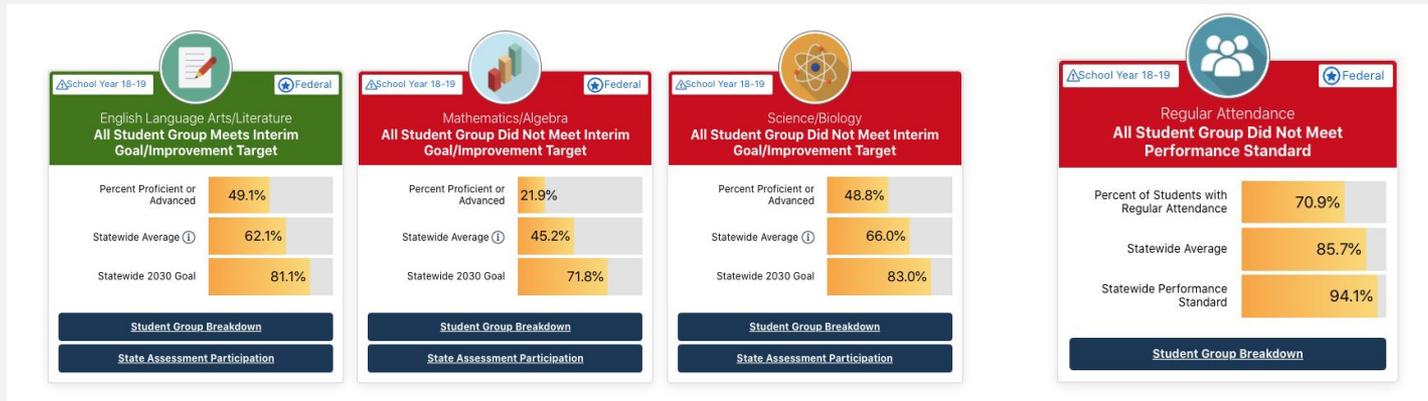
- Teacher Effectiveness Model : Act 82
- Attendance Mandates: Act 138
- Safety and Security: Act 71
 - Does not mention Act 44 training
 - Does not mention trauma informed training, suicide awareness, or any mental health component
- Act 45 Professional Development hours

The application reiterates professional development training and support sessions for “nurturing heart and other proposed curriculum,” but does not detail or fully explain plans for professional development.

II. Comprehensive Learning Experiences (continued) (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

- ✗ **did not** exhibit adequate standards for school improvement planning, as it models the Gillingham Charter School, which has been in school improvement with the state since 2016 for areas including the following: lack of academic growth as per PDE guidelines for multiple years consecutively
- student attendance rates are not meeting state requirements

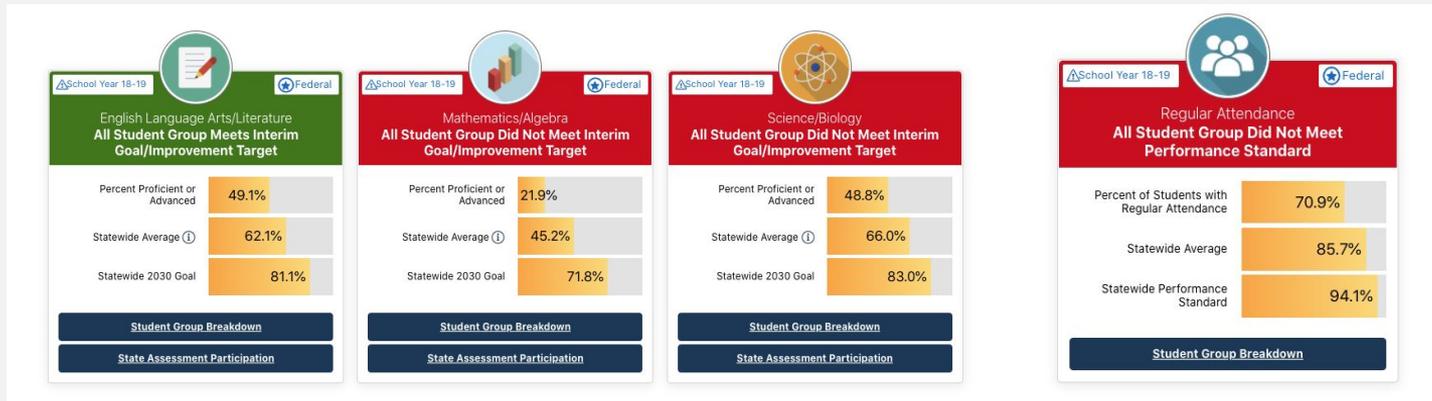


II. Comprehensive Learning Experiences (continued) (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

✗ **does not** exhibit adequate standards for school improvement planning, as it models the Gillingham Charter School, as previously noted GCS was on school improvement. They are no longer however, the PDE criteria has changed, also due to covid there has not been accurate data since 2019.

- student attendance rates are not meeting state requirements



III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Legal Issues (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

✘ **did not** abide by Charter School Law Section 1715-A, requiring charter schools to be **nonsectarian in all operating; A Charter school shall not provide any religious instruction** nor shall it display religious objects and symbols on the premises of the charter schools.

“...The School's Bylaws will require that all members **support and maintain the CMI (Charlotte Mason Institute) program and accreditation.**” (DCS application, p. 131)

- The screen shots on the following slide show recent and upcoming conferences hosted by the Charlotte Mason Institute, citing religious subject matter.

CHARLOTTE MASON INSTITUTE

Upcoming Conferences and Retreats

Pictures from the Eastern and Western CMI Conferences, 2018

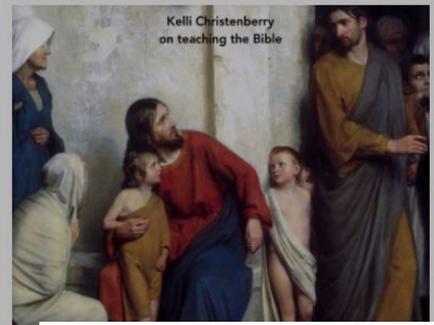


Update: CMI's 2020 Conference has been postponed to June 2021

"On Science & Faith: Celebrating God's Words and Works" – June 2021

"On Science & Faith: Celebrating God's Words and Works"

to equip and encourage you in your educational journey. Look for registration information on the website next fall.



Kelli Christenberry on teaching the Bible

Fostering Thoughts Toward God

Fostering Thoughts Toward God – CMI Conference Audio

Read more

We are delighted to provide information for the 2019 Eastern Charlotte Mason Education Conference, to be held at Roanoke College in Salem, Virginia. Now in its 15th year, the conference has grown to include educators and speakers from many places. We look forward to hosting the conference this year in the beautiful mountains of Virginia not far from the Blue Ridge.

We always aim for the plenaries and workshop sessions to instruct and inspire you for the coming school year and work to create an atmosphere which encourages you to slow down and enjoy camaraderie with other conference attendees. Striving to create the same opportunities for learning and fellowship again this year, we are exploring the theme *Geography: Nourishing the Mind and Furnishing the Imagination* at this year's conference. Dr. David Sobel, author of *Mapmaking with Children*, will speak on "A Sense of Place in Education for the Elementary Years," and Suzanne Bazak will discuss the connection between mathematics and geography.

[Read more](#)

Teen Conference

We are delighted to continue the CMI Teen Conference, now in its fifth year. The Teen Conference during the 2018-19 academic year. If a teen is 18 years old but graduated last year, they are encouraged to attend. A number of activities that will continue to build on the foundations of spiritual, moral and academic Knowledge of Man, and Knowledge of the Universe. See the Teen Conference SCHEDULE below.

REGISTER

Knowledge of God,

Charlotte Mason Institute

January 15 at 8:00 AM

Very possibly the dark short days, cold temps, and beginning to affect your mood. The honeymoon phase with your homeschool plans has ended and you begin feeling the mundane. Because the feeling is uncomfortable we sometimes rush to try to "fix" it. Often our first tendency is to run out and buy something, calling ourselves if we just get different books.

Charlotte Mason Institute

January 13 at 9:06 AM

We hope yesterday's post on fortitude was an encouragement to you. The well-being of the members of the Charlotte Mason community is continually on our hearts - and all the more during this especially difficult time. Today we are offering a video on the subject of fortitude by Dr. Jen Spencer (p

Charlotte Mason Institute

January 12 at 8:00 AM

With full-billowed sails, we excitedly enter a new school year—fresh books, fresh supplies, fresh ideas. But by the actual New Year, the wind may be weak, and the sails have more than a few holes. If you "[sit] weary after long-sustained effort," allow yourself a few moments to study this painting, and be encouraged by Charlotte Mason's words from *Ourself*.

Encourage one another and

<https://vimeo.com/290613>

The Bible

1 Thessalonians 5:11

The Bible hardly commends Fortitude to us by name as a Christian grace, yet therein we shall find our best exemplars. Our Lord, who bore more than we are able to express, says of Himself, "I am meek and lowly of heart"; and this saying, perhaps, gives us a key to the meaning of Fortitude—less a valiant than a patient grace, memorable more for what she suffers gladly than for what she does."

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Legal Issues (2021)

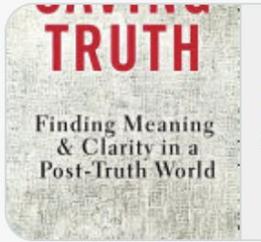
Dogwood's 2021 application...

✘ does not provide detailed explanation or proof of a secular Charlotte Mason Institute accreditation.

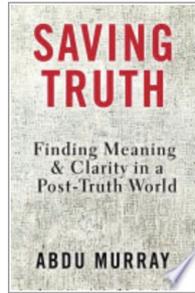
- The 2021 application references non-secular CMI accreditation, but the CVSD review team has not been able to find any information regarding CMI accreditation which does not include religiously-based tenets.
- Additionally, the Director of Dogwood's model school, Gillingham Charter School, utilizes Twitter to provide school updates as well as various other information. Nicolle Hutchinson (@toughcookie70) shares politically and religiously relative content. (see next slide)



Nicolle Hutchinson @toughcookie70 · Jul 24, 2018



Saving Truth: Finding Meaning and Clarity in a Post-Truth World



Abdu Murray

Zondervan, May 8, 2018 - Religion - 256 pages

★★★★★

2 Reviews

Increasingly, Western culture embraces confusion as a virtue and decries certainty as a sin. Those who are confused about sexuality and identity are viewed as heroes. Those who are confused about morality are progressive pioneers. Those who are confused about spirituality are praised as tolerant. Conversely, those who express certainty about any of these issues are seen as bigoted, oppressive, [More »](#)

Search inside

[Preview this book »](#)



Nicolle Hutchinson @toughcookie70 · Apr 8, 2018



Whoa. Jesus asked over 200 questions! Why doesn't the Church (and I) ask more questions instead... [instagram.com/p/BhTyHZEAWWX/](https://www.instagram.com/p/BhTyHZEAWWX/)



Nicolle Hutchinson Retweeted

Caleb Hull @CalebJHull · Jul 19, 2018



Next time someone says the media isn't biased, show them this comparison:



302

2.8K

5.4K



III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Governance (2020)

PA School Code Section 1719-A (#5): The Charter application should include **the mission and educational goal of the charter school, the curriculum to be offered and the methods of assessing whether students are meeting educational goals.**

Dogwood's 2020 application...

- ✘ **did not** clearly explain how the proposed charter will provide expanded educational opportunities beyond those currently provided by the Chartiers Valley School District.
- ✘ **did not** reference details of the current educational opportunities available to students.
- ✘ **did not** provide an assessment of the needs and strengths of the students that is complete and **did not** include reputable and reliable data sources.

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Governance (2021)

PA School Code Section 1719-A (#5): The Charter application should include **the mission and educational goal of the charter school, the curriculum to be offered and the methods of assessing whether students are meeting educational goals.**

Dogwood's 2021 application...

- ✘ **does not** provide sufficient evidence of alignment with the PA Core Standards. In the application, it states that Dogwood will “Maintain aligned curriculum to PA state academic standards and CMI’s relational model standards to implement a comprehensive school-wide relational curriculum.” However, there is no evidence of this in the curricular documents provided.
- ✘ **does not** provide a separate section regarding the evaluation of the CEO
- ✘ **does not** provide evidence of remediation and enrichment supports
- ✘ **does not** clearly explain how the proposed charter will provide expanded educational opportunities beyond those currently provided by the Chartiers Valley School District.

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Governance (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

- ✓ does contain the appropriate required Governance bylaws
- The 2021 application does acknowledge that Open Meetings Law (Sunshine Act) will be followed at Regular Meetings, but
 - ✗ does not include requirement to comply with Right to Know Law
 - ✗ does not include board policies
- The 2021 application does indicate that trustees will be qualified to serve in accordance with Ethics Act, but
 - ✗ does not state that annual Statement of Financial Interests will be filed

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Admissions Policy & Criteria (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

✘ does not abide by Pennsylvania School Code regarding the proposed charter's enrollment and eligibility criteria. The following are direct violations of PA School Code:

- requests confidential information, including social security numbers, IEP information, and academic information prior to enrollment, which are not legally permitted under school code
- gives preference to grandchildren of founding coalition or those who participated in the planning process, which is not legally permitted under school code
- does not define proof of residency requirements
- identifies a completed enrollment form as a condition of enrollment. The Basic Education Circular (BEC) states that a failure to complete the enrollment form cannot be a condition of enrollment

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Admissions Policy & Criteria (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

✘ does not abide by Pennsylvania School Code regarding the proposed charter's enrollment and eligibility criteria. The following are direct violations of PA School Code:

- requests confidential information, including social security numbers which are not legally permitted under school code
- DCS states on page 28 of application that "it does not deny enrollment or discriminate admission policies or practices on the basis of a child's disability or the child's need of special education..." however, the facility as admittedly noted is not ADA compliant in any fashion which serves the question of how to admit or educate a child with an exceptionalty needing this type of accommodation.

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Code of Conduct (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

- ✘ references excerpts from Gillingham Charter School's Code of Conduct, which is not acceptable
- ✘ does not include description of the process for suspensions and expulsions

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Code of Conduct (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

- ✓ does now include a Code of Conduct
- ✓ includes description of the process for suspensions and expulsions

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Community Involvement (2021)

✘ does not provide information on the manner in which community groups will be involved in the charter school planning process

- Of the business letters of support submitted in the 2021 application, none are located in the CVSD
- At the time of the site visit, a DW representative was asked what relationships have been established with community groups and leaders. She responded that relationships would be built if/when the school became a charter.

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Processes and reviews of Complaints (2021)

✗ does not provide procedures in which to review complaints of parents regarding the operation of the charter school

- In regards to complaints: the home district is ultimately responsible for ensuring the compliance and success of charter schools within the district.
- When asked why Dogwood did not simply establish private school rather than applying to be a charter, the representative stated that she can not afford private school tuition.
 - In other words, as a charter, Dogwood would provide a private-like education at the cost to Chartiers Valley School District tax payers.
 - As the home district, CVSD and its tax-payers would bear the brunt of administrative overhead, as CVSD administrators are ultimately responsible for overseeing the educational practices, finances, child accounting, etc. of the charter.

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Proposed school calendar and day (2021)

✘ does not proposed school calendar, consistent with provisions for required instructional hours.

- DCS states that they will follow the CVSD annual school calendar; however, they have professional development each friday for a half day student attendance.
 - With this professional development schedule I do not see how DCS will meet the state requirements for minimum hours at the secondary level.
 - State requirement for elementary 900 hours (DCS just meets this requirement)
 - State requirement for secondary 990 (DCS does not meet this requirement)

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Professional development plan for the faculty of a charter school.

✘ does not create a professional development plan that is guided by state regulations and the best interest for students

- No mention of teacher effectiveness model, Act 82 or other
- Professional development schedule impact state requirement for amount of hours required in a school year
- *In the 2021-2022 school year, the CVSD teachers have 10 professional development days and a total of approximately 350 hours of professional development per teacher annually.*
 - *This professional development time is utilized for individual selected professional growth (in alignment with the district strategic plan), building goals, curriculum goals and development*
 - *In addition to summer curriculum writing to align to state standard and evaluate effectiveness of instruction, and curricula in regards to student learning.*

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Agreements regarding participation in extracurriculars.

✘ does not address or speak to any plans regarding district participation of the charter school students in district extracurricular activities

- DCS did not mention nor have they reached out in regards to building a relationship for their students to participate in CVSD extracurriculars
 - They did mention that our coaches could be trained by them in their educational philosophy

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Management (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

✗ does not speak to any operations management requirements set forth by the Department of Education School Code. This implies a minimal understanding of the day-to-day operations of the school. Listed are a few examples from over 100 in total.

- Emergency Preparedness
- Safety and Security Training and Plan (trauma-informed care, threat assessment teams)
- Health and Safety Training and Plan (COVID-19 Planning, etc.)
- Safety Coordinator designee
- Maintenance of Records
- Incident Reporting

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Management (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

✗ does not speak to any operations management requirements set forth by the Department of Education School Code. This implies a minimal understanding of the day-to-day operations of the school. Listed are a few examples from over 100 in total.

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- Health and Safety Training and Plan (COVID-19 Planning, etc.)
- Safety Coordinator designee
- Maintenance of Records
- Incident Reporting

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Educational Goals (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

✘ **does not** include goals which correlate to assessing whether students are meeting **educational goals**, as required by PA School Code Section 1719-A. For example:

“Goal 1: All staff will be highly satisfied with the school’s operation and design.” (Dogwood application)

- Concern: How can one create with certainty that all staff will be satisfied, and what does this have to do with meeting students educational goals?

“Goal 2: DCS families will be highly committed to the school and be actively involved in school activities.” (Dogwood application)

- Concern: How can one ensure that the families that enroll will be highly involved in school activities?

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Educational Goals (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

✘ **does not** include goals which correlate to assessing whether students are meeting **educational goals**, as required by PA School Code Section 1719-A. For example:

“Each is a person invited, in his or her own way, to take risks, collaborate and struggle with inspiring ideas and worthy activities from the rich curriculum...”

- The above statement does not prove that Dogwood will serve as a model school, as it describes exactly what CVSD challenges its students to do daily. It is embedded in the model middle school philosophy, the Danielson evaluation model, and the tenets of the 21st century learning: collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, and communication.

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Educational Goals (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

- ✗ does not include methods by which student achievement data will be measured and analyzed.
- states that faculty and administration will examine data collected from PSSAs and the CMI to “tighten the alignment between the relational curriculum and the PA state academic standards,” but does not include HOW these alignments will be analyzed or HOW deficiencies in curriculum will be addressed
- states that standardized test scores will increase over the term of the charter, but does not include baseline or minimum goal, specific goals for proficient (or advanced) scores on year 1 state exams, or what percentage of growth is expected in subsequent years

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Educational Goals (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

- ✗ does not include methods by which student achievement data will be measured and analyzed.
 - Insufficient evidence of alignment with the PA Core Standards. In the application, it states that Dogwood will “Maintain aligned curriculum to PA state academic standards and CMI’s relational model standards to implement a comprehensive school-wide relational curriculum.” However, there is no evidence of this in the curricular documents provided.
 - Every child participates at his or her own level, while being gently scaled to the next level.” However, it is unclear how this type of instruction will occur through the curriculum documents provided.
 - On page 3 of the document, “Charlotte Mason Institute: More of Relational Instruction,” it indicates how the school will support struggling readers by offering more reading opportunities. It is unclear how this will be scheduled for a student, what materials will be used, or how they will monitor student progress and growth.

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Educational Goals (continued) (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

- ✗ does not include methods by which student achievement data will be measured and analyzed.
 - The only assessment samples provided is a report card from Gillingham Charter and the “Upper School Portfolio Assessment Program: An Overview,” describing the portfolio assessments.
 - The 2021 application indicates that assessments will be authentic through narrations, journaling, Individualized Learning Programs, portfolios, Open Ended Exams, a unique, cooperative system of Parental Feedback and Assessment, the Parents’ Notebook
 - These methods of assessments do not appear in the curriculum documents, nor are there samples of these types of assessments provided. It is also unclear for which grades this would be applicable.
 - The application states “assessment of learning or summative assessments” will be done at the end of each term using the CMI assessment program “to improve student achievement.”
 - The Scope and Sequence Document only lists resources used for each term; it does not include units of instruction, big ideas (pg. 37 of the application), standards alignment, essential questions, or samples of the summative assessments, etc.

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Fiscal Operations (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

✗ did not provide **financial calculations** which are based on realistic projected enrollment projections and subsequent gains.

- DCS projects 195 students for year 1 in grades K-12 (Dogwood application, p. 7)
 - However, appendix J only lists 137 unique school age students
 - 18 letters of intent
 - 81 Google survey results
 - 38 supplemental electronic signatures of support
 - Of the 137, there were
 - duplicate submissions
 - incomplete address listings
 - addresses outside of Allegheny County and outside of PA
 - students too old/young for proposed K-8 school
- Currently, CVSD sends 13 K-8 students to 6 different brick-and-mortar charter schools

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Fiscal Operations (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

- ✗ does not provide consistent enrollment projections, which affect **financial calculations**.
 - states a projected *195 students in grades K-12 for year 1* (Dogwood application, p. 7)
 - however, page 19 of application states they will be K-8, then add 9th grade in 2022
 - Letter of Intent to Lease (covering 5 years) states it will be K-8

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Fiscal Operations (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

✗ does not provide **financial calculations** based on an appropriate understanding of the preparation of an annual school budget.

- uses assumptions from 10 years ago: “assumed 1% increase in per pupil rates from 2010-2011 to 2011-12, % decrease in per pupil rates from 2011-12, and 3% increases thereafter.” (DCS application, Appendix C, p. 1)
- health insurance budget is based on 15% of total salary, which is incorrect
- budget numbers assume revenue for 195 students evenly distributed through grades K-8, which is unsupported by level of interest, as previously mentioned
- PSERS rate used for budget is 5%; actual PSERS rate for 2021-22 is 34.94%
- year 1 budget shows federal lunch reimbursement of \$136,500, but application states there will be no federal lunch program until year 2
- budget shows an end-of-fifth year fund balance of \$1,691,006, or 33% of the annual budget. This is excessive, as a healthy fund balance (per PDE and PSBA) is 5-10%.

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Fiscal Operations (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

✗ does not provide **financial calculations** which are based on realistic projected enrollment projections and subsequent gains.

- DCS projects 195 students for year 1 in grades K-8 (Dogwood application, p. 7)
 - However, appendix E lists 321 letters and survey results across 2 years
 - 167 unique students, only 133 school age (only 6% are CVSD)
 - addresses outside of CV Community and/or outside of Allegheny County
 - students too old/young for proposed K-8 school
 - Most electronic signatures of support provided do not show intent to enroll
- Currently, CVSD sends only 7 K-8 students to 3 different brick-and-mortar charter schools

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Food Service (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application

✗ does not provide a comprehensive and **equitable** food service plan.

- States that “the school will work with Pittsburgh Schools Food Service starting in Year 2 to provide meals for all students, and will participate in the Federal Free and Reduced Priced Breakfast/Lunch programs” (p. 156)
 - Pittsburgh Public Schools confirms that there is no such agreement, and PPS will not be providing meal service to DCS
- States that “***Students who are not eligible for a free breakfast or lunch program, use bus transportation, or who choose not to participate will be expected to bring their own bag lunch and snacks.***”
 - This is inconsistent with other statements regarding meals provided through National School Breakfast and Lunch programs
 - Students who ride bus to school do not receive meals?
 - Only students eligible for free/reduced meals would receive meals, which would create all free/reduced students to be overtly identifiable

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Food Service (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

- ✘ does not provide a comprehensive and **equitable** food service plan.
 - The 2021 application references a proposed contract with Metz Food Service, but when asked, a representative did not have a plan for staffing and managing a kitchen. Further, the application does not include a proposal for staffing and managing a school kitchen.
 - States that Dogwood will participate in the Federal Free and Reduced Priced Breakfast/Lunch programs” (p. 156); however the application does not provide an application or plan for that.

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Transportation (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

✗ did not provide a transportation plan based on an appropriate understanding of the requirements necessary for school busing, per PA School Code and Collier Township Ordinance (Collier Municipal Code, 27-1906).

“Only minor modifications will be required prior to opening the school in September 2021” (DCS application, p. 140)

- Submitted photographs show limited space for parking, bus turnaround, and neighborhood street safety
 - Schools should be designed to provide convenient access to all sides of the building by emergency and firefighting equipment.
 - Outside storage should be completely enclosed by a six-foot hedge or fence.
 - Schools should have direct access to a public street with sufficient capacity to accommodate the traffic generated by the proposed use.

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Transportation (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

✘ does not provide a transportation plan based on an appropriate understanding of the requirements necessary for school busing, per PA School Code and Collier Township Ordinance (Collier Municipal Code, 27-1906).

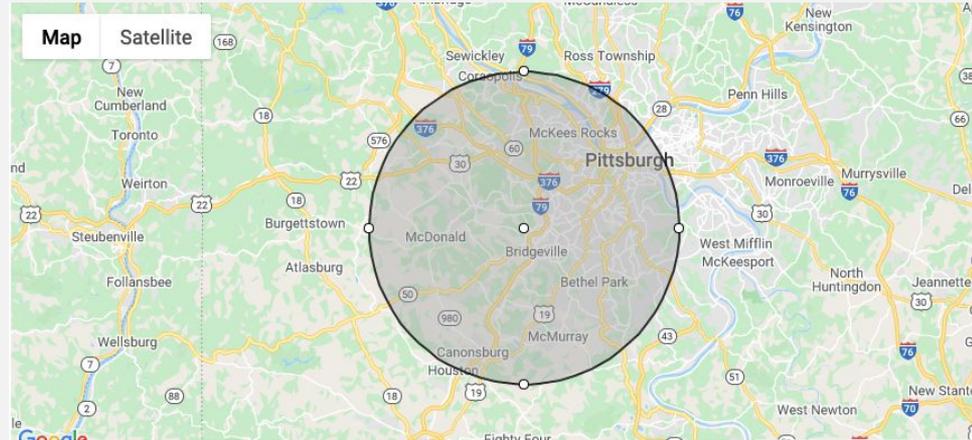
- The 2021 application does reference transportation, but leaves it up to each sending district. It does not include a plan for how to establish transportation to/from these districts or a plan for districts that do not provide transportation.

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Facilities (2020)

Dogwood's application...

✗ did not propose an equitable location for a public school.

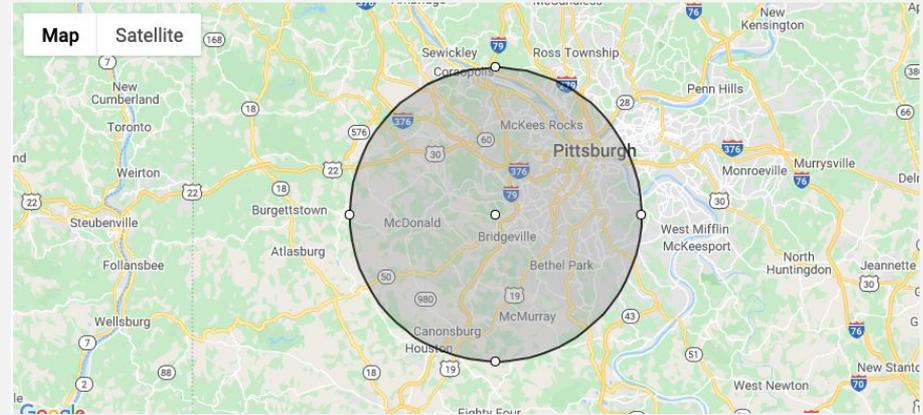
- Acknowledges that local districts must provide transportation within 10 miles, but does not account for those students who reside outside the 10-mile boundary, but local enough to make DCS a viable option
 - excludes much of the City of Pittsburgh
 - public transportation is not an option; location is not near a public bus line, etc.
 - public schools, including charters, are expected to provide equal access for any and all demographics
 - DCS presents more like a private school for a high socioeconomic demographic



III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Facilities (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

✓ does propose an equitable location for a public school.



III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Facilities (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

✘ does not speak to the specifics of **ADA compliance**.

- During the site visit it was noted and confirmed by the building's facilities director that the school is not ADA compliant. This presents not only a safety issue but an issue of equitable access for students who may require ADA accommodations.
- The building does not have an elevator
- Steps required in order to access almost all classroom areas

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Facilities (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

✘ did not speak to provisions for **cleaning** after each school day

- states that one custodial staff person would work during school day, while students and staff are still in the building
- does not provide for safe, sufficient COVID-19 cleaning procedures, which should occur after staff and students have left for the day

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Facilities (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

- ✓ does speak to provisions for **cleaning** after each school day by employing one single custodian to work during the school day.

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Key Personnel/Leaders (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

✘ did not speak to the **hiring process** and state and federal procedures regarding hiring of employees.

- Specific concerns include hiring of:
 - CEO
 - Building principal (PDE certification)
 - Teachers (PDE certification)
 - Appropriate number of special education teachers
 - Custodians
 - Secretaries
 - Technology personnel

III. PA Charter School Law, PA School Code: Key Personnel/Leaders (2021)

Dogwood's 2021 application...

✗ does not speak to the **hiring process** and state and federal procedures regarding hiring of employees.

- Specific concerns include hiring of:
 - CEO
 - Building principal (PDE certification)
 - Teachers (PDE certification)
 - Appropriate number of special education teachers
 - Custodians
 - Secretaries
 - Technology personnel

IV. Serve as a Model

According to PA Charter School Law, schools that operate independently from the existing school district structures must accomplish ALL of the following:

1. *Improve pupil learning*
2. *Increase learning opportunities for all pupils*
3. *Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods*
4. *Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the new site.*
5. *Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.*
6. *Hold the school established under this act accountable for meeting measurable academic standards and provide the school with a method to establish accountability systems.*

1. Improve Pupil Learning: Curriculum (2020)

Dogwood Charter/CMI Curriculum

- ✗ **does not** provide evidence of a complete K-5 Math or ELA curriculum with a scope and sequence, pacing guide, or curriculum-based assessments
- ✗ **is not** aligned to PA Core Standards
- ✗ **is not** evaluated by highly-qualified, PA certified educators
- ✗ **does not** have 100% PA certified or licensed teachers (required to have 75%)
- ✗ **does not** evaluate *all* student performance; it is unclear how assessment happens at classroom levels and whether data will drive instruction in the classroom

“CMI assessment program will randomly select 30% of students’ exams each year. Of that 30%, 75% will earn a passing score.” (DCS application, p. 19)

Chartiers Valley School District

- Curriculum is built directly from the PA Core Standards or PA Academic Standards
- Curriculum is evaluated on a six-year rotating cycle so that all departments go through a needs assessment
- Curriculum is reviewed yearly and adjusted by teachers based upon data taken from the Classroom Diagnostic Tool (CDT) and the state standardized assessments
- 100% of CVSD teachers are highly-qualified, PA-certified or licensed and teaching in their areas of expertise
- All students are assessed in accordance with PA state assessment system

1. Improve Pupil Learning: Curriculum (2020)

Dogwood's application...

✘ does not mention Pennsylvania's Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) in its curriculum, instruction, or assessment sections. MTSS is a standards-aligned, comprehensive school improvement framework for enhancing academic, behavior, and social-emotional outcomes for ALL students

✘ does not outline curriculum-based assessments for each grade level based on PA Core Standards/Eligible Content; the use of a universal screener is not evident.

1. Improve Pupil Learning: Math Curriculum (2020)

Dogwood's application...

- ✗ **does not** provide complete and comprehensive Math Curriculum; very little information is provided regarding the proposed math program; indicates Singapore Math, which is a resource not a curriculum
- ✗ **does not** specifically indicate how much time is devoted to math instruction; unclear whether math instruction time meets minimum number of required hours by the state.
Example of Class Schedules shows one hour allotted for "Math/English" each day (Dogwood application, p. 8)
- ✗ **does not** provide clear evidence of theme with regards to the math curriculum, nor a clear connection to CMI
- ✗ **does not** provide specifics regarding how "authentic assessments" are aligned to the curriculum for K-5 Mathematics; does mention use of PSSA data to drive decision-making at school, but does not explicitly mention any other standards-aligned assessments

"Authentic assessments to evaluate student, teacher and organizational achievement" including "Narrations; Journaling; Individualized Learning Programs; Portfolios; Open Ended Exams," etc. (Dogwood app., p. 30)

1. Improve Pupil Learning: Math Curriculum (2020)

Dogwood Charter

- ✗ **does not** provide specific information regarding how Singapore Math ties into larger curriculum; no scope and sequence or pacing guide is provided
- ✗ Singapore Math **does not** align to PA Core Standards or PA Department of Education expectations, according to EdReports.org

Chartiers Valley School District

- Utilizes the PA Core Standards
- Curriculum scope and sequence based upon standards and linear connection to building upon foundational skills and scaffolding material
- Resources to support curriculum, 2020 Savaas, Envision Mathematics



1. Improve Pupil Learning: ELA Curriculum (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

- ✗ **does not** provide complete and comprehensive ELA Curriculum; goals, objectives, unit themes, instructional resources (outside of a list of texts), pacing guide, and curriculum-based assessments are not provided
- ✗ **does not** provide best practices for systematic phonemic awareness and phonics instruction; the phrase “easy books” is mentioned without explanation of the decodable text aligned to research-based scope and sequence for foundational skill
- ✗ **does not** specifically indicate how much time is devoted to ELA instruction; unclear whether ELA instruction time meets minimum number of required hours by the state.

Example of Class Schedules shows one hour allotted for “Math/English” each day (Dogwood application, p. 8)

1. Improve Pupil Learning: ELA Curriculum (2020)

Dogwood's application...

✘ is aligned with the proposed theme of the school (CMI Model) which does not align with the PA Core Standards and does not include curriculum-based instruction

Common Core State Standards require a greater focus on informational text in elementary school and literary non-fiction in ELA classes in grades 6-12

Common Core State Standards place high priority on close, sustained reading of complex text, beginning with Reading Standard 1. Such reading focuses on what lies within the four corners of the text. It often requires compact, short, self-contained texts that the student can read and re-read deliberately and slowly to prove and ponder the meanings of individual words, the order in which sentences unfold, and the development of ideas over the course of the text. Reading in this manner allows students to fully understand informational texts as well as analyze works of literature effectively. (P. 29, Instruction According to David Coleman and Susan Pimentel (Lead writers of Common Core State Standards)

✘ does not provide examples of texts relevant, developmentally appropriate, representative of grade-level complexity expectations, or culturally responsive; phrases such as “good books” and “good literature” are used to describe student text

1. Improve Pupil Learning: ELA Curriculum (2020)

Dogwood's application...

- ✗ **does not** offer explicit and systematic instruction on foundational skills to all students; states that Reading Instruction in grade K will be offered to “students who show an interest”
- ✗ **does not** provide sufficient approaches for meeting needs of struggling students; the term “work on fluency” is not a strategy; does not mention phonics or vocabulary acquisition support for struggling students
“Students should read most of their books for themselves. There may be some students who still need books read aloud. Work on fluency.” (Dogwood application)
- ✗ **does not** provide specifics regarding how “authentic assessments” are aligned to the curriculum for K-5 ELA; does mention use of PSSA data to drive decision-making at school, but does not explicitly mention any other standards-aligned assessments
“Authentic assessments to evaluate student, teacher and organizational achievement” including “Narrations; Journaling; Individualized Learning Programs; Portfolios; Open Ended Exams,” etc. (Dogwood app., p. 30)

1. Improve Pupil Learning: ELA Curriculum (2020)

Dogwood Charter

✗ does not offer advanced reading opportunities

“There is not research support for having students read hard books. One hour spent reading easy books yields the same amount of growth as three hours reading hard books. (get the same growth in reading in one-third the time if reading easy books, as opposed to hard books.)”

(DCS application, appendix A, p.3)

Chartiers Valley School District

- Offers students leveled text on grade level, below, and above
 - 2017 study found in the Journal of Educational Research and written by Lisa Trottier Brown states that “Results indicate that weaker readers, using texts at two, three, and four grade levels above their instructional levels with the assistance of lead readers, outscored both proficient and less proficient students across multiple measures of reading achievement.”

IV. Serve as a Model (2021)

According to PA Charter School Law, schools that operate independently from the existing school district structures must accomplish ALL six criteria, including the following:

1. *Improve pupil learning*
 - a. *The 2021 application does not further address any of CVSD's concerns with the 2020 application, as addressed in the previous slides; rather, it merely reiterates the 2020 application.*

2. Increase Learning Opportunities for All Pupils (2020)

Dogwood Charter

- ✗ **does not** provide evidence or documented plan for preparing students to acquire skills necessary for 21st century workplace
- ✗ **does not** provide evidence of career readiness portfolios or standards or how to evaluate career readiness progress
- ✗ **does not** provide evidence to support how an internship program is evaluated for effectiveness

“Goal 1: Dogwood Charter School will prepare students for entry into higher education

- *80% of DCS graduates will enter some form of education after high school.*
- *100% of DCS students will participate in an internship program during their high school years to help them plan for their future education upon graduation” (DCS application, p. 19)*

Chartiers Valley School District

- Pennsylvania Career Readiness Standards
- College and Career Readiness Plan
 - Deliver K-12 curriculum to address academic, personal/social, and career areas
 - Students acquire academic preparation essential for choosing from a wide range of substantial post-secondary options, including college
 - Students will understand the relationship of academics to the world of work and to life at home and in the community
 - Students will investigate careers in relation to knowledge of self to make informed decisions
 - Students will plan to achieve future career goals
 - Students will understand the relationship between personal qualities, education, training and the world of work

2. Increase Learning Opportunities for All Pupils (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

✗ does not provide a sufficient plan for students with **learning disabilities**.

"Since one doesn't really 'own' knowledge until one processes it and can express it, children are required to narrate, or tell back (verbally, visually, dramatically), what they have read or heard."

- *"Children must narrate after one reading or hearing. Children naturally have good focus of attention, but allowing a second reading weakens their ability to pay attention. When teachers summarize and ask comprehension questions, they give children a second chance, making the need to focus the first time less urgent. By getting it the first time, less time is wasted on repeated readings."* (Dogwood application, p. 2)
 - A student with learning disabilities may struggle when only given an opportunity to read a text once and may not be able to narrate, or tell back what they have read
 - DCS application references accommodations where necessary, but doing so negates the CMI relational educational curriculum, which is what Dogwood claims makes the charter "different" from traditional education. (DCS application, p. 43)

2. Increase Learning Opportunities for All Pupils (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

- ✗ **did not** provide plan for complying with Chapter 711 and IDEA regulations for students with learning disabilities.
- ✗ acknowledges regulations, but **did not** provide processes and procedures for implementation
- ✗ **did not** plan for professional development related to special education
- ✗ **did not** provide curriculum plan for educating students who require intervention/remediation/alternative curriculum.
- ✗ **did not** provide plan for students in need of 504 plans
- ✗ **did not** provide a plan for paperwork management
- ✗ **did not** indicate location of resource room, or where learning support, one-to-one instruction, and related services will occur

2. Increase Learning Opportunities for All Pupils (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

- ✘ did not provide a plan for assessing and educating students with **Limited English Proficiency / English Language Learners**, as required. This is especially important considering that CVSD and several surrounding districts have an EL enrollment of 5% or more.
 - ✘ did not provide EL intake evaluation process or WIDA screening procedures
 - ✘ did not make reference to policies and procedures outlined by PaTTAN for the education of EL students in a charter school
 - ✘ did not provide plans to train and certify teachers to administer the ACCESS exam

2. Increase Learning Opportunities for All Pupils (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

- ✘ **did not** provide a sufficient staffing plan for students with **learning disabilities**.

- ✘ staffing plan **did not** support individualized special education mandate of least restrictive environment
 - plans to hire 2 special education teachers for projected 195 students, grades K-8 (year 1) and additional grades in following years

- ✘ **did not** address how it will manage multi-age classrooms for students with disabilities
 - CVSD special education percentage is 11.8%; given DCS projected enrollment of 195, their assumed special education enrollment is 23 students spread over 9 grades (K-8)
 - PA School Code states, *A student with a disability may not be placed in a class in which the chronological age from the youngest to the oldest student exceeds these limits unless an exception is determined to be appropriate by the IEP team of that student and is justified in the IEP.*

2. Increase Learning Opportunities for All Pupils (2020)

Dogwood's 2020 application...

- ✗ **did not** provide a sufficient plan for related services for students with **learning disabilities**.
- ✗ states that DCS has received proposals from AIU and Just About Pediatric Therapy, but **does not** include actual proposals (only general pricing information is included)
- ✗ **does not** account for a trending increased need for speech in elementary in geographical area; increased need for school psychologist support for transition to kindergarten and initial evaluations; possibility of OT, PT, Hearing, Vision, and Personal Care Assistance
Dogwood's budget plans for Speech, OCC, Psychology total of \$32,175 (\$1500/student)

IV. Serve as a Model (2021)

According to PA Charter School Law, schools that operate independently from the existing school district structures must accomplish ALL six criteria, including the following:

2. Increase learning opportunities for all pupils

- ✓ does provide plan for complying with Chapter 711 and IDEA regulations for students with **learning disabilities**
- ✗ acknowledges regulations, but does not provide processes and procedures for implementation
- ✗ does not provide a plan or accountability for Title III funding; Considering CVSD's high EL population, it may be shortsighted of DW to not anticipate any EL student population.
- ✓ does plan for professional development related to special education
- ✓ does provide curriculum plan for educating students who require intervention/ remediation/alternative curriculum
- ✗ does not provide plan for students in need of 504 plans
- ✗ does not provide a plan for paperwork management
- ✗ does not indicate location of resource room, or where learning support, one-to-one instruction, and related services will occur

3. Encourage the Use of Different and Innovative Teaching Methods (2020)

Dogwood Charter

✗ did not offer expanded education choices beyond what CVSD offers

“Relational Education Framework, based upon Charlotte Mason’s (1842-1923) Framework

- *A learning community that relies on relationships, discipline, and concepts to help students meet state learning standards while also preparing them for a full life in a changing world.” (DCS application, p.____)*

Chartiers Valley School District

Understanding by Design (UBD), developed by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe

- Student understanding as opposed to merely taking it in and recalling
- Understanding is not a single goal but a family of interrelated abilities
- Education for understanding must deliberately develop the different facets of understanding
- Engage students in inquiry, promote transfer of learning, provide a conceptual framework for student to make sense of discrete facts and skills so they can uncover big ideas
- Utilize an array of methods for appropriately assessing the degree of student understanding, knowledge, and skill

3. Encourage the Use of Different and Innovative Teaching Methods (2020)

Dogwood Charter

✗ did not offer expanded education choices beyond what CVSD offers

“Postmodern Paradigm “

- *Students and adults learn through community*
- *Integration of creativity*
- *Collaborating, empathizing, and synthesizing*
- *Multiple meanings, not one single answer”*
(DCS application, p. 18)
- Students are not “interrogated” by teachers

Chartiers Valley School District

Pennsylvania Requirement for Teacher Evaluation Danielson Framework: Domain 2: Classroom Environment

- Ensuring relationships among students and teachers are positive and supportive
- Teachers must create an environment of respect and rapport by focusing on creating a class where students feel valued, safe, and comfortable taking intellectual risks
- Caring interactions among teachers and student are the hallmark of Domain 2
 - Respectful talk, active listening, and turn-taking
 - Acknowledgment of students’ backgrounds and lives outside of the classroom
 - Physical proximity
 - Politeness, Encouragement, Fairness

3. Encourage the Use of Different and Innovative Teaching Methods (2020)

Dogwood Charter

✗ did not offer expanded education choices beyond what CVSD offers

“Complex Thinker - Gardner’s 2006 Critical Thinking

- *The complex thinker thinks and cares about the world and people around her. The complex thinker will demonstrate synthesizing and creative minds and will demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills and strategies of decision making and problem-solving in all curriculum and relational areas.” (DCS application, p. 26)*

Chartiers Valley School District

Pennsylvania Requirement for Teacher Evaluation
Danielson Framework: Danielson Framework:
Domain 3, Instruction

- Questions of high cognitive challenge, formulated by both the students and teacher
- Questions with multiple correct answers or multiple approaches, even when there is a single correct response
- Effective use of student responses and ideas
- Discussion, with the teacher stepping out of the central, mediating role
- Focus on the reasoning exhibited by students in discussion, both in give-and-take with the teacher and with their classmates
- High levels of student participation in discussion

4. Create new professional opportunities for teacher, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the new site (2020)

Dogwood Charter

✗ did not provide a documented plan for assessing teacher satisfaction with culture and climate

“Goal 1: All staff will be highly satisfied with the school’s operation and design.”

- *On average at least 80% of the staff will return to the school each year*
- *On average, there will be at least a 90% daily attendance rate for staff each year*
- *90% of staff will give “highly satisfied” marks for all key areas of the staff satisfaction surveys.”*
(DCS application, p. 25)

Chartiers Valley School District

- Average staff years of service in CVSD is 19 years
- Daily attendance rate for teachers in 2019 is 94%
- Staff responded with the following information in a December 2020 survey regarding the district
 - 99% of teachers would recommend CVSD to parents seeking a school for their child
 - 85% of teachers feel respected by other faculty and staff

IV. Serve as a Model (2021)

According to PA Charter School Law, schools that operate independently from the existing school district structures must accomplish ALL six criteria, including the following:

3. Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods

a. *Findings from this section of the 2021 application remain consistent from that of the 2020 application. There is nothing new or stated as to how the charter will utilize innovative teaching methods unique to the offerings of the Chartiers Valley School District.*

- The definition of *innovative* is: **a new method, idea, product, etc.**
- The purpose of a charter school is to offer a unique experience, one that is not offered by the home district.
- The 2021 application (p 54) states that it will offer students “*a unique education fostering the love of learning, wonder, and curiosity, in an intentional environment based on the belief that children are persons... each person is invited , in his/her own way, to take risks, collaborate , and struggle with inspiring ideas and worthy activities from the rich curriculum, uncovering his or her potential and capabilities...*”
 - This is not different than what is already offered here at CVSD
 - ***How is this statement an example of innovation as it is not a new method idea or product? The framework for 21st century learning encompasses the 4 C's (Critical thinking, Collaboration, Communication, and Creativity) adopted this same concept over a decade ago. CVSD is known for being on the cutting edge of innovation in its program offerings and pedagogical practices for quite some time.***

4. Create new professional opportunities for teacher, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the new site (2020)

Dogwood Charter

✘ teacher professional development did not lend itself to maximizing student instructional time

- *Each Friday, students will be dismissed after lunch 12:00. Professional learning will be held from 1-3 every Friday (DCS application, p. 25)*

Chartiers Valley School District

- In the 2020-2021 school year, teachers have 10 Professional Development days built into the PA Dept of Education approved District calendar
 - These days do not take away from student instructional time
 - Summer hours and holiday breaks are utilized for curriculum writing and other PD opportunities

IV. Serve as a Model (2021)

According to PA Charter School Law, schools that operate independently from the existing school district structures must accomplish ALL six criteria, including the following:

4. Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the new site.

- *In the 2021-2022 school year, the teachers have 10 professional development days and a total of approximately 350 hours of professional development per teacher annually.*
- *This professional development time is utilized for individual selected professional growth (in alignment with the district strategic plan), building goals, curriculum goals, and development*
- *In addition to summer curriculum writing to align to state standard and evaluate effectiveness of instruction, and curricula in regards to student learning.*
- *It is unclear whether Dogwood has plans for an induction program and whether or not planned professional development are state-approved ACT 48 hours*

5. Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system (2020)

Dogwood Charter

✗ did not provide a documented plan for increasing and assessing family and community involvement

“Goal 2: DCS families will be highly committed to the school and will be actively involved in school activities

- *At least 80% of parents will sign the parent volunteer form indicating a willingness to be called upon to volunteer time and effort to school activities and projects*
- *Each year, there will be at least 10 family members in attendance at every community event held at the school*
- *80% of parents will give “high satisfied” marks for all key areas of the community satisfactions surveys” (DCS application page 25)*

Chartiers Valley School District

- There are currently around 35 members of the PTA at the Intermediate School and Primary School
- The following example community events occurred with community attendees:
 - Trauma training
 - Parent Committee Meetings
 - 15-20 parents participate in PTA meetings for the PS and IS monthly
 - Family Code Night
 - Celebrate CV (500+ attendees)
- Out of 762 parent responses in a December 2020 survey...
 - 95% of parents believe that the teachers are invested in the students
 - 94% of parents feel that their children feel safe at school
 - 94% of parents feel that their children are accepted and included at school
 - 85% of parents feels that the school gives parents information about what students are expected to learn

IV. Serve as a Model (2021)

According to PA Charter School Law, schools that operate independently from the existing school district structures must accomplish ALL six criteria, including the following:

5. Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the public school system.

Chartiers Valley offers numerous opportunities to expand educational choices in addition to 4 core courses, including:

- *K-5: Gifted education, MTSS, English Learning classes, Life Skills, emotional support, pull-out classes, Girls on the Run, orchestra, band, chorus, music, art, spanish (grades 3-5)*
- *6-8: Team concept, Project Lead the Way (PLTW), Applied Engineering, Robotics, WPIAL recognized athletics, 20+ clubs and activities, world languages, business, coding, family and consumer science (FCS), art, variety of music classes, social-emotional learning*
- *9-12: expansive program of studies, 28 AP classes, 15 College in High School classes, PLTW courses, Theater, Dance, Music, WPIAL recognized athletics, 20+ clubs and activities*

6. Hold the school established under this act accountable for meeting measurable academic standards and provide the school with a method to establish accountability systems. (2020)

Dogwood Charter

✗ **did not** provide a quantifiable method to establish accountability systems.

“Goal 3: Maintain aligned curriculum to PA State academic standards and CMI’s relational model standards to implement a comprehensive school-wide relational curriculum

- Complete one-week intensive Relational Education training to maintain the alignment between CMI/DCS curriculum and the PA State academic standards
- Annually, faculty and administration examine data collected from PSSA’s and the CMI to tighten the alignment between the relational curriculum and the PA state academic standards.”

Chartiers Valley School District

- CVSD Curriculum council
- 6-year cycle of core content areas
 - Needs assessment
 - Data and program reviews
 - Curriculum updates
 - Professional development alignment to needs
- Use of PDE recommended instructional cycle



IV. Serve as a Model (2021)

According to PA Charter School Law, schools that operate independently from the existing school district structures must accomplish ALL six criteria, including the following:

6. Hold the school established under this act accountable for meeting measurable academic standards and provide the school with a method to establish accountability systems.

- *Findings from this section of the 2021 application remain consistent from that of the 2020 application. There is no process or procedure for meeting the measurable academic standards provided within the 2021 application.*

In conclusion,



The purpose of a public charter is to offer students educational opportunities they would not have in the public home district. CVSD is an award-winning district known for innovative and exceptional academic offerings. We encourage and utilize the four C's of learning: collaboration, communication , creativity, and critical thinking; all which are documented 21st century learning skills.

Dogwood Charter School refers to a “postmodern paradigm in which students are not treated as machines to be programmed and manipulated through behaviorism.” This is an antiquated statement from the early 20th century when Charlotte Mason was alive and teaching. The fact that the applicant feels that public education still operates in this industrial age shows a lack of knowledge and an ignorance to today’s educational pedagogy. This implication is down right insulting to every member of the CVSD staff, student body, and community.

PA Charter School Law Criteria

Charter school applications shall be evaluated by the local board of school directors based on Pa Charter Law criteria, including, but not limited to the following:

<p>I. The demonstrated, sustainable support for the charter school plan by teachers, parents, other community members and students including comments received at the public hearing held under subsection (d).</p>	<p>×</p>	
<p>II. The capability of the charter school applicant, in terms of support and planning, to provide comprehensive learning experiences to students pursuant to the adopted charter.</p>	<p>×</p>	
<p>III. The extent to which the application considers the information requested in section 1719-A and conforms to the legislative intent outlined in section 1702-A.</p>	<p>×</p>	
<p>IV. The extent to which the charter school may serve as a model for other public schools.</p>	<p>×</p>	

PA Charter School Law Section 1702-A

Under PA Charter Law Section 1702-A, charter schools shall accomplish **ALL** of the following:

1. Improve pupil learning	×	
2. Increase learning opportunities for all pupils	×	
3. Encourage the use of different and innovative teaching methods	×	
4. Create new professional opportunities for teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site	×	
5. Provide parents and pupils with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities that are available within the school system	×	
6. Hold the schools established under this act accountable for meeting measurable standards and provide the school with a method to establish accountability systems	×	

PA Charter School Law Section 1719-A

Under PA Charter Law Section 1719-A, a charter application shall include **ALL** of the following:

1. The identification of the charter applicant		✓
2. The name of the proposed charter school		✓
3. The grade or age levels served by the school		✓
4. The proposed governance structure of the charter school, including a description and method for the appointment or election of members of the board of trustees		✓
5. The mission and education goals of the charter school, the curriculum to be offered and the methods of assessing whether students are meeting educational goals	✗	
6. The admission policy and criteria for evaluating the admission of students which shall comply with the requirements of section 1723-A	✗	

PA Charter School Law Section 1719-A (continued)

7. Procedures which will be used regarding the suspension or expulsion of pupils. Said procedures shall comply with section 1318.		✓
8. Information on the manner in which community groups will be involved in the charter school planning process	✗	
9. The financial plan for the charter school and the provisions which will be made for auditing the school under section 437		✓
10. Procedures which shall be established to review complaints of parents regarding the operation of the charter school	✗	
11. A description of and address of the physical facility in which the charter school will be located and the ownership thereof and any lease arrangements		✓
12. Information on the proposed school calendar for the charter school, including the length of the school day and school year consistent with the provisions of section 1502.	✗	

PA Charter School Law Section 1719-A (continued)

<p>13. The proposed faculty and a professional development plan for the faculty of a charter school.</p>	<p>×</p>	
<p>14. Whether any agreements have been entered into or plans developed with the local school district regarding participation of the charter school students in extracurricular activities within the school district. Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary, no school district of residence shall prohibit a student of a charter school from participating in any extracurricular activity of that school district of residence: Provided, That the student is able to fulfill all of the requirements of participation in such activity and the charter school does not provide the same extracurricular activity.</p>	<p>×</p>	
<p>15. A report of criminal history record, pursuant to section 111, for all individuals who shall have direct contact with students.</p>		<p>✓</p>
<p>16. An official clearance statement regarding child injury or abuse from the Department of Public Welfare as required by 23 Pa.C.S. Ch. 63 Subch. C.2 (relating to background checks for employment in schools) for all individuals who shall have direct contact with students.</p>		<p>✓</p>
<p>17. How the charter school will provide adequate liability and other appropriate insurance for the charter school, its employees and the board of trustees of the charter school.</p>		<p>✓</p>

Broad Takeaways: Final Scoring Criteria Checklist

Does the charter school have current petitions and letters of support from teachers, parents, students, and the community?		
Did the charter school have support from the community at the public hearing?		
Does the charter school provide the Chartiers Valley School District with expanded choices in the types of educational opportunities currently being offered?		
Is the governance structure of the charter school in compliance with all federal, state, and local regulations and the PA school code?		
Does the application consider all of the information requested in section 1719-A and conform to the legislative intent outlined in section 1702-A?		
Is the curriculum complete and comprehensive; aligned to state standards?		
Does the charter school provide a continuum of services to meet the needs of all students, including students with special needs, English language learners, and at-risk students?		
Is the proposed charter school financially viable?		
Is the location identified that can comply with all federal, state, and local health and safety regulations?		
Can the charter school serve as a model for other schools in the District?		



Thank You

February 8, 2022
Dogwood Charter School Review
of 2021 Application