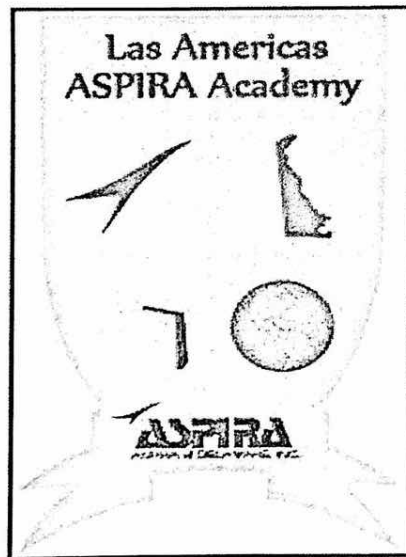


LAS AMÉRICAS ASPIRA ACADEMY

ANNUAL REPORT

2019-2020



326 Ruthar Drive
Newark, DE 19711
Phone: (302) 292-1463

I. OVERVIEW

1.1 School Overview:

Review the following chart with the school’s basic information. (Note: This table will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy. **Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.**)

BASIC INFORMATION	
Name of School	Las Américas ASPIRA Academy
Year School Opened	2011
Enrollment 2019-2020 ¹	946
Approved Enrollment	897
School Address	326 Ruthar Dr, Newark, DE 19711
District(s) of Residence	Christina School District
Website Address	http://www.aspiraacademy.org/
Name of School Leader	Margie López Waite
School Leader Email and Phone Number	margie.lopezwaite@laaa.k12.de.us (302) 292-1463
Name of Board President	Lourdes Puig
Mission Statement: Las Americas ASPIRA Academy's mission is to educate and empower each student to realize their full potential and positively impact their communities.	

1.2 School Demographic Data:

Please review the following table for accuracy and complete the second row (“# of Students on Waiting List”) for 2019-2020. (Note: The remaining sections of the table will be completed by the Charter School Office. Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.)

ENROLLMENT & DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION	
	2019-2020 ¹
Total Enrollment	946
# of Students on Waiting List	1,024
Gender	
% Male	47.04%
% Female	52.96%
Ethnicity/Race	
% African American	12.79%
% American Indian	0.42%
% Asian	1.16%
% Hispanic/Latino	66.60%
% White	17.12%
% Multiracial	1.69%
Special Populations	
% Special Education ²	10.68%
% English Language Learners	35.52%
% Low-Income	25.90%

Schools are invited but not required to comment on any aspect of the demographic data above in table 1.2

1.3 Approved Minor and Major Modifications:

The table lists any approved minor and/or major modifications over the course of the school's current charter term.

(Note: This table will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review the following table for accuracy. Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.)

Date	Modification Requested	Outcome
12/21/18	LAAA wishes to expand vertically by adding grades 9-12, and laterally, by leveling enrollment in grades K-12, starting the 2020-2021 school year.	Approved
12/21/18	Las Americas ASPIRA Academy's (LAAA) K-8 approved charter is for enrollment of 780 students. LAAA is requesting an increase in the K-8 enrollment to 897 students.	Approved

Schools are invited but not required to comment on any aspect of the modification data above in table 1.3

1.4 School Enrollment:

Please review the following chart with the school's enrollment trends during the current term of the charter. (This table will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy. Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.)

School Enrollment Trends		
<i>Cells highlighted in grey were grade levels not serviced by this school</i>		
	2019-2020	
	Approved Enrollment	30-Sep Enrollment Count
K	100	100
Grade 1	100	104
Grade 2	100	106
Grade 3	100	107
Grade 4	100	104
Grade 5	100	106
Grade 6	97	108
Grade 7	100	107
Grade 8	100	104
Grade 9		
Grade 10		
Grade 11		
Grade 12		
Total	897	946

Schools are invited but not required to comment on any aspect of the enrollment data above in table 1.4.

1.5 Reenrollment:

Reenrollment Rate² is the % of students continuously enrolled in the school from one year to the next.

Review the following chart with the school’s reenrollment trends during the current charter term. (This table will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy. **Any changes identified by the team must be highlighted in red prior to submitting the report. Only changes highlighted in red will be reviewed by the Charter School Office. Should there be no highlighted changes, the data will appear as presented in this draft.**)

School Reenrollment Trends		
<i>Cells highlighted in grey were grade levels not serviced by this school</i>		
Las Américas Aspira Academy		
	Number of Students Reenrolled Count	Percentage of Students Reenrolled %
K	7	
Grade 1	94	94.95%
Grade 2	93	87.74%
Grade 3	92	95.83%
Grade 4	93	95.88%
Grade 5	89	95.70%
Grade 6	87	86.14%
Grade 7	54	96.43%
Grade 8	93	100.00%
Grade 9		
Grade 10		
Grade 11		
Grade 12		
Total/Avg	702	94.74%

** School entry grade level. Reenrollment data not collected for this grade level.

Describe the school’s plans to monitor and minimize attrition rates. Provide information about why students are choosing to enroll in different schools.

II. ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

2.1 Delaware School Success Framework

Changes in the Academic Framework

From School Year (SY) 2014-15 through SY 2017-18, the academic performance of all charter schools was evaluated using the Delaware School Success Framework that were publishing annually. In December 2015, Congress reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the main federal law governing public education. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) replaced the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). ESSA implementation began in 2017-18 school year.

Overall Academic Ratings

a) Since all assessment and accountability requirements for SY 19/20 have been waived due to the COVID-19 pandemic, please describe the school's performance against its remote learning plan and address the following areas (2 pages will suffice):

- i. Content mastery;
- ii. Addressing learning gaps (e.g. serving students with disabilities);
- iii. Equity (e.g. measuring and addressing the technology gap, technological literacy)
- iv. Student engagement;
- v. Student wellness (e.g. challenges at home);
- vi. Assessment and measures of success;
- vii. Grade level differences;
- viii. Lessons learned and improvements for school year 2020-2021 (e.g. preparation, content, synchronous vs. asynchronous learning, etc.)

School Comments:

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA) ended the 2019-2020 school year in a virtual learning environment due to ongoing COVID-19 health and safety concerns. The shift to remote learning presented many challenges, but we persevered and applied our lessons learned to our reopening plan for the 2020-2021 school year. All students were given multiple opportunities to demonstrate their master of the content, which included computerized and teacher-led assessments. Students were supported by regular education, special education and paraprofessionals as needed based on their abilities. Our educators delivered instruction in whole group, small group and one-to-one settings. Thanks to our previous investment in establishing 1:1 technology, we were able to provide every student with a Chromebook or tablet (iPad) to support their remote learning. When necessary, paper packets were provided to students to ensure they had access to the material.

We started the 2020-2021 school year in a virtual learning environment due to ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The State's investment in the technology infrastructure helped to ensure all of our students had access to the internet and Schoology, which was a significant improvement from the spring of 2020. Students began the year learning from home for 6 weeks then we transitioned to hybrid learning

on October 12th. We provided students/families with the following details so they would understand virtual learning and the expectations.

SYNCHRONOUS VS. ASYNCHRONOUS LEARNING

	Synchronous (Real Time) Learning	Asynchronous (Independent) Learning
What is it?	Takes place in real time with a group of other learners and the teacher. These lessons could be held live in person or live via videoconferencing.	Anytime, anywhere learning that provides students with pre-recorded lessons and structured, engaging independent practice.
Examples	Direct instruction through live lessons <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Zoom meetings ▪ Google Hangouts ▪ Schoology conferences ▪ Small-group instruction ▪ Class discussions ▪ Previewing or explaining assignments of the learning task ▪ Modeling or sharing examples of final products ▪ Teacher-led review ▪ Assessments 	Independent practice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reading ▪ Video lessons ▪ Schoology posted assignments ▪ Discussion board posts ▪ Paper-pencil activities ▪ Group collaboration ▪ Recording performances to upload for review ▪ Online lab
Highlights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Frequent live interaction with teachers and peers ▪ Learner questions can be answered quickly ▪ General feedback is immediate ▪ Closest format achievable in a virtual setting to replicate in-person learning ▪ Scheduled and online tests ▪ Student follow their schedule for times assigned for each class period providing for a smooth transition into the hybrid model or face to face learning ▪ Similar to on-campus instruction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Student-focused; students choose the time and place that they learn ▪ Learners have more opportunity to review and reflect on their learning ▪ Students can follow the learning path in a way that meets their personal learning ▪ Pre-assigned work with formative assessment on paper or in Schoology ▪ Intermittent teacher instruction
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students need to be in attendance at specific times to learn ▪ Feedback provided may not be specific to the needs of each student 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Students need to be motivated to stay on task ▪ Little interaction with others in the class

STUDENT EXPECTATIONS

Please note that your student's teachers may establish additional norms or expectations to follow.

- Students will attend classes according to their schedule (this will be sent electronically to each student).
- Students will be on time for class. Attendance will be taken daily in each class period at the beginning of synchronous (real time) learning.
- Students will be prepared for class and ready to learn.
 - We are asking families to make sure students are dressed appropriately to participate in the learning sessions with their teachers and classmates. Please refer to the Dress Down Day guidelines for examples of appropriate dress.
 - Students will be sitting upright in a space free of distractions. Examples are at a desk, at the dining room table, or sitting on a couch.
 - Ensure you sign into synchronous learning sessions with your full name (ex. Karla Williams).
- Students will participate in lessons and complete assignments for grades. Students will submit assignments on time.
- Students will attend office hours to seek out help.
- Students will manage their independent learning time.
- Students will follow the Code of Conduct .
- Students will try their best!

LEARNING BLOCKS

Each day's lesson (four days a week) will include some synchronous (real time) and asynchronous (independent) learning. Teachers will plan their lessons according to what is needed for each day's learning. Synchronous learning will occur daily and will always include taking attendance. Students will be engaging in 10-15 hours of synchronous learning each week. Students are expected to participate in synchronous learning sessions as assigned. Asynchronous learning will be planned according to the guidelines below as an average amount of time needed to complete the assignments. Fridays will be fully asynchronous learning, unless teachers have planned other academic activities or small group interventions. The learning content will be provided weekly in the student's Schoology course.

Synchronous (real time) learning sessions will be recorded and made accessible to all students through Schoology after the session has completed. Families please understand that your student may be in class recordings that will be posted in Schoology. If you do not wish for your student to be recorded, please be sure that your student's audio and video are turned off. In addition, please communicate this decision with your student's teacher.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Remote learning schedules will vary depending on the grade level. Please refer to the grade level teachers to obtain more specific details and instructions.

GRADING

Students will have until Friday at 11:59 pm to complete their assignments for a given week.

Performance Agreement

Academic Performance Expectations

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy's DSSF Ratings are:

Indicator	Points	Point Earned	Percent Point
Academic Achievement	150.00	68.00	45% Approaching Expectations
Academic Progress	200.00	132.00	66% Meets Expectations
School Quality/Student Success	50.00	49.00	98% Exceeds Expectations
Progress Toward English Language Proficiency	50.00	37.00	74% Meets Expectations
Overall	450.00	286.00	64% Meets Expectations

By September 2024, our expectation is to achieve an overall rating of "Meets" or "Exceeds" on the Delaware School Success Framework (DSSF). Each year, we will show growth within each metric area, putting us on track to achieve our academic performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

Mission Specific Goal(s):

Over the next five years, LAAA has established academic goals to meet the needs of each individual student at their point of achievement. Our goals will not only address student achievement, but also focus on factors that affect student learning. Our goals include the following:

- **SBAC Growth:** 50% or greater of LAAA students will meet their SBAC growth targets in ELA and Math each year. This metric will be measured by student cohort, disaggregated subgroup and LAAA start date.
- **SBAC Proficiency:** LAAA students' proficiency rates will be equal to or higher than the proficiency rates for the Christina, Colonial and Red Clay school districts (which equates to 95% of our students). This metric will be measured by student cohort, disaggregated subgroup and LAAA start date.
- **Educator Effectiveness:** Novice educators will continue to have a positive average rate of growth from Fall to Spring as measured by our Educator Effectiveness Framework (EEF).
- **Extended Learning:** Maintain or increase the number and/or participation level of curricular or extracurricular programs at LAAA to enhance student learning. This programs include those offered during the school day (i.e., Band, Choir), as well as after school programs (i.e., clubs, sports).
- **Multi-Tiered Support System (MTSS):** In collaboration with DDOE, we are participating in a pilot program in grades 3 and 8 in the 2019-2020 school year. MTSS is defined as "the practice of

providing high-quality instruction and interventions matched to student need, monitoring progress frequently to make decisions about changes in instruction or goals, and applying child response data to important educational decisions" (Batsche et al., 2005). We will be expanding the implementation over the next five years.

- a) Discuss the school's academic performance based on its approved Performance Agreement (see above).

School Comments

2.2 Academic Achievement

Metric	Value	Points	Points Earned
--------	-------	--------	---------------

Due to COVID-19, all SY 19/20 assessment and accountability requirements have been waived by the U.S. Department of Education.

Respond to the following questions.

a) Based on the school's Academic Achievement ratings over the course of the school year, discuss the school's current performance and provide explanations/root causes (positive and negative) for the results. Please include local assessment data if applicable.

School Comments

b) Looking ahead, what are your expected outcomes for Academic Achievement and what steps will you take to achieve them?

School Comments

c) Describe how you will measure progress to determine whether you are on track to meet your expected Academic Achievement outcomes?

School Comments

2.3 Academic Progress

Metric	Value	Points	Points Earned
--------	-------	--------	---------------

Due to COVID-19, all SY 19/20 assessment and accountability requirements have been waived by the U.S. Department of Education.

Respond to the following questions.

a) Based on the school's Academic Progress for all students over the course of the school year, discuss the school's current performance and provide at least three explanations/root causes for the results (Note: We invite the school to provide information about all students including those below, at and above proficiency.)

School Comments

b) Looking ahead, what are your expected outcomes for Academic Progress for all students and what steps will you take to achieve them?

School Comments

c) Describe how you will measure progress to determine whether you are on track to meet your expected Academic Progress outcomes for all students.

School Comments

2.4 School Quality/ Student Success

Metric	Value	Points	Points Earned
--------	-------	--------	---------------

Due to COVID-19, all SY 19/20 assessment and accountability requirements have been waived by the U.S. Department of Education.

Respond to the following questions.

a) Based on the school's School Quality/ Student Success ratings over the course of the school year, discuss the school's current performance and provide explanations/root causes (positive and negative) for the results.

School Comments

b) Looking ahead, what are your expected outcomes for School Quality/ Student Success and what steps will you take to achieve them?

School Comments

c) Describe how you will measure progress to determine whether you are on track to meet your expected School Quality/ Student Success outcomes.

School Comments

2.5 Progress toward English language proficiency (ELP) * new

Beginning in the 2017-2018 school year, every school was measured on student “Progress toward English language proficiency (ELP)” This metric is an index calculation that measures the percentage of all current ELs who make annual progress toward ELP as measured by the statewide ELP assessment. ELP is defined as scoring a PL of 5.0 on the statewide ELP assessment. Attainment has been defined in Delaware as a PL of 5.0 and a level in which a student is considered to have met a proficiency level comparable to their native English speaking peers. Therefore, a PL of 5.0 is considered a student’s Attainment Target (AT).

Metric	Value	Points	Points Earned
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Due to COVID-19, all SY 19/20 assessment and accountability requirements have been waived by the U.S. Department of Education.

Respond to the following questions.

a) Based on your Progress toward English language proficiency (ELP) ratings over the course of the school year, discuss the school’s current performance and provide explanations/root causes for the results. Please include local assessment data if applicable.

School Comments

b) Looking ahead, what are your expected outcomes for Progress toward English language proficiency (ELP) and what steps will you take to achieve them?

School Comments

c) Describe how you will measure progress to determine whether you are on track to meet your expected Progress toward English language proficiency (ELP) outcomes.

School Comments

III. ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

The Organizational Performance Framework reflects expectations the charter school is required to meet through state and federal law and the charter performance agreement, and seeks to provide information regarding these key questions:

- Is the school organizationally sound and well operated?
- Is the school fulfilling its legal obligations and sound public stewardship?
- Is the school meeting its obligations and expectations for appropriate access, education, support services, and outcomes for students with disabilities?

3.1 Mission Specific Goal(s)

Is the school faithful to its mission as defined in its current charter, including approved mission-specific academic goals if applicable?

<i>Curriculum alignment to the Common Core State Standards and the Next Generation Science Standards</i>		
Item	Description	Evidence
Scope and Sequence	Our K-8 curricular Scope and Sequence document demonstrates clear alignment with the Delaware Content Standards (including Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts and Mathematics, and Next Generation Science Standards) in core content areas.	<u>Scope and Sequence Document</u>
<i>English Language Arts</i>		
Item	Summary	Evidence
High Quality Instructional Resources	<p>Teachers College Reading and Writing Project's Units of Study are high quality instructional resources with strong alignment to the Common Core State Standards.</p> <p>The Teachers College Reading and Writing Project's approach to literacy instruction includes best practices from a number of well-known researchers in the area of literacy. The units aim to prepare students to become life-long, confident readers and writers who display agency and independence. The work is informed by research in all of these areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High volume of high-success, high interest reading 	<p><u>Research Base Underlying the Teachers College Reading and Writing Project's Approach to Literacy Instruction</u></p> <p><u>Reading Units of Study Common Core Standards Alignment</u></p> <p><u>Writing Units of Study Common Core Standards Alignment</u></p>

a) Rate the school's performance according to the criteria established by the school for its 2019-2020 mission specific goal(s).

School Comments

b) Provide as Appendix 1 the results (data source) of the school's mission specific goal(s). Remember not to include any personally identifiable information (PII).

3.2 Organizational Performance

Note: Please utilize the hyperlink in this sentence for more information about the [Organizational Performance Framework](#).

The following tables will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy.

SUMMARY AND OVERALL RATING

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy

Year	Education Program				Governance & Reporting			Students & Staff		Facilities, Transportation, Health & Safety	OVERALL RATING
	Mission Fidelity	Applicable State & Federal Requirements	Students with Disabilities	English learners	Governance & Public Stewardship	Oversight of School Management	Reporting Requirements	Students Rights	Req. on Teacher Certification & Hiring Staff		
Year	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	3a	3b	4a	OVERALL RATING
2019-2020	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Meets Standard

a) Describe the school's organizational performance over the current school year (This section is for the school to address any overall rating where the school has not met standards. The school will be able to address individual metrics in the sections below.)

School Comments:

b) Identify changes to organizational practices that the school has implemented to improve the school's organizational outcomes.

School Comments:

c) Address any measure where school did not meet standard or is approaching standard.

Performance Agreement

Organizational Performance Expectations

Discuss the school's organizational performance based on its approved Performance Agreement.

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy's (LAAA) overall organizational rating is Meets Standard.

By September 2024, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of "Meets," as measured by the Organizational Performance Framework. Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate performance-aligned with those organizational performance expectations. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

a) Discuss the school's organizational performance based on its approved Performance Agreement (see above).

School Comments:

3.3 Board Financial and Governance Members and Training

a) Please complete the chart below with the necessary information. In accordance with Del. 14 §512 (15), the school shall have a satisfactory plan to ensure the effectiveness of its board of trustees, including governance trainings conducted for any new board members and at a minimum of once every 3 years.

Board Financial and Governance Training

First Name	Last Name	Term Begin Date	Term End Date	Role/Title	Financial Training Date	Board Governance Training Date*
Lourdes	Puig	2014	annually	Chair/President	2/12/2015	May/June 2019
Donald	Patton	2015	annually	Co-Chair	11/30/2015	May/June 2019
Luis	Santiago	2016	annually	Treasurer	3/30/2017	May/June 2019
Serah Jo	Pesce	2017	1/3 years x 2	Secretary	1/12/2018	May/June 2019
Ana	Viscarra Gikas	2020	1/3 years	Parent Rep.	7/10/2020	
Rosalie	Rolon Dow	2019	1/3 years	At-Large	5/31/2019	May/June 2019
Guillermina	Gonzalez	2020	annually	At-Large	4/8/2020	
Tiffany	Burton	2018	1/3 years	Teacher Rep.	7/25/2018	May/June 2019
Marisa	Terranova Fissel	2020	1/3 years	At-Large	7/9/2020	
Alberto E.	Chávez	2020	annually	At-Large	8/10/2020	
Rebecca	Penix-Tadsen	2020	1/3 years	At-Large	8/23/2020	

*Please list only the most recent training date.

Please attach all certificates or evidence of Board Governance Training for active board members.

School Comments:
See attached documents.

b) Please complete the chart below with the necessary information. Pursuant to 14 Del. Admin. Code 736 6.1 Each member of a Citizen Budget Oversight Committee shall attend and receive a Certificate of Completion for the Citizen Budget Oversight Committee training within the allotted timeframe of his/her appointment to a Citizen Budget Oversight Committee. Provided further, additional training may be required from time to time as determined by the Department.

Citizen Budget Oversight Committee Membership & Trainings

First Name	Last Name	Role/Title	Financial Training Date
Min	Guan	Secretary	10/18/2017
Lucy	Li	Member	10/13/2017
Margie	Lopez Waite	Head of School	7/1/2012
Greg	Panchisin	COO	7/1/2012
Nicole	Florian	Teacher Representative	2/10/2020
Luis	Santiago	Chairperson	3/30/2017

School Comments:

3.4 Teacher Retention: Is the school monitoring and minimizing teacher attrition rates and maintaining a stable teaching staff?

2019-2020		
% of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers RETAINED	# of Teachers ELIGIBLE
87.3	55	63

Review the table above with the school’s teacher retention trends and answer the following questions.

- a) Describe the school’s plans to monitor and minimize teacher attrition rates. Provide information about why teachers leave the school.

School Comments:

The following initiatives have been implemented to attract and retain highly qualified team educators:

- Educator Effectiveness: Providing more frequent and targeted professional learning opportunities to teachers; hiring instructional coaches to support Educator Effectiveness Framework which is the teacher evaluation system used at ASPIRA
 - Compensation: LAAA bases its teacher salaries on the Christina School District scale. In the initial year of employment, an individual’s salary is set at 90% of that scale. In each subsequent year, that percentage is increased by 2, until 100% is reached in year six. This is in addition to step and credential increases. Plus-credit and degree increases are effective with the completion or conferral date, so teachers are not required to wait until the next school year to be compensated for their achievement.
 - Child care: In August, 2015, LAAA opened its Early Childhood Development Center. This bilingual center provides care and learning experiences for staff children from infants through Pre-K. Parents may visit with their children throughout the day, and a room is provided for nursing mothers. The cost to staff is kept as low as possible and staff have preference in filling the positions. For a minimal fee, care is also provided on professional development days for staff children who attend LAAA K-8.
 - EPER: There are plenty of opportunities made available to current staff to earn extra pay for extra responsibilities (EPER) to add to their salaries.
-

- b) Describe how the school’s professional development plans support teachers and leadership.

School Comments:

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy provides school-wide professional development on designated days as well as individualized, ongoing professional development throughout the school year. Ongoing professional development is provided for educators using a bi-weekly coaching model focusing on the teachers’ area of professional growth and the students’ academic achievement standards. Coaching sessions are provided by the Director of Curriculum & Instruction, Supervisor of Mathematics, Instructional Technology Coach, Elementary Reading Specialist/Coach, and Biliteracy Coach. Coaching sessions take the form of a formal observation, co-teaching lesson, demonstration lesson, or a planning meeting. All sessions include a feedback component provided to educators using the Six

Steps to Effective Feedback: Provide precise praise, Probe, identify problem and concrete action step, Practice, Plan ahead, and Set timeline.

IV. FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE

4.1 Financial Performance

Note: Please utilize the hyperlink in this sentence for more information about the [Financial Performance Framework](#).

The following tables will be completed by the Charter School Office. Please review for accuracy.

Financial Performance Framework Ratings	Near Term Indicators				Sustainability Indicators				Financial Management and Oversight	Overall Rating
	Current Ratio	Days Cash	Enrollment Variance	Default, Loan Covenants, & Debt Service Payments	Total Margin	Debt Asset Ratio	Cash Flow	Debt Service Coverage Ratio		
Year	1a	1b	1c	1d	2a	2b	2c	2d	3	
2019-2020	M	AS	M	F	F	AS	F	M	M	Approaching Standard

a) Describe the school's Financial performance over the current school year (This section is for the school to address any overall rating where the school has not met standards. The school will be able to address individual metrics in the sections below.)

School Comments: LAAA invested heavily in capital expansion to ensure a successful opening our new high school. We completed a \$3MM fit out of the high school building, which enabled us to open in August 2020, but the cost of completing the necessary construction affected our FY20 operating budget.

b) Identify changes to Financial practices that the school has implemented to improve the school's financial outcomes.

School Comments: LAAA will continue to be aggressive in procuring outside funding to offset expansion needs, and we always strive to increase our cash reserve (carry over). We will also continue to follow our budget guidelines to keep debt (a result of capital expansion) at less than 15% of new revenue on an annual basis.

c) Address any measure where school did not meet standard or is approaching standard

Measure 1b. Days Cash:

Cash divided by (Total Expenses / 365)

2019-2020
33

The days cash on hand ratio indicates how many days a school can pay its expenses without another inflow of cash. The preferred result is more than 60 days cash.

School Response To Rating: LAAA has invested heavily in capital expansion. In FY19, LAAA used \$660,000 of its operating funds to cover capital expenses related to library construction, a new exit for our school's parking lot, and to make necessary drainage repairs to our rear parking lot. In FY20, LAAA completed renovations, which also included the purchase of furniture and equipment, to the newly acquired (leased) high school building. To support the high school expansion, LAAA acquired almost \$1.7MM in grants; however, overall costs of the capital project exceeded \$3MM. We also paid \$1,031,488 in interest on our long-term debt (Bond Financing).

Measure 1d. Default, Loan Covenants, & Debt Service Payments

2019-2020
Yes

This metric addresses whether or not a school is meeting its loan covenants and / or is delinquent with its debt service payment, as noted in the notes accompanying the audited financial statements. A school which cannot meet the terms of its loan may be in financial distress.

DOE Rating Information:

The FY20 independent audit identified that the school has not been compliant with debt covenant requirements related to the debt held with Zions Bank. The School has failed to meet the requirement of maintaining unrestricted cash reserves to meet sixty days of operating expenses.

School Response To Rating: One of LAAA's debt covenant requirements is to maintain a cash reserve of 60 days. See comments above (1b. Days Cash). To remedy this default, and for as long as we are below the cash reserve of 60 days, we are required to retain on an annual basis at least 50% of our cash reserve.

Measure 2a. Total Margin:

Net Income divided by Total Revenue

2019-2020
1 YR: 3.63%
3 YR: -3.44%

Total margin measures the deficit or surplus a school yields out of its total revenues ; in other words, whether or not the school is living within its available resources. The preferred result is a positive margin for the past year and the past 3 years.

School Response To Rating: LAAA secured \$21MM bond financing in July 2016 to refinance its existing mortgage and support a \$12.5MM construction and renovation of the K-8 school building, which allowed us to expand to a 125,000 sq. ft. school to accommodate our growing enrollment. LAAA also used \$1.15MM of its operating funds to cover the remaining construction, equipment and furniture costs in FY18, as well as \$660,000 in FY19. Additionally, in FY20, we completed a \$3MM renovation of our high school, but we acquired capital and operating grants and contributions to support our high school expansion effort, thus lessening the burden on our operating budget. Evidence below supports our ability to improve our margin in FY20.

<u>1YR. Margin</u>	<u>3 YR Margin</u>
FY19 = -11.46%	FY19 = -9.87%
FY20 = 3.63%	FY20 = -3.44%

Measure 2b. Debt to Asset Ratio:

Total Liabilities divided by Total Assets

2019-2020
1

The debt to asset ratio compares the school's liabilities to its assets, or what a school owes against what it owns. The preferred result is less than 0.90.

School Response To Rating: Total Liabilities = \$25,759,521 and Total Assets = \$25,849,521. As of FY20, LAAA was in its third full year of long-term debt service (\$21.63MM in bonds payable as of June 30, 2020), which was a result of its bond financing (capital expenses for the East Campus building purchase and construction) in July 2016. The preferred result for this metric is <.90 and LAAA is at 1.00 vs. 1.02 in FY19, so we improved on this metric. We will continue to pay down the bond debt, which has a maximum annual debt service (MADS) of \$1.3MM.

Measure 2c. Cash Flow

2019-2020
1 YR: \$-31285
3 YR: \$-786122

Cash flow indicates the trend in the school's cash balance over a period of time. This measure is similar to days cash on hand, but indicates long-term stability versus near-term. Since cash flow fluctuations from year-to-year can have a long-term impact on a school's financial health, this metric assesses both three-year cumulative cash flow and annual cash flow. The preferred result is greater than zero.

School Response To Rating: Our one year cash flow for FY20 = \$-31,285, and our three year cash flow improved from \$-838,084 in FY19 to \$-786,122. We completed a \$3MM+ capital expansion high school project, but our aptitude to obtain capital and operating grants and contributions outside of the traditional charter school funding (no capital funding) shows our ability to support school expansion without solely relying on cash reserves. As of June 30, 2020, LAAA's cash = \$1,362,330. LAAA will continue to seek other revenue sources to support the build-out of our high school, thus minimizing the need to spend our cash reserves to support the targeted enrollment growth over the next several years.

Performance Agreement

Financial Performance Expectations

Las Américas ASPIRA Academy (LAAA) overall financial rating is Meets Standard.

By September 2024, our expectation is to achieve the overall rating of "Meets" standard as measured by the Financial Performance Framework. Each year, we will be on track to demonstrate economic viability and achieve our financial performance expectation. This progress will be monitored through our annual performance review.

- a) Discuss the school's financial performance based on its approved Performance Agreement.

School Comments:

- b) Describe how the school developed and implemented a corrective action plan in response to audit findings (if applicable).

School Comments:

V. INNOVATION

Describe the school's innovative practice(s) that could be replicated at other schools in Delaware. Please include the data that supports the success of these practice(s).

School Comments:

Innovative Features of the School:

- **Dual Language:** LAAA aims to fulfill its mission by implementing a bilingual programmatic focus called dual language education. Dual language education is an instructional approach that develops language proficiency and literacy in English and a partner language. Immersion is one type of dual language education which begins in elementary school, and in which native English speakers and native speakers of another language learn academic content through English half of the time and a partner language the other half of the time. This immersion model was the first of its kind in Delaware, commencing in 2011 and seeking to educate and empower all language learners.
- **Academic:** The partner language at LAAA is Spanish; therefore, LAAA has an A/B day rotation in K-5 in which students alternate learning all core content (language arts, math, science, and social studies) in Spanish and English as they rotate each day. In grades 6-8 the continuation model includes English instruction in all core content areas (language arts, math, science, and social studies) and Spanish instruction in language arts and social studies known as humanities. Upon graduating 8th grade, students take the Assessment of Performance Toward Proficiency in Languages (AAPPL) which will allow them to apply for continued language courses in the 9th grade with the ultimate goal of applying for the Certificate of Multiliteracy at the end of high school graduation.
- **Project-Based Learning (K-8):** Project based learning (PBL) is a teaching method in which students gain knowledge and skills by working for an extended period of time to investigate and respond to an authentic, engaging and complex question, problem, or challenge. LAAA is committed to providing PBL experiences for our students in which students can use their experiences in the classroom to benefit the wider community.
 - One of our largest PBL experiences is where second and third grade students team up to raise money for childhood cancer research by hosting our annual Alex's Lemonade Stand. Second grade students practice their mathematical skills such as measuring volume and counting money while third grade students focus on studying economics such as the production and distribution of yellow goods and services. Each year, LAAA has made a generous charitable donation to the ALS Foundation.
 - In addition, our first grade team partners with Heifer International during their non-fiction writing unit. Students research and write books about animals in specific regions, at the same time students are introduced to Heifer International, which is a charity organization working to end hunger and poverty around the world by providing livestock and training to struggling communities. This makes a real world connection for the students to the people and animals living in different regions around the world. Homeroom classes agree on which animals to purchase which will help sustain food and an income for families over a long period of time. For example, after sharing their research and stories, the students

chose to buy \$400 worth of beehives in past years. The families can eat and sell the honey from the hives.

- A school-wide PBL experience is the Outdoor Learning Environment (OLE) at ASPIRA, a National Wildlife Certified habitat, which serves as an extension to our classroom curricula. Our students at all grade levels benefit from hands-on, experiential learning in various facets of environmental education. ASPIRA's youngest learners have the opportunity to plant and maintain our edibles garden annually. Through a partnership with a local zoo, the crops are donated for animal enrichment. Students not only learn about the life cycle of plants, but also how plants and animals are interconnected. Our upper-elementary students take advantage of the storm water retention pond on our campus to learn about ecosystems and habitats of native wildlife. Learners conduct field observations, collect data, and research the animals that make their home in the Outdoor Learning Environment. As part of the Delaware Pathways to Green Schools program, middle school students at ASPIRA have researched the effects of climate change on local and global levels. With this information they created and implemented an action plan to reduce ASPIRA's carbon footprint by deeming our campus a 'no idling zone'. The entire student body and team members at ASPIRA enjoy the benefits of the Outdoor Learning Environment on a regular basis by engaging with nature on a personal level. These experiences have led to our students becoming environmental stewards at school, at home and around our community.

- **Mastery Learning and Assessment (K-5):** Focus on implementation of Common Core, NGSS and DE Content Standards in a competency-based learning model. Implementation of Progress Book to provide real-time information to teachers and parents regarding students' mastery of concepts and skills.
- **Blended Learning and Personalized Learning:** LAAA offers 1:1 Chromebooks in Grades K-8; Implementation of Schoology (grades 3-5), Seesaw (grades K-2), Google Apps for Education (grades K-8), and STEMscopes (K-8). Blended learning models incorporated in our core curriculum and instructional approaches include flipped classroom, playlists, and station rotation, personalizing learning by tailoring instruction towards students' individualized learning goals. In addition, an innovation lab was created including activities often found in a makerspace incorporating all areas of STREAM (Science, Technology, Reading, Engineering, Art, & Mathematics).
- **MTSS:** LAAA signed an MOU with DDOE to participate in these state-wide efforts, collaborating with coaches from the American Institute for Research (AIR) which will take a look at academic, behavior, and social emotional supports under the Multi-Tiered System of Support Model (MTSS). During the 2018-2019 school year we formed an MTSS team including a variety of stakeholders. The MTSS team participated in a comprehensive needs assessment to identify specific areas of improvement. An action plan was developed to address the need for a behavior screener and we have begun to pilot the screener in targeted grades (3 and 8) based on both academic and behavior data.
- **Social Curriculum:** A school-wide implementation of the Responsive Classroom Approach, which embraces a fostering of community, based upon teaching socially-responsible behaviors.
- **Character Education:** ASPIRA's Character Education provides students the social and emotional foundation and skills necessary to work in a rich and diverse learning environment. It focuses on teaching Accountability, Social and Emotional Intelligence, Positive Mindset, Inquiry, Resilience, and Appreciation mostly through two components already embedded in our instructional practices: Morning Meetings and Community Circles. By having a character growth focus, we launch our students into a successful future. We teach one character trait per month of the year.

We do this by incorporating conversations, quotes, readings, discussions, games, and other similar practices to one of our Morning Meeting components: Greeting, Sharing, Activity, or Morning Message. Growth Mindset is a key trait taught throughout the school year. At ASPIRA, our social and emotional growth is as important as our academic growth.

VII. ANNUAL REPORT CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

Name of School:	Las Américas ASPIRA Academy
Location:	Newark, Delaware

I hereby certify that the information submitted in this annual of a charter school is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; that this application has been approved by the school's Board of Directors.



Signature: Chairperson of Board of Directors (or designated signatory authority)

2/11/21

Date

Print/Type Name:	Margie López Waite
Title (if designated):	Chief Executive Officer
Date of approval by board of directors:	January 28, 2021

References:

¹ Based on September 30th Unit Count

² Pursuant to the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (34 CFR §99), the DDOE applies the following statistical methods to avoid disclosure of personally identifiable information in aggregate reporting.

1. For all data, counts for groups or subgroups with 15 or fewer students are suppressed and represented by “-” in data reports. Complementary suppression of one or more non-sensitive cells in a table may be required so that the values of the suppressed cells may not be calculated by subtracting the reported values from the row and column totals.

2. Only report percentages for grade level reporting within a school and district.

3. Percentages are suppressed when the underlying student counts can be derived for groups or subgroups with 15 or fewer students (i.e., if the number tested and proficient are reported, then the percentage may need to be suppressed).

4. Any percentage above 95 or below 5 will be reported as >95% and <5%, respectively.

³ Graduation rate data is lag data by one school year to include all students that have completed their high school diplomas during that year including summer graduates.