

DSU to Explore Establishment of Charter School on Campus

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Delaware State University and representatives of the local community have partnered with Innovative Schools, a Delaware-based non-profit public school support organization, to submit a charter application to the Delaware Department of Education this December. If approved, the proposed charter high school would implement the state's first Early College High School, a nationally recognized school design brought to Delaware through a partnership between Innovative Schools and EdWorks, and would be located on the DSU campus in Dover. The school would be designed specifically to serve first generation college-bound students.

In the Early College model, high school and college combine to form a coherent educational program in which students work toward a high school diploma and up to two years of college credits in four years of high school. Located on a college campus, the model directly challenges the belief system of under-prepared poor and minority students about their ability to do college level work and get a postsecondary degree.

Housing a high school on the DSU campus is not unprecedented in the University's history. In the 1893-94 school year, the then State College for Colored Students established a two-year preparatory school to help students get ready for a college education. In 1917, a Model Grade School was established by DSU, which granted a high school diploma to graduates. Capital improvement donations by philanthropist Pierre du Pont in the 1920s included funding to construct a new school building named the Du Pont Building. That building served as the only high school facility for African Americans in Kent County until 1952, when the high school for blacks moved to a larger school facility in the then-Dover city limits.

"Adding an Early College High School on DSU's campus is consistent with the University's historic mission and would strengthen the University's ability to serve first generation college-bound students and underrepresented minorities from the greater Dover area," said Dr. Alton Thompson, DSU provost and vice president for Academic Affairs. "It would provide them with an exceptional academic program that truly prepares them for success in college and beyond."

Students participating in the Early College High School model launched by EdWorks in Ohio have an average graduation rate of 91% and out-perform state averages in high stakes graduation tests for reading, writing, and mathematics. At the completion of four years in high school, 100% of student attending Early College High Schools have earned a minimum of 30 hours of college credit, and as many as 60% of students earn an associate's degree, or the equivalent of 45-60 college credit.

The University intends to blend the Early College Charter High School with its existing STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) Initiative.

"The Early College High School at DSU will be an innovative learning environment designed to inspire students who have the potential and motivation to be the first in their families to graduate from college," said Dr. Thompson. "We are committed to making this school a good fit for our community."

As part of the charter application process, members of the Early College Charter High School Founding Board are asking members of the Kent County community to share their opinion to determine the interest and demand for the proposed charter school. Students, parents, educators and other community members can learn more about the Early College High School, view videos of the school design in action, and complete an online survey at www.makemineamodelschool.org [1]. All responses are confidential and will be used to help determine the demand for new schools.

About Delaware Charter Schools

Charter schools are free public schools open to all Delaware students. In Delaware, charter schools are authorized by Del. C., Title 14, Chapter 5 which was enacted in 1995. The creation of the charter school legislation is intended to improve student learning; encourage the use of different and innovative or proven school environments and teaching and learning methods; provide parents and students with improved measures of school performance and greater opportunities in choosing public schools within and outside their school districts; and to provide for a well-educated community. There are currently 21 charter schools operating across the state of Delaware. The proposed charter school, if approved, would open to students in the 2013-2014 school year.

About Innovative Schools the Make Mine A Model School Campaign:

Innovative Schools is a non-profit public school support organization that empowers educators and communities to adopt modern school models proven to inspire passionate teaching and learning. As a comprehensive center for school innovation, the organization provides the strategies, tools, and ongoing support needed to select the right school models and ensure its successful operation. As part of its work, Innovative Schools has developed the Make Mine A Model School campaign, a community-based tool to mobilize Delaware educators, students, families, and citizens who want modern schools that inspire passionate teaching and learning. The goal of the Make Mine A Model School Campaign and Innovative Schools work is to modernize Delaware's public school system by providing schools and students with choices for academic programs that offer new and engaging ways of teaching and learning, and that prepare students to become members of a global community. The Early College High School model is one of four unique high school designs being brought to Delaware by Innovative Schools, in partnership with national school design organizations. Learn more about this school design and about the work of Innovative Schools at www.innovativeschools.org [2].

About Delaware State University:

DSU has a long and proud history as one of America's Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and is among the top 15 of 72 ranked in the nation. Founded in 1891 as the State College for Colored Students, DSU has evolved in its 120-year history into a comprehensive University that offers a wide array of bachelor, master and doctoral degree programs. While the University is predominantly African American, it enjoys a rich, ever-growing diversity of students from other backgrounds, including those from more than 27 countries. To learn more about Delaware State University, visit www.desu.edu [3].

Source URL: <http://www.desu.edu/news/dsu-explore-establishment-charter-school-campus>

Links

[1] <http://www.makemineamodelschool.org>

[2] <http://www.innovativeschools.org/>

[3] <http://www.desu.edu/>