

To: City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee

DLH Academy continues to work to partner with parents to provide a quality education for all students. This communication is to address concerns regarding school performance that did not reflect anticipated and expected growth during the 2017-2018 school year. The last year's performance data brought into question the school's communication practices to staff and parents as well as the school use of systems to monitor student progress throughout the year. In response to the concerns it has been requested that the school report practices/process in these two areas and report on our progress toward meeting our local measures. The following will include actions taken to address the matter of ensuring that our staff and families have a clear understanding regarding the sense of urgency in all parties working diligently to support student growth. Additionally, a sample of mid-year performance data is included as well as follow-up practices in place describing our response to our mid-year data report.

Does the school communicate a sense of urgency with parents and teachers?

Actions taken to ensure that a sense of urgency has been clearly and consistently communicated with staff and parents include the requirement of additional data review sessions in which student data regarding attendance and academic performance is addressed. Meetings put in place this year include monthly data sessions with staff to review student performance, assessment/feedback practices and effective use of curriculum. Additionally, new teachers are scheduled to meet weekly with the principal to reflect on planning and monitoring practices. New teachers also, have additional check-ins as a result of more frequent classroom observations. During meeting sessions, student performance and teacher practice is reviewed. Follow-up actions are required of teachers, students, educational assistants, parents and administrative staff when necessary. Parents and teachers must attend restorative sessions to address social and emotional matters that hinder performance. Middle school teachers also attend monthly meetings to discuss their responses to the book study, *What Every Middle School Teacher Should Know*. Among the follow-up sessions for parents is a mandatory administrative meeting to discuss attendance.

Three evening meeting sessions were held to address all families struggling to meet attendance requirements. This meeting included a presentation of the state requirements, how DLH Academy works to meet the requirements and the consequences of not meeting the requirements. Prior to all meetings, parents received multiple communications via phone calls and letters updating them on attendance concerns. Additional meetings took place in one-on-one family principal/meetings, as well as, during impromptu sessions as administrative staff selected specific days to meet tough to reach parents at the front door during drop-off/pick-up times.

Are effective monitoring systems for school performance in place?

Detailed parent updates are made possible through an adjustment made in our record keeping regarding attendance such that in addition to general absences reporting, a parent sign-in log records the time of arrival as well as the time that students are picked up daily. These reports are discussed during individual family meetings and have provided eye-opening experiences for some of our families.

Efforts to monitor attendance proved effective until the bus company experienced a decrease in employees available to provide services. Transportation services began to be inconsistent and unreliable. The school has attempted to work with the company to find solutions. Currently, transportation appears to be at a point of improvement but considerable damage to attendance has occurred as well as parent trust in the transportation services provided (due to inconsistencies that began to heighten in January and continue through March).

Teachers continue to work with students and families to bridge learning gaps as they are identified. Students who struggled to maintain the expected learning pace are required to work on action plans. This plan includes specific skills that a student must work to build in a given amount of time through re-teaching, pullouts and additional practice work to complete as homework. This year middle school students were able to receive more pullout instruction as well (in addition to general academic teacher interventions) to work on remedial skill building and to receive check-ins (items such as organizational skills, timely completion of assignments etc.). This support has been helpful especially to help our new middle school teachers who struggle more with differentiation and student monitoring. The information discussed in monthly data sessions determine what students will receive pullout instruction. Mid-year analysis has also provided information that confirms effective support systems as well as allows us to identify areas where we must make adjustments in student and teacher support.

DLH Academy continues to build on a culture of data informed practices, research based practices and a never ending resolve to work with students and families to provide a holistic education for students in our care. It is our intention to continue to work with integrity to carry out the mission and vision for which were established in service and accountability to our community.