



DELAWARE COLLEGE PREPARATORY ACADEMY

FROM HOWARD TO HARVARD, EVERY CHILD PREPARED FOR COLLEGE – NO EXCUSES.

PROGRAM SUMMARY

► MISSION

Delaware College Preparatory Academy ensures that our kindergarten through grade five students are prepared to succeed in the most competitive middle and high schools in the nation. Through a structured, disciplined and academically rigorous environment, our students will master the core skills that they will need to succeed academically – reading writing and math. Modeled after other successful college preparatory elementary school programs, we intend to provide an education that rivals that found in the nation’s most elite private, independent and suburban schools – an education that is made available from public dollars and is accessible for all children, especially those from limited means.

► GOALS

The school’s guiding mission to prepare every student for college informs our decision to establish and focus relentlessly on the following goals that are directly linked to student achievement:

- To ensure that every student performs on or above grade level in the core subjects;
- To exceed state and national performance expectations in reading, math and writing;
- To prepare students to enter and succeed within the most competitive college preparatory middle and high schools; and
- To develop the unwavering intent in the mind of every student that I *will* graduate from a college or university.

► CORE PHILOSOPHY

In support of these goals, Delaware College Preparatory Academy’s core philosophy is based on the following beliefs:

1. All students can and will learn.
2. We must hire, retain and develop exceptional teachers committed to outstanding academic results.
3. We must create a school culture that supports strong academic achievement.
4. Data analysis must drive all curriculum and staffing decisions.
5. We must retain a razor sharp focus on the academic needs of our students.

► EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

The ability of our students to acquire knowledge necessary to succeed in all future education begins with mastery in the core content areas of reading, writing and math. Since elementary education serves as the primary foundation on which all other educational achievement rests, we will implement research-proven elementary curriculum that have demonstrated strong academic outcomes with similar student populations. In every grade, K-5 we will implement the following

curriculum appropriate for each grade level and in alignment with Delaware State Standards and Grade Level Expectations:

- English Language Arts - Open Court (supplemented with SRA Reading Mastery and Waterford)
- Math - Saxon Math (supplemented with Everyday Math and Everyday Counts)
- Social Studies - Core Knowledge
- Science - FOSS Science

Delaware College Preparatory Academy firmly believes in using proven, results-driven instructional approaches and strategies and we have modeled our methodologies and practices after approaches utilized in high performing charter schools across the nation. These instructional strategies include:

- Standards based curriculum and instruction
- Organized and systematic approach to instructional delivery using instructional consistency, strategic, detailed lesson planning, Dr. Lorraine Monroe's Black Board configuration, and school wide systems and structures.
- Relentless focus on reading mastery including 160 minutes of reading and writing instruction daily, the use of a two-teacher model in the earliest literacy building grades, and the development of the 'reading habit'.
- Engagement intensive student-teacher interaction techniques (Rap, Rhythm and Rhyme, Precise Praise, Kinesthetic Learning, etc.) that stimulate the learning environment and creates a steady, brisk pace, a high degree of teacher/student interaction and uses techniques that support a culture of high academic achievement.
- "I do", "We do". "You do" instructional model that uses teacher led instruction, guided classroom practice and individual practice for mastery of a specific lesson. This technique enhances student learning by increasing opportunities for students to practice skills, affording teachers a direct opportunity to catch a student's inability to grasp a skill sooner and allowing teachers to adjust their instructional approach in real time.

Assessment Strategies

A critical part of our educational model is the use of data to drive instruction and curriculum decisions. Assessment results are meaningful tools to assess exactly what students are learning and to what extent they are mastering key skills and concepts. Students will receive baseline assessments within their first few weeks of school to gain a measurement of student ability immediately. Students will also receive tests and quizzes and an internally designed, cumulative interim assessment every six weeks. The results of the interim assessments will be carefully evaluated and analyzed by administrators and teachers to identify areas of strength and weakness across grades, across curriculum and across teachers. This serves as the foundation for our data driven instruction and provides the information needed to make effective changes in our curriculum. Delaware College Preparatory Academy will also participate in the DSTP and will utilize a national norm-referenced test (Stanford 10) to measure student academic progress against other students across the country. Additional assessments that will be utilized include the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS), the Test for Early Mathematical Awareness (TEMA), and the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT).

► UNIQUE SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS

Delaware College Preparatory Academy has a variety of unique school features incorporated into the school design. These elements include the following:

- College preparatory focus beginning in Kindergarten including trips to colleges and universities and an unwavering understanding by every student that “I am college bound.”
- Academically intensive environment providing 3.5 hours of additional instruction daily, 160 minutes of literacy daily, 80 minutes of math instruction daily, homework and required reading every day and immediate academic challenges each morning such as “Breakfast for the Brain”.
- Two-teacher classroom model in grades K-2 to ensure a 1:10 teacher to student ratio in the earliest stages of literacy development.
- Character development based on the *Be the Dream* values, a school-wide character education program that establishes a foundation of academic and behavioral expectations used consistently throughout the school.
- The use of data to drive all academic and instructional decisions. The frequent use of assessments and weekly professional development sessions will play a vital role in ensuring that data is used.
- The consistent implementation of school wide systems and structures and instructional strategies to minimize time spent in the classroom on non-instructional activities.
- Weekly professional development time for all teachers and administrators to improve professional skills, discuss student needs, problem solve, and analyze data. All staff will also participate annually in three weeks of professional development training prior to the commencement of the school year in August.
- Prep-Parent Partnership that establishes the expectation that parents must be our partners in the education of their children. Parents will be expected to agree to terms of the *Be the Dream* contract, a parent, student and school commitment letter that explains what each stakeholder can expect of the other throughout the school year.

► **SCHOOL CALENDAR AND HOURS OF OPERATION**

Delaware College Preparatory Academy will have an extended school day and an extended school year. The extra hours of instruction afforded by this model will allow us to provide 160 minutes of literacy instruction and 80 minutes of math instruction daily while still providing classes in science, social studies, art, music, character development and physical education.

The school year will last approximately 198 days each year and will begin in August and end in late June. The school will observe all traditional school holidays.

On Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday the school’s hours of operation will be from 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Breakfast and lunch will be served every day. On Wednesday, the school’s hours of operation will be from 7:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Early dismissal will occur on every Wednesday to provide professional development to staff members.

► **CONTACT INFORMATION**

For additional information about Delaware College Preparatory Academy please feel free to contact Nita Roberson, Executive Director at 302-762-7424 ext. 111 or at nita.roberson@dcpa.k12.de.us.