

Original Proposed Resolution
VII.E.

Connecticut State Board of Education
Hartford

To Be Proposed:
March 1, 2023

Resolved, that the State Board of Education accept the Commissioner of Education's recommendation that in light of the substantial and ongoing interest in Capital Preparatory Middletown Charter School's application for an initial certificate of approval for a state charter, and given the State Board of Education's desire to ensure that those wishing to be heard on that application have a full opportunity to share their opinions regarding such application, the State Board of Education defer to its next scheduled meeting a final decision on Capital Preparatory Middletown Charter School's application, and direct the Commissioner of Education to take any and all action necessary to effectuate this resolution.

Approved by a vote of _____, this first day of March, Two Thousand Twenty-Three.

Signed: _____
Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Secretary
State Board of Education

**CONNECTICUT STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION
Hartford**

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Charlene M. Russell-Tucker, Commissioner of Education

DATE: March 1, 2023

SUBJECT: Consideration of Granting Initial Certificate for a State Charter to Capital Preparatory Middletown Charter School, Middletown

Executive Summary

Introduction

Subsection (f) of Section 10-66bb of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S) requires that an application for the establishment of a state charter school be submitted to the State Board of Education (SBE) for approval and filed with the local board or regional board of education in the school district in which the charter school is to be located. The SBE may approve an application and grant the *initial certificate of approval* for the charter for the state charter school by a majority vote of the membership. The SBE may condition granting the *initial certificate of approval* for the charter based on the applicant meeting certain conditions determined by the Commissioner of Education to be necessary and may authorize the Commissioner of Education to release the *initial certificate of approval* for the charter when the Commissioner of Education determines such conditions are met. Under Section 10-66bb(a) of the C.G.S., if the SBE grants an *initial certificate of approval* for a charter, the SBE must submit a copy of its approval documents and a summary of comments made at the local public hearing concerning the proposed new charter school to the Education and Appropriation Committees of the Connecticut Legislature. Section 10-66bb(a) further provides that the Connecticut Legislature may appropriate funds to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) to provide operating grants to charter schools, and if such funds are appropriated, an *initial certificate of approval* for a charter shall be deemed effective as of July 1st of the first fiscal year for which such funds are appropriated. After an *initial certificate of approval* for a charter for a state charter school, pursuant to Section 10-66bb(a)(2) of the C.G.S., such charter may be valid for a period of time of up to five years. The SBE may allow the applicant to delay its opening for a period of time of up to one year, in order for the applicant to fully prepare to provide appropriate instructional services.

Background

On March 15, 2022, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) released a Request for Proposals for new state and local charter schools. Section 10-66bb(c) of the C.G.S. requires the SBE to annually consider applications for proposed charter schools located in towns that have one or more Commissioner's Network Schools or in a town designated as a low-achieving school district. The application for Capital Preparatory Middletown Charter School (Capital Prep Middletown), a proposed state charter school to be located in Middletown, CT, was received on December 1, 2022.

Capital Prep Middletown proposes to open with middle and high school grades (illustrated in enrollment table below) and slowly increase to serve kindergarten-Grade 12. Capital Prep Middletown's proposed mission emphasizes a 201-day college preparatory, early college academy where students focus on the study and application of a social justice framework. Capital Prep Middletown's application states that the school will accept all students in kindergarten-Grade 12, regardless of their credit accumulation status or academic needs and/or behavioral challenges encountered. Capital Prep Middletown will function like a prep school, graduating students ready for a four-year college experience and career.

Capital Prep Middletown will be modeled after the existing schools operated by Capital Preparatory Schools, Inc., a charter management organization, managing schools in Bridgeport (Capital Prep Harbor), the Bronx (Capital Preparatory Bronx Charter School), and Harlem (Capital Preparatory Harlem Charter School).

Capital Prep Middletown describes its academic model's foundation of comprehensive affective programming as being designed to ensure students feel seen, valued, and have a sense of belonging. Daily advisory is part of the school's model, which is summarized as being designed to create meaningful relationships between students and their learning environment. Students will have an annual two-sport requirement, house competitions, and student government, with an emphasis on social justice research and action which is embedded throughout the program.

At the high school level, Capital Prep Middletown will offer four years of rigorous study in English language arts (ELA), math, science, and foreign language, to position students for college. This program was established for students to exceed Connecticut's 25 credit standard for graduation by going beyond the nine-credit recommendation for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) and the humanities. Additionally, the application states that Capital Prep Middletown students' time and study will culminate in a capstone social justice project to demonstrate their perspective, understanding and commitment to community. Many high school students from Capital Prep Harbor in Bridgeport are enrolled in college level classes and this benchmark will be replicated at Capital Prep Middletown. The school will meet its mission by offering a rigorous curriculum, a variety of athletic programs, and multi-pronged affective faculty support. The result is a unique, college preparatory, social justice-themed academic experience that develops and prepares students for college and career readiness.

Capital Preparatory Middletown Charter School proposes to open in 2024, with the following five-year growth plan:

PROJECTED STUDENT ENROLLMENT															
Grade	PK	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Total
Year 1	N/A							90	45	45	100	45	45	10	380
Year 2	N/A							90	90	45	100	100	50	50	525
Year 3	N/A							90	90	90	100	100	100	50	620
Year 4	N/A	80	80					90	90	90	100	100	100	100	830
Year 5	N/A	80	80	80				90	90	90	100	100	100	100	910

Section 10-66bb(c) of the C.G.S. directs the SBE to give preference to certain applications. Capital Prep Middletown seeks to be considered for the following statutory preference:

1. Opening the charter school in a Priority School District.

Capital Preparatory Middletown Charter School Application Review Process

Application Review: A team composed of the CSDE managers, appointed by the Commissioner of Education with expertise in curriculum, instruction, academics, special education, finance, etc., reviewed the application. The application was evaluated based on the standards and review criteria detailed in the *Application Package for the Development of State and Local Charter Schools*. In the 19 sections of the [Capital Preparatory Charter School Middletown application](#); Mission, Purpose and Specialized Focus, Educational Philosophy, Curriculum, Instruction, Student Assessment, Experience and Expertise of Founders, School Governance and Management, School Leader, Evidence of Support, School Demographics, Special Education, English Learners(EL) Multilingual Learners (ML), Admission Policy and Criteria, Student Discipline Policies, Human Resource Policies, Building Options, Financial Plan, Self-Evaluation and Accountability, and Timetable reviewed and scored, Capital Preparatory Middletown Charter School scored 38.12 points out of a total possible 57 points, the summary rating that meets expectations to operate a successful charter school. (Attachment A).

Public Hearing: Patricia Keavney-Maruca, member of the State Board of Education, and the CSDE staff presided over a public hearing on Capital Preparatory Middletown Charter School application on February 15, 2023, as required by C.G.S. §10-66b(f)(1). In accordance with Section 10-66bb(f)(1), the hearing was held in the City of Middletown, the district in which the proposed school is to be located. Over 417 people attended the public hearing, and 83 attendees signed up to speak. Due to the time that was available for public comment, however, only 48 of those 83 – including students, parents, educators, nonprofit leaders, elected officials, and community representatives – were able to speak, resulting in the 35 remaining individuals who signed up for public comment, unable to share their perspectives. Consequently, almost 43 percent of those who sought to share their opinions on the application were unable to do so. Of the 48 individuals who provided testimony, forty-two were in support of the application and six were in opposition. In addition, since the February 15, 2023, public hearing, a number of individuals have contacted the CSDE, either submitting comments regarding the application or expressing their desire to submit comments.

Invitation for Written Comments: The CSDE solicited comments from the Middletown Board of Education and from the local and regional boards of education in towns contiguous to Middletown, which include Berlin, Cromwell, East Hampton, Meriden, Portland, Regional District 13 (Durham and Middlefield), and Regional District 17 (Haddam). Letters of support were received from Douglas McCrory, Connecticut State Senator, 2nd District (Attachment B), Scot Esdaile, President, CT NAACP State National Board Member (Attachment C), and Leslie Saunders, Adjunct Professor at Central Connecticut State University (Attachment D). Several e-mails opposing the creation and support of the school were received by the CSDE, which included letters from Dr. Alberto Vázquez Matos, Superintendent of Middletown Public Schools (Attachment E), and Robert Kosienski, Board President of Meriden Public Schools (Attachment F).

Recommendation

Capital Preparatory Middletown Charter School’s application has drawn a substantial amount of interest, far more than is typical. As noted, over 417 individuals attended the February 15, 2023, public hearing that was held pursuant to C.G.S. §10-66bb(f)(1), which provides in relevant part that the CSDE shall “hold a public hearing on such application in the school district in which such state charter school is to be located.” The clear intent of this public hearing requirement is to provide an opportunity for individuals in whose district a proposed charter school will be located to gain additional information about the school and, if they so choose, to share opinions – either positive or negative – regarding it.

As also discussed, at the February 15 public hearing, 83 attendees signed up to speak, but due to the time that was available, only 48 of those 83 were able to share their opinions during public comment, resulting in almost 43 percent of those who had signed up to speak unable to do so. In addition, since the February 15, 2023, public hearing, numerous individuals have contacted the CSDE, either submitting their comments on Capital Preparatory Middletown Charter School’s application or expressing their intention to provide comments. These submissions are still being received, further underscoring the extraordinary level of public interest in this matter. Therefore, to ensure that these individuals have an opportunity to submit their opinions regarding Capital Preparatory Middletown Charter School’s application, I recommend to the SBE that it defer the final decision on that application until the SBE’s next scheduled meeting, thereby providing those who wish to share their opinions with the SBE on this application with that opportunity.

Prepared by: _____
Felicia Canty, Charter School Liaison
Turnaround Office

Approved by: _____
Irene E. Parisi, Chief Academic Officer
Academic Office

APPENDIX G: APPLICATION RUBRIC

Proposed Charter School Name: Capital Prep Middletown Date: 01/20/2023

Directions: Using the rubric below, please apply the Review Standards to score each section of the RFP on a scale of “0 – Does Not Meet” to “3 – Exceeds”; evaluate each of the sub-indicators to arrive at an overall “Total Score” for each section. The total score for each section should reflect an average of the scores for each of the sub-indicators outlined for that section. Enter the total score for each section on the final “Evaluation Summary” page. Lastly, recommend whether to award the applicant preference(s).

Review Standards:

0	Does Not Meet: The response lacks meaningful detail, demonstrates a lack of preparation, or otherwise raises substantial concerns about the applicant’s understanding of the issues in concept and/or ability to meet the requirement in practice.
1	Partially Meets: The response lacks critical details in certain areas. The response requires additional information to be considered reasonably comprehensive and demonstrate a clear vision of how the school will operate.
2	Meets: The response indicates solid preparation and a grasp of the key issues, as demonstrated by a reasonable and comprehensive response. It addresses the review criteria with information showing preparation and a clear, realistic picture of how the school will operate. The response demonstrates the ability of the applicant to execute the vision described in the response.
3	Exceeds: The response reflects a thorough understanding of key issues. The response indicates thorough preparation, expertise, and a clear and compelling picture of how the school will operate. The response demonstrates the readiness of the applicant to successfully execute the vision described in the response.

I. School Vision and Design

1. Mission, Purpose and Specialized Focus C.G.S. 10-66bb(d)1,(7)	Total Score:	1.83	0	1	2	3
Speaks to the core purpose and key values of the school.					✓	
Communicates high academic standards for student success.					✓	
Illustrates a compelling vision for the school community.					✓	
Describes the ways in which the school will positively impact stakeholders in the school and community.				✓		
Describes the specialized focus of the charter school.					✓	
States the ages of students or grades to be taught and total estimated enrollment.					✓	

Justifications:

The information provided aptly describes a core purpose and key values that align with the school mission of providing a strong academic program for underrepresented student populations through a social justice theme. The program focuses on developing students as agents of change who graduate and go on to college at a rate of 100%. The description was less developed around the ways in which the school benefits the larger community and outside stakeholders. Further detail would be helpful.

Students ages, grades, and enrollment are described with a roll-out plan in terms of timing.

2. Educational Philosophy	Total Score:	2.00	0	1	2	3
Describes the founding group’s core beliefs and values.					✓	
Demonstrates the willingness to embrace and serve the diverse needs of individual students.					✓	
Provides a compelling argument that the approach is likely to improve students’ academic performance.					✓	

Justifications:

Includes research to support projected achievement. Applicant provides evidence that a lead approach to learner is student-led, student-centered with opportunities for personal learning aligned to the CPREP Learner Expectations.

The applicant references the performance and success of Capital Prep Harbor in Bridgeport as evidence of potential for Capital Prep Middletown.

3. Curriculum C.G.S. 10-66bb(d)(5)	Total Score:	1.83	0	1	2	3
Explains the process to identify or develop curriculum to be used by the school and provides a rationale for the process.					✓	
Provides evidence of alignment to the Connecticut Core Standards for ELA and mathematics and NGSS for science. Provides evidence demonstrating that the curriculum is likely to improve students' academic performance.					✓	
Provides evidence demonstrating that the curriculum is likely to improve students' academic performance.					✓	
Demonstrates accessibility and appropriateness for students at all levels, including ELs, students with disabilities, etc.				✓		
Describes a clear plan for the ongoing development, improvement, and refinement of the curriculum.					✓	
Describes a process for monitoring and assessing the implementation and effectiveness of the curriculum.					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>Shared Learner Expectations and alignment with Social Justice Matrix. Additional information would assist in understanding how the learner matrix and expectations are developed through the curricular resources.</p> <p>Questionable practice of the 2-year sport requirement in lieu of physical education. No evidence of developing or providing health/wellness education which differs from social emotional awareness. The CSBE requires a planned, sequential PK-12 school health education program that addresses the physical, mental, emotional and social dimensions of health and enables children and youth to establish and practice health-enhancing behaviors over a lifetime and become healthy and productive citizens. <u>An effective health education curriculum is designed to motivate children and youth to maintain and improve their health, prevent disease, reduce health-related risk behaviors and develop and demonstrate health-related knowledge, attitudes, skills and practices.</u> School health education is one component of the Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child approach and must be delivered by appropriately certified teachers.</p> <p>C.G.S. section 10-221a requires health/wellness and physical education. It is necessary for the applicant to provide evidence for how they plan to meet the statutory requirements in the curriculum, course sequence and access. Healthy-and-Balanced-Living-Curriculum-Framework-03282022.pdf (ct.gov)</p> <p>The applicant is required to comply with the CSDE Approved Core reading curriculum and or programs. The curriculum decisions related to K-3 literacy will require review and revision - Connecticut Approved K-3 Reading Curriculum Models or Programs</p>						
4. Instruction C.G.S. 10-66bb(d) (5),(10)	Total Score:	1.75	0	1	2	3
Describes the instructional methods or techniques that will be used to facilitate high-quality teaching and learning.					✓	
Demonstrates how instructional methods support high standards and are accessible and appropriate for all students.				✓		
Explains how the school will create a data-driven culture to meet a wide range of student needs.					✓	
Describes how the school will determine and provide for the professional development needs of the staff.					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>The pedagogical approach at Capital Prep Academy is designed to focus on relationships, rigor, and relevance to effectively examine curriculum, instruction, and assessment. It places a particular emphasis on higher standards and student achievement, as well as social-emotional learning and relationships to facilitate high quality teaching and learning. This approach is also designed to be accessible and appropriate for all students, with a focus on the most important standards and skills at each grade level and access to courses necessary for college acceptance.</p> <p>In addition, the school promotes a data-driven culture using the Data Wise process and protocols from Harvard University. This approach is considered highly effective in supporting students in alignment with the Capital Prep mission and model. The school also has systems and routines in place to ensure that instructional methods are delivered effectively, with ongoing evaluations of lesson plans, observations, individualized plans, and professional development.</p>						

5. Student Assessment C.G.S. 10-66bb(d)(9)	Total Score:	1.67	0	1	2	3
Presents a comprehensive approach to assessment. Demonstrates that assessments and assessment practices are valid for their intended purposes.				✓		
Shows clear alignment of assessments to the curriculum and the state standards.					✓	
Indicates how the assessment system ensures the participation of all students on both the state mandated testing and other alternative assessments.					✓	
Explains how they will monitor student progress using a combination of the state standardized assessments, the state-provided interim blocks assessments, and other standardized/non-standardized measures as appropriate, while minimizing testing.				✓		
Demonstrates a high-quality plan to show how data from progress monitoring can be used to implement appropriate and timely student interventions and support.					✓	
Describes how they will train and support educators to employ formative assessment practices in their classrooms.					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>Using the Interim Comprehensive Assessment (ICA) as a form of practice for the summative assessment does not minimize testing and is not advised. There are a variety of assessments in the plan including iReady and MAP three times/year. Interim Assessment Blocks (IABs) the tool that is best aligned to the state summative assessment receive limited attention in the plan. There seems to be a lot of support for teachers.</p>						

II. Strength of Organizational Effort

1. Experience and Expertise of Founders	Total Score:	2.67	0	1	2	3
Demonstrates clear expertise and relevant experiences and/or qualifications of the founders.					✓	
Specifies the role of the founding group in the development and launch of the proposed school.						✓
Identifies any organizations, individuals, or consultants that are partners in designing and launching the proposed school and provide evidence of the partner's ability to operate a high-quality school.						✓
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>The proposal lists a 15 member of the "founding team" including 2 persons employes by Capital Preparatory Schools, Inc. (CPS) a charter management organization (CMO) and one person currently employed by Capital Prep Harbor, a charter school. The "Founding Group Members" are the other 12 persons. Eight of the 12 will be joining the Governing Board. The school will contract with CPS as a CMO.</p> <p>CPS had a role in constructing the proposal. CPS will participate in the search for the school's principal and, according to the proposal, will likely fund the principal until the school is able to take over this position financially.</p>						
2. School Governance and Management C.G.S. 10-66bb(d)(3)	Total Score:	2.63	0	1	2	3
Provides a viable governance structure and organizational chart showing proper oversight of various functions of the school.					✓	
Presents a clear picture of the officers and members, terms, election/appointment processes, and committees. Please note no member or employee of the governing council may have a personal or financial interest in the assets, real or personal.						✓
Specifies the criteria and procedures for selecting officers and members of the governing council, include teachers, parents/guardians and local school board chair or superintendent or designee.						✓
Describes how the governing council will exercise its responsibility to oversee the operation of the school including, but not limited to, educational programs, governance and fiscal management, personnel, facility maintenance, and community outreach. Indicates how the governing council will hold the school accountable to stakeholders.					✓	
Provides resumes of initial council membership, showing a wide range of expertise and experiences.						✓
Defines the roles, responsibilities, and interaction between council membership, committees, and school administration.						✓
Presents the process by which the governing council will hire and evaluate the school administrator.						✓
If applicable, provides evidence indicating the CMO's ability to serve the intended student population; strong student outcomes and success at managing nonacademic school functions.					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>This section of the proposal presented a detailed and thoughtful response to the required topics.</p> <p>Eight-member Governing Council, i.e. health care executive, community organization volunteer, music teacher/school counsellor, two people of faith, including a prison chaplain, founder of a not for profit which works with disadvantaged families, member of Middletown Board of Education.</p>						

3. School Leader C.G.S. 10-66bb(d)(6)	Total Score:	3.00	0	1	2	3
<i>For applicants with an identified school leader:</i> Provides the name, qualifications, experiences, certifications, and education of the proposed lead administrator; offers evidence to demonstrate whether the individual has a record of leading a high-quality school.						
<i>For applicants without an identified school leader:</i> Presents a plan for recruiting and hiring a proven school leader and clearly articulates the characteristics and skills that the proposed school will evaluate in selecting a leader.						✓
Justifications: Presented a detailed plan for recruiting a school leader. A thorough list of characteristics and skills required was listed.						
4. Evidence of Support C.G.S. 10-66bb(d)(2)	Total Score:	0.25	0	1	2	3
Provides evidence that the proposed school is welcomed by the local community.				✓		
Justifications: The letters of community support from parents etc. weren't dated so it was difficult for me to ascertain how recent they are.						

III. Student Composition, Services, and Policies						
1. School Demographics C.G.S. 10-66bb(d)(12),(15)	Total Score:	1.75	0	1	2	3
Describes the needs and demographics of the community and student population to be served by the proposed school.					✓	
Explains how the proposed school model meets the needs of students and will likely increase student achievement.				✓		
Provides a sound enrollment plan, including a clear rationale for grades served, enrollment, and growth.					✓	
Describes sound procedures for encouraging involvement by parents and guardians of enrolled students in student learning, school activities and school decision-making.					✓	
Justifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School model needs to specify meeting the instructional needs of students struggling and what supports are provided • Detailed information regarding families • Included dual enrollment and AP 						

2. Special Education C.G.S. 10-66bb(d) (5),(6),(12)	Total Score:	2.25	0	1	2	3
Includes a comprehensive plan for educating students with disabilities.						✓
Plans for adequate staffing to address the needs of students with disabilities and Section 504 Plans, including properly state-certified special education teachers(s).						✓
Articulates a clear system to monitor student data and consider a student's eligibility for Section 504 services.				✓		
Presents a plan to engage the parents of students with disabilities.					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>Typo in report Section "405" Misunderstanding of Charter responsibility related to Section 504. Reliance on School District Related Services.</p>						
3. English Learners (EL)/Multilingual Learners (ML) C.G.S. 10-66bb(d) (5),(6),(12)	Total Score:	2.00	0	1	2	3
Provides a plan to identify and meet the learning needs of all EL/ ML students (e.g., screenings, assessments, exit criteria).					✓	
Describes how the school will provide EL/ML students with access to the general education curriculum.					✓	
Describes how the school will involve the parents of EL/ML students in the school, including through translation services.					✓	
Plans for adequate staffing to address the needs of EL/ML students, including properly state-certified staff.					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>Will support in an inclusive classroom. Applicant describes plan to promote language acquisition with vocabulary programs, reading comprehension and sheltered instructional model.</p> <p>Plan to integrate CELP standards in general curriculum.</p> <p>Some explanation of a formative assessment process to determine needs of ELs – Universal Common Assessments 3x per year may not be enough to support ELs.</p> <p>Translation services to be provided with external partner. Translations of routine communications.</p> <p>Some evidence of two-way communication with parent square. Little evidence on how the applicant will engage the parents of ELs in the school community.</p>						
4. Admission Policy and Criteria C.G.S. 10-66bb(d)(8),(15)	Total Score:	2.25	0	1	2	3
Provides a clear and coherent admissions policy including student admission criteria and procedures and plan that complies with C.G.S. § 10-66bb(d)(8).					✓	
Provides a viable plan to attract students and families, from a diverse student body and avoid discrimination.					✓	
Shows a commitment to reduce racial, ethnic, and/or economic isolation.						✓
Describes a student recruitment and retention plan that includes, but is not limited to, the capacity of the school to attract, enroll, and retain students from the following populations: students with a history of low academic performance; students who receive free or reduced-priced lunches pursuant to federal law and regulations; students with a history of behavioral and social difficulties; students identified as requiring special education; and students who are English learners (ELs)/Multilingual learners (MLs).					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>Recruiting beyond the host district is a strength in this plan.</p>						

5. Student Discipline Policies	Total Score:	1.67	0	1	2	3
Provides a clear behavior management system that encourages positive behaviors and applies consistent sanctions and interventions in response to severe infractions.				✓		
Offers educational alternatives for students who are expelled or suspended.					✓	
Provides due process safeguards for all students, including those with disabilities.					✓	
Justifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unclear and I don't think they answered the question (a) regarding sanctions and interventions in response to severe infractions. "Students are not allowed to enter the building without their uniform-so what happens?" Are they sent home? Is this a suspension? What is the alternative? (p 96) P 97 A certain amount of tardies equals an absence. Is there an alternative? Is there a referral process for support? There may be a deeper concern in the classroom for avoidance, transportation, homelessness. Cheating-concern that a student can be withdrawn from school due to repeated occurrences and forced withdrawal is not allowed. Drug/Alcohol is a little confusing- they discuss bringing it to school but need to be clear regarding distribution. I did not see anything regarding social media. The handbook should be posted not may be posted. Due process is missing for expulsion 10-233d. 						
6. Human Resource Policies C.G.S. 10-66bb(d)(6),(10),(13)	Total Score:	2.50	0	1	2	3
Defines competencies and professional standards necessary for hiring teachers, administrators, and all other school staff.					✓	
Creates processes for dismissing staff for conduct and performance issues.				✓		
Provides a sample job description that clearly articulates necessary staff competencies, expectations, and qualifications.						✓
Provides clear and effective procedures to document efforts to increase the racial and ethnic diversity of staff.						✓
Describes a targeted staff size and plans for staff recruitment and retention.						✓
Describe the number and qualifications of teachers and administrators to be employed in the school.						✓
Presents a system to evaluate and develop teachers and administrators.						✓
Provides human resource policies around salaries, benefits, hiring, personnel contract, and affirmative action that align to the school mission, educational philosophy, students served, and budget.					✓	
Justifications: Employment is "at will". No process is described other than that an employee can terminated without notice "with or without" cause.						

IV. School Viability						
1. Building Options C.G.S. 10-66bb(d)(11)	Total Score:	2.00	0	1	2	3
Provides a plan for identifying and acquiring a suitable facility to support the proposed school.					✓	
Justifications: The applicant identifies two options for a facility with a detailed explanation for how each building could accommodate the needs of the school both short and long term. The applicant identifies a timeline and a reasonable budget for the acquisition and necessary renovations/construction of either facility. The first option which appears to be the preferred option involves leasing an existing building. The second option involves the purchase of land and the construction of a new facility.						

2. Financial Plan C.G.S. 10-66bb(d)(4),(14)	Total Score:	1.57	0	1	2	3
Provides a thorough budget that reflects all commitments outlined in the application through the proposed school's fifth year of operation and shows sound financial planning and the fiscal viability of the school.					✓	
Includes financial projections that account for all sources of revenue (e.g., state per-pupil grant; other federal, state, and private grants; donations and fundraising).					✓	
Provides a detailed budget narrative that explains budget line items and short- and long-term projections, offering a clear rationale for calculations and assumptions.					✓	
Presents a pre-opening budget statement detailing and explaining estimated start-up activities.				✓		
Provides a cash flow projection for each of the three years of operation that shows a sophisticated understanding of expenditures mapped against available revenue during the year.				✓		
Presents a schedule of borrowings and repayments that aligns to the pre-opening budget, the projected five-year budget, and the cash flow statement.					N/A	
Presents a financial management system and processes aligned to GAAP with adequate internal controls, including a description of the fiscal staff positions, qualifications, and duties.					✓	
Describes how the school will track finances in its daily operations, and how the governing council will provide oversight.				✓		
<p>Justifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The five-year budget is balanced based on the estimated revenues and expense which appear reasonable. • The preopening budget does not identify the source(s) of private contributions/donations which make up 30% of the estimated revenue. Commitment letter(s) for the contribution(s) were not included. • The cash flow projection submitted was only for the first year of operation. For the year submitted, cashflows appear adequate. • The application includes conflicting information on whether the Assistant Superintendent position is an employee of the school or CMO. Certain financial management responsibilities such as authority to open bank accounts and sign checks have been assigned to this individual. The CMO should not have authority over school bank accounts. • The Board Treasurer does not appear to have any financial or related professional experience. 						
3. Self-Evaluation and Accountability C.G.S. 10-66bb(d)(16)	Total Score:	1.25	0	1	2	3
Identifies clear and operational goals at all levels (e.g., school-wide, grade-level, classroom, staff, and student).				✓		
Provides clear systems of accountability for all stakeholders.				✓		
Identifies robust data systems and processes to regularly track leading and lagging indicators of student achievement, student enrollment, and organizational operations and effectiveness.				✓		
Presents a clear plan to share student learning practices and experiences with the local or regional board of education of the town in which the proposed school is located.					✓	
<p>Justifications:</p> <p>CPS plans a series of visits, each with a focus area. It's not clear how each focus area may manifest itself in something observable during a visit. A strength of the plan is that self-evaluation is grounded in the Next Generation Accountability System. This aligns with the charter renewal process.</p>						

4. Timetable	Total Score:	2.50	0	1	2	3
Provides a thorough action plan, outlining activities leading up to the successful launch of the proposed school (e.g., projects, staff responsible, deadlines, status, and resource alignment).						✓
Demonstrates strong forethought and project management, showing the team's ability to coordinate, manage, track, and execute multiple work streams simultaneously.				✓		
<p>Justifications: The action plan that was presented listed several project activities, along with the timeline, and appropriate comments regarding each activity.</p>						

Evaluation Summary

Proposed Charter School Name: Capital Prep Middletown Date: 01/20/2023

I. School Vision and Design		
1. Mission and Vision Statements	Score:	1.83
2. Educational Philosophy	Score:	2.00
3. Curriculum	Score:	1.83
4. Instruction	Score:	1.75
5. Student Assessment	Score:	1.67
II. Strength of Organizational Effort		
1. Experience and Expertise of Founders	Score:	2.67
2. School Governance and Management	Score:	2.63
3. School Leader	Score:	3.00
4. Evidence of Support	Score:	1.00
III. Student Composition, Services, and Policies		
1. School Demographics	Score:	1.75
2. Special Education	Score:	2.25
3. English Learners/Multilingual Learners	Score:	2.00
4. Admission Policy and Criteria	Score:	2.25
5. Student Discipline Policies	Score:	1.67
6. Human Resource Policies	Score:	2.50
IV. School Viability		
1. Building Options	Score:	2.00
2. Financial Plan	Score:	1.57
3. Self-Evaluation and Accountability	Score:	1.25
4. Timetable	Score:	2.50
		Total Score: 38.12

Section 4: Preferences		
1a. Serving High-Need Student Populations through Establishment of Educational Programs	Yes	No
1b. Serving High-Need Student Populations by Using Specific Strategies to Attract, Enroll and Retain Students from the above populations	Yes	No
2. Turning Around an Existing School	Yes	No
3. Opening in a Priority School District or District with at Least 75 Percent Racial or Ethnic Minority Enrollment	Yes	No
4. Being a Higher Education Institution	Yes	No
5. Locating the School at a Work Site	Yes	No



State of Connecticut

SENATE DEMOCRATS OFFICE

State Capitol
Hartford, Connecticut 06106-1591

SENATOR DOUGLAS McCRORY
SECOND DISTRICT

LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING
LOB ROOM 3105
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT 06106

CAPITOL: (860) 240-8600
EMAIL: Douglas.McCrory@cga.ct.gov

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GOVERNMENT, ADMINISTRATION & ELECTIONS

November 10, 2022

To Whom it May Concern:

It is my pleasure to write a letter in support of approving the application for Capital Preparatory Middletown Charter School.

As a state senator, I have been a witness to Capital Prep from its inception. I know the difference that Capital Prep can make in the lives of children and their families. The consistent performance of 100% of graduates being accepted into college/university is a compelling promise to students.

I fully support the expansion of the Capital Prep model to Middletown, CT. We must continue to cultivate and support organizations that provide a path to success for our children. We look forward to working with you on approval to expand this charter school network and continuing to provide all students with access to quality education.

Sincerely,

Douglas McCrory
State Senator – 2nd District



CONNECTICUT STATE CONFERENCE OF
NAACP BRANCHES

www.ctnaacp.org

October 13, 2022

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To Whom it May Concern,

I have known and worked with Dr. Steve Perry since 1995. Our work has been focused on improving the lives of Black People in the state of Connecticut and the Nation. I support him as an educator and as a dedicated civil rights advocate.

When he opened Capital Prep Magnet School in Hartford in 2005, I supported it. In 2015, I supported the expansion of the Capital Prep model's growth to a charter school in Bridgeport, CT. Since that time, Capital Prep Harbor School has sent 100% of it primarily Black and Latin low-income first generation collegiate to four-year colleges every year since its inception.

As I continue to fight to expand civil liberties for our communities that have been deprived, I see the importance of expanding access through education. Therefore, I support the expansion of Capital Prep into Middletown. I have seen the model success and I am aware of the need for more opportunities for black children to gain access to a quality education.

If you have any questions pertaining to this letter of support, please feel free to call me any time at (203) 668-4562.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Scot X. Esdaile".

Scot X. Esdaile, President
CT NAACP State Conference

NAACP National Board Member



CENTRAL
CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

Department of Counseling and Family Therapy

November 8, 2022

To whom it may concern:

I would like to submit this letter of support for the new Capital Prep Middletown Charter School in Middletown, CT. I am a 35-year retired school counselor from the Middletown School system and a 12-year retired adjunct professor from Central Conn. State University. I have also had the great fortune of working with the faculty and administration of the Capital Prep Magnet School in Hartford, CT. and The Capital Prep Charter Schools in Bridgeport, CT., and Harlem, New York. I assisted with the College and Career Program. During our affiliation, I have been able to witness many of the strengths of the Capital Prep program.

The greatest strength must be the administration and staff! I have witnessed them going beyond the "call of duty" to bring about success for ALL students and fellow staff to reach a positive result in a situation. Whether carrying a student to a college fair or an important meeting, giving food items needed for the home, or sending a get-well card to a fellow staff member, the Capital Prep family grows TOGETHER!

After years of attending Capital Prep, the staff and the students understand the rewards and benefits of quality education. They are shown the present as well as future implications of positive education. All students are accepted to a FOUR-YEAR college or university upon graduation from high school. Upon graduation from college, some of the students enter education or other related fields. Many of the staff continue their personal education so that they may impart more knowledge to the students and their families.

The adage "It takes a village to raise a child" is evident at Capital Prep! Parents/guardians and school staff work cohesively to monitor student progress. Quarterly, student-led conferences are held to discuss the progress of each student. This is an opportunity for all to address any issue a student or staff may have. This is an example of an entire school/ family working together to produce a Capital Prep Student! Hopefully, this model will occur in ALL schools in the future. If you have further questions, please contact me at les24482000@yahoo.com or 860-685-1955.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Leslie Saunders".

Leslie Saunders
Adjunct Professor
Central Connecticut State University



Office of the Superintendent
Unlocking the Potential in ALL Students

Alberto Vázquez Matos Ed.D, Ph.D., Superintendent
superintendent@mpsct.org | (860) 638-1401
311 Hunting Hill Ave, Middletown, CT 06457
www.middletownschools.org

February 13, 2023

Mr. Robert Kelly, Charter School Programs Manager
Connecticut State Department of Education
450 Columbus Blvd., Suite 602
Hartford, CT 06103

Dear Mr. Kelly,

Thank you for your letter and for the opportunity to provide comments to the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) regarding the potential establishment of Capital Preparatory in Middletown. We share the applicant's goals of excellence in the education of our children and take great pride in the commitment and opportunities we provide to the children of Middletown.

The Middletown Public Schools serves 4,800 unique and brilliant students. These young people are our District's collective purpose; they are the ones who bring us together and empower us to employ advocacy, creativity and collaboration. As Superintendent of this incredible district, it is with unwavering certainty that I know that the Middletown Public Schools is and will forever be in service of the students and families of Middletown. In that spirit, I wish to affirm my unequivocal support for every family's right to school choice.

Nevertheless, I would be remiss if I did not take this opportunity to highlight the remarkable array of choices that is already well-established and continues to grow within the District of Middletown Public Schools. To date, we offer, and continue to expand, the following programs to our students: Early College Experience; Dual Enrollment; Advanced Placement classes; the Seal of Biliteracy; an award-winning Career and Technical Education program, which includes, but is not limited to Aerospace Manufacturing and Robotics; an International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Programme; robust fine arts, music, and athletics programs; an ever-expanding summer program; and more. Starting in the 2024-25 school year, we will begin to offer a STEAM Pathway, a Mathematics Pathway, and a Dual-Language (Spanish/English) Pathway. These programs are intentionally supported by our Middletown Social Emotional Learning and Intervention (MSELI) Framework and by our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Change Agents, which allows us to reinforce our commitment to learning and working environments where all feel safe, seen, and supported.



Office of the Superintendent
Unlocking the Potential in ALL Students

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Beyond our classrooms and during my tenure with the Middletown Public Schools, we have:

- prioritized our Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion vision and practices in recognition of the District's historical obstacles;
- reorganized our district-level administrative structure with the express goal of increasing efficiencies in our systems that better support the students and families that we serve;
- dramatically increased our communication with families and community members to foster successful relationships; and
- established and continue to expand our instructional vision such that our entire community can support our students' academic growth.

This is a sliver of the astounding work that is happening in the District of Middletown Public Schools, all in service of students and families.

In sum, the students and families of Middletown have a wide variety of choices already. Apart from what our District currently offers to the students and families of Middletown, there are additional school choices in and around our region – private, technical, and magnet. To date, 209 Middletown students participate in the state choice program by attending participating schools in that program.

As you consider this application for a new charter school in Middletown, I urge you to carefully evaluate the implications of establishing a Capital Preparatory in Middletown and the impact it will have on the educational ecosystem of our District.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I look forward to our continued partnership and collaboration with the CSDE in the improvement of educational opportunities for all students in Middletown.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Alberto Vázquez Matos'. The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name.

Alberto Vázquez Matos, Ed.D., Ph.D.

MERIDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Here, Students Succeed



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*Research & Evaluation
Specialist*

Via email at robert.kelly@ct.gov

February 7, 2023

Mr. Robert E. Kelly
Charter School Program Manager
State of Connecticut
State Department of Education
Hartford, CT 06145

Dear Mr. Kelly,

Thank you for providing a venue for the Meriden Board of Education to share why we strongly oppose the creation of the Capital Preparatory Middletown Charter School in Middletown, CT.

First, limited state resources should be invested in the school districts that serve the students most in need. Meriden's per pupil expenditure is already the second lowest in the State of Connecticut.

Second, overall charter schools have not proven to be more effective than community public schools.

Third, students in Meriden already have numerous no-cost-to-family secondary school choice options.

Which include:

- H. C. Wilcox Technical;
- A.I. Prince Technical;
- Lyman Hall (where we have a signed agreement with Wallingford public schools); and
- magnet schools across the State of Connecticut.

The last thing urban districts need right now is another school to enroll more students from their community-based secondary schools.

Lastly, the State of Connecticut has already supported and invested millions of dollars in like-new renovations at our two comprehensive high schools—Orville H. Platt and Francis T. Maloney. Our district does not welcome nor support a charter school in our backyard.

In closing, the Meriden Board of Education vehemently opposes the creation and support of the Capital Preparatory Middletown Charter School. At a time when students need more support and school systems are struggling to find staff at all levels (certified and classified), the state's efforts should be focused on working with current schools and districts not adding more schools.



Mr. Robert E. Kelly
Page 2
February 7, 2023

Thank you for sharing my correspondence with all decision-makers in this matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robert E. Kosinski", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Robert E. Kosinski, Board President
Signed on behalf of the entire Meriden Board of Education

cc: Irene Parisi, Chief Academic Officer, Academic Office
Felicia Canty, Charter School Office Liaison
Deborah Cain, Chair, Middletown Board of Education
Dr. Mark D. Benigni, Superintendent, Meriden Public Schools