

[National hype over charter schools hits Delaware](#) [1]

At a time when charter schools are garnering national attention, nine such schools, including three focusing on math and science, are seeking state approval to open in fall 2011. The nine, all proposed for New Castle County or northern Kent County, would join 18 charter schools established throughout Delaware and three planning to open this fall.

Charter schools are intended to give families more options in public education, and the proposals coming forward this year are catered to target populations.

"Choice is important. Every student doesn't learn the same way. Every family doesn't have the same educational goals," said Susan Harris, executive director of the Delaware Charter School Network. "Parents need these kinds of choices."

Harris credited the large number of applicants this year to the national hype around charter schools. President Barack Obama and U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan are strong proponents, and Duncan has said he will evaluate states on their support for charter schools when choosing winners of the \$4 billion federal Race to the Top Fund.

The state Legislature passed a moratorium on charter schools in June 2008 to give leaders time to discuss whether Delaware's charter school law should be changed, but no changes were made. Four schools were exempted from the moratorium: Delaware Academy for Public Safety and Security, **Las Americas ASPIRA Academy**, Reach Academy for Girls and Gateway Lab School. All were approved to open this fall except for Gateway, which was denied because of an incomplete application.

Gateway, however, has applied again this year.

The Newark 1-to-8 school would feature individualized instruction and small classes. Gateway teachers would use experiential learning and the arts to teach children with learning disabilities and attention deficit disorder. The school would open with 180 students in grades 3 to 7 and grow to 288 students over four years.

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- [ASPIRA of Delaware](#) [2]

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Enlaces:

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