

Innovation at the The Charter School of Wilmington 2021-2022 School Year Overview

Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics Focus and Collaboration with Cab

In 1996, a group of visionary leaders from the Wilmington business community, encouraged by then Governor Thomas R. Carper, joined forces with educational leaders from the Wilmington area and from the Red Clay Consolidated School District to form Delaware's first public charter school -The Charter School of Wilmington. The mission of The Charter School of Wilmington is to inspire and prepare highly motivated students to thrive both individually and as responsible global citizens through world-class science, mathematics, and technology education.

We strive to elevate The Charter School of Wilmington as a source of innovation, care, and joy in education.

CSW believes that critical thinking, problem-solving skills, and collaboration promote innovation. We want to develop an ethical learning environment that leads to good decision-making, habits, and virtues. To appreciate all the unique differences within an interconnected and multicultural world community, CSW places a high priority on cultural awareness. Although our focus is on Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics, Charter students in collaboration with Cab Calloway School of the Arts, are enrolled in art, drama, concert band, jazz band, marching band, chorus, and other musical groups. In March, Cab and CSW students collaborated on Culture Day to embrace, share, and celebrate the diversity of our campus community with student performances, displays, and food representing a variety of cultures.



Sharing a building is challenging at times due to space constraints but Dean Anthony Gray-Bolden from Cab and his team share their spaces with us when the need arises. Their faculty and staff helped us create a safe haven on campus after the loss of a student. The School-Based Health Center opens its doors to students and staff for guidance, insights, and additional services.

CSW's organizational structure and climate (culture, atmosphere, standards), support our curriculum. The roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the administration and faculty are clearly defined. Administration, faculty, and support staff are qualified to provide a top quality educational experience. Our instruction focuses most heavily on developing our students' higher order skills: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. We reach our objectives through a combination of traditional and innovative instructional techniques. Our educational objectives focus on developing students who are technologically literate and able to understand and make use of computers and laboratory instruments.

The 2021-2022 school year signaled the return to a "new normal" after the pandemic closed schools in March 2020. Teachers continued to use their technology and software options from virtual and hybrid learning to diversify their toolbox with Google Meet Plus, Google Classroom, Pear Deck, Duolingo, Nearpod, NoRedInk, Quizlet, Quizziz, Gimkit, Edpuzzle, Logicly, Flipgrid, Desmos, YouTube, Kahoot!, and Khan Academy.

CSW focuses on interests in math, science, and computer science. At least 10.5 of the required 24.5 credits must be earned in these areas. Our school offers a challenging, college preparatory curriculum. To graduate from The Charter School of Wilmington, students earn a minimum of 24.5 credits, which includes an experimentally designed research project.

DATA:

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Student Well-Being and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI)

The Charter School of Wilmington is committed to providing an innovative, rigorous academic program that simultaneously addresses and values student's health and well-being. We believe in providing the support necessary to ensure successful outcomes for all CSW students.

With the arrival of a new school president in May 2021, CSW began the school year in a reflective mode, reviewing operational procedures, school policies, curriculum, staffing, student well-being and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).



Dr. Reginald Johnson shared the core values that reflected his leadership style with the community: authenticity, trust, quality, and integrity. He gathered data and started conversations with students, faculty, staff, parents, and the CSW Board of Directors on DEI topics. He added the “Community” and “Belonging” aspect to assess what CDEIB ideally looks like at CSW. Dr. Johnson also gathered data from the last administration’s work on DEI needs. Students and faculty suggested that the school leadership work on their own knowledge and awareness of DEI issues before taking action to ensure we build from a strong foundation.

Listening to our student voices continued to be a priority. Administration met monthly with our Asian Student Union, Black Student Union, Latinx Student Union, LGBTQ+ Student Union, and the South Asian Student Union. The unions were created during the 2020-2021 school year to ensure the representation of CSW’s diverse voices and viewpoints.

- Our Black Student Union hosted a conversation with Ms. Bebe Coker, a playwright, poet, and civil rights leader in Delaware. She began working with us on our DEI initiatives in 2019.

- Dr. Tawanda Bond, Red Clay's Director of Equity and Strategic Partnerships, visited the Black Student Union.
- Delaware State Representative Sherry Dorsey Walker visited the South Asian Student Union on Zoom.



CSW administration also continued its bi-weekly meetings with the Student Government leadership team to hear concerns and ideas of all students and foster a positive working relationship between the student body and the administrative team.



Student Counseling and Well-Being

Throughout the school year, our school counselors, Special Services Coordinator, and staff focused on students with formal learning plans (IEPs and 504s). Students, teachers, and families maximized Schoology Resource Folders by graduating class (programs, scholarships, testing support, and more). Over 200 parents attended [College Night for Junior Parents](#) presented by the CSW Counseling Department. Attendees scanned a QR code to find their itinerary and visit with their child's counselor for the "College Application Process - It's a Journey" presentation. Guest speakers included Nick Hoeschel and Kat DelGrosso: Funding Your College Education; Sally Coonin: Scholarships 101, and Karen Keegan: College Admissions Data.

Our Instructional Intervention Team (IIT) meets biweekly to discuss specific student concerns and collaborate on possible supports. In December 2021, members of the IIT team met with staff from Sean's House to consider a Peer Support program with University of Delaware students that aligns with the Sean's House model.

Grade-level "student support huddles" took place in the library after school. The purpose of these huddles was to give teachers an opportunity to drop in and connect with other teachers about a student (or students) for whom they may have concerns about.

After a tragic loss of a beloved student in January 2022, a Wellness Committee was created to develop, promote, and implement initiatives that focus on the well-being of our students, staff, and families. The group is composed of administrators, faculty, board members, students, parents, and mental health professionals. A commitment to invest more time and energy into brain health, emotional safety, and social support for both students and staff at CSW was supported by all CSW stakeholders. The Wellness Committee provides input and guidance on strengthening our culture of care. Mental health care professionals rotated in on the meetings to share resources.

In building a "Culture of Care" at CSW, Chris Locke, Founder of Sean's House, spoke at our basketball tournament sharing his perspective on losing a son to suicide and how his organization could support our students. Sean's House hosted a breakfast for our students and returned in April 2022 to present a program to parents and students. Administrators on the Wellness Committee attended a Wellness Day at an area high school to learn about their best practices. A temporary Student Center was created in the Main Office to offer all students a safe place during school where they can decompress and meet privately or collectively with school counselors. This dedicated space ensures privacy and confidentiality for our staff and students. In February 2022, Lieutenant Governor Bethany Hall-Long visited our Nanotechnology lab and spent time with our school counselors, Special Services Coordinator, and School Nurse. They discussed mental health and student wellness and are pursuing additional resources and funding for schools in these critical areas.



In May 2022, our PTSO hosted an event to help parents open up and maintain a strong dialogue with their teens about mental health. Their guest was [Dr. Lani Nelson-Zlupko](#), a goal-oriented, solution-driven clinician, coach, and consultant who specializes in change management.

During the 2021-2022 school year, our list of partners and expert consultants expanded. CSW reached out to:

- 1) **Red Clay Consolidated School District Deployment Team** - (Met with us and provided support and education about memorialization to our staff - the team intervenes when there is a crisis in the school community)
- 2) **Harriton High School (Lower Merion School District)** - (They had a student who died by suicide about four years ago, so the principal and school psychologist met with us and shared their story; they provided the extended leadership team recommendations about the grieving process and memorialization.)
- 3) **American Foundation for Suicide Prevention** - (Met with us and provided the extended leadership team support and education in regards to the grieving process and memorialization)
- 4) **Supporting Kidds** - (Met with us and provided the extended leadership team support and education in regards to establishing a board level memorial policy. Additionally, they assisted our newly established wellness team. Supporting Kidds focuses on supporting grieving children and their families through a whole-family approach.)

- 5) **PAWS for People** - (Volunteers and trained dogs provided therapeutic visits to our students and staff.)
- 6) **Sean's House** - (Provided students with virtual appointments and 24/7 support at their mental health safe haven in Newark)
- 7) **Nemours/Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children** - (Provided support, resources, and education about the grieving process)
- 8) **National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Delaware** - (Provided support, resources, and education about the grieving process; attended special school events)
- 9) **Delaware Department of Education** - (Provided support, resources, and education about the grieving process and memorialization)

DATA:

[College Night for Junior Families](#)

[Supporting Student Wellness Program Resources](#)

CSW Faculty/Staff/Administration Professional Development

The Charter School of Wilmington is committed to creating a welcoming culture and inclusive environment that reflects and supports the diversity of our community. We support a school environment free from discrimination and harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, age, genetic information, or disability.

During the 2021-2022 school year, CSW faculty and staff:

- Attended professional development the week of August 23, 2021, focusing on school safety, expectations, Middle States planning, and a presentation from the National Alliance on Mental Illness Delaware
- Participated in various Professional Development opportunities and College Board/Advanced Placement conferences
- Attended workshops on teaching strategies
- Completed new and ongoing certifications in their content areas
- Incorporated new technology in their classrooms
- Collaborated to create real world formative and summative performance tasks scenarios around unit can-do statements



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CSW COVID Response Team

In August 2021, CSW administration shared and presented the return to school plans and protocols regarding COVID-19 safety (masks, quarantining, vaccination opportunities, etc.) The CSW COVID Response Team, under the leadership of our COVID Coordinator, continued to meet weekly and was in regular contact with the Delaware Division of Public Health (DPH). CSW continued to partner with DPH and Quidel Corporation to provide free comprehensive rapid antigen COVID-19 testing during school for our students and staff.

DATA:

[COVID-19 Reporting and Resources Hub](#)

Freshmen Mentoring and Peer Mentoring Programs

In August 2021, freshmen students were officially introduced to the CSW community at orientation, and participated in building tours, assemblies, and workshops focusing on study skills, healthy habits, and stress management.

In 2021, a peer tutoring program was created and managed by a senior teacher. Students who needed a 1 to 1 tutor to help with a class or study skills, accessed their "Class Link Dashboard" to request assistance. Students could stop by a designated classroom any day during Activity Period, or after school Monday through Thursday. Tutoring opportunities included proofreading papers, helping with projects, studying for a test, organizational skills, and homework help.

Junior Research Program and Science Fair

The CSW Junior Research program gives high school students with an interest in math and science an authentic, in-depth experience in scientific research. In 2022, Junior Research Presentation Day was on campus. Introduction to Science Research class is a sophomore class requirement that teaches basic research and laboratory skills. The class fully prepares students for topic selection, background research, experimental design, data collection, and data analysis. Upon completion of the class, students will be ready to conduct the experiment for their topic, collect and analyze data, and draw conclusions. The experimentation and data collection will take place over the summer. Data analysis, paper writing, and poster and oral presentation will take place in the Fall of the student's junior year. Students are often matched with mentors and in some cases, practicing science professionals, as they research and actively investigate a specific scientific topic.

The project gives every student at CSW the opportunity to experience long-term learning practices that build self-reliance and confidence. The addition of the Junior Research Science project as a high school requirement by CSW has been hailed and embraced by the local science community (i.e., Christiana Care, Astra Zeneca, Verizon, Delmarva Power, Ashland Inc., DuPont, etc.) All students are also required to participate in the Science Fair as juniors.



DATA:

The U.S. Department of Education visited the Junior Science Fair in January 2020 and [created a video to highlight the event and our Junior Research program](#). CSW was one of only five high schools in the nation to receive this additional honor.

Nanotechnology Lab

In 2014, CSW created a Nanotechnology Lab to support a Nanotechnology class thanks to the generosity of the Longwood Foundation and Christiana Care Health Systems. Students have access to a scanning tunneling microscope, a scanning electron microscope, an atomic force microscope, a manual sputter coater with pump, and a benchtop vibration isolator platform. A magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) and NMR (Nuclear Magnetic Resonance) Teaching System was also purchased. CSW students may use the lab for their Junior Research project or independent research. Local grade and high school students learn about nanotechnology by visiting our lab for workshops, special class events, and summer camp sessions.

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Community Outreach - Signature Programs

CSW students have engaged with the community over the past decade in several outreach programs that are having a positive and continuing impact:

1. *Science Ambassadors*: Bringing positive enthusiasm to elementary students about science, with regular after-school activities at Shortlidge, Harlan, Elbert Palmer, Baltz, Lewis and Highlands as well as Eastside Charter and Edison Charter. (established 2005)
2. *Science Expo*: Originally hosted at the CSW campus, this event is now hosted at The Delaware Children's Museum's (DCM) in order to facilitate access for students in city communities. CSW students encourage an interest in science through the use of science kits and participation. (established 2005)
3. *Multiplying Good*: Formerly named the CSW Jefferson Council, Multiplying Good members teamed up with The Andrew McDonough B+ Foundation once again for the Annual Charterthon in 2022. Over five hundred students danced through the night and raised \$85,567.39 to support families that have children with cancer and to fund cutting-edge research.



DATA:

[Multiplying Good Charterthon Website](#)

Community Partnerships

New partnerships are being formed and the collaboration is extraordinary, ensuring The Charter School of Wilmington remains on a steady course and remains an innovative educational force in Delaware, and a national leader in Science, Technology, and Mathematics initiatives. We are thrilled to be a partner with The LYTE program (Leading Youth Through Empowerment). Adult and teen volunteers mentor and tutor talented students and organize school visits, field trips, and summer programs. The directors search for advanced curriculums for their programs and are familiar with Delaware's high school landscape because they are constantly building relationships. The LYTE program helps scholars apply to area public and charter high schools through SchoolChoice.org and assists with the independent and parochial school's admissions process as well. LYTE scholars visit CSW for Nanotechnology tours and summer camps.

Block Schedule, Study Halls, and Activity Periods

With block scheduling, CSW is continuing to provide study halls and activity periods, helping to reduce student stress, and allow student participation in over 100 clubs and activities.

DATA:

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[Clubs and Activities](#)

Advanced Placement Offerings, Dual Enrollment, and Electives

The Charter School of Wilmington uses an Integrated Math curriculum. Students may enroll in 21 AP classes. Two additional AP classes are available through a partnership with Cab. In 2021, 392 students took 983 exams. We offer a dual enrollment Anatomy & Physiology class with Delaware Technical Community College and a dual enrollment Horn Entrepreneurship Institute's EntreX Lab class with the University of Delaware. Students may opt to take electives such as Math and Art, International Relations, Criminology, Nanotechnology, Bioethics, Biochemistry, Neuroscience, Genetics, Epidemiology & Public Health, Organic Chemistry, Microbiology, Biotechnology, Robotics, Computer 3D Modeling, Mobile Applications, Data Structures, Computer Software Engineering, AI Theory and Practice, Video Game Design, and Data Science.

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Academic Competitions

CSW students competed virtually and in-person for inter-scholastic and academic competitions and placed in the top ranks at state, national, and international competitions. In the [2022 Regeneron Competition](#), three seniors, Claire Andreasen, Arjan Singh Kahlon, and Heran Yang, entered these prestigious ranks as the 2022 Top 300 Scholars. Claire Andreasen was named a Top 40 finalist which ranked her among the nation's most promising young scientists or mathematicians.



These events are inclusive of varied disciplines; Science Olympiad, Delaware BioGENEius, Brain Bee, Math League, Odyssey of the Mind, Regeneron Science Talent Search, Envirothon, U.S. Physics Team, Mock Trial, Youth in Government, Boys State, Girls State, Delaware Young Playwrights Festival, and Model United Nations. CSW writing and reading performances regularly receive state and national recognition.

DATA:[Regeneron Competition 2022](#)[State Report Card](#)[2021-2022 Fact Sheet](#)[2023-2024 Course Selection Book](#)[School Profile](#)[Clubs and Activities](#)[World Language Program](#)[Academic Department Curriculum Sheets](#)**Athletic Success**

Our growth has provided the school an opportunity to excel beyond the academic arena. The athletic programs have grown in size and scope as well. CSW enjoys the highest rate of student participation in interscholastic athletics in Delaware. CSW teams have earned several conference and state championships in a variety of sports.

**DATA:**

CSW received the 2021 DIAA State Sportsmanship Award.

Forcessports.com