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Delaware Charter Schools Network Proudly Names Kelly Kline Its 2027 Teacher of the Year

Newark Charter School Music Teacher and Choral Director Honored for Building a Thriving Arts Program That Transforms Student Lives

NEWARK, Del., June 22, 2026 — The Delaware Charter Schools Network (DCSN) is thrilled to announce that Kelly Kline, Music Teacher and Choral Director at Newark Charter School, has been named the 2027 DCSN Teacher of the Year. This honor recognizes an educator whose passion, creativity, and dedication exemplify the very best of Delaware’s charter school community.

“We are honored and proud to have Kelly represent all of our Delaware charter school teachers as the Delaware Charter Schools Network Teacher of the Year.”

~ **Kendall Massett, Executive Director, Delaware Charter Schools Network**

Kelly’s love of the arts and the pure joy with which she speaks about music and education captivated the DCSN selection committee. What set her apart was not simply her talent in her own classroom, but the way she uses the flexibility inherent in the charter school model to weave the arts throughout the life of Newark Charter School - not just in music class, but across theater, curriculum, and the school’s broader culture of belonging.

“Great teachers change lives and Ms. Kelly Kline does that every day. Through music, Kelly teaches not only technique and performance, but also perseverance, collaboration, and self-confidence. We could not be more thrilled to have her recognized as the Delaware Charter Schools Network’s Teacher of the Year.”

~ **Sam Golder, Head of School, Newark Charter School**

Kelly’s impact on Newark Charter School runs deep. In 2006, as a parent of a kindergartner, she approached then-School Director Gregory Meece with a simple idea: what if the school started a musical theater program? That conversation sparked what would become one of the school’s most beloved traditions. Kelly served as Music Director for the very first NCS production and has since been the Music Director for 28 musicals and 10 summer theater camp productions. What began as a single elementary show has grown into a full performing arts continuum spanning 3rd through 12th grade. Her high school choir program alone now enrolls 180 students, many of whom stay in choir for all four years.

One of the hallmarks of charter schools is the flexibility to innovate and meet students where they are. Kelly Kline is a model of what that flexibility looks like in practice. She has connected students with the Newark Symphony Orchestra, taken choirs to perform in Rome and New York City, created the “Choir Extras” club so students who can’t fit choir into

their schedules can still participate, and brought music into community spaces from Glasgow Park to the Student Empowerment Summit. DCSN is proud to celebrate educators who use that flexibility to expand opportunity - not just in their own classrooms, but across an entire school community.

“There are countless amazing educators across our state who dedicate their hearts, talents, and energy to helping students grow and succeed. I am honored to represent all of the amazing educators at both NCS and the Delaware Charter Schools.”

~ Kelly Kline, 2027 DCSN Teacher of the Year

Kelly holds a Bachelor of Science in Music Education from West Chester University and, in 2025, earned both a Master of Instruction from Wilmington University and her National Board Certification - the gold standard in teaching excellence. She has served as Co-Chair of the Delaware All-State Junior Choir and as Membership Chair for the Delaware Music Educators Association.

Kelly Kline will be recognized at our 30 Year Gala event on October 1, alongside fellow charter school Teachers of the Year from across Delaware. DCSN congratulates Kelly and extends deep gratitude to all of Delaware’s charter school educators for their extraordinary dedication to students every day.

About the Delaware Charter Schools Network

Founded in 2001, the Delaware Charter Schools Network is a membership-based advocacy and support organization serving Delaware’s charter school community, including families, students, teachers, school leaders, and board members. DCSN works to strengthen public charter schools as high-quality educational options for all Delaware students.

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