Pennsylvania Department of Education

COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
333 MARKET STREET
HARRISBURG, PA 17126-0333

Charter Annual Report

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SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Organization Description

Achievement House Charter School is a cyber charter school that is committed to serving students in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Grades 9 — 12. Currently we have 308 students enrolled. Our enrollment goal for the 2007-2008 school year is 536. Many of our students are at the extreme ends of the spectrum with respect to learning abilities. Some of them are exceptionally bright and energetic to the point that their performance is adversely affected when held back by curriculum paced at the average student's ability. Others struggle with concepts and need learning support to maintain pace with the average rate of student learning. Additionally, we have many students who have non-educational challenges that make it more difficult to attend school in a brick and mortar environment. Examples often cited include pregnancy, young children, their own physical illness or the physical illness of family members, or the need for outside employment. Our environment enables these students to continue their education while being able to address their other responsibilities. Most of our students seek an environment that can be adjusted to their learning pace and which is free of social pressures.

Core Purpose

Mission

The mission of Achievement House Charter School is dedicated to providing a comprehensive high school curriculum, individually designed to meet each student's needs. Achievement House Charter School integrates quality services and educational programs, state-of-the-art technology, research-based curriculum development and instructional practices into a dynamic, non-traditional learning community.

Achievement House Charter School is committed to providing to all students continual opportunities to achieve individual excellence, appreciate human value, contribute positively to a changing world, and become a contributing, life-long learner and a globally responsible citizen.

The mission statement above is scheduled to be presented at the August 21, 2007 Board meeting for approval.

The current mission statement follows:

"The mission of the Achievement House Charter School is to provide a comprehensive high school curriculum (and subsequent diploma) to high school students who may be at risk for a variety of reason. The school will combine:

- A schedule that provides for more time on task
- Intensive student/teacher and mentor contact
- Parental Involvement
- Advanced technological tools plus an online curriculum
- Curriculum that meets the Commonwealth standards plus special supplementary internet materials and project-based learning
- Extracurricular instruction in life skills, specifically
    - social skills
    - study skills
    - resilience
- Stimulating assignments requiring
    - collaborative activities
    - search for information
    - its integration
    - its application
- Daily monitoring of the student's progress and tutoring as needed to provide a very supportive environment

- Small school and classes for familiarity of all with one another"

Vision

Achievement House Charter School is comprised of a cohesive, supportive group of dedicated staff, students, parents, and community members united in our commitment to pursue excellence in education. We intend to realize our highest potential as an educational community by setting clear, measurable goals, employing best practices, engaging in effective communication, and utilizing resources wisely. We will use our successes as a catalyst for future growth, change, and improvement.

Unique aspects of the school's vision include:

- Intensive student-teacher and mentor contact
- Parental involvement
- Advanced technological tools
- Online curriculum
- Project-based learning and collaborative inquiry
- Special emphasis on developing social skills, study skills, and resiliency
- Daily monitoring of the student's progress and tutoring, as needed, to provide a very supportive environment
- Small school atmosphere and small class size
- Increased time on task

Shared Values

- We believe that our school community must be an emotionally and intellectually safe environment in which to learn and lead.
- We believe that student learning is our first responsibility. Each student is an individual to be treated with dignity and respect. This begins with self-respect.
- We believe all individuals can be successful learners. Learning styles are celebrated and respected.
- We believe that the school, family, and community have a shared responsibility to help students develop critical qualities such as integrity, perseverance, and resiliency.
- We believe that excellence is a journey and demands conscientious effort.

- We believe that all individuals have gifts, talents, and intrinsic worth. We respect and recognize the unique contribution of the staff in creating a positive learning environment.

- We believe that all students and their families have a personal responsibility to take full advantage of the opportunities provided by Achievement House Charter School.

- We believe the responsibility for a life-long education is shared by the student, school, family, and community.

- We believe that active communication and participation between and among parents, community members, and Achievement House Charter School is essential at all times in order to ensure the success of all the goals.

- We believe that parents and community members have the responsibility of being actively involved in the student's successful education accomplishments and development of life-long learning skills.

- We believe that high standards encourage high achievement.

- We believe that open and honest communication promote mutual understanding and trust.

Academic Standards

Achievement House Charter School accepts the academic standards as they appear in Chapter 4, 4.12 of the School Code. Achievement House Charter School also accepts any additional standards as approved by the state as they appear in an amended Chapter 4. All curriculum will be aligned to the state standards focusing on the assessment of the current standards.

Strengths and Challenges

Strengths and Challenges

The Achievement House Charter School staff consistently seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of its educational program and its ability to meet the needs of its students. Examples of the self-evaluation process includes the following: (1)analysis of performance data; (2)analysis of parent, student and staff surveys; (3) frequent communication with parents, students, and staff in a variety of formats, (i.e. informal, individual conversation, monthly chats, and staff meetings); (4) meetings of the Student Success Team; (5) exit interviews with parents and/or students; (6) a suggestions/concerns mailbox on the school site; (7) Faculty Advisory Committee meetings; (8) Best Practices meetings for staff; and (9) regularly scheduled meetings of the management team. Open communication between staff and administration, through the expression of concerns or suggestions, is encouraged and valued.

Recognizing that improvement is an active, ongoing, and synergistic process, Achievement House Charter School is focusing on improving the following areas:

- **Increasing student motivation —** Achievement House Charter School is working to increase the student's sense of community and expected levels of academic performance and communication. Students who feel part of a positive learning community will be more motivated and committed to succeed. Examples of strategies to be utilized to achieve this goal will include, but not be limited to, the following: (1) public recognition of student accomplishment, both within

the school and in the students' communities; (2) two live virtual classes each week in each subject area to increase interactive learning; (3) recording of live virtual chats enabling 24 hour access for skill recovery; (4)continued development of stimulating and challenging lessons utilizing the UDB template; (5) student participation in one-on-one and small group tutoring sessions; (6) increasing the number of clubs, both academic and social; (7) offering field trips; and (8) increasing formal and informal contact between staff and students.

Increasing performance on PSSA Math and Reading tests — Achievement House Charter School has implemented many programs to support and encourage students who are struggling in Math and Reading. One-on-one and small group tutoring sessions have continued to be provided for all students. The number of live virtual classes taught has doubled. The live virtual classes are recorded to enable students to review key concepts as often as necessary. We will continue to offer the PSSA Power Prep Program. The Power Prep Program offers extra opportunities to increase scores by providing diagnostic and remedial instruction in math and reading and instruction in test-taking skills. Study Island is also used to support reading and math proficiency. The PSSA Power Prep also offers students the opportunity for "friendly competition" in completing lessons for increased achievement. This helps students to build a sense of accomplishment in a team environment.

Increasing student retention — Achievement House Charter School will be more thorough in evaluating and analyzing data relative to student withdrawals/disenrollments. Increased contact by mentors, responsiveness to attendance irregularities and decreased academic performance, exit interviews with all withdrawing students and responding to student or parents questions, or concerns, within a twenty-four hour period should all serve to increase student retention.

Increasing parental involvement — Achievement House Charter School will continue to offer additional opportunities for parent involvement with the school. Specific examples will include increased participation in Career Week presentations, volunteering for school activities, and helping to plan and coordinate regional visitations. Increased parent communications through school-wide announcements have also been planned.

Increasing student interest in college attendance — Achievement House Charter School has and will continue to encourage graduates to pursue post-secondary schooling. A guidance counselor was hired during the 2006-2007 school year to assist students in assessing and planning important life and post-high school opportunities, such as applying to colleges, technical schools and other types of post-secondary education/career choices. This year, the school plans to increase the dissemination of information relating to all forms of post-high school career choices, including college applications, and financial assistance. The faculty will continue to model positive learning behavior and emphasize the importance of students furthering their education upon graduation from high school.

While it is always necessary to be vigilant of the school's weaknesses and areas of needed improvement, it is equally significant to acknowledge the school's accomplishments. Achievement House Charter School feels that we have excelled in the following areas:

PSSA Participation — The 2006-2007 school year was the second consecutive year in which 100% of our students participated in all scheduled PSSA testings, including the newly introduced Science testing. We feel that this is a major accomplishment recognizing the geographic challenges specific to PSSA testing in a cyber school environment. We attribute this success to our PSSA Power Prep and consistent communication with students and parents regarding PSSA testing.

PSSA Writing Test Proficiency — The 2006-2007 school year was the second consecutive year in which students at Achievement House met the NCLB goals for proficiency in Writing. Success for this accomplishment is credited to the staff's persistence in requiring writing across the curriculum for all students. Additional opportunities for writing prowess are also emphasized in the PSSA Power Prep Program.

Increased Graduation Rate — The 2006-2007 graduation rate at Achievement House Charter School was 84%, an increase of 31 percentage points over the graduation rate of 53% in 2005-2006. The personal interest shown for each student, the academic support and dedication to the mission and shared values of AHCS by each staff member were, and continue to be, critical variables responsible for increasing the graduation rate.

A Successful Special Education Program — In the recently received AHCS charter renewal from the PDE, the document states that relative to the special education program, "there were no issues pending related to the school" and that our "policies meet the requirement of both state and federal law." It further elaborates "the current advisor reports that over the past 18 months the school has demonstrated compliance consistentlyâ€¦" The success of the Special Education Program, and its department, can be directly attributed to the special education staff's attention to the needs of its students and to keeping apprised of changes in special education requirements and law. Success can also be attributed to the positive collaboration between special education and regular education staff in meeting students' needs.

Excellent Mentor Support — Since the inception of AHCS, the mentoring program has distinguished itself as a key component of the school's success. Data analysis from parent and student surveys, school exit interviews, and other feedback opportunities have noted consistent feedback regarding the positive effects that our mentors have had on student academic and personal successes. This year we received a number of letters from our senior class indicating the large role the mentors played in assisting the student in graduating. We attribute this feedback to the hard work and dedication of our mentors in reaching out to and developing positive relationships with their individual students.

SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Strategic Planning Process

Dr. Alexander Grande attended workshops previewing the development of the Annual Report. An internal planning team has been organized to review the development of the Annual Report. Dr. Dale Baker has served as a consultant in the development of the Annual Report. The Board of Trustees approved the final draft of the Annual Report which was submitted July 30, 2007. The Teacher Induction Plan and Professional Education Plan will be submitted by September 30, 2007. The Technology Plan will be reviewed and revised in the future. The Student Services Plan will be completed by January 15, 2008.

Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Ann Marie Daly	AHCS		Management Team
Constance Frownfelter-Brooks	AHCS	Special Education Representative	Management Team
Dr. Alexander Grande III	AHCS	Administrator	Management Team

Dr. Wallace H. Wallace	AHCS	Administrator	Management Team
Erin Price	AHCS	Secondary School Teacher	Management Team
Sharry Wanner	AHCS		Management Team
Dave Sutter	AHCS		Management Team
Jennifer Archibald	AHCS	Secondary School Teacher	Management Team
Jill Boisvert	AHCS	Secondary School Teacher	Management Team
Sue Stiver	AHCS	Secondary School Teacher	Management Team
Charles Hawkins	AHCS		Management Team
Dr. Dale Baker	CES		Management Team
Ryan Schumm	CSC	Business Representative	Management Team

Goals, Strategies and Activities

Goal: **FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE (for districts and schools that graduate seniors)**
Description: Graduate rate will meet an 80% threshold and/or show growth.

Strategy: **Continued mentoring program**
Description: Continued close interaction with students to determine wants, needs, concerns, problems, and suggestions.
Activities:

Activity	Description	
Current mentoring program will be continued with increased focus on mentor/student/family communication		
Person Responsible	**Timeline for Implementation**	**Resources**
Alexander Grande III	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	$0.00

Activity	Description	
Exit interviews with withdrawing students		
Person Responsible	**Timeline for Implementation**	**Resources**
Alexander Grande III	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	$0.00

Goal: **IMPROVE TOTAL ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

Description: To design an assessment program which will offer diagnostic results to assist in revision of curriculum.

Strategy: **Contact with students and parents to inform and encourage participation**
Description:
Activities:

Activity	Description	
School wide communication, individual e-mails, and phone contact to inform students and parents regarding local assessments and encourage participation		
Person Responsible	**Timeline for Implementation**	**Resources**
Alexander Grande III	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	$0.00

Strategy: **Evaluate new assessment tools.**
Description: New assessment tools will be researched and evaluated.
Activities:

Activity	Description	
Evaluation of new assessment tools	New assessment tools will be researched and evaluated for content, diagnostic reliability, application in an online environment, ease of use by students and staff.	
Person Responsible	**Timeline for Implementation**	**Resources**
Alexander Grande III	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	$0.00

Activity	Description	
Selection of a more user friendly, data driven, assessment tool.		
Person Responsible	**Timeline for Implementation**	**Resources**
Wallace Wallace	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	$0.00

Goal: **INCREASE RECRUITING AND RETENTION.**
Description: Achievement House Charter School plans to reach our potential enrollment goal through additional recruiting methods. In addition, Achievement House Charter School will design stronger communication methods for retention.

Strategy: **Develop strong marketing plan and increase communication to better address needs of student population.**
Description:
Activities:

Activity	Description	
Development of marketing plan	A marketing plan will be developed within the scope of budgeted funds in order to increase enrollment.	
Person Responsible	**Timeline for Implementation**	**Resources**
Wallace Wallace	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	$0.00

Activity	Description	
Various formats of increased advertising and increase school-wide and individual communication with student population.		
Person Responsible	**Timeline for Implementation**	**Resources**
Ann Marie Daly	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	$0.00

Goal: **INCREASE STUDENT MOTIVATION**
Description: Achievement House Charter School will design and promote a program for all students aimed at increasing a sense of community and interest to increase student performance.

Strategy: **Increase sense of community.**
Description:
Activities:

Activity	Description	
Achievement House Charter School staff will increase individual communication and class activities in order to develop a stronger sense of community.		
Person Responsible	**Timeline for Implementation**	**Resources**
Alexander Grande III	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	$0.00

Activity	Description	
Increase opportunities for student involvement		
Person Responsible	**Timeline for Implementation**	**Resources**
Ann Marie Daly	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	$0.00

Goal: **MATHEMATICS**
Description: At least 45% of all students will be proficient in Mathematics, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments. Achievement House Charter School will show a 10% decrease in the number of students performing in categories below proficient.

Strategy: **Revised Math Curriculum**
Description: Dr. Grande, in conjunction with the Math Department, will review and provide direction for the revised Math curriculum.
Activities:

Activity	Description	
Research and evaluate additional resources for use with the Math curriculum		
Person Responsible	**Timeline for Implementation**	**Resources**
Alexander Grande III	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	$0.00

Activity	Description	
Students will be engaged in intervention strategies based on diagnostic assessment.		
Person Responsible	**Timeline for Implementation**	**Resources**
Alexander Grande III	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	$0.00

Goal: **READING**
Description: At least 54% of all students will be proficient in Reading, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments. Achievement House Charter School will show a 10% decrease in students scoring below proficient.

Strategy: **Revised English Curriculum**
Description: Dr. Grande, in conjunction with the English Department, will review and provide direction for the revised Math curriculum.
Activities:

Activity	Description	
Research and evaluate new resources for the English curriculum		
Person Responsible	**Timeline for Implementation**	**Resources**
Alexander Grande III	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	$0.00

Activity	Description	
Students will be engaged in intervention strategies based on diagnostic assessments		
Person Responsible	**Timeline for Implementation**	**Resources**

Alexander Grande III	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	$0.00

Goal: **STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN STATE ASSESSMENTS**
Description: At least 95% of eligible students will participate in required state-wide assessments.

Strategy: **Contact with students and parents to inform about scheduling and encourage attendance**
Description: Students and parents will be kept informed of expectations and encouraged about the importance of attending.
Activities:

Activity	Description	
School wide mail, individual e-mails, and phone contact will be made with students and parents to encourage attendance.		
Person Responsible	**Timeline for Implementation**	**Resources**
Ann Marie Daly	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	$0.00

SECTION III. QUALITY OF SCHOOL DESIGN

Rigorous Instructional Program

Rigorous Instructional Program

Under the Pennsylvania Accountability System, all schools will need a rigorous instructional program to meet the academic targets. Describe the charter school's curriculum and instructional practices and how they are being used to meet academic standards and goals. For example:

What curriculum does your charter school utilize?

Achievement House Charter School has developed and implemented a rigorous curriculum which is correlated to the Pennsylvania anchors and standards. The school's curriculum and instructional practices were developed to increase student learning and meet the school's and the state's academic standards and goals.

The Pennsylvania content standards and assessment anchors are core components of all curriculum development at Achievement House Charter School. The comprehensive plan for curriculum development, implementation and assessment that included the use of approved, accredited curriculum providers, was shared with Dr. Dan Felix and a panel of Pennsylvania Department of Education curriculum and legal advisors on March 8, 2005. The final document for curriculum development, implementation and assessment detailed the correlation of content standards to the Achievement House Charter School curriculum in all subject areas. It also included a yearly outline, a sample week outline, and individual lesson plans from each discipline. This document was submitted to Dr. Dan Felix and members of the Bureau of Performance and Accountability and Reporting on March 21st, 2005. Below is a sample of what was submitted:

Example 4.1

TITLE: Labor Strives to Organize

GOALS: Students will examine the working conditions laborers faced and government's involvement with strikes and unions.

8.3. United States History

8.3.9. **GRADE 9**

A. Identify and evaluate the political and cultural contributions of individuals and groups to United States history from 1890 to Present.

• Political Leaders (e.g., Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, Franklin D. Roosevelt)

• Cultural and Commercial Leaders (e.g., Abby Aldrich Rockefeller, Langston Hughes, Alan Greenspan)

• Innovators and Reformers (e.g., Wilbur and Orville Wright, John L. Lewis, Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King)

8.3.12. **GRADE 12**

• Commerce and Industry (e.g., corporations, conglomerates, multinational corporations)

• Politics (e.g., New Deal legislation, *Brown v. Topeka*, isolationist/non-isolationist debate)

• Social Organization (e.g., compulsory school laws, court decisions expanding individual rights, technological impact)

• Transportation and Trade (e.g., expansion and decline of railroads, increased mobility, Internet)

• Women's Movement (e.g., right to vote, women in the war effort, Women's Peace Party)

D. Identify and evaluate conflict and cooperation among social groups and organizations in United States history from 1890 to the Present.

• Domestic Instability (e.g., Great Depression, assassination of political and social leaders, terrorist threats)

• Ethnic and Racial Relations (e.g., internment camps for Japanese Americans, Montgomery Alabama Bus Boycott, land tensions with Native Americans)\

Achievement House Charter School continues to supplement the main curriculum with outside materials. Supplemental materials are used by all teachers in the majority of their daily lessons. These materials allow students to explore a concept in greater detail and/or reinforce an idea presented in a lesson. Supplemental sources are used for reviewing and re-teaching a concept or adding an extra layer of diversity to the total curriculum package.

A representative sampling of supplemental sites utilized for Example 4.2 include:

Holt Rinehart Winston collateral course materials

United Streaming

Digital History (http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/)

Gilder Lehrman Institute for American History (http://www.gilderlehrman.org/teachers/index.html)

National Geographic (www.nationalgeographic.com)

Education World (www.educationworld.com)

C-SPAN (www.cspan.org)

Discovery School (http://school.discovery.com/)

History Channel (www.historychannel.com) which includes A&E, Biography, History International

Teacher Planet (www.teacherplanet.com or www.globeteacher.com)

PBS (www.pbs.org)

You Tube (www.youtube.com)

ING Direct (http://www.orangekids.com) Friendly web site to provide a simple and fun way for kids to learn about the importance of saving. Tackle topics that range from the value of money, to setting a budget, understanding credit, and building savings goals for the future.

Educere provides independent complete courses of both a vocational and academic nature at both the High school and College Levels.

A number of WebQuest sites among them being the originator at San Diego State University.

POWER Access, Pennsylvania's extensive collection of reference materials, newspapers, Encyclopedias, etc available online through local libraries.

On April 1, 2005, Sheri Rowe, Division Chief, approved the Achievement House Charter School Enhanced Curriculum process and product. She further commended the school on its effort in communicating the changes to the parents and students.

Do you have documentation that shows that your curriculum meets the Chapter 4 content standards and all requirements?

Selection and implementation of Achievement House Charter School's standards-based curriculum continues to be primarily based upon the research and specific action plans/steps developed by:

1. Wiggins and McTighe, "Understanding by Design" ("UBD")

2. Curriculum mapping developed by Heidi Hayes Jacobs

3. Articulating scope and sequence in a standards-based curriculum by Alan Glatthorn

4. Differentiating instruction by Carol Tomlinson

5. Standardized, performance-based and authentic assessments by Doug Reeves

All staff are required to be familiar with the national and the PA State Curriculum and content standards and assessment anchors in initiating the process. Articulated scope and sequence for concepts, content, essential skills and performance-based assessments is the linchpin for the teaching, assessing, and curriculum development triad. An instructional plan/lesson design template consistent with the Danielson and McGreal models ensures consistency with the above and, most importantly, with the PA content standards and assessment anchors for each subject area curriculum. Designated content, recommended strategies for effective instruction and assessment, student differences in understanding, learning rates and demonstration of mastery are key criteria to determining the degree of student learning, student content/skill mastery and lesson effectiveness.

A school-wide curriculum committee consisting of all teachers, mentors, teacher aides and administrative staff consistently monitors existing curriculum efficacy and new curricula. This ongoing, multi-stage process ensures that students are learning best when they can make a connection between curriculum, their interest and their life experiences. Formative and summative assessment data is utilized to evaluate curriculum relevancy to student performance. The school is also currently evaluating ETS materials, such as assessment literacy models; criteria on-line writing evaluation; and the Focus on Standards Instructional Data Management System, to further utilize assessment data to guide and target instruction.

How is the curriculum organized to meet the developmental and academic needs of the students?

A key component of Achievement House Charter School's mission is "to provide enhanced educational opportunities and a more personalized environment." With the collaboration between teacher, mentor, and student/parent, we continue to be able to better prepare lessons for various interests and needs. The Achievement House Charter School staff continues to receive training in curriculum and lesson development, implementation and assessment. The Achievement House Charter School curriculum is organized to meet the developmental and academic needs of its students. Each content curriculum area is articulated from grade nine through twelve consistent with the PA content standards and assessment benchmarks.

Scantron placement tests are given to each student upon admission to the school. Lesson plans are developed using the "UBD" process which supports learning by:

1. Identifying desired results

2. Determining acceptable evidence

3. Planning learning experiences and instruction

The core curriculum continues to be presented in a number of ways, including online and in print form. Teachers prepare their lessons with authentic and multi-disciplinary tasks. Activities and assignments accentuate many levels of learning in one lesson. More specifically, the design tool template assists lesson planning which contains questions, prompts and idea starters and assessment options. This expansion of "UBD" is shown below:

Identifying Desired Results

1. Desired, overarching understandings, essential and unit questions

2. Relevant goals

3. Essential questions

4. Expected student understandings

5. Essential unit questions

Determine Acceptable Evidence

1. Performance tasks, projects

2. Rubrics

3. Quizzes, tests, academic prompts

4. Student self-assessment

5. Observations, work samples, dialogues

6. Authentic performance tasks

Planned Learning Experiences and Instruction

1. What students will need to know, knowledge and skill

2. What teaching and learning experiences will equip students to demonstrate targeted understandings

3. Explicit instruction

4. Student opportunities to rehearse, revise and define work based on feedback

5. Student self-assessment and goal setting

Cyber learning encourages and requires students to learn through exploration. Achievement House Charter School teachers continue to strive to "facilitate interaction between students' existing knowledge and new experiences or ideas they encounter." Virtual instructional chats, recorded virtual instructional chats, extended office hours and help sessions, tutoring centers, specialized courses, parent contacts, working closely with grade level mentors, etc. are specific examples of facilitating and encouraging teacher-student interactions.

How does the charter school promote in-depth and inquiry-based teaching and learning?

Achievement House Charter School promotes in-depth and inquiry-based teaching and learning through many different facets of instruction, assessment and instructional delivery.

Students are able to work at their own pace, while still being an active member of the class. Most activities revolve around analyzing secondary and primary sources, reading documents and literary pieces, and sources that require building upon previous concepts and ideas. Written assessments and activities are used to demonstrate a higher level of comprehension and writing proficiency.

The Achievement House Charter School curriculum, and pedagogy, is also well-grounded in de Bono's "eight levels of creative thought": fluency, flexibility, originality, elaboration, curiosity, imagination, complexity, and risk taking.

Achievement House Charter School continues to provide multiple opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge,and interact with their peers and teachers, through web classes and virtual instructional chats in each course. While promoting participation in school and fostering responsibility for work, web classes offer the chance to promote an active learning experience through real time instruction from the teacher. This setting enables students to share what has been learned in various ways, including group collaborations and presentations. Supplemental sources continue to be a key component of the Achievement House Charter School curriculum and are integrated into the web classes for clarification of a topic or concept, review and/or independent exploration.

Further, the criteria stipulated in the PDE-advocated "Getting Results — A Framework for School Development Planning" serves as the foundation for Achievement House Charter School's curriculum instructional and assessment practices. This framework is especially significant relative to promoting in-depth and inquiry based instruction and assessment, and is also highly compatible with "UBD". The criteria listed for quality teaching as part of the Achievement House Charter School instructional design is listed below:

1. **Multiple data-sources —** Analysis and interpretation of current state of the school based on multiple sources of data (including PSSA) that show trends and provide robust insight into improvement target; Scantron Performance Series Testing; Study Island; PSSA Testing

2. **Outcome and process data —** Assessment of current state of student performance (i.e. in reading, math, attendance, etc.) and educational practices (i.e. instructional program, professional development, staff attendance, etc.)

3. **Subgroup specificity —** Data analysis and interpretation for all subgroups, especially data provided by PSSA results, provides adequate insight into conditions and needs of subgroups (as appropriate).

4. **Coherent instructional/programmatic roadmap —** The Achievement House Charter School curricular and instructional design flows logically from the data analysis and interpretation; reflects a coherent "theory of action" and consists of high-leveraged, aligned strategies, i.e. Guskey, Jacobs.

5. **Evidence-based strategies —** Achievement House Charter School's instructional design, and best-practices approach, is research-based and has been adapted from other successful models or derived from promising practices that show some early evidence of efficacy., i.e. Danielson, Marzano, Brophy, Darling-Hammond, Dufour and Eaker, Schmoker, etc.

6. **Standard-aligned —** Curriculum, assessments and instructional strategies are clearly aligned with PA content, performance standards and the

anchors, (with particular attention to the needs of subgroups as applicable), reading, writing, math and science/health.

7. **Rigor and relevance —** The Achievement House Charter School curriculum continues to reflect high expectations and access to challenging learning opportunities for all students, with particular attention to the needs of subgroups (as applicable)

8. **Differentiated instructional and intervention strategies —** Instructional design, which includes co-teaching and differentiated instruction, in addition to daily practices, establish clear linkages to the Achievement House Charter School improvement goals, especially in the reading and math areas. These strategies are responsive to the specific needs of individual students.

9. **Safe, disciplined learning environment —** Clear expectations for student and staff behavior/conduct are defined in Achievement House Charter School policy and written manuals. The policies and regulations are fairly and consistently reinforced.

10. **Professional Learning Community** — During the 2006-2007 school year, Achievement House Charter School initiated a Professional Learning Community for its staff, based on the guiding principles established by Rosenscholtz (1989), Darling-Hammond (1996), and DuFour and Eaker (2006). As the process continues, expected results for staff and students at Achievement House Charter School are listed below:

For staff, the expected results will include:

- Reduction of isolation of teachers
- Increased commitment to the mission and goals of the school and increased vigor in working to strengthen the mission
- Shared responsibility for the total development of students and collective responsibility for students' success
- Powerful learning that defines good teaching and classroom practice and that creates new knowledge and beliefs about teaching and learners
- Increased meaning and understanding of the content that teachers teach and the roles they play in helping all students achieve expectations
- Higher likelihood that teachers will be well informed, professionally renewed, and inspired to inspire students
- More satisfaction, higher morale, and lower rates of absenteeism
- Significant advances in adapting teaching to the students, accomplished more quickly than in traditional school
- Commitment to making significant and lasting changes

- Higher likelihood of undertaking fundamental systemic change.

For students, the expected results will include:

- Decreased dropout rate and fewer classes “skipped”
- Lower rates of absenteeism
- Increased learning that is distributed more equitably
- Greater academic gains in math, science, history, and reading than in traditional schools
- Smaller achievement gaps between students from different backgrounds

What strategies does the school use to accelerate academic skill development, content knowledge and learning strategies of students performing significantly below standard in literacy and mathematics skills?

Given the design and structure of Achievement House’s curriculum and staff, students who are performing below standards are monitored and worked with very closely to help them improve their skills. Our customized curriculum ensures that necessary supports are available for students who are struggling in the areas of literacy and math. We are able to “custom-tailor our school wide program to our students’ unique skills and interests.” The introduction of the Student Success Team provided assistance and interventions for 92 students during the course of the 2006-2007 school year. A Student Assistance Program (SAP) will be in place for the 2007-2008 school year.

Where applicable, and in accordance with Chapter 711, Achievement House Charter School ensured that each child had an individualized learning plan that was developed by the student/parent, special education teacher, mentor, regular education teacher, doctor’s recommendations, and/or paraprofessional’s suggestions. Where the identified areas of need were in literacy and/or math, a plan was designed for specific areas of need; goals were established, both short and long range; and “progress towards immediate and long-term improvement in student performance” was charted.

Achievement House Charter School has established systematic policies and procedures for early detection and early intervention of special needs. Each child’s education is a collaborative effort. This feature is carried out primarily by the child’s mentor. The mentor monitors the success and challenges of the students and intervenes immediately to provide support in helping the student resolve the problem.

The student’s teachers are informed of the student’s challenges immediately and are consulted on appropriate strategies/interventions that allow that student to experience mastery and success in that area. The role of the mentor is to encourage, support, and motivate the student.

In addition to the mentor’s role, diagnostic assessments are given to students when they first enroll at Achievement House Charter School. These assessments provide data to ensure accurate course placement, as well as to identify strengths and weakness in the student’s educational progress to date. Consultation with the school counselor is also utilized to ensure accurate course placement.

Study Island is the main assessment used for mathematics. Study Island testing and reporting is correlated to PSSA testing, the PA state content standards and the assessment anchors. The

assessment is divided into specific sections with each sub-section correlating to a particular anchor. Individual data also reports time-on-task and student mastery of a particular anchor. Achievement House Charter School continues to utilize Study Island as listed below:

to provide ongoing data for realigning math and reading instruction to appropriate standards/anchors

to help prepare students for achieving success on the PSSA's

What types of teaching strategies are used to actively engage students in the learning process?

Achievement House Charter School actively uses all available technology to engage students in the learning process. The school's rich, integrated use of technology enables the staff to custom-tailor our school-wide program to our students' unique skills and interests. The continuing use of the multi-media classroom concept has enabled greater student participation and collaboration with the staff, and other students, during the virtual instructional chats.

As previously mentioned, the framework for teaching strategies used to actively engage students in the learning process is based upon the PDE "Getting Results, Quality Review Criteria, Quality Teaching" and the "Understanding by Design" process developed by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe. Both processes have been described in detail in earlier sections of this narrative.

Our lessons/activities engage the students beyond the textbook and make our students active learners, rather than passive ones. The use of streaming videos allows our students to visualize what the Battle of Waterloo may have looked like, safely view scientific experiments for a lab, gain a better understanding of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* by seeing it performed and watch equations being balanced. Mathematics uses interactive PowerPoints and Webinars to help explain reducing polynomials, tutorial programs are also utilized to provide extra assistance without the teacher's presence. During the 2006-2007 school year, the English and Social Studies departments collaborated on selected integrated topics, allowing students to learn about a particular person, place, or event and then read and analyze a literary piece written during or about that event. Using those literary works, students gained proficiency in grammar, vocabulary, and writing skills.

The Achievement House Charter School academic program is designed to facilitate numerous learning strategies while accommodating various needs in numerous ways. The different web sites and programs used by the students open the door for the various methods of assessment that are aligned with the instructional approaches and individual learning activities in a given discipline.

Third party curriculum vendors (i.e. Educere) continue to be utilized to meet individualized needs consistent with procedures stipulated in the Achievement House Charter School Charter. Courses selected from third party vendors must align with the PA state standards and assessment anchors. Selected third party vendor courses are being offered in an effort to help our students explore areas of interest that might not be included in the scope of the Achievement House Charter School curriculum. This attention to individual interest serves to aid in actively engaging students. A virtual summer school program has been planned for the summer of 2008 to provide additional opportunities for students for reducing student learning gaps.

Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachment

- Rigorous Instructional Program

English Language Learners

On March 15, 2005, Achievement House Charter School adopted an ELL/ESL Policy which has guided the development of the English Language Learners. The PDE publication, "A Guidebook for Planning Programs for English Language Learners" (May 2002), ESL Professional Development Video Conferences, and NCLB position papers have been utilized to formulate, maintain, and improve the Plan. Achievement House Charter School is also using the services of MCIU to ensure compliance with the PDE/NCLB regulations.

Upon registering for school at Achievement House Charter School, each family/student must complete the Board approved Home Language Survey and assess eligibility for ELL services. The results of the Home Language Survey are filed and placed in each student's permanent record. The following will then occur:

- If the student's first language is not English but the student speaks English and English is spoken at home, then an informal assessment will be conducted by the ELL team. A survey, with a narrative from the content area teacher and ELL teacher and a writing sample from the student, will be used to assess English language proficiency. A formal assessment will be conducted if the informal assessment does not indicate English language proficiency.

- Any other combination of non-English responses to the survey questions will have the ELL team conducting a formal assessment of the student for a level of English language proficiency.

The ELL team will use the IDEA Proficiency Test (IPT), or the WIDA Access Placement Test (W-APT), for assessing the level of English language proficiency of the students identified by the Home Language Survey. Skills in reading, writing, and oral English language are assessed by both tests. Students will be placed in the ELL program as beginning, intermediate, or advanced English language learners according to the scores achieved in the assessment. Students will be tested again at the year's end to show growth in English language proficiency, or sooner if deemed necessary by the ELL teacher. To exit the program, the student will need to show that they have attained English language proficiency by scoring accordingly on test and show evidence of meeting the goals of the ELL program as documented by the ELL teacher.

Upon identification of a student for the ELL program, parents will be notified by letter of the need for support and instruction in English language learning. The letter will include a description of the program, program goals, grading procedures, and name of the ELL teacher assigned to their child. In addition to the letter, a separate form will be sent in the student's native language asking if communications with parents need to be written in a language other than English. This information will be noted in student's file for future reference. Additional information regarding the ELL program, goals and objectives, exit criteria, content area classes for ELL students, participation in extra-curricular activities, homework, attendance and behavioral policies will be explained to parents at the ELL orientation meeting.

The goals of the Achievement House Charter School ELL program are to assist the English language learning in using English:

- to communicate in social settings
- to achieve academically in all content areas
- in socially and culturally appropriate ways

ELL students will be placed in appropriate grade level classes. They will receive instruction in all content areas as do other students in the class. The ELL student will receive additional supplemental support and instruction from the ELL teacher during English courses and during necessary content area classes. The ELL teacher will assist the content-area teacher in identifying and implementing teaching strategies that will help the ELL student achieve academic success in the content-area classes. While students are in the ELL program, grades will be given on a pass/fail basis with a narrative from the homeroom and ELL teacher describing academic and English language proficiency progress.

The ELL program will come under the direction of the Principal. He will be responsible for the assurance of the implementation of the program and that proper procedures are being followed. The Principal will hold a meeting with Student Services to explain the procedures for the distribution of the Home Language Survey to parents and then to the ELL team. He will also be responsible for sharing information regarding the informal teacher survey, working with the ELL teacher and providing cultural information about ELL to staff to prevent culture clashes between school and students. ELL teaching resource materials will be obtained by the Principal and kept in his/her office for reference for both program and non-program teachers. The Principal will be responsible for providing information regarding professional development relative to the needs of ELL learners.

The English language learner will have equal access to participate in all academic and extracurricular activities offered by Achievement House Charter School. No student will be denied acceptance into a club, group, or activity due to enrollment in the ELL program. The English language learner has a unique opportunity to offer first hand knowledge of a different culture. They can become the teachers in the classroom. Their participation is not only welcomed, but necessary, for the betterment of our students, school, and community.

Program Goals and Objectives

Achievement House Charter School has developed the following goals and objectives for the ELL program.

Goal 1: To use English to communicate in social setting

- Objective: By the end of the school year, students will increase their ability to use English to participate in social interactions. This will be evidenced by observation of students in cooperative learning activities and personal conversation.
- Objective: By the end of the school year, students will increase their ability to interact in, through, and with spoken and written English for personal expression and

enjoyment. This will be evidenced by personal writing journals and book choice with reading log.

- Goal 2: To use English to achieve academically in all content areas.

v Objective: By the end of the school year, students will increase their use of English to interact in the virtual classroom; evidenced by conversations with the teacher, observations of student in cooperative group settings and monitoring of students in social interactions.

v Objective: By the end of the school year, students will increase their ability to use English to obtain, process, construct, and provide subject matter information in spoken and written form. This will be evidenced by an increase in standardized testing content area scores, a portfolio of student work, and the teacher's evaluation of the student's ability to pose questions and have discussions in content area classes.

- Goal 3: To use English in socially and culturally appropriate ways.

v Objective: By the end of the school year, students will increase their ability to the appropriate language variety, register, and genre according to the audience, purpose and setting. This will be evidenced by student academic presentations, student's social conversations with peers, and student's conversation with the teacher.

These goals and objectives were developed from the TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) Standards and align with the Pennsylvania Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening (1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7)

Achievement House Charter School bases its curriculum on the inclusion model. English language learners will be part of the regular classroom for all content area classes including English and Reading classes. The ELL will be provided an ELL teacher, who is PA certified, who will support the student in content area, and who will provide supplemental instruction during English and Reading. Continuous contact between the ELL teacher and classroom teacher will provide close monitoring of the ELL student. Immediate action will take place for any students who are falling behind or who are not progressing academically.

The success of the ELL program will be measured by: student's increasing scores within their level of the program; student's testing to the next level of the program; and student's testing out of the program as evidenced by end of the year English proficiency testing. Success will also be measured by an increase in academic scores on a content area standardized test. We will also look at student portfolios and teacher narratives to demonstrate progress of the ELL.

ELL's will not be excluded from any curricular or extra-curricular activities at Achievement House Charter School.

Students will be placed in a classroom and receive instruction in all curricular content area. ELL's will be expected to participate in the PSSA and school wide standardized assessments.

Achievement House Charter School will assess the ELL program on a yearly basis. Program success will be shown by ELLs meeting the goals of the ELL program; to use English to communicate in social setting, to use English to achieve academically in all content areas and to use English in socially and culturally appropriate ways. We will specifically look at ELL student progress through the levels of the program, number of students who test out of the program, academic achievement of each student and participation in school activities by ELL students.

Achievement House Charter School will provide an orientation to parents as well as to ELLs upon entering the school. The orientation will include basic school information, a description of the ELL education program, a listing of content classes the student will attend, a listing of available special programs, homework and attendance policies and district-wide assessment practices and procedures.

The philosophy of "inclusion" at Achievement House Charter School is extended to the ELL students. Classroom instruction and activities will be made available to ELL students, along with their English-speaking peers. Through the assessment process, the ELL teacher will determine the proficiency level of each ELL student. Designated English and Reading instruction will then be supplemented for each ELL student by an ELL teacher in the virtual classroom. Support for other subjects will also be made available to each ELL student as needed. Other information about the components of the ELL program will be addressed in the brochure, "Educating Students with Limited English Proficiency", which students and parents will receive as part of their orientation packet.

Achievement House Charter School has instituted policies and procedures that are linguistically and culturally sensitive to the needs of ELL students and their communities. Special programs for ELL students will include the following:

- Assigning homework buddies

- ☐ Creating web pages where class assignments and student produced work are posted

- ☐ One-on-one tutoring or mentoring

- ☐ Planning group/cooperative learning activities that encourage student discussions in English

- ☐ Providing students with choices of spoken activities, such as oral presentations, choral readings, and recorded presentations to demonstrate mastery of a learning objective

- ☐ Incorporating writing activities with peer process

- ☐ Incorporating opportunities for ungraded writing, such as journals for students to write about topics of their own interest

Parents will be notified of these opportunities during orientation.

The school's policy regarding homework for ELLs will be the same as for other students. Each teacher will have their own guidelines for completing assignments. Parents will also be informed of the policy procedures for homework through the student handbook. The Student Handbook will be translated in the language of the parents' choice.

Attendance policies will be the same for ELLs as for English-speaking students.

The Student Handbook will clearly state the school's policy and expectations.

English Language Learners - Attachment

- English Language Learners

Graduation Requirements

b) Graduation Requirements

Achievement House Charter School has developed a multi-faceted, standards and anchor based, interactive curriculum which meets, and often exceeds, the Pennsylvania Standards. Achievement House Charter School's curriculum and instructional practices have been developed to maximize student learning and achievement. Through the use of materials from multiple curriculum providers, and teacher developed scoped and sequenced lesson plans and assessments, Achievement House Charter School prepares its students to meet high school graduation requirements.

In helping our students meet the high school graduation requirements, Achievement House Charter School has used Section 4.24 of the Pa. School Code as its framework. Key components of that plan are listed below:

1. Graduation requirements are specified.

2. Graduation requirements include course completion, grades, graduation project completion and results of local assessments aligned with academic standards and assessment anchors.

3. Students must demonstrate at least proficiency in reading, writing, and mathematics in state and/or locally aligned assessments.

4. The graduation project must enable student to apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information and be proficient in communicating significant knowledge and understanding.

5. Students with disabilities who meet the required proficiency levels will be granted and issued a high school diploma.

The Board of Trustees initially resolved that the following credits and courses would be required in order to graduate:

Language Arts	4 credits
Social Studies	3 credits
Math	3 credits
Science	3 credits
Electives	5 credits
Health/Safety/PE	2 credits
Total	20 credits

At the July 12, 2006 Board Meeting, the Board of Trustees resolved to add the following graduation requirements:

Foreign Language** 2 credits for current 9th and 10th graders and any new enrollees in 9th or 10th grade level. 1 credit for current 11th graders and any new enrollees at the 11th grade level. No credit requirement for current 12th graders or any new enrollees at the 12th grade level.

**Although these are the foreign language requirements, we will recommend that students would benefit greatly from three years of foreign language.

Transitions 1 credit

Transitions is a course designed to offer students direction and insight into entering the job market and/or college. At the May 16, 2006 Board Meeting, the Board of Trustees' voted to waive the Transitions requirement for Seniors entering the school in their Senior year.

Transitions and Foreign Languages courses are considered to be part of the five (5) Electives credits referenced in the graduation requirements.

Prior to graduation, our students must successfully complete a Graduation Project.

Grade 11 students were afforded the opportunity to begin their Graduation Project during 11th grade during the 2006-2007 school year. Some of these students actually completed their graduation projects while still in 11th grade. We will continue this practice in 2007-2008.

Our students are given standards and anchor based assessments in a variety of formats on a regular basis to assure that they are proficient in the material being presented. Additionally, our students are given the PSSA exams in 11th grade as required by the State of Pa.

Special Education

Special Education Instructional Strategies

The IEP Team Meeting

The IEP team meeting is held for annual review and for students newly enrolled at Achievement House Charter School. The team includes, but is not limited to, the following: student, parents, special education director, special education teacher, special education mentor and a regular education teacher. The IEP team reviews information from evaluation reports and gathers information from the parent and student to determine strengths and needs. Special education students at Achievement House Charter School are instructed within the general education curriculum and given appropriate modifications and accommodations as stated in their IEP. If the IEP team determines that appropriate modifications and accommodations were provided and the student's needs cannot be met within the general education curriculum, alternative curriculum and additional support will be provided. At each IEP meeting, the IEP team stresses to the parents that they can request to meet and review the IEP at any time during the course of the school year.

Extended school year is also discussed during the IEP team meeting. If the IEP team determines that an identified student qualifies for extended school year, appropriate support and curriculum are provided to ensure implementation of the IEP.

If related services are indicated by the student's needs, Achievement House Charter School contracts with a local service provider, such as an intermediate unit or Therapy Source.

The IEP team discusses transition planning with the parents and students. Achievement House Charter School contacts the Office of Vocation Rehabilitation and invites them to the IEP. Achievement House Charter School provides the following transition services: career assessments; transition resources, online and in hard copy; a Virtual Job Shadow website; and a Transitions class.

Assessment

Special education students are assessed upon enrollment with standard based assessments in the areas of math, reading, and language arts. They are also assessed at the end of the school year to track progress. This assessment also generates suggested learning objectives that may be used to direct instruction by all teachers assigned to the student. The suggested learning objectives are generated based upon the students' areas of need within the Pennsylvania standards of that particular subject area. This data may be used to track the progress of students' IEP goals; the data is then documented to an established IEP progress monitoring

program. These student assessments are used in conjunction with information provided in the students' Evaluation Reports. This information is then used by the IEP team to determine appropriate curriculum, as well as accommodations and modifications.

Special Education Teachers

Special education teachers at Achievement House Charter School provide specially designed instruction to the identified students. They also provide weekly support to students through scheduled call times. This is an individualized time for the teacher to review with the students such things as: progress; attendance; accommodations and modifications; instructional strategies; organization; technical issues; and to provide motivation and encouragement. If the student has an emotional disability, the weekly call time may be used to review coping strategies. This is also an opportunity for the teacher to review the student's progress with the parent, if the parent is available. Special education teachers are available to their students and student's parents by email, phone and instant messaging each school day. The teacher and/or student may schedule to meet additional times during the week for tutoring or other academic assistance, as well as for assistance with transition plans or graduation projects.

Special Education Mentors

Each student at Achievement House Charter School is assigned a mentor who also provides support to students, in addition to monitoring student attendance and progress. Mentors are a source of support for students, addressing a variety of issues, such as: school site orientation; technical issues; books; organization; as well as assisting the special education teachers. Mentors also oversee the daily tracking and documentation of assignment completion and attendance. Mentors maintain records on truancy issues and send notices to educational facilitators and/or parents when students' academic progress and attendance are not compliant with school policy. Parents are given opportunity to schedule a meeting with the IEP team upon receipt of each notice.

Collaboration and Progress Monitoring

Special education teachers monitor IEP goals and review academic progress for each student on a weekly basis. Regular education teachers document academic progress in bi-weekly reports. Collaboration with special education teachers and regular education teachers is ongoing. Teachers meet and discuss modifications and accommodations to curriculum, and specially designed instruction and goals of individual students. Special education and regular education teachers meet at the end of each quarter to review all students. Special education teachers are available to the regular education teachers for support and collaboration on a daily basis to review individual student goals and needs.

Training

The special education and regular education staff receive training at least once a month. Training may be done in-house through best practices sessions, researched and developed by staff. Training is also provided by PATTAN and intermediate units. Intermediate unit staff has provided training on topics such as progress monitoring, transition plans and Behavior Intervention Plans. Contracted service providers have also provided training for an online remedial reading program; Study Island; Scantron Assessments; and the Virtual Job Shadow Website. Each faculty member is required to complete 30 ACT 48 hours each school year.

Annual Public Notice of Special Education Services and Programs and Rights for Students with Disabilities And Notifications of Rights Under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act.

Achievement House Charter School

1021 West Lancaster Av. Suite 207

Bryn Mawr, Pa 19010

It is the responsibility of the Pennsylvania Department of Education to ensure that all children with disabilities residing in the Commonwealth, regardless of the severity of their disabilities, and who are in need of special education and related services, are identified, located, and evaluated. This responsibility is required by a federal law called the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et. seq. ("IDEA 2004"). IDEA 2004 requires the publication of a notice to parents, in newspapers or other media, before any major identification, location, or evaluation activity. IDEA 2004 requires this notice to contain certain information.

In addition, the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA), which protects confidentiality, requires educational agencies to notify parents annually of their confidentiality rights.

The Charter School fulfills its duties with this annual notice. The Charter School also directs parents to the procedural safeguards notice available through the school.

The purpose of this notice is to describe: (1) the types of disabilities that might qualify the child for such programs and services, (2) the special education programs and related services that are available, (3) the process by which the public schools screen and evaluate such students to determine eligibility, (4) the special rights that pertain to such children and their parents or legal guardians and (5) the confidentiality rights that pertain to student information.

How a child might qualify for special education and related services

Under the federal Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004, or "IDEA 2004," children qualify for special education and related services if they have one or more of the following disabilities and, as a result, need such services:

(1) mental retardation;

(2) hearing impairments, including deafness;

(3) speech or language impairments;

(4) visual impairments, including blindness;

(5) serious emotional disturbance;

(6) orthopedic impairments, or physical disabilities;

(7) autism,

(8) traumatic brain injury, or neurological impairment;

(9) other health impairment; and

(10) specific learning disabilities.

Children with more than one of the foregoing disabilities could qualify for special education and related services as having multiple disabilities.

The legal definitions of the above-listed disabilities, which the public schools are required to apply under the IDEA 2004, may differ from those used in medical or clinical practice. The legal definitions, moreover, could apply to children with disabilities that have very different medical or clinical disorders. A child with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, for example, might qualify for special education and related services as a child with “other health impairments,” “serious emotional disturbance,” or “specific learning disabilities” if the child meets the eligibility criteria under one or more of these disability categories and if the child needs special education and related services as a result.

Under Section 504 of the federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973, and under the federal Americans with Disabilities Act, some school age children with disabilities who do not meet the eligibility criteria outlined above might nevertheless be eligible for special protections and for adaptations and accommodations in instruction, facilities, and activities. Children are entitled to such protections, adaptations, and accommodations if they have a mental or physical disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

AHCS, as stated in their charter admits students from grade nine through twelfth. If a Charter School admits children below school age, the Commonwealth provides early intervention services to eligible children with special needs who are at least 3 years of age but younger than the age of beginners through agencies which hold Mutually Agreed Upon Written Agreements (MAWAs).

Available Programs and Services for Children with Disabilities

Public schools must ensure that children with disabilities are educated to the maximum extent possible in the regular education environment, and that the instruction they receive conforms as much as possible to the instruction that non-disabled students receive. Programs and services available to students with disabilities, in descending order of preference, may include: (1) regular class placement with supplementary aides and services provided as needed in that environment; (2) regular class placement for most of the school day with itinerant service by a special education teacher either in or out of the regular classroom; (3) regular class placement for most of the school day with instruction provided by a special education teacher in a resource classroom; (4) part time special education class placement in a regular public school or alternative setting; and (5) special education class placement or special education services provided outside the regular class for most or all of the school day, either in a regular public school or alternative setting.

Depending on the nature and severity of the disability, the public school can provide special education programs and services in areas such as (1) the public school the child would attend if not disabled, (2) an alternative regular public school either in or outside the school district of residence, (3) a special education center operated by a public school entity, (4) an approved private school or other private facility licensed to serve children with disabilities, (5) a residential school, (6) approved out-of-state program, or (7) the home.

Special education services are provided according to the primary educational needs of the child, not the category of disability. The types of service available include: (1) learning support, for students who primarily need assistance with the acquisition of academic skills; (2) life skills support, for students who primarily need assistance with development of skills for independent living; (3) emotional support, for students who primarily need assistance with social or emotional development; (4) deaf or hearing impaired support, for students who primarily need assistance

with deafness; (5) blind or visually impaired support, for students who primarily need assistance with blindness; (6) physical support, for students who primarily require physical assistance in the learning environment; (7) autistic support, for students who primarily need assistance in the areas affected by autism spectrum disorders; and (8) multiple disabilities support, for students who primarily need assistance in multiple areas affected by their disabilities.

Related services are designed to enable the child to participate in or access his or her program of special education. Examples of related services include but are not limited to, speech and language therapy, occupational therapy, physical therapy, nursing services, audiologist services, counseling, and family training.

The public school, in conjunction with the parents, determines the type and intensity of special education and related services that a particular child needs based exclusively on the unique program of special education and related services that the school develops for that child. The child's program is described in writing in an individualized education program, or "IEP," which is developed by an IEP team consisting of educators, parents, and other persons with special expertise or familiarity with the child. The parents of the child have the right to be notified of and to participate in all meetings of their child's IEP team. The IEP is revised as often as circumstances warrant but reviewed at least annually. The law requires that the program and placement of the child, as described in the IEP, be reasonably calculated to ensure meaningful educational progress to the student at all times. IEPs contain, at a minimum, a statement of present levels of academic achievement and functional performance, an enumeration of the annual goals established for the child, and a statement of the special education and related services that the child needs to make meaningful educational progress. For children aged sixteen and older, the IEP must also include an appropriate transition plan to assist in the attainment of post-secondary objectives. The Charter School must invite the child to the IEP team meeting at which the transition plan is developed.

Screening and Evaluation Process for Children to Determine Eligibility for Special Education and Related Services

Screening

Each educational agency must establish and implement procedures to locate, identify and evaluate children suspected of being eligible for special education. These procedures involve screening activities which include but are not limited to: review of group-based data (cumulative records, enrollment records, health records, and report cards); hearing screening (at kindergarten, first, second and third grades); vision screening (every grade level); motor screening; and speech and language screening.

Except as indicated above or otherwise announced publicly, screening activities take place in an on-going fashion throughout the school year. Screening is conducted at the Charter School unless other arrangements are necessary.

If parents need additional information regarding the purpose, time, and location of screening activities, they should call or write the CEO of Charter School at:

Achievement House Charter School

1021 West Lancaster Av. Suite 207

Bryn Mawr, Pa 19010

Screening activities are often undertaken before the Charter School refers most children for a multidisciplinary team evaluation. When concerns raised either by school staff or parents warrant screening, the child is referred to an “instruction support team” (“IST”), sometimes called the “child study team.” The IST is responsible for assessing the current achievement and performance of the child, for designing school-based interventions to address concerns raised, and for assessing the effectiveness of those school-based interventions. If the concern that resulted in the referral can be addressed without special education services, or is the result of the lack of English proficiency or appropriate instruction, the IST will recommend interventions other than multidisciplinary team evaluation. Parents nevertheless have the right to request a multidisciplinary team evaluation at any time, regardless of the outcome of the screening process.

Evaluation

When screening indicates that a student may be eligible for special education, the Charter School will seek parental consent to conduct an evaluation. Evaluation means procedures used in the determination of whether a child has a disability and the nature and extent of the special education and related services needed by the child. The term evaluation refers to procedures used selectively with an individual child and does not indicate basic tests administered to or procedures used with all children. Before the public school can proceed with an evaluation, it must notify the parents in writing of the specific types of testing and assessment it proposes to conduct, of the date and time of the evaluation, and of the parents’ rights. The evaluation cannot begin until the parent has signed the written notice indicating that he or she consents to the proposed testing and assessments and has returned the notice to the public school. Once parental consent for evaluation is obtained, the school has timelines and procedures specified by law that it must follow. The law contains additional provisions and due process protections regarding situations in which parental consent for an initial evaluation is absent or refused discussed more fully below and in the Procedural Safeguards Notice.

This evaluation is conducted by a Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT) which includes a teacher, other qualified professionals who work with the child, and the parents. The MDE process must be conducted in accordance with specific timelines and must include protection-in-evaluation procedures. For example, tests and procedures used as part of the Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation may not be racially or culturally biased.

The MDE process results in a written evaluation report called an Evaluation Report (ER). This report makes recommendations about a student’s eligibility for special education based on the presence of a disability and the need for specially designed instruction.

Parents who think their child is eligible for special education may request, at any time, that the Charter School conduct a Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation. Requests for a Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation must be made in writing to the CEO of the Charter School at 1021 West Lancaster Av, Bryn Mawr, Pa 19010

If a parent makes an oral request for a Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation, the Charter School shall provide the parent with a form for that purpose. If the public school denies the parents’ request for an evaluation, the parents have the right to challenge the denial through an impartial hearing or through voluntary alternative dispute resolution such as mediation.

Educational Placement

The determination of whether a student is eligible for special education is made by an Individualized Education Program (IEP) team. A single test or procedure may not be the sole factor in determining that a child is exceptional. The IEP team includes: the parents of a child

with a disability; not less than one regular education teacher, if the child is, or may be, participating in the regular education environment; not less than one special education teacher, or when appropriate, not less than one special education provider; a representative of the school who is qualified to provide or supervise the provision of specially designed instruction to meet the unique needs of children with disabilities, is knowledgeable about the general education curriculum, and is knowledgeable about the availability of resources of the School; an individual who can interpret the instructional implications of evaluation results, who may be a member of the team described above; other individuals, at the discretion of the parent or the agency, who have knowledge or special expertise regarding the child, including related services personnel as appropriate; and whenever appropriate, a child with a disability. If the student is determined to be eligible for special education, the IEP team develops a written education plan called an IEP. The IEP shall be based in part on the results of the Multi-Disciplinary Evaluation. The IEP team may decide that a student is not eligible for special education. In that instance, recommendations for educational programming in regular education may be developed from the ER.

An IEP describes a student's current levels, goals, and the individualized programs and services, which the student will receive. IEPs are reviewed on an at least an annual basis. The IEP team will make decisions about the type of services, the level of intervention, and the location of intervention.

Placement must be made in the least restrictive environment in which the student's needs can be met with special education and related services. All students with disabilities must be educated to the maximum extent appropriate with children who are not disabled.

Services for Protected Handicapped Students

Students who are not eligible to receive special education programs and services may qualify as handicapped students and therefore be protected under federal statutes and regulations intended to prevent discrimination (in particular, 34 CFR Part 104 and 28 CFR Part 35). The Charter School must ensure that qualified handicapped students have equal opportunity to participate in the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate for each individual student. In compliance with federal law, the Charter School will provide to each protected handicapped student without discrimination or cost to the student or family, those related aids, services or accommodations which are needed to provide equal opportunity to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities to the maximum extent appropriate to the student's abilities. In order to qualify as a protected handicapped student, the child must be of school age with a physical or mental disability that substantially limits or prohibits participation in or access to an aspect of the school program.

These services and protections for "protected handicapped students" may be distinct from those applicable to children with disabilities served under IDEA. The Charter School or the parent may initiate an evaluation if they believe a student is a protected handicapped student. For further information on the evaluation procedures and provision of services to protected handicapped students, parents should contact the school CEO.

Protections for Eligible Students

State and federal law grant many rights, protections and procedural safeguards to children with disabilities and their parents, including mediation and due process hearing request rights. A written summary of those procedural safeguards and protections is available to parents and students upon request to the CEO of the Charter School.

Rights and Protection

The Charter School must notify parents in writing whenever it: (1) Proposes to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child; (2) Refuses to initiate or change the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child; (3) Proposes or refuses to make changes regarding the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the child; and (4) No later than the date on which the decision to take disciplinary action is made, a Charter School must notify the parent of that decision and of all available procedural safeguards. Such notice must be accompanied by a full written description of the parents' rights.

What prior written notice must contain:

Prior written notices must be written in the native language of the parent, unless it clearly is not feasible to do so. Prior written notice must contain:

A description of the action proposed or refused by the school;

An explanation of why the Charter School proposes or refuses to take the action and a description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report the Charter School used as a basis for the proposed or refused action;

A description of other options considered by the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team and the reasons why those options were rejected;

A description of the factors that are relevant to the Charter School's proposal or refusal;

A statement that the parent of a child with a disability has procedural safeguards protection and, if the notice is not an initial referral for evaluation, the means by which a copy of a description of the procedural safeguards can be obtained;

Sources the parent may contact to obtain assistance in understanding these provisions;

A statement informing the parent about the state complaint procedures, including a description of how to file a complaint and the timelines under those procedures.

*In Pennsylvania, prior written notice is provided on the form "Notice of Recommended Educational Placement" (NOREP).

PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS NOTICE

When a Procedural Safeguards Notice must be provided:

A copy of the Procedural Safeguards Notice must be given to the parent one (1) time a year, except that a copy must also be given to the parent:

Upon initial referral for evaluation;

Upon the parent's request for evaluation;

Upon receipt of the first occurrence of the filing of a request for due process; and

Upon request by the parent

The Procedural Safeguards Notice must include a full explanation of available procedural safeguards, written in the native language of the parent, unless it is clearly not feasible to do so. It must be written in an easily understandable manner, describing the procedural safeguards available relating to:

Independent educational evaluation;

Prior written notice;

Parental consent;

Access to educational records;

Opportunity to present and resolve complaints, including the time period in which to file a Due Process Hearing Request;

The opportunity for the Charter School to resolve the Due Process Hearing Request;

The availability of mediation;

The child's placement while due process proceedings are pending;

Procedures for children who are subject to placement in an interim alternative educational setting;

Requirements for unilateral placement by the parent of a child in private school at public expense;

Due process hearings, including requirements for disclosure of evaluation results and recommendations;

State level appeals;

Civil actions, including the time period in which to file such actions;

Attorneys' fees; and

State complaint procedures, including applicable time periods.

When Prior Parental Consent Must Be Obtained

Parental consent must be obtained by the Charter School prior to conducting an initial evaluation to determine if the child qualifies as a child with a disability, and before providing special education and related services to the child, for the first time. Parental consent for an evaluation shall not be construed as consent for their child to receive special education and related services. The screening of a child by a teacher or specialist to determine appropriate instructional strategies for curriculum implementation is not considered to be an evaluation for eligibility for special education and related services; therefore, parental consent is not required in this instance.

Consent for Wards of State.

The Individuals with Disabilities Act of 2004 contains language about seeking parental permission for initial evaluations when a child is a ward of the State. In Pennsylvania, however, if a child is designated a ward of the State, the whereabouts of the parent is not known or the rights of the parent have been terminated in accordance with State law; someone other than the parent has been designated to make educational decisions for the child. Consent for an initial evaluation should therefore be obtained from the individual designated to represent the interests of the child.

Absence of Parental Initial Consent

If the parent does not provide consent for an initial evaluation, or the parent fails to respond to a request to provide consent, the Charter School may pursue an initial evaluation of the child through mediation or due process procedures. If the parent does not provide consent for the child to receive special education and related services, the Charter School will not provide special education and related services, nor will the Charter School use mediation or due process procedures.

If the parent refuses to consent to the receipt of special education and related services, or the parent fails to respond to a request to provide consent, and therefore the child does not receive special education and related services, the Charter School will not be in violation of its requirement to make a free appropriate public education (FAPE) available to the child for its failure to provide special education and related services to the child; and the Charter School does not have to convene an Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting or develop an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for the child regarding special education and related services.

Independent Educational Evaluation

The parent has the right to obtain an independent educational evaluation of their child at public expense if the parent disagrees with an evaluation obtained by the Charter School. An independent evaluation is an evaluation by a qualified professional who is not an employee of the Charter School responsible for the child.

Once the parent requests an independent evaluation at public expense, the Charter School must, without unnecessary delay, either request a due process hearing to demonstrate that its evaluation is appropriate, or ensure that an independent evaluation is conducted. If a due process hearing is requested by the school, and the final decision is that the Charter School's evaluation is appropriate, the parent still has the right to an independent evaluation, but not at public expense.

If the parent asks for an independent evaluation, the Charter School may ask for the parent's reason why he or she objects to the evaluation. However, the parent is not required to give this explanation and the Charter School may not unreasonably delay either providing the independent evaluation at public expense or requesting a due process hearing.

If the parent obtains an independent evaluation at private expense, the results of the evaluation must be considered by the Charter School if the evaluation meets Charter School criteria, in any decision made with respect to the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the child; and may be presented as evidence at a due process hearing.

If a Hearing Officer requests an independent evaluation as part of a hearing, the cost of the evaluation must be at public expense. The Charter School will provide, on request, information about where an independent evaluation may be obtained.

Whenever an independent evaluation is conducted at public expense, the criteria under which the evaluation is obtained, including the location of the evaluation and the qualifications of the examiner, must be the same as the criteria which the Charter School uses when it initiates an evaluation, to the extent those criteria are consistent with the parent's right to an independent evaluation.

Dispute Resolution Systems

When disputes arise between the parent and the Charter School, the following formal systems are available to assist in resolving the dispute:

1. Mediation

Mediation is a voluntary process in which the parent and Charter School involved in a dispute regarding special education both agree to obtain the assistance of an impartial mediator to resolve the conflict. Mediation is available for parties to special education disputes involving any special education matter, including matters arising prior to the filing of a Due Process Hearing Request. Mediation can be requested alone, or in conjunction with due process. Mediation cannot be used to deny or delay the parent's right to a due process hearing or to deny any other rights of the parent.

The Pennsylvania Department of Education's Bureau of Special Education, through the Office for Dispute Resolution, maintains a list of individuals who are qualified mediators and knowledgeable in laws and regulations regarding the provision of special education and related services. Mediators are not employed by any local or state agency providing direct services to the child, and the mediator must not have a personal conflict of interest. The mediator's services are paid for by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Mediations are scheduled in a timely manner and are held in a location that is convenient for the parties to the dispute. Discussions that occur during the mediation process are confidential and may not be used as evidence in any subsequent due process hearing or court proceeding. The mediator may not be called as a witness in future proceedings.

In the event the parties resolve the dispute through mediation, they are required to execute a legally-binding agreement that sets forth the resolution terms; states that all discussions that occurred during the mediation process must be confidential and may not be used as evidence in any subsequent due process hearing or civil proceedings; and is signed by both the parent and a representative of the Charter School who has the authority to bind the school. This agreement is enforceable by a court.

2. Due Process Hearings

The parent or Charter School may request a due process hearing with respect to any matter relating to the identification, evaluation, or educational placement of the child or the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) by filing a "Due Process Hearing Request". A due process hearing will not proceed until all required information is provided and procedures followed.

Timeline for requesting Due Process.

The parent or Charter School must request a due process hearing through the filing of a Due Process Hearing Request within two (2) years of the date the parent or the Charter School knew

or should have known about the alleged action that forms the basis of the Due Process Hearing Request.

There are limited exceptions to this timeline. This timeline will not apply to the parent if the parent was prevented from requesting the due process hearing due to the specific misrepresentations by the Charter School that it had resolved the problem forming the basis of the Due Process Hearing Request; or if the Charter School withheld information from the parent which was required to be provided to the parent.

Service of Due Process Hearing Request.

A copy of the Due Process Hearing Request must be sent to the other party and, at the same time, to the Office for Dispute Resolution.

Contents of Due Process Hearing Request.

The Due Process Hearing Request must contain the following information:

The name of the child; the address where the child lives, and the name of the school the child is attending;

If the child or youth is homeless, available contact information for the child and the name of the school the child is attending;

A description of the nature of the problem, including facts relating to such problem; and

A proposed resolution of the problem to the extent known and available to the party filing the Request.

Challenging Sufficiency of the Due Process Hearing Request.

The Due Process Hearing Request will be considered to be sufficient unless the party receiving it notifies the Hearing Officer and the other party in writing

within fifteen (15) days of receipt that the receiving party believes the Request does not meet the requirements listed above.

Response to Request.

If the Charter School has not sent a prior written notice (NOREP) to the parent regarding the subject matter contained in the parent's Due Process Hearing Request, the Charter School must send to the parent, within ten (10) days of receiving the Due Process Hearing Request, a response including the following information:

An explanation of why the Charter School proposed or refused to take the action raised in the parent's Due Process Hearing Request;

A description of other options the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team considered and the reasons why those options were rejected;

A description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, record, or report the Charter School used as the basis for the proposed or refused action; and

A description of the factors that are relevant to the Charter School's proposal or refusal

Filing this response to the parent's Due Process Hearing Request does not prevent the Charter School from challenging the sufficiency of the Due Process Hearing Request. If the Charter School has already sent prior notice (NOREP) to the parent, or it is the parent receiving the Due Process Hearing Request, then a response to the Due Process Hearing Request must be sent to the other side within ten (10) days of receipt of the request. The response should specifically address the issues raised in the Due Process Hearing Request.

Hearing Officer Determination of Sufficiency of Due Process Hearing Request.

Within five (5) days of receiving a party's challenge to the sufficiency of the Due Process Hearing Request, the Hearing Officer must make a determination based solely on the information contained within the Request, whether the Request meets requirements. The Hearing Officer must immediately notify both parties in writing of his or her determination.

Amended Due Process Hearing Request.

Either the parent or a Charter School may amend its Due Process Hearing Request only if:

The other party consents in writing to the amendment and is given the opportunity to resolve the issues raised in the Due Process Hearing Request through a preliminary meeting/resolution session; or The Hearing Officer grants permission for the party to amend the Due Process Hearing Request. However, the Hearing Officer may grant this permission not later than five (5) days before a due process hearing occurs

Subject Matter of the Hearing.

The party requesting the due process hearing is not permitted to raise issues at the due process hearing that were not raised in the Due Process Hearing Request (or Amended Due Process Hearing Request) unless the other party agrees otherwise.

Preliminary Meeting/Resolution Session.

Before a due process hearing will take place, the Charter School must convene a preliminary meeting with the parent and the relevant member or members of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) Team who have specific knowledge of the facts identified in the Due Process Hearing Request in an attempt to resolve those issues without the need to proceed to a due process hearing. This preliminary meeting must be convened within fifteen (15) days of the Charter School's receiving the parent's Due Process Hearing Request. A representative of the Charter School who has decision-making authority must be present at this meeting. The Charter School may not have an attorney attend the meeting unless the parent is also accompanied by an attorney. At the meeting, the parent will discuss the Due Process Hearing Request, and the Charter School will be provided the opportunity to resolve the Due Process Hearing Request, unless the parent and the Charter School agree, in writing, to waive this meeting, or agree to use the mediation process.

If the parent and Charter School resolve the issues in the Due Process Hearing Request at the preliminary meeting, they must put the agreement terms in writing, and both the parent and a representative of the Charter School who has the authority to bind the Charter School must sign the agreement. The agreement is a legally-binding document and may be enforced by a court.

Either the parent or Charter School may void the agreement within three (3) business days of the date of the agreement. After three (3) days, the agreement is binding on both parties.

Administrative Matters at Preliminary Meetings, Mediation and Due Process.

When carrying out administrative matters such as scheduling, exchange of witness lists, and status conferences, the parent and Charter School may agree to use alternative means of meeting participation, such as videoconferences and conference calls.

Timeline for Completion of Due Process Hearing.

If the Charter School has not resolved the Due Process Hearing Request within thirty (30) days of receiving it, or within thirty (30) days of receiving the Amended Due Process Hearing Request, the due process hearing may proceed and applicable timelines commence. The timeline for completion of due process hearings is forty-five (45) days, unless the Hearing Officer grants specific extensions of time at the request of either party.

Disclosure of Evaluations and Recommendations.

Not less than five (5) business days prior to a due process hearing, each party must disclose to all other parties all evaluations completed by that date, and recommendations based on the offering party's evaluations that the party intends to use at the due process hearing. Failure to disclose this information may result in a Hearing Officer prohibiting the party from introducing the information at the hearing unless the other party consents to its introduction.

Due Process Hearing Rights.

The hearing for a child with a disability or thought to be a child with a disability must be conducted and held in the Charter School at a place and time reasonably convenient to the parent and child involved.

The hearing must be an oral, personal hearing and must be closed to the public unless the parent requests an open hearing. If the hearing is open, the decision issued in the case, and only the decision, will be available to the public. If the hearing is closed, the decision will be treated as a record of the child and may not be available to the public.

The decision of the Hearing Officer must include findings of fact, discussion and conclusions of law. Although technical rules of evidence will not be followed, the decision must be based upon the substantial evidence presented at the hearing.

A written, or at the option of the parent, electronic verbatim record of the hearing will be provided to the parent at no cost to the parent.

Parent may be represented by legal counsel and accompanied and advised by individuals with special knowledge or training with respect to the problems of children with disabilities.

Parent or parent representative must be given access to educational records, including any tests or reports upon which the proposed action is based.

A party has the right to compel the attendance of and question witnesses who may have evidence upon which the proposed action might be based.

A party has the right to present evidence and confront and cross-exam witnesses.

A party has the right to present evidence and testimony, including expert medical, psychological or educational testimony.

Decision of Hearing Officer.

A decision made by a Hearing Officer must be made on substantive grounds, based upon a determination of whether the child received a free appropriate

public education (FAPE). In disputes alleging a procedural violation, a Hearing Officer may find that a child did not receive a free appropriate public education (FAPE) only if the procedural inadequacies impeded the child's right to a free appropriate public education (FAPE); significantly impeded the parent's opportunity to participate in the decision-making process regarding the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the parent's child; or caused a deprivation of educational benefits.

A Hearing Officer may still order a Charter School to comply with procedural requirements even if the Hearing Officer determines that the child received a free appropriate public education (FAPE). The parent may still file a Complaint with the Bureau of Special Education regarding procedural violations.

Administrative Appeal - Impartial Review.

In most cases, a party dissatisfied by the findings and decision of a Hearing Officer in a due process hearing may appeal to a panel appointed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (called "the Appellate Panel Officers" or "Appeals Panel"). For a school-aged child, the only exception to the right to appeal to the Appeals Panel is when the due process hearing addresses Section 504/Chapter 15 issues only. In that case, any appeal from a Hearing Officer order goes directly to court, not the Appeals Panel. If the due process hearing addresses both Section 504/Chapter 15 cases and other matters, that portion of the case dealing with non-Section 504 issues may be appealed to the Appeals Panel.

For early intervention preschool special education cases, the Appeals Panel review is not available and, therefore, any appeal from a Hearing Officer's order should go directly to court. In addition, it must be noted that Section 504/Chapter 15 issues do not apply to early intervention preschool cases.

On appeal, the Appeals Panel will do the following:

Examine the entire due process hearing record.

Ensure that the procedures at the hearing were consistent with the requirements of due process.

Seek additional evidence if necessary, at the discretion of the Appeals

Panel. If a hearing is held by the Appeals Panel to receive additional evidence, any party to such a hearing generally has the right to:

• Be accompanied and advised by counsel and by individuals with special knowledge or training with respect to the problems of children with disabilities;

• Present evidence and confront, cross-examine, and compel the attendance of witnesses;

• Prohibit the introduction of any evidence at the hearing that has not been disclosed to that party at least five (5) business days before the hearing;

• Obtain a written or, at the option of the parent, electronic, verbatim record of the hearing at no cost to the parent;

• The parent's representative shall be given access, if such was not already provided prior to or at the due process hearing, to educational records, including any tests or reports upon which the proposed action, or decision not to act, is based.

• Each hearing must be conducted at a time and manner that is reasonably convenient to the parent and child.

Afford the parties an opportunity for oral or written argument, or both, at the discretion of the Appeals Panel. Oral arguments must be conducted at a time and place that is reasonably convenient to the parent and child.

Make an independent decision upon completion of the record review.

Provide the parent a written, or, at their option, an electronic copy of the findings of fact and decision.

Appeals Panel decisions are completed within thirty (30) days after request for review, unless at the request of either party the Appeals Panel grants a specific extension to file Exceptions or Answers to them. Requests for a specific extension of time in which to file appeal documents with the Appeals Panel must be directed to the particular Appeals Panel assigned to the matter. Contact information can be obtained from the Office for Dispute Resolution.

The decision by the Appeals Panel is final, unless a party brings a civil action under the procedures described below.

Disclosure of Appeals Panel Decisions.

A copy of the Appeals Panel Decision, with the child's name removed from the Decision, is made available to the public, as required by law, through posting on the Office for Dispute Resolution webpage, and through dissemination to the State Special Education Advisory Panel. Questions regarding documents posted on the webpage should be directed to the Office for Dispute Resolution.

Civil Action.

Either the parent or Charter School who disagrees with the findings and decision of the Hearing Officer (in the case of Section 504/Chapter 15 cases and early intervention cases) or the Appeals Panel (for all other cases) has the right to file an appeal in state or federal court. Sometimes the issues in a due process case deal not only with special education issues, but also regarding a child's status and/or claim as a gifted child. In that instance, the final order of the Appeals Panel -- to the extent it deals with issues of giftedness -- can only be appealed to Commonwealth Court. For all other appeals, the party filing an appeal is encouraged to seek legal counsel to determine the appropriate court with which to file an appeal. A party filing an appeal to state or federal court has ninety (90) days from the date of the Hearing Officer decision in the case of Section 504/Chapter 15 and early intervention cases to do so, and for all other cases, 90 days from the date of the appeals panel decision in which to file an appeal to state or federal court.

Attorneys' Fees.

A court, in its discretion, may award reasonable attorneys' fees as part of the costs:

1. To a prevailing party who is the parent of a child with a disability;

2. To a prevailing party who is a State Educational Agency or Charter School against the attorney of the parent who files a Due Process Hearing request or subsequent cause of action that is frivolous, unreasonable, or without foundation, or against the attorney of the parent who continued to litigate after the litigation clearly became frivolous, unreasonable or without foundation; or

3. To a prevailing State Educational Agency or Charter School against the attorney of the parent, or against the parent, if the parent's Due Process hearing Request or subsequent cause of action was presented for any improper purpose, such as to harass, to cause unnecessary delay, or to needlessly increase the cost of litigation. Fees awarded will be based on rates prevailing in the community in which the action or proceeding arose for the kind and quantity of attorney services furnished. The federal law imposes certain requirements upon the parent and Charter School and in some circumstances may limit attorney fee awards. Parents should consult with their legal counsel regarding these matters. The following rules apply:

*Attorneys' fees may not be awarded and related costs may not be reimbursed in any action or proceeding for services performed subsequent to the time of a written offer of settlement to the parent if the offer is made within the time prescribed by Rule 68 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedures, or, in the case of an administrative hearing, at any time more than ten (10) days before the proceeding begins; the offer is not accepted within ten (10) days; and the court finds that the relief finally obtained by the parent is not more favorable to the parent than the offer of settlement.

*An award of attorneys' fees and related costs may be made to the parent who is the prevailing party and who was substantially justified in rejecting the settlement offer.

*Attorneys' fees may not be awarded relating to any meeting of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) team unless the meeting is convened as a result of an administrative proceeding or judicial action.

*A due process resolution session is not considered to be a meeting convened as a result of an administrative hearing or judicial action, nor an administrative hearing or judicial action for purposes of reimbursing attorneys' fees.

The Court may reduce the amount of any attorneys' fee award when:

a. The parent, or the parent's attorney, during the course of the action or proceeding unreasonably protracted the final resolution of the controversy;

b. The amount of the attorneys' fees otherwise authorized to be awarded unreasonably exceeds the hourly rate prevailing in the community for similar services by attorneys of reasonably comparable skill, reputation and experience;

c. The time spent and legal services furnished were excessive considering the nature of the action or proceeding; or

d. The attorney representing the parent did not provide to the local educational agency the appropriate information in the Due Process Hearing Request.

These reductions do not apply in any action or proceeding if the court finds that the State or Charter School reasonably protracted the final resolution of the action or proceeding.

Child's Status during Administrative Proceedings.

Except for discipline cases, which have specific rules, while the due process case (including an appeal to the Appeals Panel) or appeal in court is occurring, the child must remain in his or her present educational placement unless the parent and Charter School agree otherwise. If the decision of the Appeals Panel agrees with the child's parent that a change of placement is appropriate, that placement must be treated as an agreement between the Charter School and the parent. If the due process hearing involves an application for initial admission to public school, the child, with the parental consent, must be placed in the public school program until completion of all the proceedings, unless the parent and Charter School agree otherwise.

Parental Claims For Tuition Reimbursement

If the parent of a child with a disability, who previously received special education and related services under the authority of a Charter School, enroll the child in a private school without the consent of or referral by the Charter School, a court or a Hearing Officer may require the Charter School to reimburse the parent for the cost of that enrollment if the court or Hearing Officer finds that the Charter School had not made free appropriate public education (FAPE) available to the child in a timely manner prior to that enrollment. However, the cost of reimbursement may be reduced or denied if:

*At the most recent Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting that the parent attended prior to removal of the child from the public school, the parent was rejecting the placement proposed by the charter school to provide free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the child, including stating the parent's concerns and intent to enroll the child in a private school at public expense; or Ten (10) business days (including any holidays that occur on a business day) prior to the removal of the child from the public school, the parent did not give written notice to the Charter School of the information listed above;

*Reimbursement may also be reduced or denied if prior to the parental removal of the child from the public school, the Charter School informed the parent, through prior written notice, of its intent to evaluate the child (including a statement of the purpose of the evaluation that was appropriate and reasonable), but the parent did not make the child available for such evaluation; or

*Upon a judicial finding of unreasonableness with respect to actions taken by the parent.

Despite the requirement that the Charter School provide prior written notice, the cost of reimbursement will not be reduced or denied for failure to provide such notice if:

The Charter School prevented the parent from providing such notice; or The parent had not received prior written notice explaining the notice requirement; or Complying with the provision to give notice at the Individualized Education Program (IEP) meeting of the intent to remove the child or complying with the provision to give ten (10) day written notice of the intent to remove the child, would likely result in physical harm to the child; and Reimbursement may not be reduced or denied for failure to provide notice, in the discretion of the Hearing Officer or court, if:

a. The parent is illiterate and cannot write in English; or

b. Compliance with the notice provisions would likely result in serious emotional harm to the child.

Rights Regarding Discipline And Suspension

School personnel may consider any unique circumstances on a case-by-case basis when determining whether to order a change in placement for a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct.

According to federal law, school personnel may remove a child with a disability who violates a code of student conduct from their current placement to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting, another setting, or suspension, for not more than 10 school days (to the extent such alternatives are applied to children without disabilities). The determination of an interim alternative educational setting is made by the IEP team.

A change in placement requires a prior written notice (a Notice of Recommended Educational Placement or "NOREP"). The exclusion of a child with mental retardation who attends a Charter School, for any amount of time is considered to be a change in placement and requires prior written notice (assuming the disciplinary event does not involve drugs, weapons and/or serious bodily injury). If the parent does not agree with the change in placement on the Notice of Recommended Educational Placement (NOREP), the child remains in the existing placement until due process is completed, unless school officials take further action and go to court. A removal from school is not a change in placement for a child who is identified with mental retardation when the disciplinary event involves weapons, drugs and/or serious bodily injury.

If school personnel seek to order a change in placement that would exceed 10 school days and the behavior that gave rise to the violation of the school code is determined not to be a manifestation of the child's disability, the relevant disciplinary procedures applicable to children without disabilities may be applied to the child in the same manner and for the same duration in which the procedures would be applied to children without disabilities although it may be provided in an interim alternative educational setting.

A child with a disability who is removed from the child's current placement (irrespective of whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability) shall: (i) continue to receive educational services, as provided, so as to enable the child to continue to participate in the general education curriculum, although in another setting, and to progress toward meeting the goals set out in the child's IEP; and (ii) receive, as appropriate, a functional behavioral assessment, behavioral intervention services and modifications, that are designed to address the behavior violation so that it does not recur.

In general, within 10 school days of any decision to change the placement of a child with a disability because of a violation of a code of student conduct, the school, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team (as determined by the parent and the School) shall review all relevant information in the student's file, including the child's IEP, any teacher observations, and any relevant information provided by the parents to determine

(I) if the conduct in question was caused by, or had a direct and substantial relationship to, the child's disability; or

(II) if the conduct in question was the direct result of the School's failure to implement the IEP.

If the School, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team determine that either subclause (I) or (II) is applicable for the child, the conduct shall be determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability.

If the school, the parent, and relevant members of the IEP Team make the determination that the conduct was a manifestation of the child's disability, the IEP Team shall (i) conduct a functional behavioral assessment, and implement a behavioral intervention plan for such child, provided that the School had not conducted such assessment prior to such determination before the behavior that resulted in a change in placement described above; (ii) in the situation where a behavioral intervention plan has been developed, review the behavioral intervention plan if the child already has such a behavioral intervention plan, and modify it, as necessary, to address the behavior; and (iii) return the child to the placement from which the child was removed, unless the parent and the School agree to a change of placement as part of the modification of the behavioral intervention plan.

School personnel may remove a student to an interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days without regard to whether the behavior is determined to be a manifestation of the child's disability, in cases where a child— (i) carries or possesses a weapon to or at school, on school premises, or to or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or School; (ii) knowingly possesses or uses illegal drugs, or sells or solicits the sale of a controlled substance, while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency; or (iii) has inflicted serious bodily injury upon another person while at school, on school premises, or at a school function under the jurisdiction of a State or local educational agency.

Not later than the date on which the decision to take disciplinary action is made, the School shall notify the parents of that decision, and of all procedural safeguards accorded. The interim alternative educational setting shall be determined by the IEP Team.

The parent of a child with a disability who disagrees with any decision regarding placement, or the manifestation determination, or a School that believes that maintaining the current placement of the child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others, may request a hearing.

A hearing officer shall hear, and make a determination regarding, an appeal requested.

In making the determination, the hearing officer may order a change in placement of a child with a disability. In such situations, the hearing officer may— (I) return a child with a disability to the placement from which the child was removed; or (II) order a change in placement of a child with a disability to an appropriate interim alternative educational setting for not more than 45 school days if the hearing officer determines that maintaining the current placement of such child is substantially likely to result in injury to the child or to others.

When an appeal has been requested by either the parent or the School— (A) the child shall remain in the interim alternative educational setting pending the decision of the hearing officer or until the expiration of the time period provided, whichever occurs first, unless the parent and the School agree otherwise; and (B) the School shall arrange for an expedited hearing, which shall occur within 20 school days of the date the hearing is requested and shall result in a determination within 10 school days after the hearing.

A child who has not been determined to be eligible for special education and related services and who has engaged in behavior that violates a code of student conduct, may assert any of the protections provided for eligible students if the School had knowledge that the child was a child with a disability before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred.

A School shall be deemed to have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability if, before the behavior that precipitated the disciplinary action occurred— (i) the parent of the child has expressed concern in writing to supervisory or administrative personnel of the School, or a teacher of the child, that the child is in need of special education and related services; (ii) the parent of the child has requested an evaluation of the child; or (iii) the teacher of the child, or other personnel of the School, has expressed specific concerns about a pattern of behavior demonstrated by the child, directly to the director of special education of such agency or to other supervisory personnel of the agency.

A School shall not be deemed to have knowledge that the child is a child with a disability if the parent of the child has not allowed an evaluation of the child or has refused services or the child has been evaluated and it was determined that the child was not a child with a disability.

If a School does not have knowledge that a child is a child with a disability prior to taking disciplinary measures against the child, the child may be subjected to disciplinary measures applied to children without disabilities who engaged in comparable behaviors.

If a request is made for an evaluation of a child during the time period in which the child is subjected to disciplinary measures; the evaluation shall be conducted in an expedited manner. If the child is determined to be a child with a disability, taking into consideration information from the evaluation conducted by the school and information provided by the parents, the school shall provide special education and related services except that, pending the results of the evaluation, the child shall remain in the educational placement determined by school authorities.

Nothing shall be construed to prohibit the school from reporting a crime committed by a child with a disability to appropriate authorities or to prevent State law enforcement and judicial authorities from exercising their responsibilities with regard to the application of Federal and State law to crimes committed by a child with a disability.

A school reporting a crime committed by a child with a disability shall ensure that copies of the special education and disciplinary records of the child are transmitted for consideration by the appropriate authorities to whom the School reports the crime.

The term ‘controlled substance’ above means a drug or other substance identified under schedule I, II, III, IV, or V in section 202(c) of the Controlled Substances Act (21 U.S.C. 812(c)).

The term ‘illegal drug’ above means a controlled substance but does not include a controlled substance that is legally possessed or used under the supervision of a licensed health-care professional or that is legally possessed or used under any other authority under that Act or under any other provision of Federal law.

The term ‘weapon’ above has the meaning given the term ‘dangerous weapon’ under section 930(g)(2) of title 18, United States Code.

The term ‘serious bodily injury’ above has the meaning given the term ‘serious bodily injury’ under paragraph (3) of subsection (h) of section 1365 of title 18, United States Code.

Surrogate Parents

Each Charter School must ensure that an individual is assigned to act as a surrogate of a child when no parent or person acting as the parent can be identified, or the school, after reasonable efforts, cannot locate the parent. The Charter School must have a method of determining whether or not a child needs a surrogate parent, and for assigning a surrogate parent to the child.

The Charter School may select a surrogate parent in any way permitted under State law, but must ensure that a person selected as a surrogate is not an employee of the State Educational Agency, the Charter School or any other agency that is involved in the education or care of the child. For a child who is a ward of the State, a surrogate may be appointed by a judge overseeing the child's care or by the school.

For a homeless youth, not in the physical custody of the parent or guardian, the Charter School must appoint a surrogate. The State Educational Agency must make reasonable efforts to ensure the assignment of a surrogate not more than thirty (30) days after there is a determination by the Charter School that the child needs a surrogate.

Rights Pertaining To Educational Records

The Charter School must permit the parent to inspect and review all educational records relating to their child with respect to the identification, evaluation and educational placement of the child, as well as the provision of a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to the child, which are collected, maintained, or used by the Charter School. The Charter School must comply with a request without unnecessary delay and before any meeting regarding an individual education program or hearing relating to the identification, evaluation, or placement of the child, and in no case more than forty-five (45) days after the request has been made.

The parent's right to inspect and review education records under this section include the right to a response from the participating agency to a reasonable request for explanations and interpretations of the records; the right to have a representative inspect and review the records; and the right to request that the Charter School provide copies of the records containing the information if failure to provide these copies would effectively prevent the parent from exercising their right to inspect and review the records.

The Charter School may presume that the parent has authority to inspect and review records relating to their child unless the Charter School has been advised that the parent does not have the authority under applicable State law governing such matters as guardianship, separation and divorce.

If any educational record includes information on more than one child, the parent has the right to inspect and review only the information relating to their child or to be informed of that specific information.

The Charter School must provide the parent, on request, a list of the types and locations of educational records collected, maintained, or used by the Charter School.

The Charter School may not charge a fee to search for or to retrieve information, but may charge a fee for copies of records which are made for the parent if the fee does not effectively prevent the parent from exercising their right to inspect and review those records.

The Charter School must keep a record of parties obtaining access to educational records collected, maintained, or used (except access by the parent and authorized employees of the participating school), including the name of the party, the date access was given, and the purpose for which the party is authorized to use the records.

If the parent believes that information in educational records collected, maintained, or used under this part is inaccurate or misleading or violates the privacy or other rights of their child, they may request the Charter School that maintains the information to amend this information. The Charter School must decide whether to amend the information in accordance with the request within a reasonable period of time of receipt of the request. If the Charter School decides to refuse to

amend the information in accordance with the request, it must inform the parent of the refusal and of their right to a hearing as set forth below. The Charter School must, on request, provide an opportunity for a hearing to challenge information in educational records to ensure that it is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the child.

The hearing is conducted by the school, not a due process Hearing Officer. If, as a result of the hearing, the Charter School decides that information is inaccurate, misleading or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the child, it must amend the information accordingly and so inform the parent in writing. If, as a result of the hearing, the Charter School decides that the information is not inaccurate, misleading, or otherwise in violation of the privacy or other rights of the child, it must inform the parent of the right to place in the records it maintains on their child a statement commenting on the information or setting forth any reasons for disagreeing with the decision of the Charter School. An explanation placed in a child's records under this section must be maintained by the Charter School as part of the records of the child as long as the record or contested portion is maintained by the Charter School; if the records of the child or the contested portion is disclosed by the Charter School to any party, the explanation must also be disclosed to the party.

Complaint Procedures

Parents who believe that the educational rights of their child are being violated may file a Consumer Request Intake Form with the Bureau of Special Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education, requesting that this agency investigate the alleged violation. Requests for complaint investigation must be in writing, and should be sent to:

Chief, Division of Compliance, Monitoring and Planning Bureau of Special Education
Pennsylvania Department of Education 333 Market Street, 7th Floor Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Parents may request a Consumer Request Intake Form by calling the Bureau of Special Education's Consult Line, a parent helpline, at 800-879-2301.

The Bureau of Special Education's Compliance Advisor assigned to the region where the Charter School is located will investigate the complaint in a timely manner to determine whether the Charter School has failed to comply with State and/or federal laws and regulations. The investigation may include obtaining written or oral information and an on-site visit. Except in extenuating circumstances, the Bureau of Special Education's Compliance Advisor will complete the complaint investigation and issue a report of findings within sixty (60) calendar days.

If a written complaint is received that is also the subject of a due process hearing, or the written complaint contains multiple issues, of which one or more are part of that due process hearing, the State must set aside any part of the complaint that is being addressed in the due process hearing, until the conclusion of the hearing. However, any issue in the Consumer Request Intake Form that is not part of the due process action must be resolved using the time limit and procedures.

If an issue is raised in a Consumer Request Intake Form filed under this section that has previously been decided in a due process hearing involving the same parties, the hearing decision is binding and the Bureau of Special Education must inform the person filing the Consumer Request Intake Form of this fact.

A Consumer Request Intake Form Alleging a Charter School Failure to Implement a Due Process Decision must be Resolved by the Bureau of Special Education, not a Due Process Hearing Officer.

Either an organization or an individual may file a signed written Consumer Request Intake Form. The Consumer Request Intake Form must include a statement that a public agency has violated a requirement of Part B of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004) or applicable State regulations, and the facts on which the statement is based. The Consumer Request Intake Form must allege a violation that occurred not more than one (1) year prior to the date that the Consumer Request Intake Form is received, unless a longer period of time is reasonable because the violation is continuing, or the person filing the Consumer Request Intake Form is requesting compensatory education for a violation that occurred not more than three (3) years prior to the date the Consumer Request Intake Form is received.

This Annual Notice has been written in accordance with The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004).

THE CONTENT OF THIS NOTICE HAS BEEN WRITTEN IN STRAIGHTFORWARD, SIMPLE LANGUAGE. IF A PERSON DOES NOT UNDERSTAND ANY OF THIS NOTICE, HE OR SHE SHOULD ASK THE CEO OF THE CHARTER SCHOOL FOR AN EXPLANATION. THE CHARTER SCHOOL WILL ARRANGE FOR AN INTERPRETER FOR PARENTS WITH LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY. IF A PARENT IS DEAF OR BLIND OR HAS NO WRITTEN LANGUAGE, THE SCHOOL WILL ARRANGE FOR COMMUNICATION OF THIS NOTICE IN THE MODE NORMALLY USED BY THE PARENT (E.G., SIGN LANGUAGE, BRAILLE, OR ORAL COMMUNICATION).

THIS NOTICE IS ONLY A SUMMARY OF THE SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES, EVALUATION AND SCREENING ACTIVITIES, AND RIGHTS AND PROTECTIONS PERTAINING TO CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, CHILDREN THOUGHT TO BE DISABLED, AND THEIR PARENTS AND IS ONLY A SUMMARY OF THE CONFIDENTIALITY RIGHTS REGARDING STUDENT INFORMATION.

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REQUEST EVALUATION OR SCREENING OF A CHARTER SCHOOL STUDENT CONTACT THE CEO OF THE CHARTER SCHOOL AT THE CHARTER SCHOOL,1021 West Lancaster Av. Bryn Mawr, Pa 19010

NOTHING IN THIS NOTICE IS INTENDED TO CONFLICT WITH OR SUPPLANT THE INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S CURRENT "PROCEDURAL SAFEGUARDS NOTICE" WHICH IS AVAILABLE THROUGH THE SCHOOL FOR YOUR REVIEW OR WITH APPLICABLE STATE AND/OR FEDERAL LAWS.

For more information you may contact the AHCS Special Education Department or visit the PDE Special Education website.

Special Education - Attachments

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Special Education Program Profile - Chart I

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Lynne Moyer	1	Learning Support/Emotional Support	Achievement House Charter School	28	no unique circumstances
Deb Bender	1	Emotional/Learning Support/Autistic Support	Achievement House Charter School	25	no unique circumstances
Jen McConnell	1	Learning Support/Emotional Support	Achievement House Charter School	25	no unique circumstances

Special Education Program Profile - Chart II

Organization	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Career Planner Assessments	n/a	Learning/Emotional Support	Achievement House Charter School	27	no unique circumstances
Leader Services	n/a	Learning/Emotional/Autistic Support	Achievement House Charter School	78	no unique circumstances
Read Please	n/a	Learning Support	Achievement House Charter School	20	no unique circumstances
HEC Reading Horizons	n/a	Learning Support	Achievement House Charter School	20	no unique circumstances
Special Computer	n/a	Emotional Support	Achievement House Charter School	1	no unique circumstances
Educere	n/a	Learning Support	Achievement House Charter School	3	no unique circumstances
Dragon	n/a	Autistic/Learning Support	Achievement House Charter School	3	no unique circumstances
Kurzweil	n/a	Learning Support	Achievement House Charter School	1	no unique circumstances

Special Education Program Profile - Chart III

Title	Location	FTE
Special Education Director	Achievement House Charter School	1
Special Education Assistant	Achievement House Charter School	1
Special Education Mentor	Achievement House Charter School	1
Special Education Mentor	Achievement House Charter School	1

Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV

IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual	Title/Service	Amount of Time Per Week
Career Planner	Vocational Assessments	as needed
Therapy Source	School Psychologists	as needed

SECTION IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Student Assessment - Primary

Test/Classification	K	1	2	3	4	5
na	No	No	No	No	No	No

Student Assessment - Secondary

Test/Classification	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
PSSA	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Scantron	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Study Island	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Student Assessment

a.) Using the most recent PSSA data, any locally developed tests and other data that reflects improved academic performance, describe how the evidence indicates significant improvement or continued strong student performance. Include in the discussion:

How these results influence development of annual measurable goals and targets

This is Achievement House Charter School's third year in session. We are comparing our third year's PSSA, Scantron, and Study Island data to the data from the 05-06 school year to determine if we have met annual measurable goals and targets, and to set annual measurable goals and targets for next year.

The PSSA data reports that, in math, 72% of students scored below basic; 18% scored basic; 8% scored proficient; and 2% scored advanced. In reading, 51% scored below basic; 22% scored basic; 21% scored proficient; and 5% scored advanced. In our 2006 annual report, AHCS developed a plan for 2006-2007 in which the percentage of students scoring in the advanced, proficient, and basic levels would increase and the percentage of students scoring in the below-basic range would decrease. Our goal was to have a five percent increase in the percentage of students scoring in both the proficient and basic levels. Because no students scored in the advanced level, and a five percent increase cannot be made on 0, we hoped to have 1% of our students scoring in the advanced range. If these goals were met, they would result in a five percent decrease in the below-basic range. For the 2007 math portion of the PSSA, there was a

3% decrease in amount of students scoring below basic, a 6% increase in amount of students scoring basic, a 4% decrease in amount of students scoring proficient, and a 2% increase in amount of students scoring advanced. We did not meet all of our goals in math. We did, however, succeed in increasing the number and percentage of students scoring in the advanced category by the 1% projected in our 2006 Annual Report. For the 2007 reading portion of the PSSA, there was a 9% increase in the amount of students scoring below basic, a 7% decrease in amount of students scoring basic, a 4% increase in amount of students scoring proficient, and a 7% decrease in amount of students scoring advanced. Our goals were not met.

The Scantron data reports that students scored an average of 3206 on the reading portion and 2895 on the math portion. Last year's average year end testing score in reading was 3136, while last year's average year end testing score in math was a 2770. This data indicates that we did not meet the goal of a 5% increase in average math and reading scores. However, we did show a 4.5% increase in our average year end math scores. We also achieved a 2.25% increase in average reading scores by the year end testing. Students took the Scantron test twice throughout the school year. In the first round of testing, students scored averages of 3203 in reading and 2853 in math. This indicates that there was an improvement in performance throughout the year. While we did see an improvement in performance throughout the current school year, we also noticed that there was a decrease in participation. When the participation in the Reading and Language Arts sections are combined, the number of students who participated in the 2006-2007 testing was only 75% of the number of students who participated in the 2005-2006 testing. Participation in the Math section this year was only 46.3% of the participation last year.

The Study Island data from 2005-2006 indicates that students scored an average of 66% in math; 71% in reading; and 67% in writing. This year's results showed a slight decrease in reading and math performance and a 3% increase in writing perfomance. This year students scored an average of 65.2% in math; 70.8% in reading; and 70% in writing. Last year, we set a goal of a 5 percentage point increase in each of the subject areas. We did not meet our goal in any area. However, we did show a 3% increase in student writing performance.

Data from the PSSA, Scantron testing, and Study Island assessments provided critical information from which to makes goals and projections for next year and following years.

From the PSSA results, Achievement House Charter School has developed a plan for 2007-2008 in which the percentage of students scoring in the advanced and proficient will increase and the percentage of students scoring below proficient decrease. Our goal is to have a ten percent increase in the percentage of students scoring in both the proficient and advanced levels and a commensurate 10% decrease in students scoring below proficient.

From the Scantron testing results analysis, Achievement House Charter School has determined that there is a need for increased participation in the Scantron testing in order to produce accurate data for diagnostic use. We have developed a plan for next year in which participation in Scantron testing will be more actively encouraged. We plan to increase school wide communications prior to the testing period. We also plan to increase mentor contact before and during the testing period to encourage participation. Additionally, we will be increasing the number of testing opportunities from two per year to three per year. The increased participation will result in greater diagnostic accuracy which can then be used to guide our curriculum revisions to better address the academic needs of the students.

From the Study Island result analysis, Achievement House Charter School has developed a goal in which we plan to encourage increased participation. Study Island allows the student to continue to practice a concept until the student becomes proficient. We intend to more actively encourage students to continue to attempt concepts, requesting support from the appropriate instructional staff as needed, until students reach a proficient level. Study Island also

enables students to tackle concepts at their own instructional level. As student performance improves at lower instructional levels, students will be actively encouraged to attempt concepts at a higher instructional level. We will also increase the use of the Study Island program in our PSSA Power Prep because of its alignment with the PSSA test standards. Incentives will be offered to increase student participation and motivation in Study Island testing.

In order to meet the goals for PSSA, Scantron, and Study Island goals, we have developed a plan of action which includes a revised English and math curriculum. The school has already transitioned into a more comprehensive curriculum in which teachers and students have more contact, and students are instructed relative to their different learning styles.

Achievement House Charter School places a high priority on professional development and training for the instructional staff. Each certified staff member is expected to have enrolled in and completed a minimum of 30 Act 48 hours each year. Non-certified instructional staff are expected to pass the Praxis exam and enroll in an approved teacher certification program.

Another plan of action is to provide further teacher training for our staff. Each instructor is expected to continue his or her education with at least one course, earn 30 or more Act 48 hours, or pass the Praxis exam. In 2006, Achievement House Charter School was granted status as an approved provider for Act 48 credits. Since that approval status, staff has received on-going training in Understanding by Design (curriculum and assessment training), and research-based best practices from Achievement House Charter School staff member. Teachers in the Induction Program are also utilizing the text, Learning by Design (DuFour, Ealser, and Many, 2006) in understanding the dynamics of a professional learning community. Achievement House Charter School also strongly encourages its staff members to pursue a Master's Degree in their area of certification.

The school also provides up to $2,000 per semester to encourage staff to earn advanced degrees and take courses related to content proficiency and learning research-based best practices.

During the 2006-2007 school year, and to be continued indefinitely, teachers are required to provide scheduled help/tutoring sessions. Additional tutoring sessions and mini-courses are provided for math and reading remediation. The number of virtual instructional chats per week has been increased. All virtual chats are recorded to provide additional opportunities for students to grasp key concepts and skills.

As described above, PSSA, Scantron, and Study Island data has been analyzed to determine student achievement patterns. From this data, achievement-related and other goals and objectives have been developed as annual measurable goals. Specific action plans have also been developed to achieve those goals and objectives.

If locally developed tests are used, discuss how they are used and what impact they have on the curriculum and any measurable goal decisions

Achievement House Charter School uses Scantron and Study Island as other assessment sources to determine student achievement levels and progress in math, reading, and writing.

Scantron and Study Island are both online assessment tools. Students take reading, writing, and math tests on the web, and results are immediately available for viewing. Results of these tests from each testing period can be compared to determine individual and collective student progress. The Scantron test also serves as a method to determine student progress. In addition, the Scantron test is also utilized in determining course placement for new students enrolling in Achievement House Charter School.

Using the Scantron test, students are assessed for academic gains in reading, math, and writing. In 2007-2008, we plan to test students three times during the year. We will be using Scantron for at least two of those local assessments and will be evaluating other assessment tools that might be available to use for the third testing.

Study Island, a web-based state assessment preparation program, is utilized for instructional and diagnostic purposes. The program is organized with topics covering all the PA assessment anchors which contain a lesson and assessment questions with explanations. Each student must take a pre-test, complete all content groups covering all the assessment anchors, and pass a post-test in order to complete the program.

In turn, the Achievement House Charter School staff can view usage statistics for each student, student sub-group, and the entire school. This data helps teachers measure progress and identify deficiencies as they relate to the specific anchor.

The teaching/mentoring staff have a wide variety of diagnostic information available to them as listed below:

1. Scantron (discussed in other sections of this report)

   Math Measures

   Reading Measures

   Language Arts Measures

2. Survey Data covering

   Student reactions to school, courses, and teachers

   Educational Facilitator reactions to school, courses, and teachers

   Staff attitudes

   Educational Facilitators with student on Academic Probation

   Students on Academic Probation

   2006 Graduates

   New Educational Facilitators

   New Students

   Special Education Educational Facilitators

   Special Education Students

3. PSSA data on Reading and Math - Analysis of 9 demographics overall (see Attachment N)

   Gender

Ethnic Categories of

Asian

African American

Caucasian

IEP

Economic Status

Time Spent at Achievement House Charter School

4. Study Island

Math

Reading

Writing

PSSA Prediction

While the basic results of Study Island are provided in other sections of this report, the information listed below will cover the diagnostics which are available from Study Island.

The teachers have access to reports on individual students or on class performance in Math and Reading. The diagnostic categories are extensive so the weaknesses of the class or individual can be ascertained. Math has 36 diagnostic categories, Reading 21, and Writing 13. An example of diagnostic categories, based on anchors, for each subject is listed below:

Math

- Simplify Polynomial Factors
- Order of Operations
- Distance, Midpoint and Slope
- Graph Linear Functions
- Probability

Reading

- Roots, Prefixes, and Suffixes
- Fact and Opinion

- Character Analysis
- Theme
- Bias and Propaganda

Writing

- Writing for Audience and Purpose
- Edit Writing
- Using Parts of Speech
- Spelling
- Writing Organization

Please describe features of the student achievement plan and note the usage of teacher observations, surveys, portfolios or other local instruments to measure student progress.

Achievement House Charter School's Student Achievement Plan outlines measures the school takes to improve and/or maintain the achievement of all students. These measures reflect a focus on the individual. Please see a summary of initiatives,
below:

☐ Developmentally and culturally relevant assessment is used as a tool for improved student learning and instruction.

☐ An assessment system based on ongoing teacher evaluation of student work results in informed decisions about curriculum, instruction, and learning.

☐ Multiple evaluation formats provide information about student learning. The use of Study Island for Math and Language Arts, and future testing for Social Sciences and Science, aid in appropriate placement and continuous evaluation of standards acquisition.

☐ Analysis of multiple sources of data about student performance is accessible to teachers in a timely manner

☐ Multiple strategies and interventions will assist students in performing proficiently on local and statewide tests. Frequent use of testing such as Scantron, Study Island, and PSSA and SAT practice tests aid the student in becoming accustomed to a variety of testing formats.

☐ All students have access to high quality instruction in every curricular area focused on increasing student achievement.

☐ In addition to standards-based, teacher-developed courses, third party courses are offered to increase the variety of elective curriculum options for all students. Course offerings are based on surveys of students' interests. These courses enable students to pursue areas of interest with an

expected increase in the interest in learning and achievement at Achievement House Charter School.

- A strong and continuous cycle of assessment and instruction including technologies such as online testing, web-based curriculum and online chats with audio capability for discussion and presentations, is utilized in conjunction with certified teachers, mentors, to ensure that student strengths and weaknesses are addressed.

- Bloom's Taxonomy will be used to increase the level of questions and discussion

- Assessments will be based on standards acquisition, and correlated to the assessment anchors, to aid in directing individual student learning.

- The cyber school setting provides more individualized, focused instruction. The mentoring program allows for the development of strong relationships between students and school personnel.

- Students are supported in performing at proficient levels through interventions and specialized instruction

- Identification and evaluation of current intervention and remediation efforts support effective programs and eliminate ineffective ones.

- Coordinated opportunities for students assure that interventions and/or remediation are connected to, and not isolated from, the curriculum

- Successful models and technology from across the nation are identified for implementation. Components of the AVID (Advancement via Individual Determination and the Gates Small Schools models have been utilized in our program.

- Increased use of Project Based Learning and Webquests to enhance motivation and involvement of students.

- Every student feels supported academically and personally throughout the school experience

- Academic and personal support from the teachers and mentors engage students in courses and build resiliency and a sense of personal accomplishment.

- Database available for the student's teachers and mentors to ensure continuity of support and awareness of student's needs.

- Collaboration between the staff and students, student to student and between school and family increases student motivation and interest in learning process

- The school encourages family involvement at school-related events, parent/student — faculty chats, sitting in on classes, and volunteerism. The school is parent-friendly.

- A special orientation to cyber education, as it pertains to Achievement House Charter School, is provided to all students and Educational Facilitators. Improvements have been made to the website to allow easier parental access to status of assignment completion, students achievement, and student attendance pattern.

- As research has validated, parent involvement at Achievement House Charter School will increase student involvement and interest. Parents have been encouraged to form a parent organization and to assist staff members in offering clubs, establishing field trips, etc. Communication with the parents is also fostered through parent — teacher/mentor conferences, online chats, and scheduled Achievement House Charter School Board of Trustees Meetings.

- Internal and external communications are clear, accurate, efficient, effective, and relevant.

- A clearly defined mission and vision ensure the involvement and commitment of all employees

- Parent and student surveys and online chats for parents and students promote a culture of communication and collaboration.

- The Charter Board provides strategic leadership through the communications and coalition-building process.

As listed on the PDE-426, "Semi-annual Employee Evaluation Form for Instructional I Teachers", these sources of evidence are lesson/unit plans; resources/materials/technology; assessment materials; information about students; teacher conferences/interviews; classroom observations; and teacher resource documents. Annual surveys include evaluations of each course, such as lesson plans, the textbook, the teacher, etc. These are being stored in a data bank for teacher appraisal. Teachers also have a web site, Surveyconsole.net which makes it easy to create and conduct an online survey for their individual course for parent and student feedback. The purpose is to allow the teacher to obtain student feedback on aspects of the course. The data is scored automatically and open ended responses are listed.

b. Describe the strategies and interventions that are in place to ensure that students who are at-risk of failure, or those not making reasonable progress, are being addressed. What opportunities are they afforded in order to help them succeed? Provide clear evidence that demonstrates how those strategies are proving to be effective in terms of improved academic performance.

For the 2006-2007 school year, students were assessed upon enrollment with a standards-based assessment in the areas of reading and math. Special educations students, or at risk students, are also assessed in the area of Language Arts. Students are also assessed at the end of the school year to track progress. This assessment also generates suggested learning objectives that maybe used to direct instruction by all teachers instructing that student. The suggested learning objectives generated are based upon the student's area of need within the PA standards and assessment anchors for that particular subject area. Any student who may be at risk academically, or with attendance issues, will be assessed and possibly evaluated for needed modifications to ensure success.

For the 2006-2007 school year, students were placed on their instructional level, in the area of math, according to entrance assessments. If needed, modifications were provided as deemed necessary by the staff. If greater intervention appeared to be needed, beyond modifications which had already been provided, students were referred to the Student Success Team for further discussion and possible intervention strategies. If more interventions were required, those students were referred for further evaluations and possible special education services.

The regular education teachers and the special education teachers collaborate on an ongoing basis to help meet the needs of students who may be at risk or struggling.

Achievement House Charter School also provided one-on-one and small group Math tutoring to some students at risk of failing. It enabled 73.3% of students to succeed in getting credit for their courses.

Additional Math courses and class sections were added to provide instruction at the student's mathematical instructional level as determined by Scantron and locally developed formative assessments.

All of the above programs will continue in the 2007-2008 school year.

Student Assessment - Attachments

- Student Assessment
- Student Assessment
- Student Assessment
- Student Assessment

Teacher Evaluation

Teacher Evaluation

a. List the main features of the school's teacher evaluation plan.

The process for evaluating teachers at Achievement House Charter School continues to be based upon processes as defined in the Teacher Induction Plan and use of the appropriate PDE forms 426, 427, and 428 as specified by the Pa Department of Education Performance and Assessment Process as in Chapter 49. The particular form is matched with the certification level of each professional employee at Achievement House Charter School. Non-certified staff is held to the same criteria to establish internal instructional consistency throughout the organization.

The foundation of the supervision, observation, evaluation, and rating process at Achievement House Charter School follows the professional development model authored by Charlotte Danielson "The Frameworks Model" and the work on teacher evaluation by Danielson and McGreal" As more staff members achieve Level II Certification and tenure, Achievement House Charter School professional staff will also be given the option of participating in a differentiated supervisory model as advocated by Glatthorn, Duke, Glickman, and DuFour and Eaker.

During the 2006-2007 school year, all teachers, whether PDE certified or not, were observed using the structure of PDE form 427/428. A pre-observation and post-observation conference was held prior to a formal observation and all lesson requirements were expected to be reflected in the following rubrics:

1. planning and preparation

2. classroom environment

3. instructional delivery

4. professionalism

Lesson development must also have conformed to the UBD template based on the work of Wiggins and McTighe.

During the pre-observation conference, the principal discussed the following artifacts prior to the meeting:

1. Unit and lesson plans which have been correlated to Pa standards and assessment anchors

2. Resources, materials, and technology utilized to impact student learning and achievement

3. Assessment materials and processes to be used

4. Essential information about class and individual students

At the post-observation conference, teachers were required to self-assess their performance on the twenty rubrics pertaining to instructional and classroom environment and planning and preparation. A professional colloquium between the teacher and the staff member was then conducted in relationship to the success of the lesson.

A systemic schedule of informal and formal observations was conducted throughout the 2006-2007 school year. Mid year and year end ratings were performed with each professional employee. Artifacts were required for each teacher observation and rating conference. A greater emphasis continues to be placed on teachers submitting electronic portfolios accentuating key achievements during the year.

In addition to actual classroom observations, professional employees were evaluated on their contributions to the school utilizing the four rubrics as specified in PDE-426, 427 and 428 — Category I — Planning and Preparation, Category II — Classroom Environment, Category III — Instructional Deliveries, Category IV - Professionalism.

These procedures will remain in effect in the future.

b. List entities/individuals who are responsible for teacher and staff evaluation.

b. The school principal is certified and qualified to evaluate teaching staff.

c. Describe professional development for the evaluators, particularly in the areas of Special Education and instructional techniques, that is unique to the mission of the charter school.

c. The professional development of the principal of Achievement House Charter School is unique not only to the mission and vision of the school's charter but perhaps in the state of

Pennsylvania. His past professional credits have included chairman of the Educational Leadership Program at Gwynedd-Mercy College, Superintendent of School, and Adjunct Professor at local colleges, as well as active involvement in ASCD, PASCD, PDK , the PAESSP, and PCCS organizations.

The principal has also taken advantage of PDE and Pattan workshops, brain-based learning conferences, curriculum and assessment workshops and charter school conferences. He is advised on a daily basis by the Coordinator of Special Education for the school. When necessary, the school's solicitor is also consulted for information related to professional development and special education training.

Teacher Evaluation - Attachments

- Teacher Evaluation
- Teacher Evaluation
- Teacher Evaluation
- Teacher Evaluation
- Teacher Evaluation
- Teacher Evaluation

SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

Leadership Changes

There were several changes in the Board membership during the 2006-2007 school year. Several of the exiting Board members had been on the Board of Achievement House Charter School since its inception. Board member Larry Kurtz resigned from the Board on October 17, 2006. His position has been filled by Alyssa Heeneke. Ms. Heeneke joined the Board on October 17, 2006. At the Annual Meeting on July 17, 2007, Ms. Heeneke was elected Vice-President of the Board. Board member Anne Veghte resigned from the Board on October 26, 2006. Her position has since been filled by Richard Brickley. Mr. Brickley joined the Board on December 19, 2006. Mr. Brickley was elected President of the Board at the July 17, 2007 Annual meeting. Ms. Gwen Polk and Mr. John Kruidenier resigned from the Board effective December 31, 2006. Ms. Polk's position was filled by Vince Bowers on March 6, 2007. Mr. Kruidenier's position was filled by George Zorgo on March 20, 2007. Cheryl Van Buskirk completed her term as President of the Board. Ms. VanBuskirk was elected Secretary/Acting Treasurer at the July 17, 2007 Annual Meeting. The exiting Board members resigned throughout the year for personal reasons.

Additionally, there was an administrative change at Achievement House Charter School. Due to organizational restructuring, the position of Chief Financial Officer was eliminated. Ms. Helen Baskwill, who served as Chief Financial Officer, has since left her employment with Achievement House Charter School.

Board of Trustees

Name of Trustee	Office (if any)
Richard Brickley	President
Alyssa Heeneke	Vice President
Cheryl VanBuskirk	Secretary/Acting Treasurer
George Zorgo, Jr.	Member
Vince Bowers	Member

Professional Development (Governance)

Professional development for the Board of Trustees has been informal. Our solicitor, Kevin McKenna, Esq., and his associates have advised the Board members on inclusion of and sequencing of topics, appropriateness of topics for executive session, participation rights of the public, board and staff ethics, policy development, and conflict of interest. One staff member, a former trustee of a charter school, has specialized in insuring adherence to the Bylaws in matters such as election of Board members, members' terms, etc. Information developed by the NSBA regarding responsibilities of Board members has been disseminated to the Board of Trustees. Additional professional development will be presented by the Achievement House Charter School Management Team, the school solicitor, and other consultants or governance standards such as:

- Engaging and promoting community support
- Allocating resources to facilitate student achievement
- Maintaining legislative awareness and communicating with local, state, and federal legislative bodies
- Staying current with changing needs and requirements by reviewing educational literature, attending professional development, opportunities and preparing to make informed decision
- Operating as a collective board in making decisions
- Setting annual goals that are aligned with the annual plan
- Adopting a master facilities plan conducive to teaching and learning

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School

The Board of Trustees' has been informed of interaction between the school and the PDE by the CEO and the Principal, as discussed in the charter. The Board has made every effort to address all recommendations by the PDE regarding policies. The Board has also been openly cooperative to all compliance visits and site reviews that the PDE has conducted. The President of the Board and other Board members have made themselves available for interview by the PDE or site evaluator/compliance reviewer.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School - Attachment

- COORDINATION OF THE GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT OF THE SCHOOL

Community and Parent Engagement

The Board of Trustees' strives at all times to promote opportunities for community and parent engagement at Achievement House Charter school activities by:

- Distributing relevant information about the school
- Productive methods of communication to the board and appropriate staff
- Seeking input through a variety of sources

- Including stakeholders in all communication

Specific examples of engaging the parents and community in school activities during the 2006-2007 school year include:

- The electronic representation of the Parent Representative to the majority of the Board of Trustees meetings

- Monthly parent-student/staff virtual chats

- A suggestion/concern link on the Achievement House Charter School website for parent concerns, comments, etc.

- A twenty-four hour response time to parent questions, comments, concerns

- Board of Trustees adherence to Sunshine Laws

- Public comment section available at all Board of Trustees meetings

- Solicitation of parent volunteers at various school events i.e. graduation, clubs, field trips, etc.

SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Major fund-raising activities

There were no major fund raising activities during this year and none are planned for the upcoming year.

Fiscal Solvency Policies

The school board adopts an annual budget in June prior to the upcoming fiscal year. All purchasing and expense allocation throughout the fiscal year must align with the budget. The administration and board monitors fiscal activity, as related to the annual budget, on a monthly basis. Monthly reviews also include accounts receivable and accounts payable.

Accounting System

Achievement House maintains its books on a fund accounting basis in accordance with GAAP. It maintains a chart of accounts based on the Pennsylvania State Chart of Accounts for PA Public Schools, and all PDE reports are filed in this format. The accounting firm that works with the school is revising the school's chart of accounts to further align the account codes with the state chart of accounts. Quick Books Accounting Software is used to classify, capture and report income and expenditures.

Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances - Attachment

- Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances

Audit Firm, Date of Last Audit, Auditor's Opinion, and Any Findings Resulting From the Audit

Achievement House Charter School selected Siegal and Drossner to perform the 2005-2006 audit report. They have been engaged to conduct the 2006-2007 audit, with an anticipated completion date before October 2007. The 2005-2006 audit is attached and has a completion date of October 9, 2006. The audit report identified three findings. An independent accounting firm was hired by the school in August of 2006 to help address the findings.

Audit Firm, Date of Last Audit, Auditor's Opinion, and Any Findings Resulting From the Audit - Attachment

- Audit Firm, Date of Last Audit, Auditor's Opinion, and Any Findings Resulting From the Audit

Citations and follow-up actions for any State Audit Report

None.

SECTION VII. FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES

Acquisition of Facilities, Furniture, Fixtures, and Equipment During the Last Fiscal Year

The capital expenditures for the year were computer equipment leases in the amount of $292,278.

Future Facility Plans and Other Capital Needs

The school has identified the need for further computer purchases for the upcoming year. These computers will be used to replace expiring hardware and to supply new students with computers. The school anticipates needing between 200-300 new computers during the upcoming year.

During the 2006-2007 school year, and with plans being made for the 2007-2008 school year, many technological changes occurred at Achievement House Charter School. An additional 140 computers, monitors, and printers were ordered to address growth and troubleshooting issues experienced throughout the year. In addition, there was a conference bridge installed to accommodate team conference calls and training calls in order to cut down on travel expenses. Utilizing this new technology has allowed a significant savings in travel expenses. Due to its success, there are plans to install an additional conference bridge card and lines to support full staff meetings. Ultimately this system will also allow us to eliminate the current conference service being used and create a considerable monthly savings.

Another new technology potentially being implemented over the next school year will be “thin client” computers. This new device will eventually replace all current desktop computers being used by Achievement House students. It will allow the same access the students currently have to the school site, but with better security features. In addition it will also facilitate a uniformed process to be created to upgrade students systems. Utilizing a centralized system will also decrease cost associated with computer upgrades as well as for those students who chose to leave Achievement House Charter School. Implementation of this new technology will also allow us to increase our retrieval rate for the computers because once the “thin client” is disconnected from communicating with the centralized server,it becomes inoperable and cannot be utilized elsewhere.

Achievement House Charter School will also potentially be implementing its own internal Microsoft Exchange Network for the administration offices. Even though the actual network equipment will be hosted off-site, the applications will be available to all.

SECTION VIII. HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

Compliance With Health and Safety Requirements and Maintenance of Health and Immunizations Records for Students

Achievement House Charter School's Board of Trustees has approved policies, developed by our solicitor, relating to Crisis Management and Fire Drills which comply with health and safety requirements.

Achievement House Charter School also requires enrolling students to provide their immunization records and health records.

Compliance With Health and Safety Requirements and Maintenance of Health and Immunizations Records for Students - Attachments

- COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS AND MAINTENANCE OF HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATIONS RECORDS FOR STUDENTS
- Compliance with Health and Safety Requirements and Maintenance of Health and Immunization Records for Students

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs

The school currently holds the following policies:

Property, General Liability, and Auto — The Hartford:

1,000,000 — each occurrence

1,000,000 — personal/advertising injury limit

2,000,000 — general aggregate

2,000,000 — products-complete operations

300,000 - fire

10,000 - medical payments

1,000,000 — Hired Auto

Commerical Inland Marine — The Hartford:

597,000 Computer and electronic equipment

Workers Compensation — The Hartford:

Bodily Injury — accident — 500,000 each, disease — 500,000 policy limit

Umbrella — The Hartford:

Policy Limit — 1,000,000 Self insured retention — 10,000

Errors and Omissions — National Union:

Policy Limit — 1,000,000

Sexual Molestation — Lexington:

1,000,000 each victim limit

Dishonesty Bond — CAN Surety:

25,000 policy limit

EMPLOYEE BENEFITS:

Independence Blue Cross — Keystone Health Plan East and Personal Choice

Delta Dental — Gettysburg Health Administrators

North American Benefits Corp. — Life and Disability

SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff

During the 2006-2007 school year, Achievement House Charter School employed eighteen (18) teachers and four (4) teacher assistants. Of the twenty-two (22) staff members, sixteen (16) have either Level I or Level II PA certifications status. Of the four (4) teaching assistants, two (2) of the four were PA certified teachers. One teaching assistant had Connecticut certification and is presently pursuing PA certification.

We are privileged to have the majority of staff returning to teach at Achievement House Charter School for the 2007-2008 school year.

During the course of the 2006-2007 school year, 17% of staff members left Achievement House Charter School for career advancement opportunities, job relocations, family responsibilities, and personal reasons.

Due to program reorganization, three (3) full-time employee positions have been eliminated for the 2007-2008 school year.

The high percentage of staff returning each year can be partially explained as follows:

1. Favorable working conditions

2. Salary and fringe benefits package

3. Staff working as a professional learning community

4. Staff collaboration and other best practices professional development opportunities

5. Faculty input into the decision-making process via a personal response and internal committees

6. Trust, respect, and ethos of caring.

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff - Attachments

- Quality of Teaching and Other Staff
- Quality of Teaching and Other Staff

Student Enrollment

2. Student Enrollment

a. **Describe the charter school's student enrollment procedures and policies, including the admissions policy. Describe how all policies and procedures comply with state law. Describe if a lottery was used, how students were placed on a waiting list and how those students were enrolled from the list.**

Any student residing in the state of Pennsylvania, and having completed sufficient credit to enter 9th through 12th grade, is eligible for admission to Achievement House Charter School. All applicants who completed the enrollment process were entered in the school. With permission from the PDE, the Board of Trustees voted to close the admission process to all at the start of the fourth period.

Achievement House Charter School is committed to treating all individuals, without regard to unlawful considerations of race, color, gender, national origin, religion, age, marital status, sexual orientation or disability as those terms are defined by law or any other legally protected basis in all aspects including, but not limited to its activities, program or employment practices, as required by State and Federal
Law.

Achievement House Charter School will provide each enrolled student with a disability, as established in an IEP, without cost to the student or family, those related accommodations which are needed to participate in and obtain the benefits of the school program and extracurricular activities without discrimination and to the maximum extent of the student's ability.

Below are the procedures for enrolling at Achievement House Charter School:

1. Parent/Guardian completes the enrollment forms using the enclosed checklist as a guideline.

2. Completed forms may be mailed or faxed to Achievement House Charter School along with the following required items:

   1. Proof of residence

   2. Copy of student's birth certificate

   3. Student's immunization records (original or copy)

3. Upon receipt of completed forms and required documents, an informational enrollment meeting, in person or by phone, will be scheduled. This meeting will include the Educational Facilitator (parent/legal guardian supervising the educational process of student), the student, and a member of the Achievement House Charter School staff.

Listed below is additional detailed information to assist parents/guardians to finalize the enrollment process:

Step 1. Completing forms.

Enclosed is a package that contains essential forms for enrolling your student at Achievement House Charter School. The accompanying checklist indicates which forms are required immediately. Please track your submission of required documents on the enclosed checklist.

Step 2. Submitting enrollment forms to Achievement House Charter School

Upon completion of the required forms in the enrollment packet, please mail or fax the packet, along with the required additional documentation (proof of residence, student's birth certificate, student's immunization record) to Achievement House Charter School. We cannot complete your enrollment request without these items. Should you wish to submit a copy of the student's transcript with your enrollment packet, or at the informational enrollment meeting, it will serve to expedite the placement process for your student once they are enrolled. Once the completed forms are received at Achievement House Charter School, you will be contacted to schedule the informational enrollment meeting.

Step 3: Informational enrollment meeting

An informational enrollment meeting will be conducted, in person or by phone. This meeting will include the Educational Facilitator (parent or legal guardian supervising educational process of student), the student, and a member of the Achievement House Charter School staff. The purpose of this meeting is the exchange of information between school, student, and family about Achievement House Charter School and its program. This is also an opportunity to present any additional reports or records pertaining to your student's progress in their previous school, such as your student's transcripts, to better inform the Achievement House Charter School staff about your student and expedite the placement process once they are enrolled.

Providing Achievement House Charter School with as much information about your student's prior educational records will serve to expedite and ensure accuracy in the academic placement of your student. It is advised that, during the enrollment process, the Educational Facilitator

should obtain internet service if they do not currently have service. Achievement House Charter School recommends that students use a cable internet provider or DSL provider whenever possible to ensure optimal performance of features on our webportal. Additionally, Educational Facilitators should be aware that an internet filtering system has been installed on all Achievement House Charter School computers to protect students from exposure to inappropriate material.

In the 2006-2007 school year, there was no need to conduct a lottery for admission. There was sufficient space for all students that applied through the end of April, 2007. Enrollment for the 2006-2007 school year was closed by permission granted from the Achievement House Charter School Board of Trustees and the PDE, at the end of April, 2007. All students requesting enrollment after the April closing date were enrolled effective July 1, 2007.

If Kindergarten or First Grade is offered, provide the description of the admission policy with age requirements.

Achievement House Charter School serves students in the ninth to twelfth grades only.

Provide an enrollment history for the past year, by grade level, including the number of students initially enrolled, number dropped and number added. For students who transferred out, indicate the school(s) to which they transferred, if known.

Enrolled at the beginning 2006-2007: 253

9th — 32

10th — 71

11th — 68

12th — 82

Enrolled during 2006-2007: 414

9th — 107

10th — 88

11th — 145

12th — 74

Withdrawn during 2006-2007: 371 - 74 grads = 297

9th — 48

10th — 85

11th — 94 - 1 grad = 93

12th — 144 - 73 grads = 71

Net enrollment at the end of 2006-2007: 296

Provide the number of students who completed the 2006-2007 year who are currently enrolled to return in September.

The number of students enrolled last year that will be returning in September is approximately 296.

Provide numbers of students who were required to leave the school (expulsions, other) and the numbers who left voluntarily.

Students required to leave during 06-07: 145

Students that voluntarily withdrew during 06-07: 152 (297 total from July 06 minus 145 required withdrawals)

Students that graduated during 06-07: **74**

b. Discuss any trends in enrollment including student turnover and retention data. Drawing upon exit interviews and other sources, explain why students choose to, or not to, return to the school. If the school is under-or over-enrolled based on the charter, provide an explanation.

b. Based on exit interviews conducted by mentors, administrative staff, and the manager of student services, the reasons most cited for students returning to their home districts included the following:

* Lack of traditional socialization patterns

* Students needed a more structured environment.

- Students lacked organizational and study skills to be successful in a cyber environment.
- Students failed to comply with Achievement House Charter School and state mandated attendance regulations

3. Transportation

a. Describe the charter school's transportation program. Include in the discussion whether the charter school, the school district, or a private company operates the transportation program. Also, include a description of transportation accommodations for Special Education students and suggestions for improvement to the program.

3. Achievement House Charter School is a cyber charter school. Students attend school from their homes via the internet. We do not provide any transportation.

4. Food Service Program

a. Describe the charter school's food services program. Does the charter school participate in the Free and Reduced Lunch (FRL) Program? If not, provide a brief explanation.

4. Achievement House Charter School is a cyber charter school. Students attend school from their homes via the internet. Since the students are not in a school building we do not offer any food services program.

5. Student Conduct

a. **Describe your expectations for student behavior and discipline. Explain how your discipline policy complies with Chapters 12 of the Public School Code, particularly with respect to due process.**

Achievement House Charter School's current Board and administrative policies and procedures related to discipline are in compliance with Chapter 12 of the Public School Code, particularly with respect to due process.

The conceptual framework for the Achievement House Charter School Chapter 12 Plan is based on Chapter 12 regulations of the PA State Board of Education, Section 17.41. It also reflects key suggestions advocated by the PA Association of Pupil Service Administrators. The conceptual framework is described below:

I. Developmental Services

Developmental services include counseling, psychological services, health services, home and school visitor services, and social work services that support students in addressing their academic, behavioral, health, personal, and social development issues.

II. Diagnostic Intervention and Referral Services

Pupil services staff use diagnostic services to identify barriers that limit a student's success in school. Intervention services actively engage pupil services staff in activities planned to eliminate specific barriers to student success. Pupil services staff may arrange for referrals to other school-based or school-linked professionals or may refer parents and guardians to appropriate community-based services for assistance.

III. Consultation and Coordination Services

Consultation services are used by pupil services staff, in partnership with parents or guardians, to obtain assistance to address barriers and issues that are outside the scope of the student services professional. Consultation and coordination services may be used to assist in the diagnosis, intervention, or referral of students who face barriers to success. Coordination services connect school resources with other available resources to assist students in meeting their educational objectives.

IV. Other Services

Pupil Services personnel fulfill a variety of other functions in the school which contribute to the effectiveness of the system.

As per PDE direction, Achievement House Charter School's Chapter 12 Student Services Plan will be submitted by January, 2008.

In conjunction with the Chapter 12 requirements, our expectation for student behavior is that students should behave in a safe, orderly manner that will encourage the fullest possible educational development of each student. Behavior that interferes with the delivery of

educational services or jeopardizes the health, safety, and well-being of any member of the school community, or the integrity and stability of the school itself, will not be tolerated.

The Achievement House Charter School Student Code of Conduct has been drafted with the Public School Code and due process requirements, as they apply to student discipline, as the guideline. It has also been reviewed by the school solicitor. All conduct requirements and disciplinary actions were developed with an understanding of the students' right to free, appropriate, public education.

b. **Provide the number of suspensions and expulsion by student. (Example: 12 students were involved in 21 suspension incidents and 1 student was expelled).**

b. There was one incident in this school year which resulted in an in-school suspension for one student. No other students were suspended. No students were expelled.

Student Enrollment - Attachment

- Student Enrollment

Transportation

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Food Service Program

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Student Conduct - Attachment

- Student Conduct

CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

Charter School Annual Report
Summary Data
2007 - 2008

Name of School: Achievement House CS

Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval: 07/02/04 initial 07/05/07 renewal

Length of Charter: intial charter 3 years/renewal 5 years **Opening Date:** 09/13/04

Grade Level: 9 - 12 **Hours of Operation:** 8:00am - 4:00pm

Percentage of Certified Staff: 77% **Total Instructional Staff:** 22

Student/ Teacher Ratio: 17:1 **Student Waiting List:** 0

Attendance Rate/Percentage: 100%
Enrollment: 296 **Per Pupil Subsidy:** $9,000.00

Student Profile

American Indian/Alaskan Native:	4
Asian/Pacific Islander:	2
Black (Non-Hispanic):	34
Hispanic:	17
White (Non-Hispanic):	222
Multicultural:	10 + 7 unknown

Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch: 53%

Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December: 70

Number of:	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (FTIME)	ELEM	MIDDLE	SEC.	TOTAL
Instructional Days	0	0	0	0	0	183	183
Instructional Hours	0	0	0	0	0	1100	1100

ASSURANCE FOR THE OPERATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

School Year: 2007

The Achievement House CS within Montgomery County IU 23 assures that the charter school will comply with the requirements of 22 PA Code Chapter 711 and with the policies and procedures of Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). PDE will specify, in writing, policies and procedures to be followed. Requests for any deviations from these regulations, policies, and procedures must be made in writing to PDE. The charter school assures:

1. There are a full range of services, programs and alternative placements available for placement and implementation of the special education programs in the charter school.
2. The charter school has adopted a "child find" system to locate, identify and evaluate children who are thought to be a child with a disability eligible for special education residing within the charter school's jurisdiction. "Child find" data is collected, maintained, and used in decision-making. Child find process and procedures are evaluated for effectiveness. The charter school implements mechanisms to disseminate child find information to the public, organizations, agencies, and individuals on at least an annual basis.
3. The charter school has adopted policies and procedures that assure that students with disabilities are included in general education programs and extracurricular and non-academic programs and activities to the maximum extent appropriate in accordance with an Individualized Education Program.
4. The charter school will comply with the PA Department of Education annual report requirements including special education information.
5. The charter school follows the state and federal guidelines for participation of students with disabilities in state and charter school-wide assessments including the determination of participation, the need for accommodations, and the methods of assessing students for whom regular assessment is not appropriate.
6. The charter school assures the Pennsylvania Department of Education that funds received through participation in the medical assistance reimbursement program, ACCESS, will be used to enhance or expand the current level of services and programs provided to students with disabilities in this local education agency.

This assurance must be signed by the Board President and the Chief Executive Officer for the charter school to operate services and programs.

_____ _____

Board President **Date**

_____ _____

Chief Executive Officer **Date**

Verify that all DATA reports to PDE are complete **YES** _____ **NO** _____

SIGNATURE PAGE

Identify the charter school's Chief Executive Officer.
Name Wallace H. Wallace
Title Dr.
Phone (610)527-0143 ext 130 **Fax** (610)520-1547
E-mail wwallace@achievementcharter.com

_____ _____
Signature of the Chief Executive Officer and Date

Identify the charter school's President of the Board of Trustees.
Name Richard Brickley
Title Mr.
Phone (610)265-4393 **Fax** (610)520-1547
E-mail brickleyrr@comcast.net

_____ _____
Signature of the President of the Board of Trustees and Date

Identify the charter school's Special Education Contact Person.
Name Constance Frownfelter-Brooks
Title Mrs.
Phone (717)567-7188 **Fax** (610)520-1563
E-mail frownie@achievementcharter.com

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Signature of the Special Education Contact Person and Date