
Pennsylvania Department of Education



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
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HARRISBURG, PA 17126-0333

Charter Annual Report **Tuesday, October 09, 2007**

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SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Organization Description

Commonwealth Connections Academy Charter School (CCA) provides a unique form of free public school that students attend from home. This is a program that combines the strong parental involvement of homeschooling, the expertise and accountability of public funded

education, and the flexibility of online classes. The mission of CCA is to help each student maximize his or her potential and meet the highest performance standards. Connections Academy is a high-quality, high-tech, high-touch “school without walls” that brings out the best in every student.

With CCA, parents or other “Learning Coaches” deliver the day-to-day instruction using our proven curriculum that incorporates comprehensive daily lesson plans, textbooks from leading educational publications, and exciting online lessons. Our experienced certified teachers support the Learning Coaches by creating a Personalized Learning Plan that is customized for each child and communicating regularly with parents and students to review assignments and discuss student work. The teachers also serve the students and “Learning Coaches” with “live” real time lessons and tutoring sessions through the Internet.

Who has already chosen Commonwealth Connections Academy? Parents from across the state who have students with a broad range of academic and personal strengths and concerns have chosen CCA. These include:

- Parents with exceptional children who are far ahead or far behind their peers
- Parents whose children are at risk of academic failure
- Parents with homebound children with medical issues
- Parents who live in isolated rural areas
- Parents whose children are pursuing artistic or athletic careers that require flexible schedules
- Basically, parents who think their children would benefit from one-on-one personalized instruction in the home, with a challenging curriculum and support from certified school teachers

Core Purpose

Mission

The mission of Commonwealth Connections Academy is to leverage virtual school technology to help each of its students maximize his or her potential and meet the highest performance standards. This mission is accomplished through a uniquely individualized learning program that combines the best in virtual education with unique technology-based teacher productivity tools and very real connections among students, family, teachers, and the community. Every student has a Personalized Learning Plan and an entire team of adults (including a parent or other learning coach and a Pennsylvania certified teacher) committed to the student’s successful fulfillment of that plan. Commonwealth Connections Academy is a high-quality, high-tech, high-touch virtual “school without walls” that brings out the best in every student through Personalized Performance Learning. . At CCA, experienced certified teachers support parents or other “learning coaches” in delivering day-to-day instruction using the school’s proven curriculum that incorporates comprehensive daily lesson plans, textbooks and related materials from leading educational publications, and exciting online lessons

Vision

Studies show that greater parent participation in education can lead to higher student grades and test scores, higher graduation rates and greater enrollment in post secondary education. At Commonwealth Connections Academy, parents generally serve as personal, face to face learning coaches responsible for their children’s day-to-day education. Parents may also get involved as

local community coordinators who create opportunities for special projects, field trips, and group meetings with other students and parents. CCA also provides an orientation program along with access to discussion groups and counselors to help learning coaches who are new to the challenges and responsibilities of this important role.

Studies have shown that in conventional classrooms, many tasks are mismatched to students' skill levels. At Commonwealth Connections Academy, each student receives individualized instruction, including lessons tailored to that student's academic strengths and weaknesses. Our school year begins with the development of a Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) — blueprint for the student's lessons that year. Throughout the year, the learning coach and the teacher can adjust the lessons to emphasize areas where the student is deficient or step up instruction in a subject where a student has a particular strength or interest.

While there are other cyber schools in Pennsylvania, CCA is unique. The school uses a proprietary curriculum accredited by CITA that combines online synchronous and asynchronous instruction, multimedia and traditional printed textbooks and supplementary materials, including science supplies. CCA also emphasizes the direct involvement and responsibility of the instructional staff in assuring that students have mastered required skills and uses an innovative assessment engine to increase teacher productivity by auto-grading objective answers to permit teachers to devote their expertise to subjective measures. The school's learning management system also provides innovative tools to deliver instruction, measure progress, enhance teacher productivity and meet regulatory requirements.

Shared Values

The CCA Board of Trustees and school staff fervently believe that:

- Greater parent participation in education can lead to higher student grades and test scores, higher graduation rates and greater enrollment in post secondary education.
- Technology and innovations to the traditional classroom-based teaching model combined with dedicated educators and rigorous curriculum can provide a solution for currently unmet student needs.
- Students learn best when lessons match their interests and abilities.
- There is a need to provide a more flexible and personalized form of public school education.

Designed with these beliefs in mind, CCA is a high-quality, high-tech, high-touch “school without walls” that brings out the best in every student

We are committed to measuring our success through evaluations of our parent and student satisfaction; academic performance and fiscal responsibility. We are also committed to providing opportunities for our students and parents to be active in their communities.

Academic Standards

The CCA curriculum combines proven and rigorous print-based materials with the best in technology-enhanced learning such that a significant portion of the curriculum is delivered through the Internet and other electronic means. The entire CCA curriculum has been carefully aligned with Pennsylvania Academic Standards. The Connections Academy curriculum staff has developed a core database of the thousands of standards-based learning objectives represented in the CCA curriculum. The learning objectives are organized into area, standard, level, and

benchmark, correlated with Pennsylvania Academic Standards and supplemented with additional online and other curriculum to ensure that all of the requirements are covered and that complete alignment is achieved.

The Connections Academy curriculum has been CITA-accredited. The accreditation process included a review of the curriculum and how it meets content standards and requirements. CCA staff has worked with Connections Academy curriculum specialists to ensure alignment of the curriculum Pennsylvania Academic Standards, adding content and materials as needed.

The CCA curriculum provides a developmentally appropriate combination of technology with print and hands-on materials for each grade level.

- The K-8 curriculum integrates textbooks, lesson plans and other content from a variety of leading publishers and school programs including Houghton Mifflin, Zaner-Bloser, Prentice Hall, the Calvert school and others. The curriculum also features technology-based content from “best of breed” providers such as Hooked on Phonics®, BrainPop®, Compass, and United Streaming®. CCA teachers use the LiveLesson™ tool, which provides for real-time web conferencing with small groups of students using voice over IP, chat, electronic smartboard, and shared web surfing.
- The curriculum for grades 9 and 10 provides more online experience, as appropriate for secondary school learners. The Pennsylvania standards-aligned high school curriculum integrates digital versions of textbooks from major publishers (primarily Prentice Hall) enhanced by multimedia, interactive material, communication/conferencing tools, and team projects. Top-quality third-party courseware elements from providers such as United Streaming® (digital video on demand) and Eureka Labs® (interactive online science labs) are also licensed as part of the 9-12 curriculum.
- CCA utilizes online, interactive instructional movies that incorporate graphics, video, and audio to explain the concepts and ideas the student needs to complete a lesson. These interactive, online “Teachlets™” are significantly more effective and entertaining than text alone. Interactive online instruction known as “LiveLesson™” is also used to enhance instruction and communications. With this tool, teachers can conduct live teaching sessions over the Internet to either a single student or a group. This new technology is ideal for explaining difficult concepts, conducting review sessions or promoting discussion. Individual tutorial sessions can also be arranged to assist students with specific needs.
- CCA utilized Study Island®, a leading provider of **web-based state assessment preparation programs** and **standards based learning programs**, to obtain more accurate bench marks and provide students practice and instruction in the targeted areas.
- CCA used “Math 24 — First in Math” to provide students with on line interactive challenges to develop and improve critical math skills. This is highly motivating program and has been proven to increase achievement in mathematics.

Strengths and Challenges

CCA's strengths have been:

- Its ability to satisfy parents and students (as evidenced by satisfaction ratings above 90% on annual surveys);
- Its responsiveness to stakeholder needs, as evidenced by the expanding community coordinator program, addition of high school grades, and establishment of the Philadelphia location;
- Its ability to attract and retain high-quality teachers;

- Its success in increasing PSSA test participation and scores despite the special challenges of the virtual setting; and
- Its ability to accommodate individual learning styles and improve achievement of all students through the use of each student's Personalized Learning Plan (PLP).

CCA implements evidence based instructional techniques and strategies; provides on-line tutorial and instructional sessions for students and learning coaches; provides students identified as basic or below basic with remedial programs directed towards mastery of eligible content; implements programs to support learning coaches and parents.

CCA's weaknesses are clustered around PSSA performance in specific subgroups. In particular, based on data from 2006-2007, the CCA subgroup of IEP students across all grade levels need more support and focus on the eligible content and anchors in both reading and math. The IEP subgroup did make AYP in math because of SAFE HARBOR. The General Student body made AYP in Math with a score of 55.3% and in Reading with a score of 63.2%.

SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Strategic Planning Process

Commonwealth Connections Academy (CCA) is a Public Cyber Charter School. As such, Commonwealth Connections Academy does not and is not required to complete a Strategic Plan that is developed every six years and reviewed every third year. Instead, Commonwealth Connections Academy submits, every 5 years, a Charter Renewal Document, and, every year, an Annual Report.

Although CCA does not complete a Strategic Plan, every year CCA does engage in strategic planning .

Every year a planning committee comprised of all the Board of Directors members, the C.E.O., principals, assistant principals, and teachers, reviews and analyzes data pertaining to student achievement and parent surveys. Using this data and teacher input, the curriculum is modified or revised and new programs and curriculum are recommended for review and possible adoption to the Cyber School setting. Procedures for delivery of curriculum and policies pertaining to student accountability are also reviewed. Based upon an analysis of internal and external needs, the board then approves a plan for the school specifying priorities for actions and action plans developed by the committee to achieve long range and short range goals.

There are seven members of the Board of Directors for CCA. The Board members are parents of CCA students, professional business people, and community advocates. The members of the Board reside in 6 different counties in Pennsylvania. Three of the Board members have children attending CCA.

 The template provided by PDE for the section on Goals, Strategies and Activities does not permit entry of 2006 - 2007 dates. Therefore, the data charts appear incomplete. In order to provide more clarity of the 06-07 Goals, we have included a Goal, Strategy, and Activities chart in this section of the report.

#	Goals	Strategies	Activities
1	CCA students will improve overall academic performance.	1. CCA will provide direct instructional opportunities for all students.	1. Teachers will average 2 LiveLessons each week. 2. Teachers will archive LiveLessons by use of

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. CCA students will demonstrate at least one year's academic growth in grades 3-8. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. CCA teachers in grades K-8 will use LiveLessons at least once a month to work with students or parents. 4. CCA will use a technology based standardized pre-test and post-test commercially prepared to gauge yearly progress. The test is administered at the beginning and end of the year.
<p>2 CCA will develop stronger student/teacher and student/student interactions.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CCA teachers will attend at least two community activities or field trips during each school year. 2. CCA students will engage in community activities that will also promote student interaction and provide opportunities for face to face meetings with their teachers. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CCA will secure 11 Community Coordinators for individual regions. The Community Coordinator will survey all household to solicit appropriate ideas for enrichment activities. 2. CCA will provide increased opportunities for students to develop social skills by offering opportunities to attend field trips which are educational and recreational. Each student will have access to at least 2 activities each month. 3. CCA will provide enrichment activities in music, art, and sports for all students. CCA will utilize their Community Involvement Coordinator to develop relationships with vendors around the state to create and implement Community Classes and programs for students around the state. In 2007-2007, CCA worked closely with 397 vendors around the state in setting up and implementing 900 community classes around the state. 4. CCA will sponsor science field trips/demonstrations planned by Science teachers. 5. CCA will inaugurate a Robotics Club and activities. 6. CCA will inaugurate a Spelling Bee for select elementary grades. 7. CCA will organize a project fair for all students. 8. Each of the 11 Community Coordinators will have at least

		one teacher to use as a resource and partner in planning and implementing field trips.
3 CCA will maintain and improve overall parent satisfaction with the program. On the Parent Satisfaction Survey, the Parent Perception of Overall Program Quality will be above 3.4, and the participation rate must be above 60%.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teachers will maintain regular contacts with parents and respond to all communications within 2 days. 2. Teachers will encourage parents to participate in the parent survey. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teachers with students in grades K-5 will maintain biweekly phone contacts with students and will perform instructional activities while conversing with students to ensure mastery of previously learned skills. 2. Teachers with students in grades K-5 will communicate with the learning coaches at least once per month. 3. Students in grades 6-11 will communicate with their subject area teachers or homeroom teachers at least biweekly through the use of LiveLessons and the telephone. Content mastery will be checked through these communications. 4. Teachers will provide in-person and/or LiveLesson tutoring whenever appropriate (through office hours and by appointment).
4 At least 45% of all students will be proficient in Mathematics, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments.	CCA will use multiple resources, as described, to improve performance for all students in Math skills by using various technology-based programs.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CCA will provide access to Math 24, an interactive website used to increase student performance in Math skills using games and skills activities. 2. CCA will implement PACE which provides individualized lessons and practice to students performing below proficient on state testing directly related to state standards and areas of weakness as seen on PSSA results. Students are provided weekly pre and post tests to assess mastery of each skill presented. 3. CCA will utilize Skills Tutor, a technologically-based, online program aimed at building basic skills in order to improve performance in Math and

		<p>Language Arts.</p> <p>4. CCA will provide students with Study Island, an interactive web-site directly linked to Pennsylvania State Standards used to improve performance for all students.</p>
<p>5 At least 54% of all students will be proficient in Reading, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments.</p>	<p>CCA will utilize a variety of programs in order to improve performance of students in the area of reading.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CCA will implement PACE which provides individualized lessons and practice to students performing below proficient on state testing directly related to state standards and areas of weakness as seen on PSSA results. Students are provided weekly pre and post tests to assess mastery of each skill presented. 2. CCA will utilize Skills Tutor, a technologically-based, online program aimed at building basic skills in order to improve performance in Math and Language Arts. 3. CCA will provide students with Study Island, an interactive web-site directly linked to Pennsylvania State Standards used to improve performance for all students.
<p>6 At least 95% of eligible students will participate in required state-wide assessments.</p>	<p>CCA will make access to test sites more convenient.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CCA will have at least 20 sites around the state for students to attend state testing. 2. CCA will form relationships with Intermediate Units around the state to administer the PSSA. CCA will utilize at least 10 I.U.s around the state.
<p>7 Further the mission of leveraging technology for personalized performance learning by reaching a broader audience with additional supports and an ever-improving curriculum and instructional program.</p>	<p>CCA will analyze a variety of data to make decisions for expansion of facilities, curriculum, and assessments.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Expansion to grade 12 in 2008-09 with curriculum aligned to PA Academic Standards. 2. Expansion to grade 11 in 2007-08 with curriculum aligned to PA Academic Standards. 3. Use data to determine the need for additional satellite office to benefit concentrated areas where families might benefit from a place to gather and interact in person with teachers. 4. Improve and expand the

		<p>curriculum with focus on the PSSA in term of coverage, sequencing, and emphasis.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Focus on refinement of the formative assessment tools used to identify students in need of academic instructional intervention and support. 6. Each student will have a profile of academic strengths and weaknesses at the beginning of the school year. Internal assessments (formal and informal) will track progress on addressing individual areas of weakness.
8 Focus professional development on research—based and evidenced-based strategies for students’ instruction and teaching practices.	Teachers will receive training in skills of cyber teaching.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Teachers will receive training in implementing Math 24. 2. Teachers will receive training in implementing and manipulating Study Island to address individual learning needs of students. 3. All new teachers will participate in two "Teacher Orientation" courses developed by CA. 4. Teachers will participate in yearly training of Special Education updates (laws, processes).

10/20/2018

Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Cheryl Lozier	Parent	Board Member	Board of Directors
David Taylor	Business Community	Board Member	Board of Directors
Dennis Tulli	Connections Academy	Administrator	Connections Academy
Gail A. Hawkins Bush	Community Member	Board Member	Board of Directors
Gary Madden	Connections Academy	Administrator	Connections Academy

Gregory Gettle	Connections Academy	Administrator	Connections Academy
Jan Rutt	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Special Education Representative	Board of Directors
Jerry Birmelin	Business Community	Board Member	Board of Directors
Joanna Shelley	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Elementary School Teacher	Board of Directors
Judith Miller	Community Member	Board Member	Board of Directors
Laurie Hamilton	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Secondary School Teacher	Board of Directors
Marcie Mulligan	Parent	Board Member	Board of Directors
Pamela Espinosa	Parent	Board Member	Board of Directors
Rachel Bailey	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Middle School Teacher	Board of Directors
Susan Shubert	Connections Academy	Administrator	Connections Academy

Goals, Strategies and Activities

Goal: Demonstrate Student Academic Growth

Description: CCA students will improve overall academic performance.

Strategy: Demonstrating One Year Academic Growth

Description: CCA students will demonstrate at least one year's academic growth in grades 3-8.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
LEAP test	CCA will use a technology based standardized pre-test and post-test commercially prepared to gauge yearly progress. The test is administered at the beginning and end of the year.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Susan Shubert	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Strategy: Direct Instruction

Description: CCA will provide direct instructional opportunities for all students.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
LiveLessons	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers will average 2 LiveLessons each week. Teachers will archive LiveLessons by use of message boards. CCA teachers in grades K-8 will use LiveLessons at least once a month to work with students or parents. 	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Susan Shubert	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Goal: Ensure Student Participation in State Assessments

Description: At least 95% of eligible students will participate in required state-wide assessments.

Strategy: Test Site Placement

Description: CCA recognizes the importance of site location and availability for PSSA testing. CCA will improve access to test sites.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Building Relationships with local Intermediate Units	In order to secure test sites in more areas of the state, CCA recognized the importance of forming relationships with Intermediate Units around the state. CCA utilized 12 I.U.s around the state.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
David Carr	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Test Sites Available	CCA will have at least 20 sites around the state for students to attend state testing.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
David Carr	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Goal: Improve Student Academic Achievement in Mathematics

Description: At least 45% of all students will be proficient in Mathematics, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments.

Strategy: Supplemental Resources

Description: CCA used multiple resources as described below to improve performance for all students in Math skills by using various technology-based programs.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Math 24	Math 24 is an interactive website used to increase student performance in Math skills using games and skills activities	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Rachel Bailey	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description
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PACE (Program for ALL Children to Excel)	PACE provides individualized lessons and practice to students performing below proficient on state testing directly related to state standards and areas of weakness as seen on PSSA results. Students are provided weekly pre and post tests to assess mastery of each skill presented.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Susan Shubert	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Skills Tutor	Skills Tutor is a technologically-based, online program aimed at building basic skills in order to improve performance in Math and Language Arts.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Susan Shubert	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Study Island	Study Island is an interactive web-site directly linked to Pennsylvania State Standards used to improve performance for all students.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Holly Bryzcki	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Goal: Improve Student Academic Achievement in Reading

Description: At least 54% of all students will be proficient in Reading, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments.

Strategy: Supplemental Programs

Description: CCA will utilize a variety of programs in order to improve performance of students in the area of reading.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
PACE (Program for ALL Children to Excel)	PACE provides individualized lessons and practice to students performing below proficient on state testing directly related to state standards and areas of weakness as seen on PSSA results. Students are provided weekly pre and post tests to assess mastery of each skill presented.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Susan Shubert	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Skills Tutor	Skills Tutor is a technologically-based, online program aimed at building basic skills in order to improve performance in Math and Language Arts.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Susan Shubert	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Study Island	Study Island is an interactive web-site directly linked to Pennsylvania State Standards used to improve performance for all students.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Holly Bryzcki	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Goal: Parent Satisfaction

Description: CCA will maintain and improve overall parent satisfaction with the program. On the Parent Satisfaction Survey, the Parent Perception of Overall Program Quality will be above 3.4, and the participation rate must be above 60%.

Strategy: Communications with families

Description: Teachers will maintain regular contacts with parents and respond to all communications within 2 days.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Instructional Contacts (6-11)	3. Students in grades 6-11 will communicate with their subject area teachers or homeroom teachers at least biweekly through the use of LiveLessons and the telephone. Content mastery will be checked through these communications.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Greg Gettle	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Instructional Contacts (K-5)	CCA teachers of students in grades K-5 will make contacts via telephone and perform instructional activities while conversing with students to ensure mastery of previously learned skills.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Susan Shubert	Start: N/A	\$0.00

	Finish: N/A	
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Activity	Description	
Learning Coach Contacts (K-5)	Teachers with students in grades K-5 will communicate with the learning coaches at least once per month.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Susan Shubert	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Tutoring	Teachers will provide in-person and/or LiveLesson tutoring whenever appropriate (through office hours and by appointment).	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Susan Shubert	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Goal: Support Community Involvement and Promote Student Interaction

Description: CCA will develop stronger student/teacher and student/student interactions.

Strategy: Educational/Social Opportunities

Description: CCA students will engage in community activities that will also promote student interaction and provide opportunities for face to face meetings with their teachers.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Community Classes	CCA will provide enrichment activities in music, art and sports for all students. In 2006-2007, CCA worked closely with 397 vendors around the state in setting up and implementing 900 community classes around the state.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
James Alex	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Community Coordinators	CCA will secure 11 Community Coordinators for individual regions. The Community Coordinator will survey all households to solicit ideas for appropriate enrichment activities.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
James Alex	Start: N/A	\$0.00

	Finish: N/A	
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Activity	Description	
Field Trips/Activities	CCA will provide increased opportunities for students to develop social skills by offering opportunities to attend field trips which are educational and recreational. Each student will have access to at least 2 activities each month.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
James Alex	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Project Fair	CCA will organize and implement a Project Faire for all students.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
James Alex	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Robotics Club	CCA will inaugurate a Robotics Club and activities.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Greg Gettle	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Science Field Trips/Demonstrations	CCA will sponsor science field trips/demonstrations planned by Science teachers	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
James Alex	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Spelling Bee	CCA will inaugurate a Spelling Bee for select elementary students.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
James Alex	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Strategy: Teacher Attendance on Field Trips/Community Activities

Description: CCA teachers will attend at least two community activities or field trips during each school year.

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Community Coordinators	CCA will secure 11 Community Coordinators for individual regions. The Community Coordinator will survey all households to solicit ideas for appropriate enrichment activities.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
James Alex	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Increase in number of field trips and community classes	CCA will provide increased opportunities for students to develop social skills by offering opportunities to attend field trips which are educational and recreational. Each student will have access to at least 2 activities each month.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
James Alex	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Teacher and Community Coordinator Pairings	Each of the 11 Community Coordinators will have at least one teacher to use as a resource and partner in planning and implementing field trips.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
James Alex	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Goal: Use of Technology to Improve Performance

Description: Further the mission of leveraging technology for personalized performance learning by reaching a broader audience with additional supports and an ever-improving curriculum and instructional program.

Strategy: Data Analysis

Description: CCA will analyze a variety of data to make decisions for expansion of facilities, curriculum, and assessments.

Activities:

Activity	Description
Assessment Expansion	Focus on refinement of the formative assessment tools used to identify students in need of academic instructional intervention and support

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Dennis Tulli	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Curriculum Expansion	Improve and expand the curriculum with focus on the PSSA in term of coverage, sequencing, and emphasis.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Dennis Tulli	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Grade Level Expansion	1. Expansion to grade 12 in 2008-09 with curriculum aligned to PA Academic Standards. 2. Expansion to grade 11 in 2007-08 with curriculum aligned to PA Academic Standards.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Dennis Tulli	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Personalized Learning Plan	Each student will have a profile of academic strengths and weaknesses at the beginning of the school year. Internal assessments (formal and informal) will track progress on addressing individual areas of weakness.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Susan Shubert	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Satellite Offices	Use data to determine the need for additional satellite office to benefit concentrated areas where families might benefit from a place to gather and interact in person with teachers.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Susan Shubert	Start: N/A Finish: N/A	\$0.00

Statement of Quality Assurance - Attachment

- Quality Assurance Review Form

SECTION III. QUALITY OF SCHOOL DESIGN

Rigorous Instructional Program

What curriculum does your charter school utilize?

CCA has adopted the Connections Academy curriculum, which combines proven and rigorous print-based materials with the best in technology-enhanced learning such that a significant portion of the curriculum is delivered through the Internet and other electronic means. The Connections Academy curriculum has been CITA-accredited.

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

The entire CCA curriculum has been carefully aligned with Pennsylvania Academic Standards. Curriculum staff has developed a core database of the thousands of standards-based learning objectives represented in the Connections Academy curriculum. The learning objectives are organized into areas, standard, level, and benchmark, correlated with Pennsylvania Academic Standards and supplemented with additional online and other curriculum to ensure that all of the requirements are covered and that complete alignment is achieved. CCA is also CITA and Middle States accredited. The accreditation process included a review of the curriculum and how it meets content standards and requirements.

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

The K-8 curriculum integrates textbooks, lesson plans and other content from a variety of leading publishers and school programs including Houghton Mifflin, Zaner-Bloser, the Calvert school and others. The curriculum also features technology-based content from "best of breed" providers such as Hooked on Phonics, BrainPop, Compass, and United Streaming. The 7th and 8th grade curriculum was upgraded in 2006-07 to integrate extensive use of Teachlets™ -- online animated tutorials developed by Connections Academy to introduce math topics and provide interactive practice. In 2006-07, CCA teachers also extensively used the new LiveLesson™ tool, which provides for real-time web conferencing with small groups of students using voice over IP, chat, electronic whiteboard, and shared web surfing.

The curriculum for grades 9 and 10 provide more online experience, as appropriate for secondary school learners. The Pennsylvania standards-aligned high school curriculum integrates digital versions of textbooks from major publishers (primarily Prentice Hall) enhanced by multimedia, interactive material, communication/ conferencing tools, and team projects. Top-quality third-party courseware elements are also included.

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

CCA utilizes online, interactive instructional movies that incorporate graphics, video, and audio to explain the concepts and ideas the student needs to complete a lesson. These interactive, online "Teachlets™" are significantly more effective and entertaining than text alone. Interactive online instruction known as "LiveLesson™" is also used to enhance instruction and communications. With this tool, teachers can conduct live teaching sessions over the Internet to either a single student or a group. This new technology is ideal for explaining difficult concepts, conducting review sessions or promoting discussion. Individual tutorial sessions can also be arranged to assist students with specific needs.

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

The CCA placement test, pre-/post-testing program (LEAP), and PSSA tracking helps identify students who are at risk of academic failure. Students identified as working below grade level are provided with personalized instructional and curriculum interventions to bring them up to grade level, to ensure at least a year's worth of academic growth over the course of each year, facilitate successful completion of core courses, and prepare them for success on the PSSA. Some of the interventions include:

- Implementing the PACE (Program for All Children to Excel) program providing small group tutorials for students scoring below proficient on PSSA Reading and/or Math
- Providing Hooked on Phonics ϕ' to struggling readers in levels K-2 because CCA recognizes the importance of phonics education;
- Providing Hooked on Math ϕ' to students struggling in basic mathematics skills in levels K-2 because CCA recognizes the importance of early math intervention
- Providing a computer-aided skills-based "Fast Track" programs to students significantly below grade level; and
- On line and in person live tutoring sessions are provided for students struggling with curriculum content.

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

Teachers are as important in a virtual school as they are in a conventional bricks-and-mortar school but since students and teachers are physically apart, it is very important to develop teaching strategies that bridge that gap. CCA teachers receive special instruction in using online communication tools such as email, message boards and interactive online classes to involve their students along with regular contact via telephone where teachers and students discuss their progress and lesson content. CCA's use of Teachlets and LiveLesson have been particularly effective in engaging the students. Older students are also required to participate in discussion groups and research projects where they interact extensively with other students and with their teacher.

Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachments

- CCA Induction Plan
- CCA Act 48 Professional Development Plan

English Language Learners

English Language Learners

Several aspects of the CCA program would prove beneficial for LEP students. The individualized pace of the program allows students to move more quickly through subjects where language is not a factor and spend more time on reading and writing activities; in fact, a teacher might re-prioritize the curriculum for an individual student to enable sustained concentration in a particular area. A CCA curriculum specialist with ESL/LEP/ELL training and certification will be available to work with teachers, learning coaches and students to adapt the material for LEP students and provide appropriate supplemental resources. Additionally, CCA has expertise in various technologies that can facilitate language acquisition. CCA does recognize that the virtual environment may not be the best place for students with little or no English speaking proficiency,

particularly if that student would be working in a home environment where English is not spoken. CCA did not have English Language Learners in 2006-07.

ELL Screening and Program

For students that are in kindergarten or grade one, a listening and speaking screening is administered. For students in grades two through nine, the screening may also include reading and writing. Screenings may include: an informal interview with the child, reading the student a grade level story and asking questions, having the student read a passage aloud, having the student read appropriate (grade level) material and answer written questions, review of a student writing sample. If it is determined during the screening that the student is a fluent English speaker, there is no assessment or ELL placement. A summary of the screening is placed along with the Primary Home Language Survey, in the cumulative record. If it is determined that the student is not a fluent English speaker, then the student is assessed as required by Pennsylvania. During the 2006-2007 school year, teachers began identifying students who may need ELL services. In order to identify these students, there is a formal screening process in place now. A student is identified as needing an ELL screening test based on the home language survey that every parent completes during the enrollment process. The potential ELL students are administered the WAP-T test (WIDA- Access Placement Test) to determine their fluency level. Based on their test results they are placed into the right ELL level (non English, beginner, intermediate, high intermediate, advanced). The WAP-T is a PA state approved screening program that is part of the WIDA testing program. The WAP-T does not require a certified ESL teacher to administer.

CCA uses multiple measures for determining placement and progress. Measures are informal and formal and include curriculum-based assessments, teacher observations, portfolios and standardized tests. Consideration is given to listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in addition to academic progress. CCA uses the Stanford English Language Proficiency Test (SELP) to measure English language learner progress. In order to meet PA's required exit criteria for English language instructional programs for ELLs, students must obtain a score of Basic on the PSSA assessment and score Proficient on the state English language proficiency assessment. For students in grades not assessed by the PSSA, students must have final grades of C or better in core subject areas and obtain scores on district-wide assessments that are comparable to the Basic performance on the PSSA.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation requirements were not applicable to CCA for the 2006-2007 school year.

Special Education

In accordance with Chapter 711, CCA is committed to serving children with disabilities whether such children are currently or newly identified as disabled. Through a combination of appropriate certifications among our core Mechanicsburg-based teaching staff, contracts with local school districts and private providers, and expertise in our centralized Education Resource Center, CCA will be able to meet the needs of special learners. In addition, CCA will consult with resources

like Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) and Pennsylvania's Initiative on Assistive Technology (PIAT) at Temple University in planning for and acquiring necessary technology to serve students with disabilities.

Since CCA is a program focused on individualization, flexibility and personalization it is often a very good fit for students with special needs. In addition to the regular placement test, CCA's special education placement specialist reviews each IEP analyzing the level of functioning, educational needs, and suggested accommodations/modifications to determine how CCA can meet the student's needs in the least restrictive environment. Thus, CCA can be an appropriate setting for students with special needs by providing:

- 1:1 individualized instruction
- A team of adults focused on student success
- Ongoing consultation with special educators, certified teachers, and curriculum specialists to assist with adapting and modifying assignments to meet specific student needs
- Personalized Learning Plans
- A safe and directed environment
- Reduced environmental distractions
- Frequent progress checks, evaluations and reports
- Technology to facilitate communication, organization and skill development
- Technology to address special needs (e.g., keyboarding or speech recognition software can address fine motor skills issues)
- Flexible schedule that allows for students to move at their own pace
- Ability to separate academics from socialization.

These factors, along with the presence of a caring and a committed adult (the learning coach) enable CCA to address the large majority of special needs students (approximately 75%) through the implementation of specific instructional approaches and learning strategies via a consultative service model. Included in this group would be mild to moderate disabilities in the following categories:

- Vision acuity difficulties
- Auditory deficiencies
- Health concerns
- Developmental articulation
- Developmental expressive language
- Developmental receptive language
- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills
- Developmental reading (dyslexia)
- Developmental writing
- Oral expression
- Written language
- Spelling
- Memory
- Handwriting
- Developmental arithmetic
- Reasoning
- Emotional/Behavior
- Social communication
- Attention disorder

More serious and profound cases of the above, as well as specific physical and pervasive developmental disorders (e.g., autism, Asperger's, Rett's Syndrome, Childhood Disintegrative Disorder), neurological disorders (e.g., Multiple Sclerosis), and physical disabilities will require direct service. If it is determined that CCA is a good educational fit for these students, these additional services can be provided through contracts with local school district, hospitals, non-profits, and private providers.

Students entering CCA with an IEP: During the enrollment phase, CA and CCA staff will review each IEP and determine the level of each student's need and consider the types of services that are required. In most cases, CCA teachers can modify the student's program to provide the necessary accommodations. When possible, CCA will also contract with local service agencies to provide additional related services listed on the IEP that cannot be met directly by staff.

To support students with existing IEPs, CCA will:

- Conduct annual reviews of the IEP including a review student progress with existing IEP, creation of new IEP goals, and obtaining parent consent for and approval of new IEP.
- Conduct Tri-annual reviews in which students are formally reassessed every 3 years.
- Conduct Bi-annual reviews of students identified as MR.

Referring students for Special Education services: If CCA suspects that a student requires special educational services, the following procedures will be initiated:

- The program teacher consults with the school's Special Education Supervisor and implements suggested modifications, lesson adaptations, and alternative instructional strategies. The program teacher documents all modifications and the student's level of success with each.
- The program teacher completes official Student Support Team referral. The parent is notified of this referral.
- The Student Support Team meets to review referral. If deemed appropriate by the team and a disability is suspected, the mandatory Special Education referral/evaluation process is begun. If not, the regular education program remains in place with further suggested program modifications.
- Parental consent for the student evaluation is obtained and the appropriate evaluations are arranged. Parents are sent a copy of *Procedural Safeguards*.
- Parent is invited to the multidisciplinary team meeting to review the assessment results. The team determines if the student has a disability and which special education services are required.
- IEP meeting is scheduled, and the parents are invited to attend. IEP goals are formulated and parent signs IEP.
- IEP is implemented.

As a public school CCA shall, through its policies and procedures, comply with all of the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et. Seq. (IDEA, 2004), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794 (sec. 504). CCA will provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities, including, but not limited to, identifying, evaluating, planning educational programs, providing related services and implementing placements in accordance with those Acts.

Special Education Program Profile - Chart I

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
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Sinkonis, Laura	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	61	N/A
Eckel, Amy	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	61	N/A
Schneider, Janet	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	57	N/A
Behofcist, Rita	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	55	N/A
Young, Casie	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	57	N/A

Special Education Program Profile - Chart II

Organization	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
NONE	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	N/A

Special Education Program Profile - Chart III

Title	Location	FTE
Rutt, Jan - Supervisor of Special Education	CCA Main Campus, 5010 Trindle Road, Mechanicsburg, PA	1.00

Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV

IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual	Title/Service	Amount of Time Per Week
Therapy Source	SP/L, OT, PT, Psch	As Needed
Lincoln IU #12	OT, PT	As Needed
Dianne Henna, Ph.D.	Behavior Therapy	As Needed
The Children's Institute	SP/L, OT, PT, Asst. Tech.	As Needed
Crossroads Speech & Hearing	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Easter Seals, Western PA	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
pediatric Therapy Specialists	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Community Psychiatric Centers	Psych/Ed evals	As needed
Barbara McMillen	Psych/Ed evals	As needed
Linda J. Zimmerman, Psy. D.	Psych/Ed evals	As needed
David Swisher, Ph. D.	Psych/Ed evals, PT	As needed
Vocational and Psychological Services	Psych/Ed Evals	As needed
Intermediate Unit #8	Psych/Ed evals	As needed
The Center for Pediatric Therapy, Inc.	SP/L, OT, PT, social skills groups	As needed
Dr. Constance Dent	Psych/ED evals	As needed
Ferrulli Speech Services	SP/L	As needed
Memorial Hospital	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
BLAST IU #17	Psych/Ed evals, Sp/l	As Needed
Theraplay	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Dr, Mitchell Scheiman	Vision Therapy	As Needed
CAMCO	OT, PT	As Needed
Glendale SD	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed
Elk Regional Health Center	SP/L, OT	As Needed

Mt. Nittany Medical Center	OT, SP/L, Audiology	As Needed
Strawberry Fields, Inc.	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
CEDAR School Psych Clinic	Psych/Ed evals	As needed
The Institute for Behavior Change	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed
Omni Speech Services	SP/L	As Needed
Bloomsburg Psych Center	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed
Intermediate Unit #5	Psych/Ed,SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Capital Area IU #15	Psych/Ed, OT, PT, SP/L	As Needed
Health South	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Byron Schreck, SLP, CCC	SP/L	As Needed
United Cerebral Palsy	OT, SP/L	As Needed
Cygnet Pro Staffing, Inc,	Psych/Ed, SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Margaret Myers	OT	As Needed
Aaron Center	Psych/Ed, OT, PT, SP/L	As Needed
Allied Services/ John Heinz Institute	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Schreiber Pediatric Rehab Center	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Speech Care	SP/L, LiPS	As Needed
Melanie Bennetch	OT	As Needed
Cynthia Mlles and Assoc.	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Carol Walck Assoc.	SP/L, LiPS	As Needed
Pediatric Therapy Assoc. of Lehigh Valley	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Good Shepherd Rahb Hospital	Asst. Tech	As Needed
James Truscott, Ph. D.	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed
Family Rehab Services, Inc.	SP/L	As Needed
Counseling & Consulting Specialists	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed
Gillum Psych and Counseling Services	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed
Interim Health Care Home Care	PT	As Needed
Port Psych Services	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed
Laurel Assoc.	SP/L	As Needed
Pocono Speech Center	SP/L	As Needed
Geisinger Medical Center	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Easter Seals of S.E. PA	Psych/Ed, OT, SP/L, PT	As Needed
Charles Cole Memorial Hospital	SP_/L, OT, PT	As Needed
The Pottsville Hospital	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Psychological Assoc. of Schuylkill County	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed
G & E Therapies	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Wayne Memorial Hospital	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Dr. Mary Griffin	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed
Dr. William Hahn	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed
Cherry Tree Rehab Center	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed

Pediatric Therapy Assoc.	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Brownstone Psych Services	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed

SECTION IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Student Assessment - Primary

Test/Classification	K	1	2	3	4	5
PSSA/PASA	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Local Assessment: LEAP	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Local Assessment: (DIBELS)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

Student Assessment - Secondary

Test/Classification	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
PASA/PSSA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Local Assessment (LEAP)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

Student Assessment

The LEAP test used by CCA to measure growth in an academic year indicates that 83.5% of CCA students made satisfactory progress in mathematics and 87.8% made satisfactory progress in language arts. CCA uses benchmarks and a pretest to place students at appropriate levels of instruction. Of course, the goal is to have all students obtain at least a year's growth in an academic term. With continued increase of on-line live lessons and tutoring sessions for students and learning coaches, CCA will continue to improve the results of the LEAP assessments.

The results of the PSSA assessments indicate that CCA is making AYP in all areas except for the IEP subgroup in Reading. CCA will identify these students and offer more support in their areas of weakness. Examples of such support will include having students participate in PACE (Program for ALL Children to Excel) which offers small group instruction targeting areas of difficulty determined by weekly pre and post tests. CCA will also provide instruction to Learning Coaches on implementing accommodations and modifications to daily lessons. In-service sessions on learning styles, teaching methods and use of learning technology will be offered for learning throughout the state. Currently there are many students achieving at a level below their grade of "official" record. The goal is to have students below grade level achieve more than a year's growth in one school term, in order to eventually be prepared to achieve proficiency or above on the state assessments.

The PSSA results do show an increase in performance for all tested students from 41.4 to 55.3 in Math and from 49.8 to 60.0 in Reading. In addition, CCA tested 384 more students in 2007 than in 2006 and had an increase in participation from 96.5 to 98.4.

In 2007-2008 CCA is also going to continue use of Study Island, a leading provider of web-based state assessment preparation programs and standards based learning programs, to obtain more accurate bench marks and provide students practice and instruction in the targeted areas. CCA will also be using “Math 24 — First in Math” to provide students with on-line interactive challenges to develop and improve critical math skills. This is highly motivating program and has been proven to increase achievement in mathematics. CCA used this program in 2006-2007 and has seen its effects as PSSA Math scores increased as stated above.

Teachers use CCA’s Learning Management System to log all student successes and areas in need of improvement. On-line assessments as well as submitted portfolio materials are used to measure academic achievement and to identify areas in need of remediation.

Teachers use data collected from all assessments to determine individual tutoring needs. Teachers offer these tutoring sessions to students daily, Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM.

Head Sprout ☐, Hooked on Phonics ☐, Hooked on Math ☐, Skills Tutor ☐, Teachlets ☐, Brain Pop ☐, and United Streaming ☐ are all on line sources available for students to use.

Student Assessment - Attachments

- PART I: Local Assessment Data
- Part II: Local Assessment Data

Teacher Evaluation

The individuals responsible for conducting evaluations were the CEO, Gregory Gettle and the assistant principal Susan Shubert. Gregory Gettle completed administrative certification at Temple University. He has 35 years experience in public education including experience as a teacher, athletic director, assistant principal, and principal. Additionally he has conducted workshops, directed teacher in-services, participated in the development of teacher evaluation plans and evaluated teachers at the high school level. Susan Shubert has five years of teaching experience and has a Masters Degree in Educational Administration from Gwynned-Mercy College.

The Board has instituted the following fair and objective process for teacher evaluations, following PDE requirements. All CCA professional employees are evaluated semiannually. The CCA instructional staff is observed on a regular basis and evaluated using a comprehensive, multi-layered evaluation system. To assure the highest quality teaching, CCA has set as its goal that the average teacher rating will be at least a 2 on scale of 0 to 3, where 3 = Exceeded Goal, 2 = Met Goal, 1 = Partially Met Goal and 0 = Did Not Meet Goal. Instructional I employees are evaluated using the Form PDE 426; Form PDE 428 is utilized for Instructional II employees; when a transition from level I to level II is indicated, Form PDE 427 is used.

SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

Leadership Changes

Because of the increase in enrollment, CCA hired David Carr as an Assistant Principal in July 2006 and Gary Madden as an Assistant Principal in December of 2006. In June 2007, Greg Gettle was approved for the position of High School and Middle School Principal and Dr. Dennis Tulli was approved as CEO.

During 2006-2007 Cheryl Lozier was nominated as a trustee to the board.

Board of Trustees

Name of Trustee	Office (if any)
David Taylor	President
Marcie Mulligan	Treasurer & Secretary
Pamela Espinosa	
Gail Hawkins Bush	
Cheryl Lozier	
Judith Miller	
Jerry Bremelin	

Professional Development (Governance)

Professional Training for the Board of Trustees

A board retreat was held in July 2006. At that time, the board and leadership of CCA and CA participated in a planning and teambuilding in-service. Included were the following topics:

- A review of the curriculum of and other related services and programs.
- A review of the trends in Charter Schools facilitated by Jeanne Allen.
- A review of the board's structure, by laws, subcommittees, and responsibilities.
- A planning session for strategic goals.

The Board will also be attending training in August 2007.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School

Management organization of the school: Commonwealth Connections Academy Board of Trustees governs the school. The CCA Board has engaged Connections Academy, LLC.. (CA) to manage the school under the terms of the professional services contract. The operating structure of the school is similar to a traditional educational environment with a school principal who supervises an administrative staff and teachers. The school CEO acts according to the policies and procedures as approved by the Board. All personnel decisions concerning the CEO and the teachers will be the responsibility of the Board. The day-to-day management of the CEO is the responsibility of CA or its successor if CA is terminated, under the terms of the professional services agreement. The board is responsible for ensuring the performance of CA or its successor in accordance with its obligations under the professional services agreement. The Board will continue to utilize its accounting and legal advisors, with their significant experience in charter school matters, to assist them in the performance of its duties.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School - Attachments

- CCA Board Meeting Schedule 2006-2007
- CCA Board meeting Schedule 2007-2008

Community and Parent Engagement

School Community

Commonwealth Connections Academy students are members of a variety of communities: the community of their extended family, the geographic community in which they live, the community of CCA, and the broader world to which we are all connected. With the help of technology, the CCA instructional program integrates these communities into students' learning through team projects with family members and local CCA peers, and through local community service activities that allow students to apply their academic skills in a real-world context while interacting with other CCA students in their immediate geographic areas. Some of the community connection initiatives used in other Connections Academy schools that will also be a part of CCA are numerous field trips to educational and entertainment centers, interactive educational initiatives, newsletters, student newspapers, and yearbook. Ultimately, CCA will provide some of the building blocks for each student's sense of community, fostering a very real sense of citizenship.

Relationship of school with the surrounding community: The 11 CCA community coordinators draw upon local community resources for information about events, lessons, activities, services, performance and other opportunities that might benefit CCA students and families, and use the technology to make this information easily accessible to all CCA families.

Parent involvement: Parent involvement is a centerpiece of the Commonwealth Connections Academy concept. As learning coaches (or those who oversee a designated learning coach), parents/guardians are intimately familiar with their child's progress on a day-to-day basis at CCA. The school offers ongoing training and support to help learning coaches carry out their important role while making optimum use of the available technology tools and professional teacher support to do so. In addition, teachers employ Personalized Learning Plan-based electronic progress reports to formally communicate students' academic achievement to students and their learning coaches.

Parental and student involvement in decision-making: In addition to the central role they play in their own children's day-to-day learning, parents/guardians are also integrally involved in shaping CCA and making certain that it fulfills its overall mission. Parents play an active role on the Board of Trustees (see above). In addition, both parents and staff serve in ad hoc work groups and committees as needed to advise the Board or the school administration on specific matters of interest and concern.

The parent or other learning coach. The parent/learning coach uses the CCA online daily lesson plans, technology-based curriculum and print learning materials to fulfill the student's detailed electronic Personalized Learning Plan prepared in consultation with the CCA teaching staff. Learning coaches meet regularly via webmail, phone, or instant message with their CCA teacher to facilitate instruction and review the student's progress. Learning coaches also typically administer internal assessments and progress tests, many of which are online, and can select from an array of technology-based supplementary learning materials. These individuals sign a learning coach agreement with CCA, which helps ensure that roles and responsibilities are clear. In addition, the parent/learning coach (and the student) is provided a complete Handbook of information regarding the curriculum, attendance procedures, assessments, technology, etc.

The community coordinators. These individuals are parents of students in the school who receive a stipend from CA in order to create opportunities for community projects, field trips and group meetings with other students and parents. The community coordinators use technology to post upcoming events to special online forums dedicated to such events, and make extensive use of webmail to mobilize families to participate. Through the technology, community coordinators serve as information clearinghouses for local extra-curricular activities and events. Some of the events planned by community coordinators schools included fieldtrips to science museums, art museums, and zoos; factory tours; and ice skating and pool parties.

SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Major fund-raising activities

No activities were held this year, and none are planned for next year.

Fiscal Solvency Policies

In order to maintain fiscal solvency, CCA Charter School reviews all incoming expenses at the school's public board meetings on a monthly basis. A detailed cash flow is projected on a monthly basis for the fiscal year and is also reviewed at each board meeting. All projections are made on the basis of conservative assumptions in order to ensure that the school maintains a positive fund balance. The school also manages its finances to ensure that it builds up a fund balance sufficient to ensure that it can meet payroll and other obligations even if there is a delay in payment from school districts or the PDE. CCA plans to continue to build on that balance each year with a goal of having at least several months of operating capital available. Any current cash shortfalls are covered through an arrangement with its management partner to defer payment until the school receives its funding.

Accounting System

The school currently uses Quickbooks accounting software which utilizes the PDE Chart of Accounts.

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

The firm is Siegal and Drossner, PC which issued an unqualified opinion on October 24, 2006 for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2006. The board has engaged this same firm for the fourth year to conduct its audit for the year ended June 30, 2007, which is scheduled to occur by the end of September.

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

- Auditor's Report for 2007 Annual Report

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 location of the Mechanicsburg office is 5010 Trindle Road, Mechanicsburg, PA 17050 and the location of the Philadelphia office is 2085 N. 63rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19151.

As a virtual charter school, CCA was not required to have a physical facility for day to day learning. Students worked from the setting of their family's choice. Sufficient office furniture, computers, duplicating equipment and other related office equipment was purchased to have the two offices fully operational. The school spent approximately \$65,000 on furniture and equipment for its two school locations in 2006-07.

Future Facility Plans and Other Capital Needs

Due to expected enrollment growth for 2007-08, the school is pursuing expansion opportunities in both of its existing locations. \$45,750 has been budgeted for capital expenditures to support this expansion. These expenditures would be primarily for employee workstations (cubicles), furniture (chairs, conference tables, etc.), copiers, printers, and fax machines.

SECTION VIII. HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

School Health Services

CCA follows all applicable local and state health regulations and requires parents and guardians of all students to present certificates of PA required immunization upon enrollment. A request for school records (including health records) is made with all districts of residence upon enrollment.

When necessary, school officials work with families to arrange immunizations with local health practitioners. The school communicates with and files all required reports with the Department of Health of the Commonwealth within the prescribed time. The school also maintains health records and has them open for inspection. The school has also contracted with a physician, dentist, and nurse to provide services to students as required. The report for 06-07 has not been submitted and is due in October 2007. The information for 05-06 has been loaded on a file. This includes a check received in 2007 and documents for 05-06.

Safety

CCA does not have an instructional facility, but instead, operates offices in the Mechanicsburg and Philadelphia areas for its administrative staff and teaching staff. CCA will comply with all required federal, state, and local health and safety laws and regulations regarding these offices. CCA also has a comprehensive Safe School / Emergency Plan.

Commonwealth Connections Academy Comprehensive Safe School / Emergency Plan Procedures that should be implemented in case of an emergency at all CCA offices:

- All visitors need to sign in/out every visit.
- During an evacuation of the building the principal/designee must remove the sign in register from the building.
- All visitors should receive a name tag.
- An exterior sign should be displayed indicating the main entrance to the school.
- All office entrance doors should have a sign stating the school's name.
- The staff should be made aware when a visitor is in the office.
- Any fire extinguisher cabinets/alarms in a CCA office should be marked.
- All fire exits should be visible and in working order.

- Fire plans/emergency evacuation maps should be posted and practiced. Emergency Red Cross First Aid Kit should be available.
- Schools should use the National Weather Service Web Site for monitoring weather in case of an emergency <http://www.noaa.gov>
- There should be ongoing training of all staff members in expectations during emergency situations.
- Fire/emergency drills should be held once a month. Date of drill should be recorded with evacuation time.
- The following local and state emergency management agencies' phone numbers should be available at each facility.
 - Fire department
 - Law enforcement
 - Medical emergency services
 - Local and state mental health and medical health officials

Specific Emergency Plans for CCA Schools

In the event of a fire:

- The fire alarm should be pulled if it has not already been done.
- The principal/designee should contact the fire department.
- The visitor sign in/out sheet should (if possible) be taken by the principal/designee. The principal/designee should verify that all visitors have exited the building.
- All staff members should have a designated buddy. The role of the buddy is to verify that their buddy has exited the building.
- All staff and visitors should evacuate and follow the fire drill route whenever possible. If primary route is blocked or dangerous then the alternate route should be followed. These routes should be posted in the office.
- If an individual is trapped then he/she should go to the designated area in which they can seek shelter. This will assist the fire department when searching for individuals.
- The principal/designee should meet with the emergency officials as soon as possible.
- No one should reenter the building until they are declared safe. The principal/designee will notify everyone when and if this occurs.

In the event of a lockdown:

- The principal/designee should announce "lockdown" to all staff and visitors.
- Call 911.
- Everyone should be inside the building with all exterior doors closed.
- All interior doors should also be closed/locked in case an intruder gets inside the building.
- Make sure that a head count is taken of all staff and visitors.
- Keep clear of all windows.

In the event of a medical emergency:

- Call 911.
- Do not attempt to move the victim. This may cause more harm to the victim (unless she/he is in danger).

- Make sure the victim is breathing. Initiate CPR, only staff member who is trained should perform CPR.
- Initiate first aid if needed, only if staff member is trained.
- When emergency staff has arrived provide them with information about the incident.
- The principal/designee will notify the Vice President of Operations of the emergency.

In the event of an evacuation:

- The principal/designee initiates evacuation procedures.
 - Based on what type of emergency will determine what evacuation plans should be followed.
 - In an event of a fire, follow the fire emergency plans.
 - In all other events, all staff and visitors should evacuate following the designated route that has been determined in the building.
 - The principal/designee should call 911.
 - The visitor sign in/out sheet should (if possible) be taken with a designee. The designee can verify that all visitors have exited the building.
 - All staff members should have a designated buddy. The role of the buddy is to verify that their buddy has exited the building.
 - All staff and visitors should evacuate and follow the emergency route whenever possible. If primary route is blocked or dangerous then the alternate route should be followed. These plans should be posted in the office.
 - If an individual is trapped then he/she should go to the designated area in which they can seek shelter (if possible). This will assist the emergency staff when searching for individuals.
 - The principal/designee should meet with the emergency officials as soon as possible.
 - No one should reenter the building until they are declared safe. The principal/designee will notify everyone when and if this occurs.
- CCA schools should have an area that can be used as a shelter in case someone is trapped when an emergency occurs or in case all staff and visitors need to retreat to the shelter for safety because they are unable to evacuate the building. Procedures are as follows:
 - Each CA school should identify an area that is safe within their office.
 - Principal/designee should announce that everyone must go to the shelter.
 - All windows and doors should be closed.
 - Everyone remains in shelter until principal/designee or emergency person declares that it is safe.
 - The principal/designee will notify the Vice President of Operations of the emergency.

- All CCA schools should have a shelter away from the school off school property that can be used if evacuation is required and returning to the school is delayed.

* In all of these scenarios the principal/designee should gather and record pertinent information (when appropriate) in order to decide if everyone should be evacuated or try to provide shelter within the building.\

* Regular drills of different emergencies should be conducted throughout the school year. This will assure that staff members are trained in case one of these emergencies should occur.

* If students are at any CCA school without their parent then they can only be released to those known parents or guardians that the school has been made aware of.

* Parents/guardians/Learning Coaches should be familiar with the emergency plans in order to ensure the safety of their children.

Resources for Families

-

http://www.redcross.org/services/prepare/0,1082,0_256_00.html (Evacuation Plan-This is a good resource for families to use to prepare for an emergency within their home.)

http://www.redcross.org/services/prepare/0,1082,0_78_00.html (Emergency Contact Card-Families can download an American Red Cross Emergency Contact Card.)

<http://www.ready.gov/kids/index.html> (This is a web site in which students can learn how to prepare for an emergency.)

<http://www.redcross.org/services/disaster/keepsafe/terrorism.pdf> (This is a good resource for parents. This gives suggestions of what families should think about before an emergency should occur.)

Wellness Program

The law requires each LEA participating in the NSLP and/or the SBP to develop a local wellness policy. CCA does not provide breakfast or lunch to students and does not participate in the NSLP or the SBP. Therefore, CCA is not required to have a wellness program.

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

- Department Of Health Doc

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs

Current School Insurance

CCA has obtained an insurance coverage from Diversified Insurance Industries. The Insurers affording coverage are Chubb/Federal Insurance Company and RSUI Indemnity Company for the following coverage with limits shown.

- General Liability;
 - \$1,000,000 each occurrence;
 - \$1,000,000 damage to rented premises each occurrence
 - \$10,000 MED EXP (Any one person)
 - \$1,000,000 personal & adv injury
 - \$2,000,000 general aggregate
- Automobile Liability
 - \$1,000,000 combined single limit (ea accident)
- Excess/Umbrella Liability
 - \$1,000,000 E.L. each accident
 - \$1,000,000 E.L. disease — each employee
 - \$1,000,000 E.L. disease — policy limit
 - Other
 - D&Q/EPLI \$1,000,000

Health insurance is provided to teachers through Capital Blue Cross.

SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff

The 2006-07 school year ended with forty highly qualified teachers, one School Counselor, two Curriculum Coordinators, one Community Involvement Coordinator, one Special Education Supervisor, three Assistant Principal's and one Principal. Of the forty highly qualified teachers, twenty returned to CCA from 2005-2006. Because of increased enrollment at the start of 2006-2007, additional highly qualified teachers were recruited. During the year three teachers resigned. Two were replaced with highly qualified teachers, while one was replaced with a long-term substitute. Also, due to increasing enrollment three additional teachers were deemed and hired during the year (included in the forty present at the end of the year).

One Curriculum Coordinator and one Assistant Principal were hired in December of 2006.

At the end of 2006-2007 year three teachers resigned. Of the three who resigned, two did so to seek employment in bricks and mortar settings. The third teacher resigned to enroll full-time in a graduate program.

At the end of 2006-2007, thirty nine of the forty teachers were certified in PA, have at least a bachelor's degree, and are "highly qualified." Seventeen of the teachers have a master's degree.

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff - Attachments

- Evidence of Submission for Elementary and Secondary Professional Personnel Report
- PDE 414

Student Enrollment

Enrollment Procedures.

Commonwealth Connections Academy abides by all PDE policies and guidelines for pupil admission and will not impose admission requirements that are inconsistent with PDE policies and guidelines. CCA does not discriminate against pupils on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability or handicap in its education programs or activities. Through its recruitment/marketing and application guidance activities, CCA will disclose full details about its program and encourage families to carefully consider its academic and parental involvement demands before applying. CCA will also provide tools (such as an online self-quiz and contact with a Connections Academy education counselor if desired) to help parents decide whether CCA is truly the right fit for their children and themselves.

Connections Academy receives a Family Enrollment Information Form via the mail, fax or through the web site and forwards it to the enrollment counselor. The enrollment counselor will verify all required documents as to a student's eligibility and then place an initial call to the parent. Included in this information would be family and student information, proof of age, proof of residency, a copy of the most recent report card if applicable, immunization records and IEP/504 plan if applicable.

During this initial call, the enrollment counselor will acknowledge the receipt of the enrollment form and let the parent know if there are any missing documents. Within the initial call, the enrollment counselor will also walk the family through the remainder of the process so that the parent is aware of what to expect. After the initial call is made, the information is entered into the computer system. At this time, an enrollment pack is sent to the family which consists of a placement test, parent learning coach agreement and charter school form. As soon as these documents are completed by the family and sent back, the student is ready for the next step. At this time, the family will receive a call from the enrollment counselor finally confirming the family's intention to enroll into the program and student placement will take place. Neither materials nor curriculum will be shipped until an enrollment counselor talks with the parent and verifies shipping address and final intentions for the upcoming school year.

No lottery was necessary for the 2006-2007 school year and no students were placed on a waiting list.

In that CCA was a K-10 program (K-11 in 2007-2008), the entry requirements are the same for each grade. However, in order for students to enroll in kindergarten, they must be five years old by September 1.

	9/6/06	5/31/07
Enrollment		
Kindergarten	87	121
First	87	106
Second	109	129
Third	116	141
Fourth	124	136
Fifth	124	140
Sixth	116	123
Seventh	123	161
Eighth	130	177

Ninth	94	175
Tenth	46	82
Total	1158	1491
T. Enrollment(YTD)	1158	2004
Withdrawals		
Student uncooperative with learning coach	0	26
Dislike Curriculum	0	5
Life Change	0	51
Misunderstood program	0	10
Moving	0	44
Non-compliant	0	112
Other school options	0	60
Preferred classroom	0	22
Technology issues	0	0
Too challenging for parent	0	57
Too challenging for student	0	31
Total Withdrawals Prior to Engagement	2	63
Total Withdrawals during school year (YTD)	0	307

The official enrollment process takes place from the middle of July through August. The actual number of students returning for the 2007-2008 school year is not yet available. CCA expects that at least 70 % of the 2006-2007 students will return based on the fact that 79.3% of students enrolled at the end of 2006-2007 indicated a preliminary intent to return.

Due to CCA's virtual format, a higher number of students withdraw from the school than in a traditional bricks and mortar school. Reasons for leaving CCA are documented in the chart above. When any student leaves the school, the resident school district is informed immediately. CCA did not expel or suspend any students in 2006-2007.

CCA expects to continue to have the enrollment increase. The areas of most growth are in the Bethlehem, Stroudsburg, Philadelphia, and Pittsburg areas. The projected enrollment for CCA's K-11 program in 2007-2008 is 2,200 students. As CCA's enrollment grows, highly qualified teachers will be added to the staff.

Transportation

CCA does not provide transportation.

Food Service Program

CCA does not have a Food Service Program.

Student Conduct

a) Appropriate conduct is expected of all students at the school. School students are guaranteed due process of law as required by the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. The student's code of

conduct will be explained in the school's handbook and includes steps to be followed in the event of misbehavior. All of Chapter 12 regulations are followed in the discipline policy.

b) For 2006-2007, CCA did not have any suspensions or expulsions.

Student Conduct - Attachment

- Discipline Policy

CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

Charter School Annual Report Summary Data 2007 - 2008

Name of School: Commonwealth Connections Academy CS

Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval: May 2003 and renewed June 2006

Length of Charter: 5 years **Opening Date:** Sept 2003

Grade Level: k-10 in 2006-07. k-11 in 2007-08, k-12 in 2008-09 **Hours of Operation:** 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Percentage of Certified Staff: 97.6 **Total Instructional Staff:** 42

Student/ Teacher Ratio: 48 to 1 **Student Waiting List:** none

Attendance Rate/Percentage: 97.97%

Enrollment: 1491 **Per Pupil Subsidy:** Cyber schools are paid by districts/No direct state subsidy

Student Profile

American Indian/Alaskan Native: 3
Asian/Pacific Islander: 6
Black (Non-Hispanic): 279
Hispanic: 49
White (Non-Hispanic): 1063
Multicultural: 62

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: 224

Number of:	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (FTIME)	ELEM	MIDDLE	SEC.	TOTAL
Instructional Days	180	180	180	180	180	180	180
Instructional Hours	450	450	450	900	990	990	n/a

ASSURANCE FOR THE OPERATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

School Year: 2007

The Commonwealth Connections Academy CS within Capital Area IU 15 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

2007 - 2008 Annual Report for Pennsylvania Charter Schools

Verify that all DATA reports to PDE are complete

YES _____ **NO** _____

SIGNATURE PAGE

Identify the charter school's Chief Executive Officer.

Name Dennis Tulli

Title C.E.O.

Phone 717-605-8900 Ext 367

Fax 717-796-9019

E-mail dtulli@connectionsacademy.com

Signature of the Chief Executive Officer and Date

Identify the charter school's President of the Board of Trustees.

Name David Taylor

Title Board President

Phone 717-605-8900

Fax 717-796-9019

E-mail dtaylor@connectionsacademy.com

Signature of the President of the Board of Trustees and Date

Identify the charter school's Special Education Contact Person.

Name Supervisor Of Special Education

Title Jan Rutt

Phone 717-605-8900 Ext 328

Fax 717-796-9214

E-mail jrutt@connectionsacademy.com

Signature of the Special Education Contact Person and Date