
Pennsylvania Department of Education



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
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Charter Annual Report **Tuesday, October 09, 2007**

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SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Organization Description

Wakisha Charter School was established in the year of 2000 as a partnership with families and the neighboring community. Our mission is to provide students with a sound basis for lifelong learning and productivity. It is our goal to raise the bar, strive for excellence and help develop

character as well as engage students in an academically rigorous, African centered, standards driven curriculum. Today's youth must be self sufficient, well informed, confident, responsible and global to be competitive in tomorrow's society.

In order to achieve our goals as set forth, we have incorporated into our core curriculum an entrepreneurial component that serves to cultivate an innate spirit which students will find challenging and rewarding.

Currently, Wakisha Charter School serves approximately 400 sixth- through eighth- grade students. We are a title one charter school (ninety-six percent of the student population receives free or reduced lunch) that offers an intensive literature/writing and vocabulary based reading, language arts and mathematics curriculum. The curriculum is aligned to meet the Pennsylvania Academic Standards and benchmarks, is researched based and incorporates best practices. Each lesson is designed to meet the needs of all learners by incorporating computer-based instruction, differentiated instruction, constructive learning, cooperative grouping and learning centers.

In addition to a standards driven curriculum, Wakisha Charter School offers academic intervention services through math and reading coaches with small group instruction. Beginning in September 2005, the comprehensive model of RELA & Math expanded to further integrate computer technology and software throughout each discipline as we strive to improve practical applications. Individual student achievement and improved standardized test scores (Terra Nova & PSSA) should be evident with our continued emphasis on excellence. In addition, we will offer an after school and Saturday school program entitled, "Striving for Excellence". Students will receive four days of after school academic tutoring and cultural awareness through music, art, chess, etc. Saturday programming will allow for enrichment activities such as trips to museums, hiking, horseback riding, civic awareness, etc.

Core Purpose

Mission

Our mission is to provide students with a sound basis for lifelong learning and productivity.

Vision

Our vision is to encourage our youth to be self sufficient, well informed, confident, responsible and global in order to be competitive in tomorrow's society.

Shared Values

Wakisha Charter School beliefs are based on ancient moral beliefs, and will integrate a tradition called MA'AT and the Nguzo Saba (based on the seven principles of Kwanzaa).

The foundation of the school's instruction is a value system known as Nguzo Saba (Seven Principles). They are:

Umoja — Unity

Kujichagulia — Self Determination

Ujima — Collective Work and Responsibility

Ujamaa — Cooperative Economics

Nia — Purpose

Kuumba — Creativity

Imani — Faith

Historically, thoughtful educators have been concerned about the cultivation of character traits and virtues such as honesty, courage, perseverance, loyalty, civic virtue, justice, respect, responsibility, and trustworthiness. It is generally felt that these traits must be acquired through teaching and practice in the home and in the school. Traits, or virtues, must be transmitted to be internalized. It is an important function for educators, therefore, to help form children into adults who behave well, who demonstrate good “external conduct,” and who understand why that sort of behavior is important.

Academic Standards

MEASURABLE ANNUAL GOALS	ACHIEVING TARGETS
Daily attendance rate will average 91%.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Daily phone calls will be made to families to alert lateness or absenteeism · Daily emails will be sent to families to alert lateness or absenteeism · Written notification will be mailed to homes to alert lateness or absenteeism · Motivational Techniques will be in place to encourage student attendance · Homework online for absentees
60% of students will be assigned a mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Mentors will keep portfolio and progress notes · Instructors will meet with mentors to establish consistent feedback and updates · Mentors will have incentive program to use with students
Fifty percent of the 6 th , 7 th , & 8 th grade students will score at least 45% on the PSSA in mathematics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate mastery in the following subjects: Pre-Algebra and Math Tech <p>(Note: All students with a class average below a C qualify for mandatory tutorial services.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Develop number sense and use numbers and number relationships in problem-solving situations and communicate the reasoning used in solving problems • Interpret data collection and analysis, statistics, and probability in problem-solving situations and communicate the reasoning and processes using in solving these problems • Utilize a variety of tools and techniques to

	<p>measure, apply the results in problem-solving situations, and communicate the reasoning used in solving these problems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link concepts and procedures as they develop and use computational techniques, including estimation, mental arithmetic, paper-and-pencil, calculators, and computers, in problem-solving situations and communicate the reasoning used in solving these problems
<p>Fifty percent of the 6th, 7th, & 8th grade students will score at 45% on the PSSA in reading</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate mastery in the following subjects: Reading & Language Arts <p>(Note: All students with a class average below a C qualify for mandatory tutorial services.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compare and contrast various written materials such as classics, contemporary literature, magazines, newspaper, poetry, on-line information, etc • Take command of the English language in all of the following areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ increase knowledge of roots and derivatives ○ public speaking- yearly oratory contest (school wide) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate understanding of literary responses and analysis • Combine the rhetorical strategies of narrative, expository, persuasive and descriptive essays • Write and speak with a command of Standard English connections • Formulate adroit judgments about oral communication • Deliver focused and coherent presentations that convey clear and distinct perspectives and solid reasoning

Strengths and Challenges

Wakisha Charter School's strengths are:

1. A strong commitment by Board members, Administrators, teachers, and staff to character education. This commitment is a vital component

of the school's vision to help each child achieve to his or her highest academic potential and to develop the social skills that he or she will need in order to interact in a positive and cooperative manner with people from all walks of life.

2. An Afro-Centric curriculum that is designed to teach students about their cultural heritage and history of the African people. The curriculum is designed to inspire young African Americans

3. An extended school day that is designed to give students extra time in the afternoon to receive additional remedial help, to participate in clubs such as chess, trivia pursuit, and other programs designed to help student develop/enhance higher order thinking skills and problem-solving skills. This time is also used to teach students to individualized performance improvement plans that were prepared strictly for each student based on results from the local assessment test.

4. Two computer labs equipped with state-of-the art technology.

5. Exemplary lessons plans that are linked to PA standards and Anchor Assessments.

Areas needing improvement:

Behavior Modification Programs are an instrumental component of our curriculum. Wakisha Charter School caters to a population that historically tests in the basic and below basic range. The scope of our academic program challenges the prior learning experiences and expectations of our students. This process reviews basic reading skills which include phonetic understanding, vocabulary building, and writing a complete sentence. The incoming student struggles with basic math concepts which include addition, multiplication, division, and word problems. In addition to the actual content areas, the retooling of appropriate classroom behaviors are introduced and enforced. We strive to improve each student's self esteem, stimuli, and success rate while eliminating the barriers associated with learning.

It is through a rigorous partnering of academic and social expectations that the minds and bodies of the Wakisha Charter School student are improved.

SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Strategic Planning Process

Through sound leadership and effective utilization of individual skills Wakisha Charter School (WCS) has and will continue to implement the following plans:

Achievement & Improvement Planning

We successfully reviewed and redefined all of our state benchmarks using updated methodology and curriculum content standards provided by the Commonwealth.

The focus of previous professional development was: effective implementation of classroom management techniques, student learning centers, increased writing skills, poetry and literature components and encouragement for all teachers to become qualified, meet all state requirements and hone their crafts to be the best in their chosen profession. Numerous staff members have embraced the hands-on approach "Students learn more effectively when they are active participants in the educational process."

- Writing is one of the top priorities at Wakisha Charter School. We strongly embrace the philosophy that if a child can write- he/she can also learn to spell and develop refined critical thinking skills. Creative writing will be the major focus for each classroom in every grade. "No child will be left behind" from the writing loop- journal entries for all subjects- book reports- poetry- benchmarks- letter writing, etc, will be utilized to stimulate as we create a mind for enjoying the art of writing
- Through creative scheduling, group meetings, parental involvement, effective professional forums, collaborative efforts, sharing and planning, we will provide teachers and students unbounded opportunities to grow academically and professionally
- Hallway and classroom walls will reflect student writing and creative works
- Wakisha Charter School will meet and exceed its AYP as our staff continues with professional staff development and follow up monitoring by administrative team
- Aggressive programs for all students (grades 6 thru 8) to read at least 100 books
- Professional development time will be devoted to analyzing student data
- Professional development to train staff in handling aggressive students through anger management, age appropriate topics, conflict resolution, etc (packets and discussion)
- Continually build staff morale- A satisfied teacher is a willing worker
- Staff development in all areas with concentration on writing in all disciplines
- Provide coverage for teachers to participate in cross school visitations
- Give six week assessments tests to help build student achievement- results to be used diagnostically
- All professional development programs will reflect an outgrowth and continuation from the previous year. Professional development is not a singular event, but an ongoing service to the staff. It must be relevant to our mission statement, classroom activities and students at large
- Again, we must emphasize, "A SCHOOL CANNOT PROVIDE ENOUGH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR A NOVICE STAFF IN ONE YEAR TO TRANSFORM THIS NEW TEACHER INTO AN EXEMPLARY TEACHER." This transformation takes many years of hard work.

Comprehensive Instructional Plan

Wakisha Charter School uses a comprehensive instructional plan. This plan is based on the following assessment:

- Monitoring of classrooms- formal classroom observation and weekly lesson plans
- Data from standardized test scores (PSSA & Terra Nova)
- Professional development committee (convenes on bi-monthly basis) to plan, review and evaluate professional activities, surveys and other staff development related documentation along with teacher requests

- Instructional strategies for special education students assigned to regular classrooms

Other Venues - Raising the Bar:

- Develop, publish and disseminate data/information to upgrade curriculum content in all grades represented
- Increase by 10% scores in reading, language arts and math on all standardized tests: i.e. Terra Nova, PSSA, etc.
- Continue to increase hands on instruction in all disciplines
- Increase number of learning centers in each classroom
- Encourage daily usage of technology in classroom teaching via lesson plans
- Enhance implementation of technology as a supplementary component to PA state standards
- Communicate and collaborate with community members to provide information and opportunities for students to develop civic responsibilities

There is a need to continue to follow up and be proactive as we align and integrate curriculum with our mission statement and PA benchmarks. Wakisha Charter School promotes effective discipline in all classrooms, throughout the school setting and beyond if we are to achieve our listed goals. Emphasis will be centered on how to defuse 'power struggles' with peer interaction by using appropriate interventions that preserve students' and teachers' personal dignity and respect as we aim to develop life long learners and future leaders. Suggestions are as follows:

- When applicable, open staff development to parents
- Provide staff development to improve relationships with parents/caretakers and communities
- Be certain that professional activities have longevity- not just a few hours
- Improve and increase teachers' knowledge of school curriculum
- Continue to encourage staff to pursue higher educational opportunities
- Encourage para-professionals to pursue higher education degrees
- Students will demonstrate increased skills in using technology as the tool for learning
- Differentiated instruction according to standardized and in-house assessments, instruction using stated strategies will be presented to staff during professional development

- Teachers will receive on-going in service training for creating math strategies and incorporating more appropriate math manipulatives that will advance students' overall performance in this area
- Teachers' lesson plans and other classroom activities will incorporate newly acquired format and math strategies to better serve the students
- Staff will become more knowledgeable in the instruction of math application and problem solving skills
- Encourage certification by offering Act 48 credits during staff development
- Assurance that all staff development activities include 'middle school' pedagogy
- Provide professional development which improves learning for all students while at the same time prepares the staff to understand, and appreciate individuals while creating a safe, orderly and supportive learning environment with high expectations for academic achievement for each student
- Encourage teaches to assume leadership roles as they help students develop civic responsibilities
- Continue to boost staff morale, preventing teacher 'burnout'
- Emphasis on components of effective classroom management and their impact on student engagement and achievement
- Provide ongoing training for the '**right to write program**'

African-Centered Education- staff will disseminate knowledge, usage, and modeling of African Centered values, methods, and processes and incorporate these ideas into the educational mainstream along with being role models through their behaviors

Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Donna Comrie	Wakisha Charter School	Administrator	Board
James Carl King	Wakisha Charter School	Administrator	Board
Antoinette Griffin	Wakisha Charter School	Middle School Teacher	Administration
Donna Llitwin	Wakisha Charter School	Special Education Representative	Administration
Brenda Hill	Wakisha Charter School	Ed Specialist - School Nurse	Administration
Kelly Miller	Wakisha Charter School	Middle School Teacher	Administration
Jose Seyborne	Artist- Samll Business Owner	Community Representative	Administration
Dr. Linda Brawner	Wakisha Charter School	Middle School Teacher	Administration
Kevin Ellis	Wakisha Charter School	Ed Specialist - School Counselor	Administration

Malcolm Byrd	Board President- Wakisha Charter School	Board Member	Board
Eileen Brown	Board Member & Parent	Board Member	Board
Kim Smith	Wakisha Charter School	Parent	Administration
Patricia Whitlock	Rider & Whitlock Assoc	Business Representative	Administration
Herbert Whren	Wakisha Charter School	Ed Specialist - Instructional Technology	Administration

Goals, Strategies and Activities

Statement of Quality Assurance - Attachment

- Statement of Quality Assurance

SECTION III. QUALITY OF SCHOOL DESIGN

Rigorous Instructional Program

The Pennsylvania Academic Standards serves as a catalyst to the overall instructional program. Teachers must align their lesson plans with the PA standards with linkage to the anchor assessments. Pacing plans are provided by the administration and professional development sessions support curriculum development- class syllabus, course outlines, lesson implementation, teaching strategies, assessment tools, etc.

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

Developed curriculum binders are based on appropriate grade and subject benchmarks. In addition, teacher lesson plans incorporate state standards and lesson implementation strategies.

Assessment results (Terra Nova, PSSA, performance assessments, projects, etc.) demonstrate the impact of standards, benchmarks, lesson content, teaching strategies, etc. on student performance and achievement.

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

The Core Curriculum aligned with the Pennsylvania Academic Standards is structured on a literature and vocabulary based approach for RELA & Mathematics. Writing is integrated throughout the curriculum by presenting open-ended questions, short responses and essays. This implementation design is supplemented by weekly staff development workshops which include topics such as differentiated instruction, open-ended questioning, writing prompts, creating rubrics, etc. To reinforce the RELA & Math programs along with our mission statement, students receive courses in Spanish, Social Studies/Civics, African American history, technology, science (with lab), art & art history, study hall and academics plus. This comprehensive plan will be improved beginning September 2006 with additional after school tutorial services and an extensive Saturday enrichment program. A part-time math coach and reading specialist will work with gifted and title one students incorporating audio, visual and kinesthetic learning in small group settings.

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

During core subjects- math, reading, language arts, science and history- several teaching methodologies are promoted at Wakisha Charter School. These strategies include project based-learning and inquiry centers, which support constructivist learning and differentiated instruction. These teaching and learning models support in-depth and inquiry based instruction.

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?

In an effort to improve the academics of students performing significantly below standards in literacy and mathematical skills, we incorporate a two tier approach.

1. All content areas- math, reading, language arts, science and history- are supported by electives and special classes that reinforce content, instruction, hands-on learning and practical applications. The classes include:

- MATH TECH is an enrichment course that provides instruction in the use of graphing calculators, math manipulatives, real life math applications, math-a-thon, on-line banking, and lessons that prepare students for the Great Adventures Physics Day.
- SCIENCE LAB is a hands-on, experiment filled experience. Students are immersed in daily science challenges and are required to use daily skills and materials to solve research questions.
- AFRICAN AMERICAN DISCOVERY supports the history curriculum with dialogue, research and current trends in the African American community and their impact. The timeline moves from Africa to the current events of African Americans.
- COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY reinforces the concepts in each of the content areas. Students complete budgets, research academic topics and review computer vocabulary and terminology.

2. Pull out programs for small group and one-on-one instruction is supported by the Reading Specialist and Math Coach. Both instructors identify students performing below standard, create schedules and provide instruction based on school wide and state wide assessment results.

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

Project-based learning, learning centers, and cooperative grouping support active engagement by students. We, at Wakisha Charter School, support students taking an active role in classroom discussions, class work, group work, presentations, projects, etc. Text book teaching is antiquated. Teaching strategies evolve from constructivist learning and differentiated instruction.

Differentiated Instruction

[Brain research](#) confirms what experienced teachers have always known:

No two children are alike.

No two children learn in the identical way.

An enriched environment for one student is not necessarily enriched for another.

In the classroom we should teach children to think for themselves.

Consequently, it necessarily follows that although essential curricula goals may be similar for all students, methodologies employed in a classroom must be varied to suit the individual needs of all children: i.e.- learning must be differentiated to be effective.

Differentiating instruction means creating multiple paths so that students of different abilities, interests or learning needs experience equally appropriate ways to absorb, use, develop and present concepts as a part of the daily learning process. It allows students to take greater responsibility and ownership for their own learning, and provides opportunities for peer teaching and cooperative learning.

Differentiating is not new, the concept has been around for at least two decades for [gifted and talented](#) students. However, it is now recognized to be an important tool for engaging students and addressing the individual needs of all students.

There are generally several students in any classroom who are working below or above grade level and these levels of readiness will vary between different subjects in school. It is important to offer students learning tasks that are appropriate to their learning needs rather than just to the grade and subject being taught. This means providing 3 or 4 different options for students in any given class (not 35 different options). Readiness (ability), learning styles and interest vary between students and even within an individual over time. In a differentiated classroom all students have equally engaging learning tasks.

(Diamond, 2005, p1,6)

Constructivist Learning

As a philosophy of learning, constructivism can be traced to the eighteenth century and the work of the philosopher Giambattista Vico, who maintained that humans can understand only what they have themselves constructed. A great many philosophers and educationalists have worked with these ideas, but the first major contemporaries to develop a clear idea of what constructivism consists of were Jean Piaget and John Dewey, to name but a few.

In view of this, constructivism is an overarching theory that does not intend to demolish but to reconstruct past and present teaching and learning theories, its concern lying in shedding light on the learner as an important agent in the learning process, rather than in wresting the power from the teacher.

Within the constructivist paradigm, the accent is on the learner rather than the teacher. It is the learner who interacts with his or her environment and thus gains an understanding of its features and characteristics. The learner constructs his own conceptualizations and finds his own solutions to problems, mastering autonomy and independence.

According to constructivism, learning is the result of individual mental construction, whereby the learner learns by dint of matching new against given information and establishing meaningful connections, rather than by internalizing mere factoids to be regurgitated later on.

In constructivist thinking, learning is inescapably affected by the context and the beliefs and attitudes of the learner. Here, learners are given more latitude in becoming effective problem solvers, identifying and evaluating problems, as well as deciphering ways in which to transfer their learning to these problems.

If a student is able to perform in a problem solving situation, a meaningful learning should then occur because he has constructed an interpretation of how things work using preexisting structures. This is the theory behind Constructivism. By creating a personal interpretation of external ideas and experiences, constructivism allows students the ability to understand how ideas can relate to each other and preexisting knowledge.

(Thanasoulas, 2005, p1)

Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachments

- Teacher Induction Approval Letter
- Professional Development Approval Letter

English Language Learners

English Language Learners

Currently, Wakisha Charter School does not have any students who qualify for ELL/ ESL. In the event that a new student does need ELL/ ESL support, the following program will ensure student success.

Who: “A student who is in the process of acquiring English and whose native language is not English, or who comes from a background where a language other than English is spoken.” (Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996; p. 238)

“These students may be immigrants, refugees, or native born Americans. They may come to school with extensive formal education or they may be academically delayed or illiterate in their first language. Such students arrive at school with varying degrees of English proficiency. Some may not speak English at all, others may speak English, but need assistance in reading and writing English.” (ESL Standards for Pre-K-12 Students, 1996, p. 159)

There will be four levels of ESL (**English as Second Languages**) categorization. They are (1) Beginner, (2) Beginner II, (3) Intermediate, and (4) Advanced. Students who will be placed at appropriate levels based on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB) and the Language Assessment Scales (LAS).

Goals: The goals of the ESL program are to:

1. Assist teachers to help Limited English Proficient Students (LEPs) acquire English effectively and efficiently.
2. Facilitate LEPs' interpersonal communication in social settings as well as comprehension of and meaningful participation in content area classes.
3. Enable LEPs to achieve the Pennsylvania academic content standards.
4. Promote LEPs' success in their academic careers and ultimately in life.

The Mission: The key to meeting these goals is effective ESL and content area instruction. Recent research has shown that direct teaching of language is not as effective as the teaching of language through content areas (Wayne P. Thomas and Virginia P. Collier, 1995). Therefore, language instruction can be deliberately planned through professionally selected instructional delivery strategies for content areas so that LEPs' acquisition of language is natural and incidental.

Some ESL students come to school with basic competence in the area of social communication, but many do not. "Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills" are just one level of English proficiency, however, and usually take one to two years.

Teachers will be advised to explicitly teach metacognitive skills, such as note-taking, planning, scanning, skimming, reflecting, summarizing, text-rendering, thinking aloud, test-taking, brainstorming, conducting research and learning how to learn.

A low level of proficiency in English does not necessarily mean a low level of cognitive development. Therefore, teachers are advised to motivate learning through higher order thinking exercises by tapping into students' analytical, synthetic, and evaluative skills.

Identification of students done by register upon registration:

- Initial registration form: Parents indicate if another language is spoken at home. This is the first opportunity to identify how many second language learners we may have.
- Home language survey: When any student is enrolled, all parents will fill out a home language survey indicating any language differences. If the survey indicates a second language, student must be referred for Language Proficiency Testing.
- Official registration form contains questions regarding home language and previous bilingual services.
- Records from previous school.

Testing Formal:

- School testing will be administered by the school's Speech Therapist and World Language teacher.
- The World Language teacher, when appropriate can serve as interpreter for parents.
- Students will be administered a written test. Reading Comprehension and Language usage sub test of the Terra Nova Standardized Test.
- If the student scores at or about the 40th percentile in either sub test, they will be classified as English proficient.
- If the student scores below 40th percentile in either sub test, they will take the oral proficiency test. The oral test will identify the proficiency level

These types of social communication skills represent only the tip of the iceberg of language proficiency skills. Ninety percent lies below the surface. These skills are the academic cognitive and linguistic functions required of content-area instruction.

Surface and Deeper Levels of Language Proficiency

COGNITIVE LANGUAGE PROCESS

- Knowledge
- Pronunciation
- Comprehension
- Vocabulary
- Application Grammar
- Analysis
- Synthesis
- Semantic Meaning
- Evaluation
- Functional Meaning

According to Anna Uhi Chamot and Michael J. O'Malley (1994, p.41)

LEPs must master these cognitive academic language functions in order to comprehend and participate meaningfully in mainstream ESL and bilingual classes at the high school level. Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) skills take much longer to master. It may take five to seven years for LEPs with approximately two to three years of education in their home countries to acquire *academic* language on a par with native English-speaking peers (Collier, 1995).

LEPs with no formal education in their home countries may need seven to ten years (Collier, 1995). However, in professional circles, discussion centers on how to reduce this time frame down to three or four years with appropriate and effective teaching strategies and instructional accommodations. Our ESL students are faced with a double task of mastering content-area knowledge and skills while learning academic language at the same time. Classroom teacher must not assume that oral fluency correlates with mastery of academic language.

Instructional

Strategies Limited English Proficient Students can master Basic Interpersonal

Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) instruction in the content-area classes. Content-based ESL instruction and sheltered content instruction are

effective structures for Limited English Proficient Students. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the content area teachers to employ appropriate methods of teaching to:

- (1) ensure student comprehension and participation; and also
- (2) improve the students' language proficiency.

It is the responsibility of ESL/Bilingual teacher to:

- (1) teach language; but also
- (2) incorporate basic concepts, skills, and knowledge of content areas into their ESL instruction.

The recommended way for the ESL/bilingual teacher to incorporate academic vocabulary, skills, concepts, and knowledge is through thematic units. Life itself is integrative and not departmentalized into discreet disciplines. A theme drawn from life experience will naturally offer opportunities to learn skills and concepts in social studies, math, science, etc., in an integrative manner.

ESL/bilingual teacher will teach with knowledge of the sociopolitical and cultural aspects of the English language in comparison with LEPs' home languages.

Content area teachers with LEPs, especially sheltered and co-taught class teachers, must know the level of their students' proficiency in the English language and their sociocultural backgrounds in order to teach their respective subjects effectively and also to help LEPs develop their language.

Fluency in basic interpersonal conversational English may be deceiving in that the teacher may ignore the fact that LEPs do not have enough academic vocabulary to understand the subject. For example, a student coming from a country with a different political system may not have an idea what the term "president," which the teacher considers a simple term, means in his social studies class.

Concepts can be better comprehended when embedded in context. The following figure suggests that for students at the earliest stages of language proficiency, effective pedagogy begins instruction in Quadrant A, then proceeds to B and C as soon as possible, and then to D.

Teachers will be prepared to use:

- Visuals
- Prompts
- Concrete examples
- Artifacts of all kinds
- Role play
- Dramatization and

- Scaffolding techniques

Knowledge of our student's sociocultural backgrounds will help teachers: identify students' learning styles; interact more effectively with their students; adapt instructional strategies; activate their students' prior knowledge; and help their students make academic input comprehension via scaffolding. Cooperative learning is highly recommended as a method of instruction.

The Wakisha Charter School's Adapted Version of the National ESL Standards

Goal 1: To use English to communicate in social settings

Standard 1: Students will use English accurately and appropriately for personal expression, enjoyment, and social interaction.

Standard 2: Students will use appropriate and effective learning strategies to extend their communicative competence.

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

Standard 1: Students will use English accurately and appropriately to obtain, process, construct, and provide subject matter information in the classroom and in other settings in spoken and written form.

Standard 2: Students will use appropriate and effective learning strategies to construct apply academic knowledge.

Standard 3: Students will use technologies to obtain, disseminate, and communicate information across content areas.

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

Standard 1: Students will use the appropriate language variety, register, and genre according to audience, purpose, and setting.

Standard 2: Students will use nonverbal communication appropriate to audience, purpose, and setting.

Standard 3: Students will use appropriate and effective learning strategies to extend their sociolinguistic and sociocultural competence

Graduation Requirements

Not applicable- middle school (6-8)

Special Education

Special Education- Gifted/ Academically Advanced

In many respects, the Wakisha Charter School is an environment that suits the gifted student, in that it promotes excellence, adds cultural outlets, promotes differentiated instruction and academic independence. Gifted students will begin advanced studies beginning in the 6th grade. According to the curriculum, project-based and inquiry based learning are components that will drive the middle school years.

Gifted students will be placed on this fast track after the second semester of their sixth grade year. The Curriculum is displayed in the shape of a hexagon with six academic areas surrounding the core. Subjects are studied concurrently and students are exposed to the two great traditions of learning: the humanities and the sciences.

The Wakisha Charter will pursue this opportunity for a select group of students who are admitted into the gifted program to achieve on a level far beyond the norm.

Special Education- Special Needs

The Micro Managed Educational Class (MMEC) is for a school within a school. The purpose of its creation is to handle academic and/or behavioral delays through an intensive therapeutic and academic program.

MMEC is not a quick fix nor will it put a band-aid over the Grand Canyon. However, it is an innovative program that creates an environment that is challenging, academic, therapeutic and responsible in its approach.

Special Education- Special Needs

The MMEC teachers help students:

- Understand and address their individual needs
- Establish effective techniques to deal with individual problems
- Develop a routine in the classroom that brings consistency to their lives
- Develop age-appropriate social skills with peers and adults
- Recognize the need for and respect of adult authority figures
- Begin to communicate ideas and feelings by utilizing techniques with specific tasks where dialogue is required

Above all students begin to think in terms of, "The Me I Am Learning To Be." MMEC's ultimate goal is to develop a new ABC for our students: Attitude, Backbone and Character.

Process for Identification of Special Education Students

A parent or teacher may choose to refer a student for special education when a problem (academic, behavior, or health, etc) becomes chronic and is affecting the student's ability to learn. The Wakisha Charter School will exhaust all interventions (behavior plans, parent conferences, instructional strategies, etc.) before going through this process.

- Request for Evaluation/ Re-evaluation will be submitted in writing to the school's counselor
- School Counselor will organize a Student Support Team Meeting of (e.g. school psychologist, teacher, parent, counselor, administrator, nurse, etc.)
- The following information will be reviewed by the Student Support Team
 - o Student Interventions and Observations
 - o Behavior Records
 - o Anecdotal notes
 - o Attendance
 - o Standardized test data
 - o Past and current report cards
 - o Student work samples

The student support team will share and review the information and make recommendations.

If the recommendation is for a student to be evaluated for special education services the following comprehensive evaluations will take place:

- o Parent Interview- the school counselor will meet with the student's parents to obtain the student's medical history, developmental milestones, family make-up, behaviors/interactions at home, etc.
- o Psychological examination
- o Educational examination
- o Speech/Language evaluation
- o Other related evaluations (e.g. clinical, physical therapy, neurological, etc.)
- An eligibility meeting will be held which consists of the same members of the Support Team.
- The school counselor will facilitate the meeting and review the comprehensive evaluation results with the Student Support Team
- The Student Support Team will determine whether or not a student meets the criteria for special education services
- Once a student is identified as eligible for special education services, an Individual Education Plan is developed at an IEP meeting composed of school staff and the student's parents/guardians

Targeted Student Population

Classroom teachers, counselors and other qualified on-site staff will identify potential students for participation in the resource room. Students to be placed in the MMEC setting will have an IEP and may demonstrate behaviors such as Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Oppositional Defiance (OD), Anxiety, Attached Disorder, Depression, Low Self-Esteem, experienced Sexual Abuse, Academic Underachievement, etc.

In laymen's terms the resource room is designed to accommodate students who struggle to:

- Follow directions
- Complete given tasks
- Use age appropriate skills with peers and adults
- Deal with loss and grief
- Properly respond to adult authority
- Use positive socialization skills
- Avoid fights and combative situations
- Use appropriate language
- Overcome issues of sexual abuse
- Improve academic achievement

Set Up & Goal of the resources room

Effective implementation is a vital component for the success of the resource room. One certified special education teacher and one para-professional will lead a class with a maximum of eight students. Emphasis will be placed on establishing a student friendly, dynamic environment.

The teacher will provide and is responsible for classroom structure: leading therapeutic activities, setting the overall tone of the class, group and individual instruction, establishing routines with goal sheets, put in place a daily reward system and develop rules and a consequence chart.

All adults involved in the life of a student are important. All are considered their role models. Therefore, the function of the para-professional is of the utmost importance. This person will work closely with the teacher and function as part of a "team." He/She will have an opportunity to utilize individual skills by assisting the students- helping them connect the dots and fill in the blanks. The para-professional will not grade papers. Their job is to reinforce the skills being taught, and to assist in any area deemed necessary by the teacher.

Staff for MMEC consists of one professional and one para-professional responsible for:

- Effective lesson planning- Differentiated Instruction & Direct Instruction
- Delivery of content
- Excellent classroom management skills
- Working as a "team"
- Modeling appropriate behaviors
- Responsiveness to children's' needs
- Creating an environment where students feel safe, responsible and motivated

The Learning Environment

Instructional Models: Direct Instruction & Differentiated Instruction

Reading topics cover areas such as attitude & perspectives, overcoming obstacles, character development, friendship, death & dying, achieving dreams, choices, etc. These topics will encourage group dialogue, increase sensitivity, help develop age-appropriate skills, encourage alternative methods of behavior, raise self-esteem and develop respect for education.

In each of the subjects, designed learning centers will accompany each topic. Students are expected to experience the curriculum through numerous learning modalities (audio, visual, kinetics, etc).

Therapeutic Interventions

Therapeutic intervention is the redirecting of behaviors and attitudes that are not only socially inappropriate but impede student's academic achievement. Behavior modification, age appropriate communication with peers and adults, and a positive attitude toward education are key components in this program. These issues are also addressed with work packets as supplemental tools to aid the staff. The goal is to teach students self-control and discipline of the mind and the body. Remember, it is difficult for children to change their circumstances or environment but how they respond to these challenges makes the most difference. MMEC provides students with pro-active skills and tools to deal with aggression, deficits and/or delays, life's challenges, overall respect for education and positive building traits and self-motivation.

Some students who have failed to learn appropriate behaviors at their home or in their environment have lacked opportunities to imitate good role models, have received insufficient or inappropriate reinforcement, or have misunderstood adequate social experiences.

It has been proven that social behaviors and academic behaviors are highly correlated. In order to achieve success in the MMEC, direct and systematic teaching is required on a daily basis. Learning is sequential, linked to community goals and consistent with behaviors that are relevant to student needs.

The MMEC utilizes an eclectic approach geared to meet the academic, social and behavioral needs of students. Carefully thought out daily goal sheets are designed to allow the staff to provide guidance while allowing the student to take an active role in his/her own growth.

MMEC has developed each lesson to provide role models for children, present correctional strategies and utilize techniques taught to address individual therapeutic needs of each student.

Major objectives for therapeutic intervention will include but not be limited to the following:

- Lessons to build self—esteem
- Lessons to develop self-control
- Lessons to develop a sense of responsibility for action taken
- Lessons to develop respect for the rights of others
- Lessons to teach settlement of grievances and conflict through communication without violence

Some Examples of therapeutic interventions employed by MMEC:

- Breaks between instructional periods and complex activities with less stressful activities to sustain student's interest and attention e.g., classical music, art, poetry, reading stories to class, etc.
- Teach students more effective concentration skills: clearing away distractions, study in quiet place, take breaks when needed
- Identify a variety of positive rewards to maintain student's interest and/or motivation.
- Teach self control strategies - stop-look-listen-think, count to ten
- Utilize a 'listening buddy' who sits next to student in the classroom to quietly repeat instructions as needed
- Teach student more effective test-taking strategies: reviewing material on a regular basis - reading directions more than once, proofreading work, etc.
- Teach students effective problem solving skills: identify problem, brainstorm solutions
- Encourage students to use self-monitoring checklists to improve attention, academic performance and social skills.
- Employ art therapy (drawing, painting, etc.): instruct students to create/draw pictures reflecting how he/she feels about friends, parents, etc.
- Recognize and verbalize hurt and/or angry feelings in a constructive way
- Identify targets and causes for angry feelings
- Assist student in becoming capable of identifying and verbalizing his/her emotional needs.

The MMEC approach is to offer increased, creative discipline and a classroom environment that is structured, interesting and interactive that will eventually raise the academic achievement of its participants. Thus, students benefit from this experience and begin to develop a new respect for themselves, others and education as a whole.

MMEC combats aggression, inappropriate language and inattentiveness by utilizing hands-on activities, verbal praise and diversified learning modes to raise each student's level of awareness and compliance. Students begin to develop classroom and internal strategies for dealing with conflict and strife. Constant and organized discussion, modeling and feedback are essential for student growth. Group dialogue will help teachers and students handle academic, social and emotional setbacks.

Assessment

Measurement of success includes pre and post tests in the form of written evaluations, interviews, observations, self-assessment, portfolios, etc. Various forms of assessment are incorporated with MMEC to ensure a thorough review of goals, strengths and needs depending upon what has been taught and expectations set by the teacher. Teachers are responsible for record keeping and utilizing various evaluation strategies as noted above. These assessment tools and lesson modifications are developed throughout the curriculum. Students will be given a report card grade based upon the regular classroom standards. A second follow up report of the MMEC will also be provided. This report will detail social and behavioral development of students showing strengths, needs and progress of each individual along with detailed suggestions for parents to use at home. The MMEC report will critique strengths, needs and effective strategies to be employed by staff for continued growth both academically and behaviorally by the student.

Equity

- Students with disabilities will be entitled to all special education services provided in the least restrictive environment
- Students with disabilities will have Individual Educational Plans
- If stated in a student's IEP a student with disabilities can use the services of the "MMEC" class

- Students will be assigned the “MMEC” class based on IEP
- The use of disaggregated data is addressed in accountability

Special Education Program Profile - Chart I

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Donna Litwin	1.00	LS & ES	Wakisha Charter School	8	n/a
Dorothy Kingwood	1.00	Learning Support	Wakisha Charter School	16	n/a
Hazel Bedminister	1.00	Learning Support	Wakisha Charter School	15	n/a

Special Education Program Profile - Chart II

Organization	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Catapault Learning	.30	Sppech Therapy	Wakisha Charter School	8	n/a

Special Education Program Profile - Chart III

Title	Location	FTE
School Psychologist	Dr. Robinowitz - Independent	.40

Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV

IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual	Title/Service	Amount of Time Per Week
n/a	n/a	n/a

SECTION IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Student Assessment - Primary

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

Student Assessment - Secondary

Test/Classification	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
PSSA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Reading Stars- Computer Generated Assessment	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
Math Stars- Computer Generated Assessment	No	No	No	No	No	No	No

Student Assessment

Wakisha Charter School performs multiple diagnoses on its students performance using the PSSA (state test) and the TerraNova (local test). These diagnoses are used to prepare

Individualized Performance Improvement Plans (IPIPs) and to help teachers form instruction so that students will achieve at a higher level when they take the assessment(s) at a later point in time. The results are also used by the School Improvement Planning Committee to establish realistic achievement goals for subsequent assessment administrations.

Ø If locally developed tests are used, discuss how they are used and what impact they have on the curriculum, student improvement, and decision making .

Locally developed test are generated from the content of the curriculum. Assessment tools include: Math Stars, Reading Stars and Accelerated Reader.

Ø 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.

An electronic tracking system has been developed to track student achievement over a continuum. The plan tracks student performance in each content area by cluster. This allows teachers to personalize instruction for each child based on identified strengths/weaknesses. Wakisha Charter School has a comprehensive "Teacher Observation" instrument that was designed to ensure that teachers are:

- teaching to each child's demonstrated learning style;
- teaching within the parameters of the lesson plan;
- teaching to the curriculum; and
- using a combination of the constructivist teaching style, the inquiry-based teaching style, and the traditional classroom teaching style..

Teacher surveys and student surveys have been implemented to get feedback from the two major stakeholders in the educational process so that meaningful and productive learning can take place in every classroom.

Wakisha Charter School prides itself on the ability of staff to provide various forms of assessment. A school wide portfolio process has been incorporated into the overall curriculum. Teachers and administrators are responsible for dissemination of information and evaluation. The portfolio allows assessment to take the form of:

- Weekly written assessment in all subjects- using test results diagnostically
- reading & writing
- mathematics (computation, problem solving, etc)
- social science/ history
- science
- Rubrics (using PA Academic standards for reading, writing & speech)
- writing assignments (essay- persuasive, expository, etc.)
- oral reports

- poetry / speech presentations
- Book Reports
- Hands on activities & projects
- Open Ended Questions- math, writing, science & social studies

(using PA academic standards from each discipline)

- Student / Teacher Interviews- based on content & PA academic standards
- Six week assessment in all disciplines from administration
- Teacher made testing using a variety of questions- multiple choice, short response, etc.
- Performance Assessment- Practical approach to applying subject knowledge to activities and projects (explain your answer & show your procedure)
- Teacher observation with pre-planned objectives and assessment
- Self assessment & self reflection Student surveys and forms
- Computer & software assessment program- using modern state-of-the arts equipment
- C&W's "English and Language Arts Curriculum"
- Benchmarks- Pacing in all disciplines
- Math/Reading Anchor Assessments
- PSSA & Terra Nova coach books

Ø 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.

Students performance in the classroom tests, quizzes, performance based assessment, etc. are used in conjunction with their performance on standardized tests to develop an Individual Plan that highlights their strengths and weaknesses. Content area teachers and advisory teachers collaborate to ensure that each child is being taught based on the Individual Plan.

Students in danger of failing or identified as not making reasonable progress are eligible to participate in several initiatives:

- After school homework help
- Extended Study Hall sessions
- Saturday school tutorial sessions
- Small group or one on one instruction with math technology teacher

- Small group or one on one instruction with reading specialist
- One on one scripted reading program sponsored by Greater Philadelphia Cares and Beneficial Bank
- Saturday tutorial services provided by Data Friendly
- SES services
- Computer tutorials

Teacher Evaluation

The major purposes of the teacher evaluation plan at Wakisha Charter School are to:

1. Provide a process that allows and encourages supervisors and teachers to work together to improve and enhance classroom instructional practices.
2. Provide a process for bringing structured assistance to marginal teachers.
3. Provide a basis for making more rational decisions about the retention, transfer, or dismissal of staff members.
4. Provide a basis for making more informed judgments about differing performance levels for use in compensation programs such as merit pay plans or career ladder programs.
5. Provide information for determining the extent of implementation of knowledge and skills gained during staff development activities and for use in judging the degree of maintenance of the acquired knowledge and skills.

Wakisha Charter School's Framework for the Six Teaching Components:

- Planning
- Implementing
- Provided Guided Practice
- Provides Independent Practice
- Monitors Instruction
- Closes Lesson by Using an Appropriate Strategy (ies)

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

CEO- formal & informal observations, professional development

Rider Whitlock Assoc.- informal observations & demonstration lessons for teachers

Consultants-Retired teachers will be mentors to novice teachers (mentors will also observe).

Peer observation opportunities are built into the curriculum

c.) Describe professional development for the evaluators, particularly in the areas of special education and instructional techniques that are unique to the mission of the charter school and support student success.

Objective: To implement an effective evaluation system, professional development for evaluators will be clear and visible, with an appropriate set of evaluation criteria.

A cohesive professional development-teacher evaluation program is detailed in terms of critical elements of the program and the preparation of evaluators.

Components

Professional Development: a total program for enhancing professional effectiveness.

In-service: instruction designed to supply information and develop skills that can be translated into professional practice.

Coach: a colleague who observes and gives feedback about an episode of teaching

Supervisor: a person with major responsibility for increasing professional skills through in-service, observation, and growth-evoking feedback.

Evaluator: a person designated to summarize the quality of professional performance over a period of time, and assigned the responsibility for determining a teacher's future status.

All evaluators (CAO, COO, consultants, etc) have received graduate level performance evaluation training. The special education coordinator has attended numerous PaTTAN sponsored workshops dealing specifically with special education. The Chief Executive Officer completed a graduate level course titled Administration and Supervision of the Special Education Program.

SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

Leadership Changes

During the 2006-2007 school year the board remained intact. No changes were made to trustee officer positions or responsibility.

Three board members did resign (two are current board members of the Wakisha Foundation) and new members were interviewed and await a board vote to begin service.

The school leadership has transitioned from an organization lead by Chief Academic Officer (CAO) and Chief Operational Officer (COO) to a Chief Executive Officer and a Director of Operations. This change allows for an expanded role of the leadership positions and a more effective exchange with the board.

Board of Trustees

Name of Trustee	Office (if any)
Malcolm Byrd	Chairperson
Albert Sampson	Vice- Chairperson
Anwar Young	Treasurer
Earl James	Secretary
Kelly Miller	member
Eileen Brown	member

Professional Development (Governance)

The board coordinates the governance of the school by the acting board chairman interfacing directly with the Ceo and Director of Operations, through monthly board meetings, and through written and email communication.

At the annual meeting/retreat the board chair distributes a list of recommended reading that focuses on the role and functions of board members. Each new member is also given the Schools adopted Bylaws and the minutes from the two previous meetings. In addition, board members are expected to attend trainings to develop their skills as Board Members. This year they participated in the Pennsylvania Charter School Association Annual Workshops which dissected the roles and responsibilities of Charter School Boards.

The board complies with all procedures and laws including the Sunshine Law and the Public Officials Act.

Sunshine Law - Section 702. Legislative findings and declaration

(a) *Findings.* The General Assembly finds that the right of the public to be present at all meetings of agencies and to witness the deliberation, policy formulation and decisionmaking of agencies is vital to the enhancement and proper functioning of the democratic process and that secrecy in public affairs undermines the faith of the public in government and the public's effectiveness in fulfilling its role in a democratic society.

(b) *Declarations.* The General Assembly hereby declares it to be the public policy of this Commonwealth to insure the right of its citizens to have notice of and the right to attend all meetings of agencies at which any agency business is discussed or acted upon as provided in this chapter.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School

The board maintains a working relationship by ensuring that the CEO submits all reports (PDE, District, grants, etc) in a timely manner, respond to all inquires, attends all mandatory meetings, etc.

The Board of Trustees receives monthly reports from both the Chief Executive Officer and the Director of Operations. Every report that is prepared for external organizations are given to the Board President for dissemination to the Board members. The Board also receives a copy of the Annual Report and external and internal auditors reports.

Community and Parent Engagement

Board members participate in all Open House Sessions, award ceremonies, inviting parents/guardians to serve on the board, and supporting the Parent/Teacher Organization.

Also board meeting are advertised throughout the school, the website, and in the newsletter.

SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Major fund-raising activities

The fundraising efforts include:

- Receipt of funds for the e-rate grant where we have improved the technology of the school. The school now has over 100 computers and two state of the computer labs
- Holiday Expressions- annual winter break catalogue sale
- Scholastic Book Sale- twice per year
- Dimes for Durfar- students raise and donate money to the cause

Though unsuccessful this year, Wakisha Charter School submitted grant applications and proposals to the following foundations to support our Summer SET Academy, which we hope to implement during the summer of 2008 to ensure student academic and social success:

- Coca- Cola
- ING
- Wachovia
- Dollar General Fund
- RGK Foundation
- UPS
- Youth Literacy Center

Fiscal Solvency Policies

At the beginning of the fiscal year the Board approves the annual budget. During the year all expenditures are approved by the Board, CEO and Director of Operations and are reviewed monthly at the Board meeting. The Board identifies amounts to set aside when received to cover emergencies, shortfalls and /or delays in receipt of funds.

Accounting System

Wakisha Charter School uses QuickBooks as its electronic accounting system. The Pennsylvania Chart of Accounts has been integrated with the QuickBooks Accounting System. The accounting system has been formatted to align with the state Chart of Accounts, the PDE reporting requirements formats, and with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). Entries are made in the QuickBooks Accounting System as checks are paid out. The system data is backed up and turned over to the CPA. The CPA imports the data into the QuickBooks Accounting System and applies general ledger account codes and class codes in accordance with the state chart of accounts.

Using the QuickBooks Accounting System, compliance with the state object class is achieved by assigning object class codes as general ledger account numbers. Compliance with function classifications is achieved by assigning function codes as class codes in the accounting system. The class code is further modified to achieve separate funds such as General Fund and Special Revenue Fund

The budget process and account procedures are designed to result in financial statements prepared on a modified accrual basis.

Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances - Attachment

- Preliminary Statement of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances

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

Audit firm: Siegal and Drossner, PC

Date of last audit: October 25, 2006 for the 2005-2006 School year

Auditor's opinion:

"In our opinion, the basic financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Wakisha Charter school as of June 30,2006, and the results of its operations for the year then ended with conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United

States of America.”

Findings resulting from the audit:

Findings 06-01:

Criteria: The School is required to obtain proof of residency and existence for each student

Condition: In a sample of 25 student files, 11 did not contain proof of existence through either a social security card or birth certificate, and 8 did not contain proof of residence in the district being billed.

Effect: Failure to meet the requirements may result in overpayments received from school districts

Cause: Management Oversight

Recommendations: We recommend that the School review all student files and obtain the required information to establish the student's status

Explanation of Disagreement with Audit Finding: There is no disagreement with the audit finding.

Action Planned in Response to Findings: The School will implement a review of all student files and institute revised procedures to ensure that the information is obtained.

Follow up action: The school implemented a review of all students' files and instituted a revised procedure in order to obtain student information.

Each student file was reviewed for the following information: application, birth certificate, social security card, proof of residency, immunization, copies of most recently completed grade report card, terra nova grades, and emergency contact update.

Procedure for obtaining missing documents included:

Step1: Letter to families

Step 2: Phone call to families

Step 3 : Certified mailing of letter requesting missing document

Step 4: Student was permitted from participating in off-campus events

After step 3, all missing documents were recovered. We now demonstrate 100% compliance

Citations and follow-up actions for any State Audit Report

Finding 06-01

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SECTION VII. FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Wakisha Charter School acquired computer hardware and networking equipment during the fiscal year. Most of these assets were funded through the E-Rate program. WCS paid \$39,923.50 directly to vendors for computer equipment.

Future Facility Plans and Other Capital Needs

The school is exploring the lease or purchase of a new facility. The board and administration are working to secure an unreserved fund balance in order to positively position the school as it looks to acquire a facility.

SECTION VIII. HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Wakisha Charter School uses the services of Mid Atlantic Consortium of Charter Schools (Division of Health Services) to provide mandated medical services according to title 23.1, Section 23.1- 23.7 of the Pennsylvania School Code and mandated dental services according to title 28-2387 also of the Pennsylvania School Code

The process for meeting the health and safety requirements include

- Immunization letter from the school nurse
- Omission from school- non- compliance
- Proof of immunization

In addition, a school safety and action plan has been compiled that details prevention and intervention strategies. These topics include:

- Visitor Screening Procedures
- School rules and behavior standards

- Discipline Philosophy
- Fire drill exit directions
- Shelter in Place
- Crisis Preparedness/ Pre-planning with checklist
- Multi-hazard safety plan
- Lock down plan

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

- Wellness Program & Policy
- Evidence of Submission for Request for Reimbursement and Report of School Health Services

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs

Wakisha Charter School has the following insurance coverage:

- General Liability and Educators Legal Liability Package Policy
- Worker's Compensation and Employer's Liability
- Unemployment Compensation
- Health Insurance Policy for Employees and family members
- Dental Insurance Policy for Employees and family members
- Vision Insurance Policy for Employees and family members
- Short-Term and Long-Term Disability Insurance Policy for Employees

SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff

Currently, Wakisha employs 25 teachers which support 21 general education classrooms, 3 special education classrooms and 1 reading specialist. 20 of the 25 teachers were invited to return. The WSC retention rate is 80%. Five teachers were dismissed following the completion of the 2006-2007 school year for failing to comply with certification requirements in preparation for the 2007-2008 school year. 85% of our staff is certified. The remaining staff members will take the Praxis test on August 5, 2007. WCS is prepared to accept each staff member that passes the test.

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff - Attachments

- ESPP Status Page - Evidence of Submission
- PDE 414

Student Enrollment

The Wakisha Charter School has an open-admission policy. All students who are presently enrolled at a Philadelphia public, charter, catholic, private Schools, etc. elementary or middle Schools are eligible to attend Wakisha Charter School.

- Students and their parents are invited to the school for an informal meeting
- Students selected are asked to submit the following documentations:
 - Proof of Address
 - Birth Certificate
 - Medical Records (immunization, etc.)
 - Last School Report Card

• Once the school has received from the student the requested information the student receives a “letter of acceptance”

Please note: All students may be selected through a “public lottery.”- A lottery is a random selection process by which applicants are admitted to the charter school. A lottery is used if more students apply for admission to the charter school than can be admitted. A charter school with fewer applicants than spaces available does not need to conduct a lottery.

Once students are selected for the lottery and all openings are filled, students are placed on the waiting list.

- Letter of acceptance is taken to former school and student receives school transfer
- Parents of all new students are be required to sign a “release of information form” enabling us to obtain previous school records

Enrollment

Grade	Enrollment Numbers	Added	Dropped/ Transferred
6	119	7	6
7	140	12	5
8	126	3	2

Returning in September: 255
Required to leave the school (expulsions, other): 6
Numbers who left voluntarily: 5

Wakisha Charter School enrollment trends were similar to most schools. The school's enrollment was demographically similar to the public schools. The school did have more female students than male students. The academic level of students ranged from achievement on standardized tests at Quartile 1 through Quartile 4. Student turnover was minimal. Student retention rate was approximately 95% of grade 6 students returning as 7th graders and the same percentage of grade 7 students returning as 8th graders.

Parents and students expressed satisfaction with the school's Afro-Centric Program, the school's concentration on Character Development, the Entrepreneurial Program, and the overwhelming

show of concern by teachers and administrators in providing their children/students with the educational and social foundations needed to be informed and productive citizens. In an effort to ensure student safety, families of students who poses a threat (verbal or physical) are given best placement guidance and recommendations.

Parents also expressed satisfaction with the safety of the school and the extended school day.

Transportation

All Wakisha Charter School students (grades six thru eight)are eligible to ride the school bus.) The service is provided by The School District of Philadelphia and Durham Bus Company. Special Education students with severe motor/ambulatory disabilities are provided with door to door transportation.

Suggestions for Improvements- I am attaching letters that were sent to the School District in reference to poor bus service. There were a total of 8 letters. I am enclosing three letters as an example of the problems.

1.

October 19, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

Wakisha Charter School is now entering week seven of the academic school year and unfortunately the transportation services provided by the School District of Philadelphia and All City continue to have severe operational dilemmas. Over the past six weeks buses are:

- Continuously and consistently late
- o Every day at least one bus is late
- o Several times buses have arrived after 9:00am
- o During Terra Nova Testing, two buses continuously arrived at 8:30am. Please note: WCS starts at 8:00am
- o As late as October 19, 2006 two buses arrived well after 9:00am
- Overcrowded —too many stops per bus
- o Some children are on bus stops as early as 6:15am for an 8:00am start time.
- o As many as 55 children registered to three buses
- Without updated rosters- new stops have not been added

- o Many students walk several, dangerous blocks to catch the bus
- o Students are waiting on their stops and the bus drivers are refusing to let them ride because of out dated rosters
- With drivers who are not documenting daily incident reports

Wakisha Charter School is making every attempt to support the drivers and provide a safe and orderly environment. In the coming days, we will add volunteer bus chaperones to many of the buses. We appreciate your patience and enduring this transition. Nonetheless, the above issues of lateness, overcrowding, and dated roll sheets must be addressed immediately. I thank you for your prompt attention to the above matters.

Here's to putting children first.

Sincerely,

Donna Comrie

Chief Academic Officer

2.

November 3, 2006

To Whom It May Concern:

This is now my third letter and the eighth week of school. Unfortunately, transportation still encounters huge delays and mishaps. We, at Wakisha Charter School, need clarity in terms of student rosters, drop off and pick up times, timeliness of service and improved communication of effective change dates. Bus drivers were given new rosters on November 2, 2006 and were instructed to implement these changes on November 3, 2006. Yet, Wakisha Charter School's administration and/or parents of students were given no notice. Miscommunication lead to several serious incidents where students:

- were denied entrance on the school bus and left unsupervised on the corner
- stops were removed from the roster and children were left waiting for over 45 minutes (again unsupervised)

Beyond the negligence to student safety, continuous mishaps are unfair to children and their families. These children are entitled to 181 days of instruction. Due to consistent operational errors, our children miss numerous amounts of instructional time. This is unacceptable.

I reiterate that Wakisha Charter School is making every attempt to support the drivers and provide a safe and orderly environment. In recent weeks we have suspended a bus and had several parent conferences to ensure student cooperation. We appreciate your patience through this transition. Nonetheless, the above issues must be addressed immediately. I am requesting a

meeting with the bus coordinator of All City and a representative from the School District of Philadelphia to begin open and consistent lines of communication. Your prompt attention is necessary.

Sincerely,

Donna A. Comrie, MA

CEO

3.

March 13, 2007

To: The School District of Philadelphia Transportation Department

It is now the second week of March and WCS continues to have extensive bus delays, no shows, etc. This is now my seventh letter; yet, the confusion continues. The students of WCS have suffered through the transition of two bus companies that have provided poor to no service. On March 12, 2007, after seven months of transportation mishaps, buses continue to arrive late or have been complete no shows. Yesterday was the first day of PSSA testing and we had two buses arrive after 8:00am. One did not arrive until after 9:00am. This is totally unacceptable. Our new school system instructs students to wait for the bus for 25 minutes after the posted arrival time. If the bus does not show, we encourage students to take Septa, and Wakisha Charter School reimburses each student with a token. As can be imagined, the cost to Wakisha has run over \$2,000.00. This is not only a nuisance, but cheats children out of state mandated instructional hours.

After seven months of poor service, the students and their families deserve consistent, timely, and prompt services. The same route is taken every day so extensive delays and no shows are unacceptable. Please make every effort to correct this problem. We have essentially 'grinned and bared' it for way to long.

Sincerely,

Donna Comrie, CEO

Food Service Program

Wakisha Charter School does participate in the FRL Program. The Philadelphia Archdiocese provides free breakfast for all students. Free, reduced, and full price lunches are provided daily. Students who meet the eligibility for free lunches are provided free lunches. Students who meet the eligibility for reduced price lunches are provided lunches at a reduced rate. Students who do not qualify for free or reduced price lunches have to pay the full lunch price.

Student Conduct

Students are expected to come to school prepared to learn. This includes coming to school with the proper attitude and the right demeanor. Students are expected to follow ALL classroom and school rules and not to engage in any disruptive behavior that will take away from his or her or other students instructional time. Wakisha Charter School's Discipline Policy meets the requirements of Chapter 12 and Chapter 13 of the Public School Code. Due process is specifically highlighted in the Wakisha Charter School Suspension and Exclusion Policy.

Students expelled: 0

Students suspended: 203

CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

Charter School Annual Report Summary Data 2007 - 2008

Name of School: Wakisha CS

Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval: November 15, 1999

Length of Charter: 7 years **Opening Date:** September 2000

Grade Level: 6,7, & 8 **Hours of Operation:** 8:00am- 3:05pm

Percentage of Certified Staff: 80% **Total Instructional Staff:** 25

Student/ Teacher Ratio: 22:1 **Student Waiting List:** 50

Attendance Rate/Percentage: 92%

Enrollment: 385 **Per Pupil Subsidy:** \$6,544 reg ed./ \$13,063 spec. ed

Student Profile

American Indian/Alaskan Native: 0
Asian/Pacific Islander: 0
Black (Non-Hispanic): 382
Hispanic: 3
White (Non-Hispanic): 0
Multicultural: 0

Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch: 90.0%

Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December: 43

Number of:	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (FTIME)	ELEM	MIDDLE	SEC.	TOTAL
Instructional Days	0	0	0	0	183	0	183
Instructional Hours	0	0	0	0	1109.5	0	1109.5

ASSURANCE FOR THE OPERATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

School Year: 2007

The Wakisha CS within Philadelphia IU 26 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 Donna Comrie

Title CEO

Phone 267-256-0950 x102

Fax 267-256-0953

E-mail dcomrie@wakisha.org

Signature of the Chief Executive Officer and Date

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

Name Malcolm Byrd

Title Chairperson

Phone 215- 686-3905

Fax 215-686-3682

E-mail Malcolm.Byrd@phila.gov

Signature of the President of the Board of Trustees and Date

Identify the charter school's Special Education Contact Person.

Name Donna Litwin

Title Special educator Coordinator

Phone 267-256-0950 x102

Fax 267-256-0953

E-mail donnalitwin@aol.com

Signature of the Special Education Contact Person and Date