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# Pennsylvania Department of Education

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

## **Charter Annual Report** **Monday, November 10, 2008**

**Charter School:** Agora Cyber CS  
**Address:** 60 Chestnut Ave  
Devon, PA 19333  
**Phone:**  
**Contact Name:**

## CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

### Charter School Annual Report Summary Data 2008 - 2009

**Name of School:** Agora Cyber CS

**Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval:** May 2, 2005

**Length of Charter:** 5 years    **Opening Date:** September 6, 2005

**Grade Level:** K-12    **Hours of Operation:** 8 am -5:00 pm

**Percentage of Certified Staff:** 100%    **Total Instructional Staff:** 124

**Student/ Teacher Ratio:** 50:1 (average)    **Student Waiting List:** none

**Attendance Rate/Percentage:** 95%

**Enrollment:** 4299 (Unique enrollments throughout the year)    **Per Pupil Subsidy:** \$7950  
(Average: Varies by School District)

#### Student Profile

**American Indian/Alaskan Native:** 0.90%  
**Asian/Pacific Islander:** 0.86%  
**Black (Non-Hispanic):** 21.52%  
**Hispanic:** 5.63%  
**White (Non-Hispanic):** 69.09%  
**Multicultural:** 2.00%

**Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch:**  
55.2%

**Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services  
(Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December:** 264

Number of:	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (FTIME)	ELEM	MIDDLE	SEC.	TOTAL
<b>Instructional Days</b>	0	0	181	181	181	181	724
<b>Instructional Hours</b>	0	0	1086	1086	1086	1086	4344

## SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Organization Description

Agora Cyber Charter School serves students in grades kindergarten through twelve spanning the entire state of Pennsylvania using an online instructional model, utilizing the K12 curriculum and management services. All students interact with one or more state-certified teachers (depending on the grade level) and communicate regularly with their teachers through e-mail, telephone, and online meetings. Each Agora family receives a loaner computer and subsidized Internet access, as well as boxes of materials, including a wide array of textbooks, CDs, videos,

and other hands-on tools and resources. These materials complement the interactive online elements of our program, ensuring that students receive instruction using the best method for each subject matter. The online planning and assessment tools, resources, and hands-on materials range from textbooks to microscopes; cell samples to beautifully illustrated classic children's stories; and much more.

Agora also provides an extensive support system to both parents and students. In grades K-8, working closely with the teacher, the parent (or other responsible adult) serves as a "learning coach" to the child, helping to facilitate his or her progress and working to modify the pace and schedule as needed. At the high school level the adult is less involved, as students work at more of a collective pace with a class of students in conjunction with the teacher. Each teacher is state certified and trained in his or her specific subject area. In addition, monthly networking opportunities are provided through various events and outings, enabling the entire school community to keep in close contact.

In addition to providing individualized learning, as an online public school, Agora provides the structure, administrative support, oversight, accountability, and state testing required of all public schools. In the 2007-2008 school year Agora ended the year with approximately 3200 students, 124 full and part time faculty and staff and 4 administrators. The teaching staff include full and part time regular education and special education teachers and a full time Title One coordinator and 4 Title One teachers. The school will continue to add students next year and is on target to have an enrollment of about 5000 students in the 2008-2009 school year in grades K through 12.

## **Core Purpose**

### **Mission**

The mission of the Agora Cyber Charter School is to provide an innovative, intensive academic preparation that inspires and educates students to achieve the highest levels of academic knowledge and skills.

Agora embraces a collaborative partnership between teachers and parents in order to empower students to reach extraordinary heights. Extraordinary results require extraordinary efforts! With commitment, hard work, consistency and responsibility, every student will meet the challenge of mastering high expectations.

### **Vision**

Through a combination of research based, individualized, specialized curriculum and instruction in the home, online conferencing with a certified teacher, and access to a community of experts in science and technology, our students will emerge as confident leaders of the digital age.

### **Shared Values**

The common denominator among parents who choose Agora for their children is the aspiration to remove barriers that keep them from reaching their true potential—whatever those barriers are for their children. Teachers, parents and administrators are passionately motivated to resist restrictions imposed by a learning environment that is not well-suited each student's unique need. Agora can be defined by a core sense of distinguishing values including:

1. Mastery is possible for all students
2. Research based learning without limits
3. Open communication between parents, teachers, students, and administrators
4. Personal Passion by teachers and administrators leading students to success
5. Individualized learning plans and scheduling
6. Expert lesson plans
7. Active School community opportunities

8. Focused, ethical environment
9. Nurturing learning environment
10. Accountability Standards

## Academic Standards

Agora Cyber Charter School utilizes curriculum aligned to the Pennsylvania Academic Standards. The curriculum encompasses much more than computer lessons. Students read books; do hands-on work; perform science experiments; use manipulatives and workbooks to master mathematics; draw, paint, create art projects; and participate in hands-on music lessons. Inquiry, experience, discovery and higher order thinking are at the center of our curriculum. Additionally, educational outings supplement day-to-day instruction. Student portfolio work and Socratic conversations with teachers also promote in-depth and inquiry-based teaching and learning.

The math program balances mastery of fundamental skills with critical thinking and problem solving. The elementary math program emphasizes an active, multi-sensory approach to ensure that children understand the concrete realities that underline mathematical concepts. Regular practice and review ensures mastery of basic skills. Online games and animations motivate children and help illustrate concepts, while challenge problems help develop critical-thinking skills. The middle school math program transitions students from elementary to high school by honing in on a complete understanding and mastery of algebraic functions and concepts. Teachers design instruction around the data provided from assessments and standardized test scores. This data informs instruction while teachers design individual learning objectives for students in their class.

The science program balances hands-on experience with systematic study of scientific terms and concepts. At all levels students perform many experiments to help them understand scientific principles, and receive guided instruction in important scientific concepts. Exploration of the life, earth and physical sciences in each grade nurtures curiosity, analytical skills and an appreciation of how the world is shaped by ongoing scientific and technological advances.

The history program, with integrated topics in Geography and Civics, opens students' minds and imaginations to far off lands, distant times, and diverse people. The program emphasizes the story in history—a story that includes not only great men and women, but also everyday people. In kindergarten children go on a world tour of the seven continents and are provided an overview of American history through a series of biographies of famous Americans. The history program in grades 1-4 tells the story of civilization from the Stone Age to the Space Age. In 5th-7th grades students explore major themes and an in-depth study of American History from the arrival of the first people in America through the Civil War on toward recent times. 8th graders began a journey through World History with a focus on the development of civilization across a twelve-thousand year span, from the Ice Age to the Middle Ages.

Following the timelines in the history lessons, art lessons introduce students to great works of art from different cultures and eras, while engaging them in creative activity, such as painting, drawing and molding with clay, through self-directed projects. The music program is set up as a successive series of programs. The lessons help students learn about and appreciate music, from singing and dancing, to learning about rhythm and playing the recorder.

AGORA embraces promising new approaches which emphasize the use of media in innovative ways. In many places, the approach is a combination of tried-and-true lessons fused to a technologically innovative delivery system, fully aligned to the state's expectations.

Students at Agora move at their own pace through the curriculum. The teachers carefully monitor the students to ensure that each student is placed at his/her instructional level. This pacing allows students to accelerate more quickly than students in a traditional classroom. Conversely, students who need a slower pace are monitored to and alternate strategies are employed to supplement instruction as needed to close the achievement gap that might otherwise continue to widen. Teachers develop individualize learning plans (ILP) for students and all students are carefully monitored to access mastery. Students may interact more frequently with their teacher in small group synchronous sessions for tutoring and acceleration. In addition, students are referred to the instructional support team for more in depth response to instructional interventions.

Direct Instruction is provided through technology based curriculum and instruction. Teachers provide lessons through cyberspace that are in accordance with the requirements of the Pennsylvania Standards. Students receive support in implementing lessons by having teachers and parents work together to ensure that this model of instruction is implemented to maximize and ensure student success. Teachers implement best practices according to Pennsylvania State Standards.

### **Strengths and Challenges**

Strengths of Agora are curriculum and curriculum development, professionalism, school culture, experience of staff, and overall management of curriculum and instruction through out the course of the year. Through the support of K12 management company Agora has support for school administration (Head of School, academic administrator, and Special Education Director), finance, school development/ community, enrollment. and office staff. The K12 management company helped with the overall organization and management of day to day activities with complete Board oversight. Agora's popularity continued in its third year of operation, which caused some challenges with supporting new students enrolling throughout the year with intense academic gaps. With the test scores available for returning students, Agora will strategically address the needs of at risk students through intense remediation through synchronous and asynchronous instruction our Response our Response to Intervention and Title 1 programs. Agora will focus on the area of mathematics and add math specialists to the middle level and secondary teaching staff. Agora's Board of Trustees approved a 190 day calendar in order to provide more instructional days to give students the gift of time to master content and close academic gaps.

## **SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING**

### **Strategic Planning Process**

In conjunction with Agora Cyber Charter School's Board of Trustees, administrators, teachers, parents, and community members, Agora's strategic planning process and decision making is the roadmap for Agora's mission that all students will be inspired to achieve the highest levels of academic knowledge and skills to be obtained. Agora depends on the partnerships of all of the members of the Agora community to empower all students to reach these heights. The planning process relies on data and trends paying particular attention to local and state assessment data, demographic changes and growth of student population, income of financial revenue from school districts and Federal Grants, strengthening instructional practices, and attracting, developing, and retaining effective teachers. The plan will always fully address innovative instructional technologies and practices to ultimately prepare students to emerge as leaders into

the digital age.

The academic team consisting of instructional leaders, teachers, and parents will analyze student data, paying attention to trends to affect future results and practices. Goals will be developed while work groups and actions and instructional practices implemented to help students achieve academic success. Pre and post assessments will evaluate the strategies and determine if additional planning or strategies must be implemented. Data is continually collected to actively alter or integrate different strategies to meet the changing needs of the student community. All school goals and plans will be integrated where necessary to synthesize the actions of the entire community. Ultimately Agora Cyber Charter School's Board of Trustees will review and monitor comprehensive plans and share the community's commitment to the Federal NCLB guidelines, PA School Code, alignment of academic standards and anchors to curriculum and instructional practices, community and student population.

**Strategic Planning Committee**

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Allison Dracha	Agora Master Teacher	Middle School Teacher	Sharon Williams
Amy Rupp	Agora Lead Teacher	Middle School Teacher	Sharon Williams
Anita Fiel	Agora Academic Administrator	Administrator	Sharon Williams
Dr. June Brown	Agora Cyber Charter School Founder	Administrator	Dr. June Brown
Judy Deemer	Special Ed Coordinator	Special Education Representative	Sharon Williams
Julie Schumacher	Agora Title One Coordinator	Administrator	Sharon Williams
Kevin Corcoran	Agora Business Manager	Business Representative	Sharon Williams
Mary Cipro-Flynn	Parent	Parent	Sharon Williams
Michelle Goodman	Agora Lead Teacher	Elementary School Teacher	Sharon Williams
Rebecca Cooper	Agora Lead Teacher	Elementary School Teacher	Sharon Williams
Sharon Williams	Agora Head of School	Administrator	Dr. June Brown
Tom Dorrin	Agora Director of Special Education	Administrator	Sharon Williams

**Goals, Strategies and Activities**

**Goal: FOUR-YEAR GRADUATION RATE (for districts and schools that graduate seniors)**

*Description:* Graduate rate will meet an 80% threshold and/or show growth.

**Strategy: Mentor Cohorts**

*Description:* These groups will provide a cohesive way to bring students together in effort to build accountability.

*Activities:*

Activity	Description
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Monthly Cohort Meetings	Cohort groups lead by teachers and student ambassadors will meet to address study skills, goal setting, and long range planning.	
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Sharon Williams	Ongoing	\$0.00

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	
Student Ambassadors	The use of these student leaders will provide models for the peers in their cohorts. They will lead the group in discussions on topics involving career and college goal setting as well as various study and organization skills.	
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Sharon Williams	Ongoing	\$0.00

**Goal: MATHEMATICS**

*Description:* At least 56% of all students will be proficient in Mathematics, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments.

**Strategy: Constructive Response Training**

*Description:* Teachers, parents and students will be trained on the constructive response items. Teachers will then actively and consistently teach the constructive response type math questions.  
*Activities:*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	
Math Constructive Response Portfolio	Teachers in grades K-6 will collect monthly portfolio samples as a measure of growth and understanding.	
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Anita Fiel	Start:8/18/2008 Finish: 3/2/2009	\$0.00

**Strategy: Math Re-sequence**

*Description:*  
*Activities:*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	
Re-sequence Communication	Send letter to inform parents that math units have been re-sequenced to prepare students for testing and to address the eligible content standards first.	
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Anita Fiel	Start:8/18/2008 Finish: 8/18/2008	\$0.00

**Goal: READING**

*Description:* At least 63% of all students will be proficient in Reading, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments.

**Strategy: Formative Assessment and Progress Monitoring**

*Description:* Utilize formative assessment tool (Scantron and AIMS web) to identify at-risk students and direct remediation.

*Activities:*

Activity	Description	
Benchmark Testing	Teachers will test students in grades 3-8 using benchmark assessments a minimum of twice per year. The lowest performing quartile of students will receive progress monitoring using formative assessments.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Anita Fiel	Ongoing	\$0.00

**Goal: STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN STATE ASSESSMENTS**

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

**Strategy: Communication Initiative**

*Description:* The administration and teachers will communicate early and consistently the testing requirements and logistics.

*Activities:*

Activity	Description	
School Calendar and Newsletter Initiatives	The school calendar will include the PSSA testing calendar. Also a consistent section of the school newsletter will address testing readiness and logistics.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Anita Fiel	Ongoing	\$0.00

**Statement of Quality Assurance**

Charter school has not met AYP.

Charter school has created a School Improvement Plan.

Charter school has not submitted and reviewed its School Improvement Plan with the Intermediate Unit designee.

**Statement of Quality Assurance - Attachment**

- Assurance of Quality and Accountability

**SECTION III. QUALITY OF SCHOOL DESIGN**

**Rigorous Instructional Program**

The school's academic program was built primarily around the K12.com curriculum, which was developed from the award-winning Core Knowledge Sequence. While the Core Knowledge

Foundation provided curricular guidelines, K12 provided a fully developed and comprehensive curriculum, including complete lesson plans and assessments for a 180-day school year, online lessons with teaching aids, and a comprehensive array of offline materials. The program included detailed instructional guides, clear presentation of lessons, a comprehensive on-line help system, technical support, optional challenge problems, secondary lessons, and embedded teaching tips. The publishers of the curriculum provided documentation to show that the materials met state content standards and requirements. Also, time was dedicated to an alignment project to ensure that the K12 curriculum was directly aligned to the PA Standards. State Benchmarks, Anchors and Standards were cross referenced with K12 grade level lessons objectives.

The K12 mastery based curriculum included:

Clearly defined learning objectives that were aligned to the PA Standards.

Step-by-step, easy-to-follow procedures for hands-on activities.

Alternative teaching approaches.

Materials to prepare and gather.

Keyword definitions and tips and strategies for pronunciation.

Suggestions for optional enrichment and extension activities.

The K12 curriculum also included a large number of more traditional tools that were utilized offline such as textbooks, phonics kits and manipulatives. Although K12 lessons were delivered via the Internet, students were expected to spend less than 50 percent of their time learning online. Children in grades K-5 completed approximately 20 to 30 percent of the work online. The offline work included but was not limited to reading books, solving math problems on paper, drawing, and conducting science experiments. Instruction and activities for students in grades 6-12 involved increased independence and computer use. However, offline work was always essential.

Inquiry, experience, discovery and higher order thinking were at the center of our curriculum. Additionally, educational outings supplemented day-to-day instruction. Student portfolio work and Socratic conversations with teachers also promoted in-depth and inquiry-based teaching and learning. New approaches were presented which emphasized the use of media in innovative ways. To accommodate the diverse learning styles of children, our professionals employed a variety of "Best-Practice" strategies, including direct instruction, hands-on exploration, use of manipulatives, practice exercises, and distributed review to ensure academic achievement. Students developed their technology skills through the use of technology for learning across the curriculum. Students participated in virtual classes, supported by whiteboard software, and were taught how to use a wide range of computer-based tools for working with numbers, text, and graphics.

To monitor and document student academic achievement, assessments were managed through the online K12 system and involved gathering information about student progress, strengths, and weaknesses. The following assessments, evaluations, and tests were a part of the educational program:

**Placement assessments:** In math and reading, these assessments placed students into the appropriate point in the curriculum.

**Lesson assessments:** designed to assess mastery of lesson objectives.

**Unit assessments:** designed to assess mastery of the lessons in a unit and determine whether a student should receive additional instruction on content covered in a unit.

**Semester evaluations:** provided information on what had been mastered during the semester.

**Teacher conferences and informal reviews:** On a regular basis, teachers evaluated students to monitor achievement and determine ways to boost student performance.

**PSSA.:** The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) is a standardized test used to measure a student's attainment of the state's academic standards in Reading, Writing, and Mathematics, and to assist schools in identifying strengths and weaknesses of the academic programs. Every Pennsylvania student is assessed in reading and math in grades 3, 5, 8, and 11, and in writing in grades 6, 9, and 11. Additional assessments are administered as required by the State of PA and the federal NCLB Law. Students participated in diagnostic testing as well as PSSA preparation in the web-based program, Study Island.

Each semester, students were issued a standards based progress report, reflecting completed work in the curriculum and progress towards mastery of the PA Standards. Students not meeting the goals set by the standards and demonstrated at-risk behaviors were taken through the Response to Intervention (RtI) process. A CARE team was an integral part of this process. The purpose of the team was to provide a knowledgeable group of professionals to consider the unique needs of any student in the school who may require special assistance. This may include tutorial, extra help, Title I services, crisis intervention, 504 accommodations, services for students with limited English proficiency, special education, and other special services of either a temporary or permanent nature. The RtI process involved movement through the following tiers of intervention based on individual student need:

K12's Planning, Progress, and Attendance tools enabled teachers to monitor and evaluate student academic achievement in Tier 1 of the RtI process. The Planning tools included a Daily Plan, Weekly Plan, Lesson List and Materials List. The Progress tool gave teachers, students and parents a look at both completion of lessons and mastery of lessons that had assessments. The Attendance tool allowed one to record the amount of time the student spent in school. The number of minutes for each subject was recorded, and the Attendance tool calculated the total number of hours and minutes for each day, year to date, and the total of number of days in school.

Response to Intervention (RtI)

**Tier 1 instruction** encompasses:

1. A high-quality curriculum and program of instruction
2. Use of quality research-based instructional strategies
3. Ongoing assessment of students to determine instructional strengths and needs
4. Ongoing professional development to provide teachers with necessary tools to ensure every student receives quality instruction

**Tier 1 instruction** is designed to address the needs of the majority of a school's students. By using flexible grouping, ongoing assessment, and targeting specific skills, classroom teachers are able to meet instructional goals. **Students will meet with the regular education teacher no less than 2 times per month.**

· **Key Purpose:**

- o Identify students who haven't developed the essential skills required for success
- o Collect Data for the whole class to establish benchmarks and local norms for the school

- o Upgrade general instruction in a manner that effectively addresses the needs of deficient students in a whole group setting

Steps for successful implementation of a **Tier 1 process** include the following:

- Identify students using benchmark data
- Measurable goals are established for the class and for deficient students within the classroom
- Measurable goals are set for the next data-collection period
- Teachers utilize problem-solving methods to address the needs of the deficient students and formulate these in relation to the instruction provided for the entire class
- Teachers determine the level of supports and programming needs that are necessary to accomplish the whole class goals
- Teachers implement the strategies and interventions in the regular education setting

### **Instruction in Tier 2**

Students who required more intense remediation due to large academic gaps received Tier 2 intervention and instructional strategies. These students received **supplemental instruction in addition to the standard classroom program**. The supplemental instruction in Tier 2 of Response to Intervention is designed to meet the needs of these students by providing additional individual instruction, small group instruction, and/or technology-assisted instruction to support and reinforce skills being taught by the classroom teacher.

Steps for successful implementation of a **Tier 2 process** include the following:

- The interventionist may be the classroom teacher, a specialized teacher, specifically trained for Tier 2 supplemental instruction
- Provides additional instruction to students who score below benchmark criteria in one or more critical areas of instruction
- Tutoring sessions reflect the important learning targets of content area subjects based on the grade level of the students
- Plan the amount of assistance and the method used according to progress monitoring data
- The additional instruction and frequent progress monitoring occurs at least every two weeks, preferably 3 times per month
- Exit students who progress to grade level from the Tier 2 intervention process
- Monitor progress to assure on-level performance
- Provide the third tier of intervention for those who do not exit

Five to ten percent of students who have received Tier 2 supplemental instruction continue to have marked difficulty in acquiring necessary skills. These students require instruction that is more explicit, more intensive, and specifically designed to meet their individual needs.

**Tier 3 of Response to Intervention:** Designed for students with low content area skills and/or a sustained lack of adequate progress when provided with primary and secondary interventions. Movement to this tier initiates the **Child Study Team**. This team is a special education centered team. Movement to this tier does not guarantee a special education evaluation. This evaluation occurs when deemed appropriate.

- Tutoring at this level is more intense and includes explicit instruction that meets the individual needs of struggling students. Instruction is tailored to specific individual student learning targets or goals, and the duration of daily instruction is longer. The

interventions at this level are intensive and targeted to specific deficiency areas for the individual student's needs.

- The main differences between Tier 2 and Tier 3 are not the interventions, but the frequency, duration and progress monitoring requirements of Tier 3.
- The frequency and duration become at least weekly. Progress monitoring occurs weekly.

To support our most at-risk students and Tier 2 of the Rtl process, Agora initiated a Title I program. The Title I program was a federally funded supplemental education program that provided financial assistance to improve educational opportunities for our educationally deprived students. The Title I program was designed to help Agora's lowest performing students meet the state content and performance standards in reading, language arts and mathematics. Students were assigned a reading and/or math specialist that provided specially designed, supplemental instruction. This instruction was provided weekly in Elluminate, a virtual classroom. The focus of instruction was mastery of skills needed to achieve proficiency of the state standards. Web-based remedial programs were utilized to enhance the instruction provided to students enrolled in Title I.

Agora embraced promising new approaches which emphasized the use of media and technology in innovative, meaningful ways. In many instances, our approach was a combination of tried-and-true lessons fused to a technologically innovative delivery system, fully aligned to the state's expectations.

### **Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachment**

- Teachert Induction Report

### **English Language Learners**

All PA residents of school age had the right to enroll and attend Agora under satisfactory proof of residency and immunization, regardless of their English proficiency. All families were screened during the enrollment process using the Home Language Survey. This survey was based on the form provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The survey was filed in the student's permanent record folder and will remain through graduation. Based on this screening process no PHLOTE (Primary Language Other than English) students were identified as needing a core ESL program. Professional development was provided on the following topics: Requirements for ELL Programs, Administering and Scoring the WIDA ACCESS Assessment, and Supplemental Programs (Title III). An administrator attended ESL workshops provided by the Department of Education. Student data was entered in the LEP system pertaining to identified ELL student count. Data was recorded showing no identified students.

In anticipation of identified ELL students in the 08-09 school year, a highly qualified, PA certified teacher will be hired. Assessment procedures will be secured for program entrance, measuring progress in gaining English proficiency, and program exiting. Such assessment shall address the areas of listening, speaking, reading, and written skills as well as the academic progress as they relate to the attainment of Commonwealth and School-established academic standards. Pennsylvania's Annual Achievement Outcomes will be utilized. These outcomes include: participation in PSSA assessments with appropriate coding, participation in the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs and annual LEA data review to determine student progress, inform instructional practice and/or curriculum changes. Performance targets include: making progress toward English language proficiency as measured by the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs, attaining English language proficiency as measure by the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs and meeting AYP as measured by the state content assessment (PSSA/PASA)

Exit criteria will be established based on the following: Score of Basic on the annual Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA), score of Proficient (Bridging as per the Pennsylvania

Language Proficiency Standards for English Language Learners) in the areas of Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing on the annual state English language proficiency assessment, and final grades of C or better in core subject areas (Mathematics, Language Arts, Science and Social Studies).

School communication with parents about assessment, academic achievement and other related education issues will be provided in the language understood by the parent whenever possible.

## Graduation Requirements

Agora Cyber Charter School Board of Trustees recognizes a "Graduate" when the following requirements have been successfully completed according to 22 Pa. Code Section 4.24:

### 1. Students must earn 22 credits in the following content areas that are aligned to the PA academic standards.

**Mathematics** **3 credits required**

*Algebra I, Algebra II, Geometry, Trig, Calculus, etc*

**English** **4 credits required**

*Literacy Analysis and Composition, American Lit., British and World Lit., etc*

**History and Social Sciences** **3 credits required**

*World History, Geography and World Cultures, US History, U.S. and Global Economics, etc.*

**Science** **3 credits required**

*Physical Science, Earth Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, etc*

**Humanities/World Languages** **4 credits required**

*Fine Art, Music Appreciation, Spanish, French, German, Latin, Chinese, etc.*

**Electives** \* 4 credits required **2.5 credits required**

*Computer Literacy, Web Design, Game Design, Journalism, Anthropology, etc.*

**Physical Education** **1.5 credits required**

*Physical Education*

**Health** **0.5 credits required**

*Skills for Health*

**Career Planning** **0.5 credits required**

*Career Planning, Business Communication and Career Exploration*

*\*\*Honors and AP courses are offered in all content areas*

### 2. Students must complete a culminating Graduation Project presented to peers and school sponsor.

**3. Students must score Proficient on the 11th grade PSSA in Math, Language Arts, and Writing. For students who either do not score proficient or advanced on the PSSA For students who either do not score proficient or advanced on the PSSA or who we do not have scores for, must master an alternative assessment that measures the state standards for the PSSA in reading, writing, and mathematics. If they do not receive a passing grade, they must attend a remediation session with the English and/or the Math teacher to ensure they learn the required information and retake the alternative assessment.**

## **Special Education**

Agora Cyber Charter School serves and includes students with disabilities or "Thought to Be" students with possible identified disabilities. All students have strengths and weaknesses that are recognized and accommodated in order to reach their full potential as a contributing student of Agora and a member of society.

Teachers are actively involved in student achievement, developing individual learning plans and adapting and modifying the curriculum when necessary. Unidentified students who appear to be at risk for any reason, are referred to the Response to Intervention (RtI) Team. A referral to the Child Study Team may occur for students who do not respond to strategies and it may be determined to have a multi-disciplinary team evaluation. Regular education and special education teachers receive intensive training and professional development each school year that includes Child Find responsibilities, RTI and Special Education Regulations and Procedures.

Agora Cyber Charter School uses K12 curriculum for Kindergarten through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students in a mastery-based program. Students in high school use courses from K12 and other outside providers. Placement testing taken upon enrolling in the school and existing

IEPs determine the instructional levels. The instruction is self-paced. The curriculum has daily lessons and frequent assessments. Mastery is the goal. Students with special needs may have the curriculum modified or adapted as necessary, but students work in an inclusion model and students in special education receive services from both a regular education teacher and a special education teacher. The curriculum is aligned and meets or exceeds Pennsylvania State standards.

Agora follows the appropriate team procedures as specified in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA). The regular education teacher will be present at the team meetings in order to contribute information or to make clear specifications with regard to treatment and accommodations required for the student. All teachers will have access to each assigned student's IEP. Those teachers responsible for that student's education, will understand their role with regard to that IEP's specifications. Evaluations pursuant to applicable Pennsylvania State and Federal laws and regulations occur for students with suspected disabilities. The IEP team will help to identify any other students thought to have special needs. IEP transition planning and goals for students reaching the age of sixteen years old or older are developed.

The following specially designed instruction list represents some but not limited to possible strategies incorporated into IEPs:

Assistive Technology devices (visual, auditory, kinesthetic, language etc.) as deemed appropriate:

- Behavior modification plan
- Books on tape
- Chunking information
- Communication board
- Extended time
- Frequent breaks
- Graphic organizers
- Kinesthetic techniques
- Multi-sensory approach
- Oral responses
- Positive feedback
- Read aloud to student
- Reduction in assignment requirements
- Reinforcers and tangible rewards
- Repetition of instructions
- Sensory Integration Techniques
- Sign language communication
- Social stories
- Supplemental resources
- Tape recorder
- Test modifications
- Use of a timer

- Use of an outline
- Use of a calculator
- Use of dictation
- Use of spellchecker
- Use of highlighter
- Use of manipulatives
- Use of mnemonic strategies
- Use of keyboard/computer for writing
- Visual aids or Visual AT devices
- Written instructions
- Oral instructions
- Review and repetition

Agora Cyber Charter School provides its special education students with many unique ways to progress that are simply not available in a typical brick and mortar setting. In a sense, every Agora Cyber Charter School child's education is an individualized education plan and technology replaces outdated methods for delivering individualized instruction while freeing up the teachers to provide personalized support for students who need one on one attention or additional time and support. Each student receives the individualized support of the responsible adult aka Learning Coach.

Inherent in the Agora Cyber Charter School program are a multitude of adaptations and modifications. A student who needs support in reading can receive extra support and time without missing any of his other classes.

Multi-modal instruction becomes the norm in an Agora Cyber Charter School classroom. When students research subjects, they are not limited to the school library, but can use field trip experiences, museum visits, Internet sites, and a multitude of other resources. It is possible with advance planning for students to get credit for a variety of real-world enrichment and educational experiences that were not necessarily designed in the curriculum.

Agora Cyber Charter School's special education teachers work closely with families to monitor the behaviors and progress of students. Our Special Education teachers are state certified and experienced. They provide support with behavioral issues, academic issues, related service needs, compliance issues and curricular issues. They confer with each other and suggest curriculum laddering techniques and accommodations for special needs. They create specially designed instruction and participate in the IEP team decision to recommend and order assistive technology and stimulating educational software to supplement the curriculum. Special Education teachers prepare Quarterly Progress Reports indicating progress toward annual goals and objectives. Related Service providers submit their quarterly progress reports to be incorporated. When progress is unsatisfactory, an IEP meeting occurs to discuss the student's needs.

Agora provides related services on an as-needed basis through contractors based all over the state (see chart of providers). The school has a Related Services Coordinator for

contracts and overseeing the base of providers and making referrals. Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech and Language Therapy are some of the services provided regularly. At the current time, Agora has a growing number of providers based on student needs. The school is initiating relationships with Intermediate Units, agencies and individual providers across Pennsylvania.

Agora will implement each student's IEP and provide the necessary related services. These include, but may not be limited to the following:

- Mobility training
- Adaptive therapy
- Notifications
- Evaluations
- Psychological and counseling services
- Assistive technology devices
- Speech and language services
- Resource room and special classes
- Occupational therapy
- Transportation when required
- Interpreters for deaf or hard of hearing

Agora Cyber Charter School's program works for students with medical disabilities that require frequent hospital stays or rehabilitation at home. With a laptop computer (not standard, but available to those with need), these children can take their school to the hospital or during times of bedrest. It may mean the student completes the school work in the evening rather than during the traditional school daytime hours. Agora Cyber Charter School expects students to maintain consistent progress in the curriculum according to each student's instructional needs and must meet the required total of 990 hours for secondary students and 900 for elementary students. If a student missed a week of school due to illness, he or she could easily make it up on weekends or an hour at a time by adding on to the length of the school day. Some students require, instead, a reduction in expectations due to physical or psychological factors that interfere with the amount of time they can function academically. With an IEP, it is a simple matter to adjust the workload to modify or accommodate in these situations.

Students with ADHD benefit in a number of ways from Agora Cyber Charter School's unique design. First, these students leave environments that are frequently over-stimulating and over-scheduled for many students with ADHD. This reduces the number of times students experience behavioral challenges and consequences for behaviors that are often beyond their control.

Record keeping is compliant with IDEIA and FERPA.

In addition to all of the above, the school administration provides professional development frequently to update special education teachers on changes in the law and to

review policies and procedures. A designated Special Education teacher functions as a leader to assist with the training of regular teachers to work with students with special needs. The school administration places an emphasis and intends to train all newly hired teachers in Progress Monitoring. The goal of the administration is to maintain a team of highly professional, experienced special educators of the highest caliber.

**Special Education - Attachment**

- Special Education Policies and Procedures

**Special Education Program Profile - Chart I**

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Cukauskas, Michelle	1.00	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Dieter, Shannon	1.00	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Holler, Michelle	1.00	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Sbur, Diane	1.00	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Dieter, Shannan	1.00	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
DiEudeno, Brenda	1.00	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Timms, Lisa	1.00	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Litz, Reday	1.00	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Scott, Jessica	1.00	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Costolo, Tammy	1.0	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Holler, Melissa	1.0	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Berghoff, Michelle	1.0	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Cukauskas, Michelle	1.0	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
McClaslin-Clark, Heather	1.0	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Reek, Andrea	1.0	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Silberman, Heather	1.0	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Spratt, Leslie	1.0	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant
Carnevale, Sherri	1.0	Learning Support	Agora Cyber	25	Itinerant

**Special Education Program Profile - Chart II**

Organization	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
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**Special Education Program Profile - Chart III**

Title	Location	FTE
Director of Special Education	Agora Cyber CS	1.0
Coordinator of Special Education	Agora CS	2.0

Coordinator of Related Services	Agora CS	1.0
Psychologist	Contracted	0.0
Speech Therapist	Contracted	0.0
Occupational Therapist	Contracted	0.0
Physical Therapist	Contracted	0.0
Paraprofessionals	None	0.0

**Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV**

<b>IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual</b>	<b>Title/Service</b>	<b>Amount of Time Per Week</b>
Therapy Source Agency	S/L Therapy	505 minutes per wk
Sandy Tommerello, S/L Therapist	S/L Therapy	90 minutes per wk
Capital Area IU	S/L Therapy	45 minutes per wk
Easter Seals of Western PA	S/L Therapy	180 minutes per wk
HealthSouth	S/L Therapy	60 minutes per wk
Easter Seals of Eastern PA	S/L Therapy	90 minutes per wk
Pediatric Therapy of York PA	S/L Therapy	120 minutes per wk
SpeechCare	S/L Therapy	60 minutes per wk
Strawberry Fields	S/L Therapy	60 minutes per wk
Pediatric Therapy-Lehigh	S/L Therapy	240 minutes per wk
Pediatric Therapy-Lehigh	OT Therapy	180 minutes per wk
Therapy Source	OT Therapy	60 minutes per wk
Allied Services	S/L Therapy	60 minutes per wk
Allied Services	OT Therapy	60 minutes per wk
Therapy Source	Psycho-Educational Evaluation	6 hrs per
Dr. Penni Blaskey	Psycho-Educational Evaluation	8 hrs per
Easter Seals of Western PA	OT and S/L Evaluations	2 hrs per
Easter Seals of Eastern PA	OT, PT, S/L Evaluation or Re-evaluation	2-3 hrs per
Pediatric Therapy of York PA	OT, PT, S/L Evaluation, Re-evaluation	2-3 hrs per
Sandy Tommerello, S/L Therapist	S/L Evaluation	2-3 hrs per
Total Learning Center	S/L Therapy	1 hr.
Next Step	S/L OT Therapy	4 hrs. per
Rehab Specialists	S/L Therapy	2 hrs. per
Communication Associates	S/L Therapy	1 hr. per
Children's Therapy Center	OT/PT Therapy	2 hrs per
Schrieber	S/L Therapy	2 hrs per
Tuscarora IU	S/L Therapy OT	2 hrs per

## SECTION IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

### Student Assessment - Primary

Test/Classification	K	1	2	3	4	5
PSSA	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
PASA	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
AIMsWeb	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

### Student Assessment - Secondary

Test/Classification	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
PSSA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
PASA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No

### Student Assessment

Agora's enrollment increased by 350%. The full year increase of students in grades three through eight plus grade eleven was 180%. This increase impacted the test scores since 72% (691) of the student population used to determine the Adequate Yearly Progress were newly enrolled students for the 2007-2008 school year. Agora remains in school improvement. We did not meet Adequate Yearly Progress for all subgroups. Significant gains, 12% in both reading and math, were made by the black subgroup and 54% of students who received targeted instruction made gains in at least one proficiency level. Of these students 35% moved from basic to proficient in at least one area. These gains were orchestrated using specific and strategic goals.

First, we continued the use of formative assessments. Students in grades K-6 were screened using AIMS web. Students were then monitored and students received lessons specific to the noted areas of weakness. Also, following an alignment analysis, the math curriculum was realigned in grades 3-8 to ensure that the critical material was covered prior to testing. The most dramatic and strategic of interventions was the introduction of the State Testing Intervention Plan (STI). Students with risk factors indicating a high probability for failure to meet the academic standards were taught targeted lessons several times a week utilizing the assessment anchors. These lessons were conducted 60 days prior to testing. The sessions were conducted with no more than 10 students per group and a high level of engagement was expected. As stated above more than 54% of the students identified gained a proficiency level.

During the 2007-08 school year we also utilized the Response to Intervention process (RTI) and referred students to Title I for additional services. Students who were at-risk of failure were identified, targeted for assistance using our Response to Intervention process (RTI) and some were referred to Title I for additional services. Other interventions that came as recommendations from RTI included the use of supplemental programs, detailed student academic plans, and individual tutoring. The strategies and implementation of Title I also impacted the proficiency levels of students with more than 30% in both reading and math programs improving a proficiency level.

At the middle school level, students were placed in mentor groups to provide additional training in the areas of study skills, organization and time management. These small groups allowed a teacher to follow a group of students throughout the year and target any needs for the underachieving student. More analysis of this program is needed to determine the effect on test scores, but the failure rate of students in grades seven and eight decreased by more than 14% since the introduction of these groups.

Additionally, we continued to provide a test prep program, Study Island, for students to use outside of school for additional remediation. Teachers monitored the use of Study Island and guided students through the use of the program. Additional analysis of the effectiveness of Study Island continues and if the data verifies the effectiveness of the program it will be used again next year. Anecdotally, students and learning coaches indicate that the program helped prepare the students by providing sample problems of state standards and anchors.

### **Student Assessment - Attachment**

- AIMSweb Reading and Math Scores

### **Teacher Evaluation**

An integral part of the school's self-assessment and accountability plan is the staff evaluation plan. Teachers and administrators at Agora are evaluated through a combination of self-assessment, peer review, and performance reviews. Performance reviews are conducted annually based upon personal portfolios and a published set of performance standards designed by professionals in the PA Department of Education. Teachers engage in self reflection and evaluation, peer coaching/observation, and final administrator evaluation that rounds out a comprehensive evaluation process.

The Head of School, academic administrators and special education director serve as the teacher evaluators. Teachers are provided with a detailed set of clearly defined rubrics. The rubrics are distributed to all teachers upon their hiring and reflect the school's emphasis on teacher professionalism, college preparation, and a rigorous curriculum.

Agora's teacher evaluation plan measures the effectiveness of teachers in four major areas: Achievement, Retention, Professionalism/Teamwork/Attitude, and Professional Development and Growth.

Agora administrators participate in on going professional development around the areas of teacher evaluation, coaching, and teacher growth and development through various avenues including internal and external workshops through PDE, PATTAN, and private entities. Agora administrators are committed to securing and developing the most experienced staff to support Agora's mission that all students will attain their highest potential of academic knowledge and skills. The teachers are central to this success. Their continuous professional development is essential.

The Agora teacher evaluation is designed to help all highly qualified teachers become highly effective virtual educators. The following beliefs should guide the teacher's development in this process.

- Effective teachers believe that all students can learn.
- Effective teachers are caring, fair, and respectful.
- Effective teachers hold high expectations for themselves and their students.
- Effective teachers dedicate time for preparation and reflection.
- Effective teachers are continuous learners.
- Effective teachers provide critical feedback for their peers.
- Effective teachers receive critical feedback from their peers, students, and learning coaches.

### **Teacher Evaluation - Attachment**

- Teacher Evaluation

## SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

### Leadership Changes

Agora Cyber Charter School entered into a charter with the Pennsylvania Department of Education in 2005.

Board of Trustees: Earlier this year, the Board elected Howard Lebofsky as its new president. The previous president was James Marshall.

CEO: Soon after PDE granted Agora's charter, Dr. June Brown, Agora's founder and CEO stepped down from the founding committee and the Board elected Kathleen Suloff to the CEO position in a non-pay capacity.

Administration: Due to the death of the Special Education Director Karol Canfield, Tom Dorrin was hired as the new Special Education Director in June 2008.

On or about May 30, 2006 Agora's Board of Trustees entered into a management agreement with, the Cynwyd Group, LLC ("Cynwyd") to manage and operate Agora's Administration and educational facilities. The Charter School Board of Trustees engaged The Cynwyd Group, LLC to manage and operate the administration and educational facilities. In anticipation of the execution of the Agora-Cynwyd management agreement, on or about May 11, 2006, Cynwyd entered into a services agreement with K12 Pennsylvania, LLC ("K12") whereby Cynwyd subcontracted to K12 certain services that Cynwyd provides to Agora.

Under the K12-Cynwyd Services Agreement, K12 provides the following services to Agora:

- Core and Supplementary Curriculum
- Computers and software
- Human resources services including recruitment, interviewing, and recommending candidates to Cynwyd and Board of Trustees. Provide payroll and administration medical benefits
- Financial services: including establish Charter School's chart of accounts according to state guidelines, prepare budget assessments, prepare monthly financial reports, prepare annual budget for Board of Trustees, perform accounting services, prepare and file no profit filings, administration of Federal Title 1 and I.D.E.A. funds, administer School payroll, establish and maintain proper internal controls, and assist in third party audit of Agora
- School Administration: including hiring Head of School, Academic administrators (Principals and Assistant Principals), Director of Technology, Director of Special Education, Business Manager, School development and enrollment staff, and other academic office administrators: This team manages the day to day operations with families, students, teachers, Cynwyd, vendors, contractors, school districts, related service providers, etc. This team oversees the compliance with the Charter School's policies and procedures, subject to Cynwyd oversight. K12 manages budgets, personnel, and human resources issues, prepares the Charter school to meet reporting and audit requirements, represent the charter school at conferences and open houses. K12 is responsible for the operations and logistics of arranging, negotiating, leasing, contracting and distributing and overseeing return of materials, computers, and printers for families, administrators, and teachers.
- Design, Look and feel of the content of the School website including school logo, school application and enrollment forms, school calendar, online school community including

discussion thread, message boards, and other community building aspects of the Charter school.

- Family Services: field and respond to incoming calls, letters, faxes and emails about the Charter School, its curriculum, enrollment process, instructional materials, questions, comments and concerns. Focus groups and surveys are conducted to obtain feedback on how to improve the program and school environment. Outings and community events are planned and implemented regionally across the state on a monthly basis.
- Teacher Training and Professional Development: advise and assist with the creation of teacher training materials for new and returning teachers; create and mail new student packages to newly enrolled families, design and implement on-going parent orientation sessions; provide teacher performance evaluation models and execute effective ways to measure teacher performance in a virtual setting, and collect, analyze and disseminate research on teacher quality in a virtual environment. Work with Cynwyd to address the continuing professional development needs of the administration and staff.
- Technology Services: Student Account Management System, coordinate security, creative, and content issues pertaining to the school website and student management system. Support teachers, administrators, students, and parents in answering technology related questions.

The Board of Trustees retains ultimate responsibility for adopting and overseeing the implementation of policies and procedures.

**Board of Trustees**

<b>Name of Trustee</b>	<b>Office (if any)</b>
Howard Lebofsky	Board President
Courtney Knight	Member
Myra Corbin	Vice President
James Marshall	Treasurer
Courrine Knight	Secretary
Edward Caruso	Member
Juaría Jenkins-Shelton	Member
Wilson Elliot	Member

**Professional Development (Governance)**

The Board of Trustees for Agora Cyber Charter School receives periodic instruction on legal issues and governance issues from the law firm of Schnader, Harrison, Segal & Lewis. This firm has agreed to work for the Charter School on a pro bono basis.

**Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School**

The Board of Trustees for the Agora Cyber Charter School will have the ultimate responsibility to ensure that the Agora Cyber Charter School is operating in compliance with its charter and all applicable state and federal laws and regulations. It must be aware, to the fullest extent possible, of all matters that pertain to the philosophy, mission and goals of the school and it must assure that the decisions of the Board conform to the principles of creating a school focused on achieving the highest levels of social and academic skills. The Board of Trustees will be responsible for duties that include, but are not limited to, the following:

Filling vacancies on the Board.

Matters relating to the By-Laws, including adopting, repealing or amending.

Hiring, firing and setting salaries for the CEO and all Charter staff.

All matters related to budgets and school finances.

Reviewing the annual budget.

Reviewing and approving financial disbursements.

Authorizing the selling or leasing of property.

Setting policies for the school.

The Board will communicate with the school community through the CEO. Generally, matters involving the staff, students, parents, and community that require Board action will be brought to its attention by the CEO. Any of these groups may make a written request to appear before the Board. Arrangements will be made for them to speak at the next scheduled Board meeting.

The school's Board of Trustees recognizes and respects the time consuming nature of the Head of School position and that of the Charter School Office's staff. Therefore, it encourages Charter School personnel to comply in a timely manner with School District deadlines and requests for reports to preclude placing an undue burden on members of the SRC or their staff. Further, appropriate personnel from the Charter School attend School District training sessions several times a year.

### **Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School - Attachment**

- Board Meeting Minutes

### **Community and Parent Engagement**

One of the main tenets on which Agora is founded is the partnership with parents, teachers, and students. Monthly parent workshop meetings through web-based tools, face to face opportunities or phone chats, give teachers and parents an opportunity to collaborate on improving and supporting the students' education and successful execution of strategic instructional and learning plans. Parents are further involved in the life of the school through grade level or content specific meetings at which they receive further instruction on how best to support their children's learning goals. Materials are frequently distributed to parents to guide their efforts to enhance their children's education and overall ability to meet the mission and vision set forth and supported by the Board of Trustees.

## **SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Major fund-raising activities**

The school raised a small amount of funds (<\$1000) as a by-product of social outings, including student musical performances and poetry/prose readings at institutions such as Barnes & Noble bookstores. Additionally, a \$500 annual memorial scholarship was established and awarded to a graduating member of the senior class. Prospective fund-raising activities for SY2008-09 are still To Be Determined.

### **Fiscal Solvency Policies**

The Agora board adopts an annual budget in June prior to the upcoming school/fiscal year.

All purchasing and expense allocation throughout the fiscal year must align with the budget. The school's business manager monitors all financial transactions on a daily basis, and the school's board provides monthly oversight and approvals. All positional hiring is based on projected enrollments, with close monitoring of new student registrations on a weekly basis. Monthly reviews include cash management, accounts receivable and accounts payable, as well as projections for each coming 90 day period.

### **Accounting System**

Agora Cyber Charter School uses Quick Books Accounting Software to capture, classify and report revenues and expenditures.

The school maintains its books on a fund accounting basis in accordance with GAAP. Our chart of accounts is based on the Pennsylvania State Chart of Accounts for PA Public Schools, and all PDE reports are filed in this format. .

### **Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances - Attachment**

- Agora\_Preliminary Statement of Revenues-Expenditures-Fund Balance\_July 2008.

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

For SY2006-07, the school's first full year and with external management organization K12 providing oversight of day-to-day operations, the school selected Siegal and Drossner, a respected audit firm with PA school districts and charter schools as existing clients, to perform the audit for SY2006-07.

The audit was completed with a date of February 24, 2008 with no findings of internal control deficiencies or material weakness.

The audit for the SY2007-08 school year is to commence in late August or early September 2008.

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

- Audit report by Siegal and Drossner

### **Citations and follow-up actions for any State Audit Report**

None. Not applicable at this time.

## **SECTION VII. FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

In December 2007, the school's Board approved a 9-year lease with the Cynwyd Group LLC for the second floor of a property located at 60 Chestnut Ave, located in Devon, PA.

As the school's teaching, support and administrative staff has grown in proportion to enrollment (ADM 990 in 2006-07 to ADM (appx) 3000 in 2007-08), sufficient purchases of furniture, equipment and infrastructure equipment have been made to meet the requirements of this growth.

Included in 2007-08 purchases are:

- 10 Dell desktop computers and monitors: \$8100
- 5 HP laser printers: \$2115
- Investment in office telephone and IT infrastructure installation: \$7950
- 20 Norstar telephone handsets: \$3500
- 2 Industrial-quality Internet access points: \$540
- 2 Brother Intellifax 4100E fax/copier machines: \$598
- 1 Dell server: \$3900
- 15 Office Depot desks: \$4500
- 15 ergonomic chairs for office staff: \$2980

### **Future Facility Plans and Other Capital Needs**

As a cyber charter school, most student instruction between teachers and students takes place in a decentralized manner (e.g. online, by phone, web collaboration tools, or in-person instruction at local sites around the state).

In December 2007, the school's Board approved a new 9-year lease with the Cynwyd Group LLC for the second floor of a property at 60 Chestnut Ave, Devon, PA 19333 that should meet the school's requirements for the foreseeable future.

No additional capital needs are identified at this time.

## **SECTION VIII. HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

Agora places safety of its students, families and staff as paramount to our success as an institution.

Though most teacher-student interactions occur in a distance learning environment, we emphasize safety at all times, and particularly during in-person instruction periods, standardized testing and other school events.

Each in-person event includes a safety briefing and overview at the start of the event, including location of fire exits and accountability procedures.

At our administrative office, where Agora employees work on a daily basis, we ensure safety through the following measures:

- Inspection by a local building inspector.
- Inspection by a local fire department.
- Approval from the municipal licensing authority for use of any explosives and flammable compounds or liquids in connection with courses taught at the school.
- Compliance with all other federal, state, and local health and safety laws and regulations.
- Application for certificates, licenses, etc. are part of the process.

Teachers participate in professional development on being mandated reporters of suspected child abuse and/or neglect. Teachers are trained on indicators regarding signs that the child may be a victim of abuse. As teachers, they will know when the child is safe and when their needs are being met. There will be a protocol for teachers to follow if they are reporting suspected child abuse or neglect.

Health:

Agora health initiatives focused primarily on three areas: 1) Documentation of required immunizations, 2) incorporation of healthy lifestyles and decision-making skills into curriculum, and 3) in-person mini "Health Fairs" conducted by our community outreach team during February.

Next year, nursing services will be provided and contracted to be available when students are on school sites. The school health services will comply with Article XIV of the Public School Code. Dispensing of medications will be conducted by nursing staff only while students are at the school site.

We expanded our program to include monthly health and nutrition seminars for parents as well as students to learn about dietary and nutritional health. These will be conducted on a monthly basis to have continuity in health education with parents and students. Agora Cyber Charter School is committed to ensuring that the safety and health of its students is a priority and shall be an integral part of helping the student achieve overall academic success.

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

- School Wellness Policy

## **Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs**

The school currently holds the following policies:

Property, General Liability, and Auto — Markel Insurance Co:

1,000,000 — each occurrence

1,000,000 — personal/advertising injury limit

2,000,000 — general aggregate

2,000,000 — products-complete operations

300,000 - fire

10,000 - medical payments

1,000,000 — Hired Auto

Sexual Molestation — Lexington: 1,000,000 each victim limit

### **EMPLOYEE BENEFITS:**

Agora employees are established as co-employees of Administaff Inc, which offers the following health options:

United Health Care, Choice Plus

CIGNANetwork Plan

Dental offered through United Healthcare and Delta Dental

Also offered to employees are:

Basic Life & Personal Accident Insurance (CIGNA)

Voluntary Group Life Insurance (CIGNA)

Basic Disability (CIGNA)

Educational Assistance and Tuition Reimbursement

## **Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs - Attachment**

- A copy of current insurance policy is attached.

## **SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS**

### **Quality of Teaching and Other Staff**

Agora Cyber Charter School employed a teaching staff of 117 during the 2007-2008 school year. 106 teachers are returning for the 08-09 school year. 11 teachers left Agora due to

personal reasons including: going back to a traditional classroom, they have the ability to seek other ventures outside of education, and the cyber model was not the best fit for their teaching style.

### **Quality of Teaching and Other Staff - Attachment**

- PDE 414 Verification Form

### **Student Enrollment**

Agora Cyber Charter School enrolls all students according to Act 22 in the PA School Code. Students who would like to enroll are welcome as long as they meet the state regulated age requirements and the age requirement of the student's local school district. Typically Agora K and 1st grade students must meet the age of 5 and 6 respectively by Sept. 1 of the current school year. Parents must complete an enrollment form providing proof of residence, copies of the student birth certificate, immunization records, health and dental records and annual physicals and evaluations. Parents provide a copy of the charter notification form required by districts. This form is sent within 10 days of the student's enrollment along with a signed release of records to the local district. Parents also complete notification of offense statements required by school code. No student is enrolled in Agora if they under suspension or has been expelled from their local district without written consent from the local school district.

All students take placement tests to determine the appropriate instructional level assigned in English and Math. Placement counselors discuss with parents the child's strengths and challenges in order to determine the student's academic levels and skills in order to develop student individual learning plans. Enrollment is not biased by any test scores. Placement counselors do inform parents of the instructional model and help the family determine whether this model is appropriate for the child.

On September 4, 2007 Agora's first day of school, enrollment was 2107. On October 1st; enrollment hit 2613. In February enrollment peaked at 3340 students. Students transfer in and out of cyber charter schools due to changes in family situations, health and safety, curriculum gaps, inappropriate model for the students learning style, and student non compliance with student code of conduct and compulsory attendance code. Students typically return to their local district, desired private school or home schooling. There were 4299 unique students enrolled at some point of the 2007-2008 school year.

Agora ended the school year with 3038 students

With the trend in enrollment, Agora expects to enroll approximately 5000 students in grades K-12. About 400 students were withdrawn due to non attendance and truancy. There were no Agora students expelled.

### **Student Enrollment - Attachment**

- Student Code of Conduct

### **Transportation**

As a cyber charter school, students have no need for daily transportation to a building.

Therefore, Agora Cyber Charter School does not maintain a transportation program. Upon application for enrollment, parents are informed that if they choose to enroll, they will be responsible for any transportation to PSSA regional testing sites and to optional outings and events. However, when special needs arise and transportation is required as per the student's IEP, Agora Cyber Charter School makes arrangements with the appropriate IU or other agency in that student's area. Every student's individual circumstances will be taken into account in such a situation.

### **Food Service Program**

Since Agora is a cyber charter school, we do not participate in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program.

### **Student Conduct**

AGORA expects students to reach their full potential and does not tolerate misconduct, unsafe or disorderly behavior that would interfere with the delivery of instruction or places another students or member of the school staff in jeopardy. The code of conduct is a part of the school's handbook and all students and parents are expected to sign a statement agreeing to the terms of the code of conduct.

### **Student Conduct - Attachment**

- Student Code of Conduct

**ASSURANCE FOR THE OPERATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL SERVICES AND PROGRAMS**

**School Year: 2008**

The Agora Cyber 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**  
**2008 - 2009 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** Kathleen Suloff

**Title** Ms.

**Phone** 610-254-8218

**Fax** 610-254-8939

**E-mail** ksuloff@agora.org

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*Signature of the Chief Executive Officer and Date*

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

**Name** Howard Lebofsky

**Title** Mr.

**Phone** 610-254-8218

**Fax** 610-254-8939

**E-mail** hlebofsky@agora.org

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

*Identify the charter school's Special Education Contact Person.*

**Name** Tom Dorrin

**Title** Mr.

**Phone** 610-254-8218

**Fax** 610-254-8939

**E-mail** tdorrin@agora.org

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*Signature of the Special Education Contact Person and Date*

**Signature Page**

**Signature Page - Attachment**

- Annual Report Signature Page