
Pennsylvania Department of Education



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

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

Charter School: Infinity CS
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CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

Charter School Annual Report Summary Data 2008 - 2009

Name of School: Infinity CS

Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval: Original 1/22/2003; Renewal 6/11/2007

Length of Charter: Original 4 years; Renewal 5 years **Opening Date:** 8/26/2003

Grade Level: K through 8 **Hours of Operation:** 8:30 am - 3:15 pm

Percentage of Certified Staff: 100% **Total Instructional Staff:** 12

Student/ Teacher Ratio: 10 to 1 **Student Waiting List:** 47 students

Attendance Rate/Percentage: K: 96, Elem: 96, MS: 96

Enrollment: 122 ADM **Per Pupil Subsidy:** Regular \$7,924, Special Ed \$15,631 (average across all districts)

Student Profile

American Indian/Alaskan Native: 0
Asian/Pacific Islander: 4
Black (Non-Hispanic): 24
Hispanic: 8
White (Non-Hispanic): 82
Multicultural: 4

Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch: 9.1 (from Title I Survey)

Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December: 4

Number of:	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (FTIME)	ELEM	MIDDLE	SEC.	TOTAL
Instructional Days	0	0	169	169	169	0	169
Instructional Hours	0	0	1014	1014	1014	0	1014

SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Organization Description

Infinity Charter School is a small K-8 school located in the Central Dauphin School District. The 2007-2008 school year was Infinity Charter School's fifth year of operation. Over the course of the year, we have served an average of 117 students in

grades K-8. Students were divided into six classes: Kindergarten-First, First-Second, Third-Fourth, Fourth-Fifth, Fifth-Sixth, and Seventh-Eighth. In addition to the core subjects, we also offered Art, Foreign Language, Music, and Physical Education at all grade levels. We were pleased to have a diverse student body, in terms of racial/ethnic groups, socio-economic levels, and academic performance levels. Although most of our students were residents of the Central Dauphin School District, we attracted students from ten other area school districts.

Core Purpose

Mission

Infinity Charter School's mission is the creation, operation and maintenance of a world-class charter school in the Central Dauphin School District that addresses the intellectual, academic and social-emotional needs of mentally gifted children in grades K-12.

Infinity was created because we believe intellectually and academically gifted students are under-identified and underserved in the regular public school. Because we believe each and every child is entitled to an education commensurate with her ability to learn, we have designed a school that is more responsive to the individual needs of the students, rather than requiring the children to adapt to the administrative convenience of the school.

Vision

Infinity's overarching vision is to inspire, challenge and engage the hearts, minds and spirits of our students. We are committed to serving the whole child, and to finding ways to nurture in these individuals, as Carl Sandburg wrote, "...the deepest possible roots and the highest possible flowering..."

By providing appropriate learning opportunities for each child through full-time instruction tailored to their special needs and abilities, we will strive to ensure that every child meets or exceeds state and national academic standards.

Shared Values

The following Core Values have been published in our Charter Application, and have been distributed to our parent body through the Parent Handbook.

Infinity Core Values

Education First	Respect
Quality	Personal Responsibility
Hard Work	Responsibility to Others
Life-Long Learning	Role Models
Love of Learning	Diversity
Self-esteem	Continual Improvement

Education First

At Infinity, education is our primary business. Activities that seek and support

educational excellence shall be given priority over those that do not. The basic role of teachers is to help children learn.

Quality

Beginning in Kindergarten and continuing through their school experience, the subject of quality and how it relates to school work is discussed with students. Students, parents and teachers challenge students to do their very best. It is not our goal to have students merely completing assignments without attempting to produce a quality product.

Hard Work

Creating high quality work is not always easy. We are committed to making learning interesting, exciting and fun, as much as possible. However, we recognize, and want parents and students to recognize, that while learning is not always easy, it is fundamental.

Life-long Learning

We recognize that learning does not begin or end with school. We want students to learn skills that will allow them to continue to direct their own learning. The essence of this is independence and self-reliance.

Love of Learning

Children need to learn to love learning as its own reward. We encourage students to focus on internal rewards and motivations, rather than being dependent on external rewards.

Self-esteem

We believe that self-esteem is built upon competence. We can, and do, praise children appropriately, but we do not engage in false praise. We actively assist and encourage children in their journey towards competency. We want them to take pride in what they do well. We also want our students to believe that they can make a difference in the world.

Respect

We strive to create a climate of mutual respect among students, parents, staff and community members. Students are expected to show respect to others, and can, in turn, expect to be treated with respect by others.

Personal Responsibility

We expect students to take personal responsibility for their own learning. We cannot teach them anything if they are determined not to learn. We also expect them to take personal responsibility for their actions and to be willing to accept the consequences.

Responsibility to Others

Any member of a community has some responsibilities to his neighbor. Our students have some special abilities that carry with them greater opportunities to serve. We want students to understand the contributions they can make to society and to act *responsively*.

Role Models

We have high expectations for our students. We, as parents and staff, are committed to serving as appropriate role models for our students. We need to demonstrate our values to our students on a daily basis in our own behavior. We cannot reasonably expect from them that which we are not willing to do ourselves.

Diversity

We live in a diverse society. Students need to understand and respect differences, while seeking to find common ground. Students also need to understand and evaluate different opinions and intellectual perspectives. All of this is an integral part of our curriculum.

Continual Improvement

We have adopted the Japanese philosophy of *Kaizen* or continuous improvement. We acknowledge and recognize effort; celebrate the achievement of benchmarks and milestones; and strive to get better each and every day.

Academic Standards

Infinity Charter School incorporates state and national content area standards in our curriculum and instruction. It is our goal to ensure that every student meets or exceeds these standards.

The aspects that make Infinity unique and innovative are described below.

The Infinity Charter School incorporates a **combination** of innovative program elements that make the school unique. These include, but are not limited to, the following;

- Competency-based progress
- Flexible ability grouping for skills instruction
- Utilization of community resources
- Broad-based, year-long, interdisciplinary themes
- Personalized Learning Plans
- Acceleration
- Foreign Language for all children
- Problem-finding/Problem-solving
- Curriculum compacting
- Outdoor education and extended field-trips at every grade level
- Community service projects
- Multi-age grouping
- Experiential learning
- Metacognition skills
- Futures orientation
- Alternative staffing patterns

Strengths and Challenges

Based on data from this past year, Infinity's program strengths for 2007-2008 were:

- Strong academic student performance in reading and math
- Extensive parent communication, involvement and support
- Dedicated, competent staff
- Staff awareness of Pennsylvania content standards, particularly in language arts and math
- Increase in availability of appropriate technology resources
- Diverse student body
- High attendance rates

During the next school year, we would like to continue to improve:

- Students' expository writing skills
- Eighth grade students' math skills
- Staff use of Learning Focused Schools' strategies
- Staff use of inquiry-based teaching strategies, particularly in science

SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Strategic Planning Process

This is not part of the Charter School Annual Report.

Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Cindy Walker	Learning Specialist	Special Education Representative	Teachers
Erin Doyle	Teacher	Middle School Teacher	Middle School Teachers
Katie Scherer	3-4 Teacher	Elementary School Teacher	Elementary School Teachers
Nancy J. Hall	CEO/Director	Administrator	Administrators

Goals, Strategies and Activities

Goal: MATHEMATICS

Description: At least 56% of all students will be proficient in Mathematics, as measured by the annual statewide PSSA assessments. This applies to students in third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades.

Strategy: Diagnostic testing, tailored instruction, Learning Specialist, as needed

Description:

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Training in differentiated instruction		
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Nancy Hall	Ongoing	\$0.00

Strategy: Pre- and post-testing math units using PSSA items

Description:

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Training in Compass Learning Odyssey to help create pre- and post-tests in math		
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Nancy Hall	Start:8/24/2007 Finish: 8/24/2007	\$1,375.00

Strategy: Provide opportunities for training in Learning Focused Schools Strategies

Description:

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Training in Learning Focused Strategies	With the federal goal for mathematics increasing to 54% proficient or advanced for the next three years, there is a need to improve math instruction for all students, particularly our sixth grade students. All Infinity teachers need to use research-based instructional strategies in math.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Nancy Hall	Start:8/1/2007 Finish: 5/19/2008	\$1,393.00
Professional Development Activity Information		
Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
8	4	7
Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
Capital Area Intermediate Unit #15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intermediate Unit 	Approved
Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish
Knowledge of research-based instructional strategies. Knowledge of curriculum mapping.	The Learning-Focused Schools Model was developed by Dr. Max Thompson in response to national, state, and local efforts to increase achievement for all students and to reduce achievement gaps. The Model provides comprehensive school reform strategies and solutions for K-12 schools, based on exemplary practices and research-based strategies. These practices and strategies focus on five areas: Planning, Curriculum, Instruction,	<p><i>For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases the educator's <u>teaching skills</u> based on research on effective practice, with attention given to interventions for struggling students. Provides educators with a variety of classroom-based <u>assessment skills</u> and the skills

	<p>Assessment, and School Organization.</p>	<p>needed to <u>analyze and use data</u> in instructional decision-making.</p> <p><i>For school and district administrators, and other educators seeking leadership roles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides the knowledge and skills to <u>think and plan strategically</u>, ensuring that assessments, curriculum, instruction, staff professional education, teaching materials and interventions for struggling students are aligned to each other as well as to Pennsylvania's academic standards. • Provides leaders with the ability to <u>access and use appropriate data</u> to inform decision-making. • Empowers leaders to create a <u>culture of teaching and learning</u>, with an emphasis on learning.
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Educator Groups Which Will Participate in this Activity

Role	Grade Level	Subject Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom teachers • Principals / asst. principals • Superintendent / asst. superintendents • Other educational specialists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle (grades 6-8) • Elementary (grades 2-5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening • Science and Technology • Arts & Humanities • Civics and Government • Environment and Ecology • Health, Safety and Physical Education • World Languages • Kindergarten Early Learning Standards • Mathematics • History • Career Education and

		Work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economics • Geography
Follow-up Activities	Evaluation Methods	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team development and sharing of content-area lesson implementation outcomes, with involvement of administrator and/or peers • Analysis of student work, with administrator and/or peers • Creating lessons to meet varied student learning styles • Peer-to-peer lesson discussions • Journaling and reflecting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom observation focusing on factors such as planning and preparation, knowledge of content, pedagogy and standards, classroom environment, instructional delivery and professionalism. • Student PSSA data • Classroom student assessment data 	

Goal: READING

Description: At least 63% of all students will be proficient in Reading, as measured by the annual statewide PSSA assessments. This applies to students in third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades.

Strategy: Diagnostic testing, tailored instruction, Learning Specialist, as needed

Description:

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Training in differentiated instruction		
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Nancy Hall	Ongoing	\$0.00

Goal: STUDENT ATTENDANCE (any school that does not graduate seniors)

Description: Student attendance will meet a 90% threshold and/or show growth in Kindergarten, Elementary and Secondary grades.

Strategy: Emphasize importance of attendance with students and parents

Description:

Activities:

Activity	Description
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Teachers talk with students about the importance of attendance.		
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Nancy Hall	Ongoing	\$0.00

Strategy: Make school interesting, so students want to attend

Description:

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Train teachers in differentiated instruction.		
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Nancy Hall	Ongoing	\$0.00

Goal: STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN STATE ASSESSMENTS

Description: At least 95% of eligible students will participate in required state-wide assessments. This applies to students in third, fourth, fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grades.

Strategy: Emphasize importance of participation with students and parents

Description:

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Notify parents of the importance of student participation in written communication vehicles used by the school.		
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Nancy Hall	Ongoing	\$0.00

Goal: WRITING

Description: At least 50% of fifth and eighth grade students will be proficient in writing, as measured by the annual statewide PSSA assessments.

Strategy: Provide training to improve writing strategies

Description:

Activities:

Activity	Description
Train teachers in use of MyAccess! writing software.	<p>Although Infinity students performed well on last year's writing assessment, this has not been a consistent performance from year to year. We would also like to increase the number of students who scored in the advanced category.</p> <p>Infinity is researching which resources would be most productive for meeting this goal. We have already utilized the services of some CAIU staff, and are exploring the possibility of working with the Capital Area Writing Project to provide this staff development.</p>

	In addition, our 4-5, 5-6, and 7-8 teachers are now utilizing the MyAccess! writing program to improve student achievement in this area.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Nancy Hall	Start:8/27/2007 Finish: 8/27/2007	\$200.00
Professional Development Activity Information		
Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
4	2	7
Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
Capital Area Writing Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> College 	Approved
Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish
<p>Knowledge of research-based instructional strategies to improve writing.</p> <p>Improved abilities to assess student writing.</p>	<p>The Capital Area Writing Project is a local site for the National Writing Project. For 30 years the National Writing Project has provided research-based, high quality professional development for teachers and has been catalogued as a Comprehensive School Reform provider under Title I. Programs presented by the Capital Area Writing Project are approved for No Child Left Behind. They specialize in helping teachers link theory to practice and practice to standards and assessment.</p>	<p><i>For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhances the educator's <u>content knowledge</u> in the area of the educator's certification or assignment. Increases the educator's <u>teaching skills</u> based on research on effective practice, with attention given to interventions for struggling students. Provides educators with a variety of classroom-based <u>assessment skills</u> and the skills needed to <u>analyze and use data</u> in instructional decision-making. <p><i>For school and district administrators, and other educators seeking leadership roles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides the knowledge and skills to <u>think and plan strategically</u>, ensuring that assessments,

		<p>curriculum, instruction, staff professional education, teaching materials and interventions for struggling students are aligned to each other as well as to Pennsylvania's academic standards.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides leaders with the ability to <u>access and use appropriate data</u> to inform decision-making.
Educator Groups Which Will Participate in this Activity		
Role	Grade Level	Subject Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom teachers • Principals / asst. principals • Superintendent / asst. superintendents • Other educational specialists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle (grades 6-8) • Elementary (grades 2-5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening • Kindergarten Early Learning Standards
Follow-up Activities	Evaluation Methods	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team development and sharing of content-area lesson implementation outcomes, with involvement of administrator and/or peers • Analysis of student work, with administrator and/or peers • Creating lessons to meet varied student learning styles • Peer-to-peer lesson discussions • Journaling and reflecting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom observation focusing on factors such as planning and preparation, knowledge of content, pedagogy and standards, classroom environment, instructional delivery and professionalism. • Student PSSA data • Classroom student assessment data • Participant survey • My Access! (MyAccess! Student Assessment Data) 	

Strategy: Uniform use of Structures for Reading, Writing and Thinking and Writing Across the Curr.

Description:

Activities:

Activity	Description	
Provide copies of these books to all teachers.		
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Nancy Hall	Ongoing	\$0.00

Statement of Quality Assurance

Charter school has met AYP.

Statement of Quality Assurance - Attachment

- Attachment A: 07-08 Statement of Quality Assurance

SECTION III. QUALITY OF SCHOOL DESIGN

Rigorous Instructional Program

RIGOROUS INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM: What curriculum does your charter school utilize? Do you have documentation that shows that your curriculum meets the Chapter 4 content standards and all requirements?

Infinity Charter School defines curriculum as the scope and sequence of skills and concepts that are to be learned by the students. While textbooks may be based on a scope and sequence, they are not the curriculum; they are the materials that are sometimes used to teach the curriculum in some schools.

Infinity is not a textbook-based school. We believe this allows us to be more flexible and creative in working with the scope and sequence. The scope and sequences that we use are based on the Pennsylvania content standards. We use a variety of materials, both commercially produced and teacher-developed, to teach the curriculum.

In Language Arts, Infinity has utilized curriculum backmapping compiled by the Berks County Intermediate Unit K-12 Grade Level Benchmarks to develop a K-8 checklist of concepts and skills. These checklists are updated quarterly by teachers for each student to show when a concept or skill was introduced and when the child became proficient with this skill or concept. These checklists become part of the child’s portfolio. Starting in second grade, teachers often use PSSA sample tests or questions for the pre- and post-testing, which again, helps us to ensure that we are teaching in alignment with the Pennsylvania state standards. Furthermore, during the 2007-2008 school year, we expanded our use of CompassLearning Odyssey, which is based on Pennsylvania state standards.

In Mathematics, Infinity has utilized curriculum backmapping compiled by the Berks County Intermediate Unit K-12 Grade Level Benchmarks to develop a K-8 checklist of concepts and skills. These checklists are updated quarterly by teachers for each student to

show when a concept or skill was introduced and when the child became proficient with this skill or concept. These checklists become part of the child's portfolio. Infinity has also consulted with Nancy Neusbaum, Math Curriculum Specialist at the Capital Area Intermediate Unit, regarding our Math checklist. Starting in second grade, teachers often use PSSA sample tests or questions for the pre- and post-testing, which again, helps us to ensure that we are teaching in alignment with the Pennsylvania state standards. Furthermore, during the 2007-2008 school year, we expanded our use of CompassLearning Odyssey, which is based on Pennsylvania state standards.

Infinity implements year-long interdisciplinary themes that integrate Science and Technology, Environment and Ecology, History, Civics and Government, Economics, and Geography standards. In addition to relying on curriculum frameworks that have been developed by Pennsylvania Intermediate Units or other public school districts, Infinity staff review the standards prior to designing these themes.

During the 2007-2008 school year, Infinity used the Science Curriculum Framework developed by the Math & Science Collaborative of the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, which includes the Pennsylvania academic standards for Science, Technology, Environment and Ecology, and the National Science Standards. This has recently been revised, and we are in the process of incorporating the revisions.

Originally, Infinity had used an Expanding Horizons approach to the Social Studies Curriculum. In addition to teachers referring to the standards directly, Infinity has been reviewing the Social Studies Curriculum developed by the Central Dauphin School District and the Social Studies Framework (that includes Civics and Government, Economics, Geography, and History) that was developed by the Appalachia Intermediate Unit 8 and the Chester County Intermediate Unit 24, to determine how we will be refining our curriculum in this area.

RIGOROUS INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM: How is the curriculum organized to meet the developmental and academic needs of students?

At the most basic level, the curriculum (scope and sequence) builds from easier to harder as students progress through the grades. Concrete objects, such as math manipulatives, are used more at lower grade levels or in initial instruction of concepts, before moving on to greater abstraction. Skills, that need to be taught in a particular sequence, are taught in that sequence. The reading levels of instructional materials increase in difficulty, length of reading selections increases, length of assignments increase, types of products required increase in levels of difficulty, as students apply what they've learned.

While keeping the standards at the core, Infinity teachers are encouraged to make modifications to the curriculum to meet the developmental and academic needs of students. Our philosophy is "standards, not standardization." This may involve adjusting the complexity and/or level of abstraction of the material, the length of assignments, the type of product the student completes to demonstrate mastery, the pace of instruction, the amount of repetitions of content, and/or the amount of individual help provided to a

student. In many cases, it is not so much how the curriculum is organized, but more about which instructional strategies are employed, that help us to meet the developmental and academic needs of students.

At the beginning of the school year, diagnostic testing in reading and math is completed with each student to determine their present levels of performance. Then students are placed in flexible ability groups for instruction that are designed for their level and rate of learning. Teachers may help students progress through the curriculum as quickly as they are ready. Often pre-testing is employed at the beginning of a unit, so that groups may be adjusted, as necessary. Post-testing is done after the unit is completed (usually not immediately after) to measure student learning and retention. Starting in second grade, teachers often use PSSA sample tests or questions for the pre- and post-testing, which again, helps us to ensure that we are teaching in alignment with the Pennsylvania state standards.

The Math and Language Arts checklists also enable teachers to know the skills and concepts at other grade levels, so they can move students through these at an appropriate pace. Furthermore, these checklists allow the school to document student progress.

Even though themes include more whole group instruction, teachers make whatever adjustments are necessary for individual student developmental and academic needs. Infinity's Learning Specialist, as well as CAIU learning support staff, work closely with the classroom teachers to meet the needs of all children.

At the middle school level, students can obtain extra help from their teachers during study hall or after school sessions.

Infinity's Learning Specialist works with students who need additional help in academic skill development, content knowledge and/or learning strategies, through push-in and/or pull-out strategies. Parents are also enlisted to help reinforce what is being done at school.

If students have more severe difficulties, Infinity may utilize the resources of experts at the Capital Area Intermediate Unit.

RIGOROUS INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM: How does the charter school promote in-depth and inquiry-based teaching and learning?
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According to Ronald D. Anderson of the ENC Science Advisory Board, inquiry-based teaching and learning generally involves close attention to the role of the teacher, the role of the students, and the nature of student work. In traditional pedagogy, the teacher is viewed as the dispenser of knowledge, the student is the passive receiver, and the students complete teacher-directed activities. In inquiry-based teaching and learning, the teacher is seen more as a coach and facilitator, the student is a self-directed learner, and the students are involved in student-directed learning.

By not being a textbook-based school, Infinity, by its very nature, tends to have a more nontraditional approach to teaching and learning. Teachers and students use a variety of resources to obtain information. Students are asked not just to memorize information, but to interpret and apply it. Students are involved in analyzing situations and designing solutions. They test their ideas, evaluate the results, and redesign.

At Infinity, we believe it is critically important for students and teachers to actively engage with the curriculum. (“Engagement is an essential ingredient of learning and achievement.” Farber and Finn. 2000. Classroom organization and student behavior.) We believe this is best done by hands-on and inquiry instruction, in which students:

- act as scientist in the process of learning,
- engage in the exploration process,
- plan and conduct investigations,
- use a variety of methods,
- ask questions, and
- propose explanations and solutions.

By using year-long interdisciplinary themes, students are able to see the connections among various disciplines, how skills are applied, and are able to have the opportunity to explore concepts in-depth.

Infinity provides staff development to help teachers to provide in-depth and inquiry-based teaching and learning. For example, the teaching staff has participated in professional development on Richard Paul’s Elements of Reasoning Model, and in Problem-Based Learning and are starting to integrate these into their instruction. Staff observations/conferences/ evaluations also include discussions in these areas.

Infinity applied for a Science: It’s Elementary grant for the 2007-2008 school year, which provided the majority of our teachers with extensive staff development in inquiry-based instruction.

RIGOROUS INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM: 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?

By utilizing a combination of standardized and non-standardized, direct and indirect assessments, we use assessment measures to guide and improve student learning, as well as to provide documentation for accountability purposes.

Initially, diagnostic testing/pre-testing in both reading and math enables Infinity’s staff to form flexible ability groups for instructional purposes. By working with small groups

with similar performance levels, the teacher can tailor instruction to more effectively meet their learning needs.

Once a classroom teacher identifies (either through test results or through observations) students who demonstrate difficulties with concepts and/or skills, s/he may regroup these students with other peers who are having similar difficulties. In this way, the teacher has the ability to gear instruction to these students' needs. This may include a change in pace, level of complexity, amount of review and practice, and so on.

When a student requires further assistance, the teacher/s and parent/s meet to discuss and create an individualized learning plan targeting the specific areas of weakness. The Learning Specialist usually attends this meeting as well. Using data collected through direct observation of the student, formal and informal assessments of the student and anecdotal information provided by the teacher and the parent, the Learning Specialist makes recommendations for strategies and adaptations to be used by the teacher and the student within the regular classroom. Parents are also given ideas and strategies to use at home to help build skills and to reinforce the school's interventions. The teacher may make arrangements for the student to receive additional one-on-one or small group instruction.

If the student is making insufficient progress, the Learning Specialist may provide additional help to him/her in the classroom. This "push-in" approach is scheduled during the normal classroom instructional time for that subject, and lessons are developed in coordination with the regular education teacher's instructional goals. These lessons provide additional direct instruction, as well as extra review and practice. The Learning Specialist may also provide individualized direct instruction outside of the classroom one to three times per week, as needed. The Learning Specialist may address time management and/or organization management strategies with the student, as well.

Parents and teachers meet quarterly to discuss strategies and student progress. They may meet more often, as needed. Progress is monitored through reviewing student assignments, post-tests, and observations.

If there continue to be concerns about a student's learning difficulties or rate of progress, that child may be referred for a special education evaluation. Infinity contracts with the Capital Area Intermediate Unit for such assessments and services, as needed.

Infinity is developing a more detailed process for meeting the needs of students who are at-risk of failure or not making reasonable progress. We expect that more specifics, delineating timelines, meetings, and documenting student progress, will be part of this plan.

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

“Engagement happens when a lesson captures students’ imaginations, snares their curiosity, ignites their opinions, or taps into their souls. Engagement is the magnet that attracts learners’ meandering attention and holds it so that enduring learning can occur.” Carol Ann Tomlinson

Infinity uses a variety of teaching strategies to actively engage students in the learning process. These include:

- Competency-based Progress
- Flexible Ability Grouping for Skills Instruction
- Broad-based Interdisciplinary Themes
- Personal Learning Plans
- Curriculum Compacting
- Acceleration
- Creative and Critical Thinking Skills
- Self-directed Learning
- Independent Study/Projects
- Utilization of Community Resources
- Experiential Learning
- Outdoor Education/Extended Field trips
- Use of Appropriate Technology
- Varied Pace of Instruction
- Simulations, Role-playing, Case Studies
- Group Discussions
- Use of Inquiry
- Experiments
- Problem-Based Learning
- Authentic Products/Projects
- Higher-Order Thinking Activities

Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachments

- Attachment B - Professional Education Approval Letter
- Attachment C - Teacher Induction Approval Letter

English Language Learners

HELPING ALL STUDENTS: English Language Learners: Describe the charter school’s program for English Language Learners (ELL) and a brief narrative of how it functions. Provide a copy of the report from the LEP System used to submit ELL data to PDE Bureau of Teaching and Learning Support as Attachment D.

ELL/ESL/Bilingual

Program

Outline

State of Program Goals and Objectives

In accordance with Infinity Charter School's Board of Trustees goal to provide a quality educational program for all students, the school provides appropriate planned instruction in ESL and content classes for identified students whose dominant language is not English. The objectives of the program include:

- developing English language skills, leading to English proficiency,
- providing for meaningful participation in subject area content,
- providing for the attainment of the PA academic standards.

Student and Parent Orientation Procedures

Every effort will be made to orient students and parents to the practices and procedures of the school. Guidance will be given, if needed, for completing registration forms. Forms may be translated into the native language when necessary.

Identification and Placement Screening Procedures/Entry and Exit Criteria

As part of Infinity's student registration process, the Home Language Survey is completed for all new students and filed in their permanent record. When one of the three required questions is answered, "not English," the student's English language proficiency is assessed.

Assessment Process

Identified English Language Learners are assessed for their achievement levels and native language proficiency using multiple measures, such as standardized tests, PSSA results, portfolio assessments, teacher observations, interviews with parents, and so on. Consideration is given to listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills as well as academic progress.

Instructional Describe Type of Program

Identified students are placed in the appropriate level of the ESL instructional program. The ESL instruction will be based on sound educational and language learning theory and staffed by an appropriately prepared instructor. The program will be evaluated at least twice yearly.

Planned Instructions/Standards

The planned instruction in ESL will include Language Arts areas of listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Indicate the Amount of Time in ESL Classes

The amount of time allotted for instruction will be based on the proficiency of the student. Approximate times are two-three hours for non-English speaking students; two hours daily for beginners; 1.5 hours daily for intermediate learners; and one hour daily for advanced students. Student performance will be monitored for at least one year after they have graduated from these classes.

Indicate the Amount of time in Content Classes
Students will receive content instruction aligned with the Pennsylvania standards of instruction. Teachers will accommodate the individual learning needs of the student when the student experiences difficulty in comprehending instruction.

Student Participation in Related and Extracurricular Activities including Gifted Education

English Language Learners will have the opportunities to participate in all the federal or other programs available within the school for which they qualify. Students have access to, and are encouraged to participate in all aspects of the academic and extracurricular opportunities available through the school or home district.

ELL students are eligible for gifted education or any other program that is available to all students in the school and for which they qualify. However, Infinity does not currently comply with Chapter 16 guidelines, since charter schools are not required to do so.

Pupil Personnel Services Counseling

Infinity has a part-time guidance counselor position. ELL students have equal access to the counselor and to any programming s/he provides.

Special Education

An IEP will be developed for students who have a disability that is not due to a lack of proficiency in the English language. In developing an IEP, interpreting services will be available for parents, if necessary.

Other Related Services

Any service offered to other Infinity students will be made available to ELL students.

Staff Development Related to Program

All staff will receive applicable inservice opportunities if the school enrolls students who have limited English proficiency. Infinity's Act 48 Professional Development Plan will be adjusted, as necessary. Inservice will focus on cultural information, second language acquisition, adapting/modifying classroom instruction, and appropriate assessment practices. The goals of such inservice will be to assure that programs offered to the students are based on sound educational theory; are effectively implemented; and result in successfully removing language barriers.

Community Program Involvement Planning

Funds will be allocated to implement the ESL program in proportion to amounts spent for the general population and basic programs.

Communication with Students' Homes

As necessary, information disseminated to students and their parents will be provided in a language preferred by parents, including student assessment information, what special

programs are available, and policy handbooks. Infinity will provide translation and/or interpretation services, as needed.

Program

Advisory Committee

The ESL teacher, special education teacher, CEO, or administrative designee, and community resource agencies will collaborate to plan the school program, to develop processes to communicate with parents of ELL students, to refine the complaint resolution process and to plan inservice activities.

Complaint

Resolution Process

Complaints will be directed to the CEO/Director. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, then the issue will be addressed by the Board of Trustees. If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved, advice will be sought from the ESL Regional Monitoring Center and/or Program Advisory Committee.

Program

Evaluation Procedures

The program will be evaluated at least twice annually to assess whether it is producing positive results. Revisions will be made to address any deficiencies and to increase effectiveness.

During the 2007-2008 school year, Infinity had no identified ELL students enrolled.

ATTACHMENT D - ELL REPORT

A copy of the ACS for the LEP and Immigrant Enrollment Report that was submitted through the PIMS system is attached. The data was submitted April 8, 2008. In addition, we were required to submit the ACS from the old LEP system accessed through the PDE web portal. This report was submitted in April 2008.

English Language Learners - Attachment

- Attachment D - ELL - LEP and Immigrant Enrollment ACS

Graduation Requirements

During the 2007-2008 school year, Infinity Charter School only had students enrolled in grades K-8, so this is not applicable.

Special Education

As indicated in the Assurance for the Operation of Special Education Services and Programs, Infinity is complying with the requirements of 22 PA Code Chapter 711.

Identification of special needs students

Infinity's child find policy was advertised as an annual notice in the August 29, 2007 Patriot-News, as part of the CAIU notice. The written notice includes information on identification activities, educational records/confidentiality, early intervention identification, and services for protected handicapped students.

Infinity also includes information about special education in our parent handbook that is distributed to all families.

Provision of Services

During the 2007-2008 school year, Infinity employed a full-time Learning Support Teacher/Learning Specialist to work with identified special education students. This individual was also responsible for referral and identification of special needs students, scheduling and conducting initial and reevaluation IEP and 504 meetings, maintaining the appropriate paperwork, notifying parents of meetings and of their rights, and ensuring that appropriate services were provided to students.

Infinity also contracted for services from the Capital Area Intermediate Unit to provide some special education coaching to the school, as well as other special education services to students, such as speech and language, occupational therapy, and so on.

Infinity's IEP students worked with trained special education professionals in the areas indicated on their IEPs. Infinity's professional staff made accommodations in the classroom, as indicated in the IEPs or 504 plans, to assist students in making the maximum progress.

Instructional Strategies

In general, instructional strategies for educating both special education and gifted students at Infinity start with assessing present levels of educational performance. Once these levels are established, classroom teachers provide direct instruction to students in flexible ability groups. This enables the student to receive instruction geared to his/her performance levels. This also allows for competency-based progress, in which students are able to advance based on achieving mastery of content or skills, rather than submitting to an arbitrary amount of seat time.

Classroom teachers also utilize differentiated instruction strategies with all students.

General instructional strategies might include adjustments in:

- seating arrangements
- modality or learning style in which the lesson is presented
- pace of instruction
- complexity, depth, and levels of abstraction of instruction and assignments
- length of assignments
- time allowed to complete assignments
- amount of assistance from others

Students may also receive additional instruction from the Learning Specialist that is even more specifically tailored to their learning needs. This instruction is provided within the regular education classroom, and/or outside of the classroom, as specified in the IEP.

Further specific instructional strategies are implemented by professional staff as prescribed in the IEP, or 504 plan, or are utilized by trained specialists contracted by Infinity through the Capital Area Intermediate Unit.

Ultimately, the instructional strategies used with special education and/or gifted students need to be tailored to their individual needs. That's why Individualized Education Plans are written.

Special Education - Attachments

- Attachment E(1) - Special Education Policies & Procedures (Policy #201)
- Attachment E(2) - Special Education Policies & Procedures (Policy #206)

Special Education Program Profile - Chart I

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Cindy Walker	1.0	Learning Support	Infinity Charter School	4	Infinity employed one full-time special education-certified staff member during the 2007-2008 school year. This individual provided services to identified students based on their IEPs, coordinated IEP meetings, and compiled and filed all necessary paperwork.

Special Education Program Profile - Chart II

Organization	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
CAIU	0	Speech/Language	Infinity Charter School	2	None
CAIU	0	Occupational Therapy	Infinity Charter School	2	None
CAIU	0	Psychological Evaluation	Infinity Charter School	2	None
CAIU	0	Vision Support	Infinity Charter School	1	None

CAIU	0	Autism Support	Infinity Charter School	1	None
CAIU	0	Special Ed. Coaching	Infinity Charter School	0	For Staff
CAIU	0	Audiology	Infinity Charter School	0	None

Special Education Program Profile - Chart III

Title	Location	FTE
Learning Specialist/Support	Infinity Charter School	1.0

Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV

IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual	Title/Service	Amount of Time Per Week
CAIU	Speech/Language	42 hours total
CAIU	Occupational Therapy	18 days total
CAIU	Psychological Evaluations	4 days total
CAIU	Vision Support	10.5 hours total
CAIU	Autism Support	3.5 hours total
CAIU	Special Education Coaching	1 hour total

SECTION IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Student Assessment - Primary

Test/Classification	K	1	2	3	4	5
Local Tests	No	No	No	No	No	No
PSSA/PASA	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
PSSA Writing	No	No	No	No	No	Yes

Student Assessment - Secondary

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

Student Assessment

Using the most recent PSSA/PASA data, any locally developed tests and other data that reflects improved academic performance, describe how the evidence indicates significant improvement or continued strong student performance.

The 2003-2004 school year was Infinity’s first year of operation, so the Spring 2004 PSSA scores were the first set of PSSA data we had. Infinity’s fifth graders’ performance on the 2004 PSSA reading and math were both strong. Eighty-nine percent of our students scored proficient or advanced in reading compared to sixty-three percent of

students throughout the state. Eighty-nine percent of our students scored proficient or advanced in math compared to sixty-two percent of students throughout the state.

Infinity third graders did well on the 2004 PSSA reading assessment, but not as well on the math assessment. Seventy-eight percent of our students scored proficient or advanced in reading compared to fifty-one percent of students throughout the state. Forty-four percent of our students scored proficient or advanced in math compared to fifty-one percent of students throughout the state. We took steps to try to improve student performance on the math section, which were apparently successful, based on the results of the 2005 PSSA tests.

In 2004-2005, our students improved in both math and reading on the Spring 2005 PSSA tests. One hundred percent of Infinity's fifth graders scored proficient or advanced in reading compared to eighty-nine percent the previous year. Sixty-four percent of students throughout the state scored proficient or advanced on this same test. Ninety-two percent of our students scored proficient or advanced in math, compared to eighty-nine percent the previous year. Sixty-nine percent of students throughout the state scored proficient or advanced on this same test.

Our third graders also improved in both math and reading on the Spring 2005 PSSA tests. Ninety-two percent of third graders scored at proficient or advanced in reading, compared to seventy-eight percent the previous year. Sixty-eight percent of students throughout the state scored proficient or advanced on the same test. One hundred percent of our students scored proficient or advanced in math, compared to forty-four percent the previous year. Eighty percent of students throughout the state scored proficient or advanced on the same test.

On the Spring 2006 PSSA tests, our third graders maintained their strong performance in reading, with 100% scoring at proficient or advanced, as they had the previous year. Sixty-nine percent of students throughout the state scored proficient or advanced on the same test. In math, 100% percent of our students scored proficient or advanced, compared to ninety-two the previous year. Eighty-three percent of students throughout the state scored proficient or advanced on the same test.

Infinity's fifth graders did not fare as well in the Spring of 2006. Seventy-one percent of the students scored proficient or advanced in reading, compared with one hundred percent the previous year. Sixty percent of students throughout the state scored proficient or advanced on the same test. In math, only twenty-nine percent of our students scored proficient or advanced, compared to ninety-two percent the previous year. Sixty-seven percent of students throughout the state scored proficient or advanced on the same test.

Spring 2006 provided our baseline data for fourth, sixth, and seventh grades in reading and math. Our fourth graders performed well, with 93% of students scoring proficient or advanced in both reading and math. Sixty-eight percent of students throughout the state scored proficient or advanced in reading, and seventy-seven percent scored proficient or advanced in math.

Seventy-nine percent of Infinity's sixth graders scored proficient or advanced in reading, while seventy-two scored proficient or advanced in math. Across the state, sixty-five percent of students scored proficient or advanced in reading, and sixty-eight percent scored proficient or advanced in math.

Our seventh graders performed well, with 100% scoring proficient or advanced in reading, while 91% scored proficient or advanced in math. Across the state, sixty-eight percent of students scored proficient or advanced in reading, and sixty-seven percent scored proficient or advanced in math.

The 2005-2006 school year was the first time Infinity had eighth graders. Seventy-six percent of our students scored proficient or advanced in reading, compared to 71% across the state. They performed better in math, with 88% scoring proficient or advanced, compared to 62% across the state.

On the Spring 2007 PSSA tests, our third graders maintained a strong performance in reading, with 94% scoring at proficient or advanced, a little below the previous year. Seventy-three percent of students throughout the state scored proficient or advanced on the same test. As in reading, our students maintained a strong performance in math performance with 94% of our students scored proficient or advanced, dipping a little compared to 100% the previous year. Seventy-eight percent of students throughout the state scored proficient or advanced on the same test.

Our fourth graders performed very well, with 100% of students scoring proficient or advanced in both reading and math, compared with 92% on both tests the previous year. Seventy percent of students throughout the state scored proficient or advanced in reading, and seventy-eight percent scored proficient or advanced in math.

Infinity's fifth graders also performed very well, with 100% of students scoring proficient or advanced in both reading and math. This was a much stronger performance than shown by the fifth graders the previous year when seventy-one percent scored proficient or advanced in reading and only twenty-nine percent scored proficient or advanced in math. Sixty percent of students throughout the state scored proficient or advanced on the same test in reading. Seventy-one percent of students throughout the state scored proficient or advanced on the same test in math.

Infinity's sixth graders made a slight improvement in 2007, with 85% scoring proficient or advanced in reading, compared with seventy-nine percent the previous year, while across the state, sixty-three percent scored proficient or advanced in reading. There was a significant decrease for our sixth graders in math, with only fifty-four our our sixth grade students scored proficient or advanced in math compared with seventy-two percent the previous year. However, this was an improvement, if you consider the same cohort of students had scored twenty-nine percent while in fifth grade. Across the state, seventy percent of students scored proficient or advanced in math.

Our seventh graders maintained a strong performance in reading, with 100% scoring

proficient or advanced in reading, as they did the previous year. Across the state, sixty-seven percent of students scored proficient or advanced in reading. They also maintained a strong performance in math, with 90% scoring proficient or advanced in math, compared to 91% the previous year. Across the state, sixty-seven percent scored proficient or advanced in math.

Our eighth graders made significant improvement in reading, with 100% scoring proficient or advanced in reading, compared with 76% the previous year. Seventy-five percent of students across the state scored proficient or advanced on this test. They also maintained their performance in math, with 89% scoring proficient or advanced in math, compared to 88% the previous year. Across the state, sixty-eight percent scored proficient or advanced in math.

At this time of this report, we do not yet have official, final results of the Spring 2008 PSSA tests. However, the scores are reported in the Annual Measurable Goals section.

Describe how these results influence development of annual measurable goals and targets.

Although Infinity does not consider the PSSA to be the only measure of our success as an educational institution, the PSSA results are central in developing annual measurable goals and targets. We are trying to meet or exceed the AYP targets each year. If our students are not meeting these targets, we take steps to adjust instruction to try to improve student performance.

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

Infinity teachers use standardized diagnostic testing at the beginning of the year to assess current levels of performance for students. This information is used to tailor initial instruction. These teachers continue to pre- and post-test throughout the year to measure student achievement, as well as assess instructional success. While this information is generally not used to change the curriculum, it may affect how quickly a student may move through the curriculum and how far s/he may advance through the curriculum. However, if the results of these diagnostic tests reveal any negative trends in student performance in reading or math, we would immediately take steps to adjust the curriculum and/or instruction to address any gaps or weaknesses.

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.

Infinity has a comprehensive student progress plan, which is described below.

Evaluation is generally described as either formative or summative. Formative can be defined as “along the way” assessment. Summative can be defined as “at the end”

assessment. Infinity uses both, with the primary goal of improving student learning and performance. However, we also recognize the auditing function that summative evaluation often plays, in terms of student and school accountability.

Student evaluation at Infinity is primarily for the purpose of individual improvement. Assessment measures are used to diagnose student strengths and weaknesses, and are then utilized in tailoring instruction and developing an appropriate plan to make progress on specific goals. Evaluation measures are also utilized in assessing the extent of the student's progress in relationship to those goals. These measures are designed to teach as well as test. We are not primarily interested in how students compare to each other.

The following assumptions guide our student assessment practices. (Excerpted and adapted from the work of Grant Wiggins, *The Center for Learning, Assessment, and School Structure*, 1996)

- There should be an alignment among the written curriculum, the taught curriculum, and the assessed curriculum.
- The aim of assessment is to improve performance, not merely audit it.
- Assessment should be a part of the teaching-learning process, not something that takes place after teaching and learning are over.
- A variety of assessment measures should be used.
- Assessment should be on-going, not limited to fixed tests and testing times.
- Assessment measures should include authentic challenges (What are realistic tasks and contexts worth mastering? What challenges do experts and citizens actually face? What does it mean to "do" science, history, etc.?)
- Learning to self-assess and self-adjust is the key to mastery, therefore, self-assessment should be taught, learned, and assessed as part of the curriculum.
- Learning requires feedback. (Feedback is descriptive, not evaluative.)
- Assessment tasks should evoke and require sophisticated and deep understandings of key ideas, technical competence of central skills, performance/production skills in authentic contexts, and mature habits of mind, attitude, judgment, and action.
- Teachers should be encouraged to experiment with, and improve the assessment of student performance.

Assessments should be:

- Honest, yet fair
- Credible
- Useful
- Feasible
- Balanced
- Intellectually Rigorous

In general, the following practices help us to demonstrate student learning and progress:

Students participate in diagnostic pre-assessment.
Each student has a portfolio of work.

Student progress is monitored through subject area checklists in math and language arts.

Rubrics are developed and used to evaluate projects.
Letter grades are not used as indicators of student performance/progress.
Each student has a personalized learning plan developed with parents and teachers.
Students engage in self-evaluations.

More specifically, Infinity implements the following procedures.

Reading

Teachers begin the year with a diagnostic reading test to assess the reading level of each child and then set up flexible ability groups to work with the children on those levels. Infinity is firmly committed to continuous progress, which means that each child will start working at the assessed level and progress at his or her own pace.

Math

As in reading, diagnostic measures are used at the beginning of the year to assess skills and concepts. Then flexible ability groups are formed for instructional purposes. Children are often uneven in their mastery of math skills from one standard to another, and so it is not unusual to assess children as teachers begin each standard. Of course, teachers also assess progress after teaching a particular unit.

Themes

For themes, in which we combine history, geography, civics, economics, science, technology, environment, ecology, and more, we also follow the state content standards. Assessment in these areas is not always as cut and dried. Often, the focus is on particular projects that students are doing related to the theme, and these projects are evaluated. Teachers have a checklist or rubric to evaluate these projects, often on both content and presentation.

Grades

Letter grades are not used at Infinity. The research on grades indicates they are not reliable indicators of student performance. Letter grades are often assigned based on how the student compares to other students in the classroom. An “A” or a “D” in a subject does not indicate what skills s/he has mastered, or which skills s/he is working on, nor does it convey the level of difficulty of the work. A “B” in one school may mean something entirely different than a “B” in another school. The letter grade does not indicate what criteria were used to evaluate student learning. Nor does a letter grade with a brief comment tell a student specifically what s/he must do to improve.

Because we believe letter grades are not effective in communicating with parents or other schools (should a student transfer) about content or skills learned, and because we believe

letter grades do not help students identify specific strengths they need to build on, nor specific weaknesses they need to improve, we use other more qualitative measures of evaluation, as noted below.

Report

Cards

Students at Infinity do not receive report cards. Portfolios are utilized instead. Portfolios are updated each quarter for each child, including Language Arts and Math Checklists and Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs). Copies of the Conference Record Form completed at each conference are sent home to parents following the conference.

Student

Portfolios

Infinity's student portfolios are **cumulative**. They are passed on from teacher to teacher. Work that is purged is sent home to the parents. Infinity's student portfolios are **growth** portfolios. They do not always show a student's best work. Through samples taken throughout the year, they show the progress a student has made. Sometimes work from an entire process, such as the writing process, is included.

Infinity's student portfolios are also **documentation** portfolios. Skills marked on the checklists, either as introduced or as proficient, are backed up with evidence in the portfolio, as much as possible. For example, the concept of synonyms can be covered at a variety of levels. The teacher includes some student work to indicate to which level the student has progressed.

As students mature, they begin having more ownership of their portfolios and begin taking more responsibility for selecting what goes in them. They are able to include written comments about why they selected each item and what they learned. (However, this does not alleviate the teacher of his/her responsibility to ensure that necessary samples are included.)

Checklists

At Infinity, we have a checklist for language arts and one for math. These checklists are based on the state standards and include the skills our students are working on in grades K - 8. These checklists also indicate at which grade level these skills would normally be mastered by the typical student. In this way, we, as teachers, are able to address any "holes" our students have, and parents can rest assured that their child is learning what s/he needs at each grade level.

Including the skills for more than one grade level on the checklists allows us to show when a student is working on skills at a higher, or lower, grade level. It also means these checklists are cumulative and will follow the student from class to class. The skills for each grade level are highlighted in a different color to make it easier to review. The checklists also have two columns to indicate when the skill was introduced, and when the teacher has evidence that the child is consistently proficient at this skill.

Personal

Learning Plans (PLPs)

In addition to the checklists, each student has a Personal Learning Plan (PLP) developed

in conjunction with the student herself, the parents, and the teachers. This plan will be reviewed quarterly, with the aforementioned parties, and revised as necessary. Although specific academic goals may be included, we do not want to simply restate all the skills from the checklists. Therefore, for the most part, PLPs focus more on behavioral goals, self-directed learning goals, and goals related to theme and theme projects.

Teachers send home blank PLP forms before the first conference. We do not expect families to complete the entire form, but we do ask them to sit down and discuss, as a family, what kinds of goals they want for their child/ren during the year. When they bring these ideas to the conferences, they are able to discuss them with the teacher and come to an agreement. The teacher is also prepared with goals s/he believes each student should be working on during the quarter, or during the year, and shares those with the family. In this way, we try to make the PLPs more of a working document and more useful to everyone.

Parent/Teacher/Student Conferences

Because we believe it is important to meet with parents to discuss these evaluations, we schedule four conferences during the year. The first three conferences are at least 30 minutes each to provide sufficient time for the teacher and parents to discuss the child's progress. The majority of the conferences are held during the scheduled release times on the calendar and include evening times for those parents who cannot come during the day.

Students are welcomed and encouraged to attend. Even at the younger grades, we feel it is important for the child to be aware of his/her progress and to take responsibility for his/her own learning. As the children mature, they take on more responsibility for conducting the conferences themselves.

The fourth conference of the year is held shortly after the last day of school and is student-led, with the teacher and parents present. It is more of a portfolio review and celebration of the year's learning. Teachers are available to answer questions. Morning and afternoon times are available.

PSSA

Furthermore, to ensure each child meets or exceeds local, state and national academic standards, our students participate in the state PSSA, and any other mandated assessments.

Staff

Moreover, consistent with our goals, our teaching staff continues to participate in professional development to become more skilled in using a variety of assessment measures. They are also encouraged to explore and experiment with different types of assessment, with the goal of improving student learning.

Development

Teacher evaluation at Infinity includes pre- and post-observation conferences in addition to the formal observation itself. The focus of these conferences and observations are related to how the teacher can improve instruction to improve student performance.

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.

By utilizing a combination of standardized and non-standardized, direct, and indirect assessments, we use assessment measures to guide and improve student learning, as well as to provide documentation for accountability purposes.

Initially, diagnostic testing/pre-testing in both reading and math enables Infinity’s staff to form flexible ability groups for instructional purposes. By working with small groups with similar performance levels, the teacher can tailor instruction to more effectively meet their learning needs.

Once a classroom teacher identifies (either through test results or through observations) students who demonstrate difficulties with concepts and/or skills, s/he may regroup these students with other peers who are having similar difficulties. In this way, the teacher has the ability to gear instruction to these students’ needs. This may include a change in pace, level of complexity, amount of review and practice, and so on.

When a student requires further assistance, the teacher/s and parent/s meet to discuss and create an individualized learning plan targeting the specific areas of weakness. The Learning Specialist usually attends this meeting as well. Using data collected through direct observation of the student, formal and informal assessments of the student and anecdotal information provided by the teacher and the parent, the Learning Specialist makes recommendations for strategies and adaptations to be used by the teacher and the student within the regular classroom. Parents are also given ideas and strategies to use at home to help build skills and to reinforce the school’s interventions. The teacher may make arrangements for the student to receive additional one-on-one or small group instruction.

If the student is making insufficient progress, the Learning Specialist may provide additional help to him/her in the classroom. This “push-in” approach is scheduled during the normal classroom instructional time for that subject, and lessons are developed in coordination with the regular education teacher’s instructional goals. These lessons provide additional direct instruction, as well as extra review and practice. The Learning Specialist may also provide individualized direct instruction outside of the classroom one to three times per week, as needed. The Learning Specialist may address time management and/or organization management strategies with the student, as well.

Parents and teachers meet quarterly to discuss strategies and student progress. They may meet more often, as needed. Progress is monitored through reviewing student assignments, post-tests, and observations.

If there continue to be concerns about a student's learning difficulties or rate of progress, that child may be referred for a special education evaluation. Infinity contracts with the Capital Area Intermediate Unit for such assessments and services, as needed.

Infinity is developing a more detailed process for meeting the needs of students who are at-risk of failure or not making reasonable progress. We expect that more specifics, delineating timelines, meetings, and documenting student progress, will be part of this plan.

Student Assessment - Attachment

- Attachment H - Local Test Data Statement

Teacher Evaluation

TEACHER EVALUATION: List the main features of your teacher evaluation plan.
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The success of the school in achieving its mission and goals is largely dependent on the effectiveness of the staff. Infinity hires highly competent staff members and provides them with ongoing support and professional development opportunities to help them to become even better, which again is consistent with our core value of Kaizen, or continuous improvement.

Our philosophy at Infinity is that evaluation, whether involving students or staff, should be used primarily as a springboard for improvement and growth.

Teacher

Evaluation

We are working to create something different in this area, since traditional teacher evaluation systems are seen as either meaningless or threatening to most teachers. We are continuing to work with our teaching staff to develop a system that maximizes teacher motivation and commitment to the process, in order to achieve greater gains in professional growth and development. At this point, teacher supervision and evaluation at Infinity consists primarily of clinical supervision and administrative evaluation.

Observations

An administrator (either the CEO/Director or Assistant Principal) conducts informal and formal observations of each teacher. Administrative observations are based on the CSU Assessment of Competencies of Teaching, Scales 1 - 11 and Scales 15 — 17 (See **Attachment I**). These scales were developed through the Colorado State University Teacher Induction Program and have been widely validated. The program includes definitions of desired behaviors, collection of objective data based on the scales, a process of analyzing the data, and a process for improvement planning.

Clinical

An administrator works with the teacher to identify areas for improvement. Each cycle involves a planning conference, an observation to collect data, and a feedback conference.

Supervision

Evaluation

As for evaluation procedures that impact dismissal of teachers, we are reviewing a three-tiered approach. Beginning teachers or teachers new to the school would be involved in a more directed development process for the first year. Once this has been completed satisfactorily, teachers would advance to the experienced track, which would likely involve more collaborative and self-guided development. Teachers who receive an unsatisfactory evaluation would be placed on a remediation track. The remediation track would consist of a very structured process with a specific plan devised by the teacher and the administrator to improve deficiencies. If improvement was satisfactory, this teacher could be placed in the experienced track. If improvement was not satisfactory according to the designated timelines, the employee would be notified of intent to terminate.

Competencies

The competencies are included in **Attachment I**, as is a copy of the **Teacher Evaluation Checklist** that is completed by the teacher and an administrator at the end of the year.

TEACHER EVALUATION: List entities/individuals who are responsible for teacher and staff evaluation AND indicate whether those individuals have administrative certificates.

The CEO/Director is responsible for all teacher evaluations. Dr. Joseph Schell also conducted some teacher observations during the 2007-2008 school year.

TEACHER EVALUATION: Describe training for evaluators, particularly in the areas of Special Education and instructional techniques unique to the mission of the charter school.

Ms. Nancy Hall, Infinity's CEO/Director during the 2007-2008 school year, is a Pennsylvania certified school administrator. In addition to having worked as a school administrator previously, Ms. Hall has participated in specific Evaluator Training and Mentor Training. Ms. Hall has learned about Special Education through her education administration graduate work, has been involved with Special Education in her previous administrative positions and has attended workshops related to Special Education through the Intermediate Unit, PATTAN, and PDE. Ms. Hall has a Master's Degree in Gifted Education and has taken courses and participated in training on a variety of instructional techniques and assessment techniques relevant to the mission and educational design of the charter school.

Dr. Schell is a K-12 administrator and is certified in Supervision for Special Education.

Teacher Evaluation - Attachments

- Attachment I(1) - Teacher Evaluation Checklist
- Attachment I(2) - Teacher Evaluation Plan

SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

Leadership Changes

Discuss briefly any leadership changes during the past year on the Board of Trustees and in the school administration (President of the Board, Chief Executive Officer, Principal, etc.) explaining why or how those changes occurred.

There were only normal changes in the overall leadership of Infinity Charter School during the 2007-2008 school year. Mrs. Carol Hilty was elected President of the Board in July 2007, and served in that capacity through June of 2008. She has been re-elected for a third term as parent representative, beginning July 2008.

Ms. Nancy J. Hall was, and continues to be, the school’s CEO/Director. No other changes occurred in the leadership or administration of the school in the 2007-2008 school year.

Board of Trustees

Name of Trustee	Office (if any)
Mrs. Carol Hilty	President from 07/07 to 06/08
Mr. Richard Morrison	Vice President from 07/07 to 12/07
Mr. Douglas Morrow	None
Mr. Joe Schell	Secretary/Treasurer from 07/07 to 06/08; Vice-President 12/07 to 06/08

Professional Development (Governance)

Describe the professional development provided or taken regarding governance of the school (including Sunshine Law and the Public Officials Act) for the Board of Trustees.

All members and potential members of the Infinity Charter School Board of Trustees are to review the “Orientation Packet for New Board Members.” This packet includes information about the school, governance activities and requirements (including the Sunshine Law), School By-laws, and so on. The Board members have been provided information on the Pennsylvania Ethics or Public Officials Act.

During the 2005-2006 school year, Infinity again contacted the Pennsylvania Association of School Boards about becoming a member. The PSBA charter does not allow charter schools to become members. However, they did contact the Central Dauphin School District who graciously agreed that we could “ride” on their membership for the purpose of accessing PSBA services. We hope to be able to take advantage of this opportunity soon.

In the meantime, Infinity’s Board has tried to follow the precepts espoused by Board development and management expert, John Carver, in his work, such as *Boards That Make A Difference*.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School

How does the Board of Trustees coordinate the governance and management of the school?

The Infinity Board of Trustees is not involved in the day-to-day management of the school, handled by the CEO/Director and the Business Manager. In a type of split-principal model, the CEO/Director serves as the school’s educational leader, focusing on curriculum and instruction. Business activities, such as finances and facilities, are managed by the Business Manager, with the CEO/Director having oversight responsibilities.

It is our intent that in addition to the Board’s legally mandated responsibilities, its primary focus is long-term strategic planning and policy-making related to the mission and vision of the school. The roles and responsibilities of the Infinity Board of Trustees have been delineated as follows:

- Carrying the vision
- Serving as advocates for the student body as a whole
- Evaluating the school's management, and appointing or dismissing as necessary
- Fixing salaries or compensation of administrators, teachers, or employees of the charter school
- Overseeing and approving the school's annual budget
- Enacting policy
- Designating sound fiscal management policies, including defining acceptable depositories of school funds, creating or increasing indebtedness, purchasing or selling land
- Approving curriculum, adopting courses of study and/or textbooks
- Adopting the school calendar
- Entering into contracts (of any kind) on behalf of the school
- Raising funds for the school
- Evaluating its own (the Board's) performance
- Serving as a focus group for the management

- Bringing stakeholder concerns to the management
- Problem-solving, as requested
- Serving as key communicators to the parents and staff
- Serving as "cheerleaders" for the school, as warranted
- Serving as good-will ambassadors to the larger community.

During the 2007-2008 school year, the Board met twelve (12) times. The CEO/Director and the Business Manager attended all these meetings.

There is a written agenda for each meeting. This agenda includes a Citizen Comment Time, Approval of the previous meeting Minutes, Old Business, New Business, and Executive Sessions, as necessary, to discuss legal and personnel issues. The CEO/Director and Business Manager complete reports on their activities for each meeting.

The Board reviews each report and may ask questions or request more information concerning the outlined activities. Members of the Board may direct the CEO/ Director or Business Manager to supply additional information prior to making decisions. When the Board makes a decision and/or approves a policy, the staff is responsible for the implementation of such directives.

Describe the Board of Trustees' efforts in maintaining a working relationship with the charter granting School District's Board of School Directors.

Infinity's Founding Group began by trying to establish a positive working relationship with Central Dauphin School District, and at every opportunity, Infinity has continued to express its desire to work collaboratively with the district.

The Central Dauphin School District graciously agreed that we could "ride" on their membership for the purpose of accessing PSBA services.

The Central Dauphin School District has provided all ADM funding requested by Infinity for resident students enrolled at our school. They have also included Infinity in their Emergency Evacuation Plans.

Infinity submitted a charter renewal intent letter to the Central Dauphin School District on August 1, 2006, and on June 11, 2007, the District renewed Infinity's charter for five years.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School - Attachment

- Attachment J - 2008-2009 ICS Board Meeting Schedule

Community and Parent Engagement

Describe the Board of Trustees' efforts in promoting opportunities for community and parent engagement in school activities.

Infinity is committed to making the community and our parents an integral part of our school and our educational program. Our desired relationship with the community and parents is reflected in our original goals, several of our educational components, and in our staffing pattern.

COMMUNITY

With respect to the community, our intent is to:

- Facilitate student service to, and involvement in, the community, *and*
- To blur the boundaries between school and community and actively promote the concept that the school and the community have mutual responsibilities to each other.

To use a scientific analogy, we want to create a “permeable membrane,” such as that of a living cell, between our school and the outside community. As we create our own learning community, we want to draw in the rich resources of the community and, at the same time, we want to extend the concept of the school beyond the physical edifice, and send our students out into the community, to learn and to contribute, in an extended environment.

Utilization of Community Resources

Education at Infinity is not campus-based. There is a vast array of resources available to students throughout our local communities and beyond. Sometimes the community members and organizations come in to the students and sometimes the students go out into the community. Field trips and speakers are an integral part of the educational program at Infinity, with goals and objectives clearly tied to the curriculum. We want our students to be able to take advantage of a wide variety of community resources to enhance our curriculum. In addition to the academic benefits, we also believe community members have the potential to contribute a great deal in the affective realm. In the words of an old African proverb, “It takes an entire village to raise a child.”

Infinity had 78 speakers for 84 presentations and 21 field trips (not including community service) over the course of the 2007-2008 school year. In addition to individual class experiences, this included level-wide elementary and middle school trips to the Harrisburg Symphony and overnight/extended field trips for students in grades K-5.

Telecommunications

Telecommunications are a way to enlarge our “community of resources.” Computer

telecommunications and speaker phones were used this last year to enable students to connect to resources otherwise unavailable. Parents and teachers often communicate about students via email. Almost all of our parents have internet capabilities, so we are able to send emails to provide information to parents, particularly if this needs to be accomplished quickly. In addition, information about the school is normally available to the community and our parents on Infinity's web site.

Community Service Projects

We believe the school and the community have mutual responsibilities to each other. While we want our students to be able to take advantage of a wide variety of community resources to enhance our curriculum, we also want our students to use their time and talents to give back to the community. As our students participate in community service activities, they are actively engaged with the community in a positive way. Students participated in 15 school-organized community service activities/projects during 2007-2008.

Community Resources Coordinator

Infinity's commitment to creating a symbiotic relationship with the community is also reflected in our staffing. Our Community Resources Coordinator is an integral part of the educational program at the school. She is primarily responsible for assisting classroom teachers to enhance the educational experience by coordinating speakers, field trips (including overnight programs), assemblies, and other resources in the community. She is also responsible for arranging community service activities.

Committee

Infinity also taps community members to serve on various committees for the school, such as the Professional Education Plan Committee.

Membership

Board Meetings

All Board meetings are open to parents and community members, and an opportunity for interested individuals to speak is offered at the beginning of the meetings. Visitors are often involved in Board discussions on topics of interest to them.

The Board is currently composed of community members and one parent member, as permitted in our by-laws. It is continuing to recruit additional community members to serve on the Board.

PARENTS

One way to encourage parents to be engaged with the school is through effective two-way communication. It is not simply enough that the school distribute information to the parents. We must also listen to what parents want to share with us about the school, and respond to their feedback in appropriate ways.

Communication

Weekly Folders: These folders include student work, the weekly school calendar of events, a weekly school-wide letter written by the CEO, a weekly letter written by the

classroom teacher, and a form that allows teachers and parents to write notes back and forth each week about each child.

Weekly Classroom Letters: Teachers write and send home weekly newsletters to parents, including information about content, skills, and activities in which their children are involved.

Weekly School-wide Letters: The CEO letter is a communication that goes out to the parent community on a weekly basis and includes information about the school, information about gifted students, general parenting information, assessment results, school philosophy, and so on.

Weekly Calendar of Events: The Calendar of Events is a weekly communication to parents that notifies them of upcoming school activities.

Student Assessment: Parents want and need to know how their child is progressing in school. As noted elsewhere, students do not receive report cards at Infinity. Instead, portfolios are used and include Language Arts and Math Checklists and Personalized Learning Plans (PLPs). Copies of the Conference Record form completed at each conference are sent home to parents following the conference.

Parent/Teacher Conferences: Formal conferences with parents are scheduled four times each year. Students are welcome to attend, and, as they progress through the grades, are expected to take on a larger role in leading the conference. The first three conferences are a minimum of thirty (30) minutes each, and evening times are available for those parents who cannot come during the day. The majority of the conference times are during the scheduled release times on the calendar. The fourth conference takes place shortly after the last day of school and is more of a portfolio fair at which the child has the primary responsibility in sharing his/her progress with his/her parent/s. Teachers are available to answer questions. Morning, afternoon, and evening times are available.

Parent Handbook: The school has developed a Parent Handbook to provide important information to parents about the school. This includes general information, enrollment information, office information, attendance/absence information, arrival and dismissal procedures, health services, special education services, assessing and communicating student progress, lunch program, student behavior expectations, and school policies.

Web Site: Information about the school is normally available to our parents on Infinity's web site. This usually includes Board minutes.

Board of Trustees Meetings: The location and meeting times of the school's Board of Trustees are posted at the school and on the school's web site. Approved minutes of the previous meeting are to be posted. Meetings are open to the public. Parents have an opportunity to speak at the beginning of meetings and often share opinions during meetings. There is one parent representative serving as a Board member.

Informal Dialogue: Opportunities for dialogue between parents and school staff present themselves during times that parents volunteer in the school. In addition, parents always have the opportunity to call or email a teacher or other staff member to discuss areas of concern or to express compliments.

Formal Parent Concern Process: When a parent calls, or comes in with a concern, the CEO listens and refers the parent to the teacher directly. If the parent refuses to talk with the teacher, the CEO talks with the parent and then informs the teacher of the concern. If necessary, a conference is arranged with all parties involved. The school does not believe that parents are always right or that staff is always right. The CEO will try to help resolve any and all concerns in the best interest of the children, and, as much as possible, to the satisfaction of all parties involved.

Get to Know the Board Meeting: A special meeting was hosted in November by our Board to provide an additional opportunity for parents to meet the current Board members, ask questions and discuss concerns.

End-of-Year Survey: Infinity distributes a questionnaire to parents at the end of each year to determine parent satisfaction with the school program. The results are shared with the entire parent body and the school staff.

The following are the results from the 2007-2008 survey.

Satisfied with school

Question Strongly (A&SA) ree	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	St Ag
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1. My child is satisfied overall with Infinity.	0%	2%	9%	47%	42%	89%
2. As a parent, I am satisfied overall with Infinity.	0%	0%	11%	48%	40%	88%
3. My child's overall interest in school is high.	0%	4%	7%	51%	38%	89%
4. The learning opportunities at Infinity have been appropriate for my child's needs.	0%	2%	7%	55%	36%	91%
5. My child has made appropriate academic progress this year.	0%	2%	7%	55%	42%	91%
6. My child's relationship with his/her peers is good.	2%	0%	5%	47%	45%	93%
7. My child's relationship with his/her teacher/s are good.	0%	2%	4%	44%	51%	95%
8. My child's feelings about himself/herself are positive.	2%	0%	2%	53%	44%	96%

9. Our child’s school activities are discussed at home often.	0%	2%	7%	45%	46%	91%
10. The school and teachers, through such information/activities as the Calendar of Events, school-wide Monday Letters, Monday Folders, Open Board and Information Meetings, is doing a good job communicating with me as a parent.	0%	0%	5%	42%	53%	95%
11. I feel I have sufficient opportunities to be involved in my child’s education at Infinity.	0%	2%	4%	37%	57%	94%
12. Overall, my child has been more successful at Infinity than at previous schools.	0%	0%	17%	29%	54%	83%

Note: Some A+SA totals have been rounded to the next appropriate %.

We had 55 responses to the End-of-Year Survey, from 83 families who had students enrolled.

At Infinity, we want parent involvement to be more than just a phrase; we want it to be a way of life. Productive partnerships allow us to provide more for the children than any of us could accomplish alone. We welcome parents’ talents, skills, and energies toward that end.

Parent

Volunteers

Volunteers contributed innumerable hours of service to Infinity during the 2007-2008 school year. Volunteers were involved in working in classrooms, offering hot lunches, coordinating fundraising, producing the school yearbook, driving for field trips, presenting to students, painting, renovating and cleaning the facility, organizing school spirit activities, as well working on committees, leading Odyssey of the Mind Teams, and so on.

Class/School

Picnics

In the summer, before school starts each year, Infinity has class and/or whole school get-togethers, so that parents, students, and staff can all get to know each other in an informal setting.

New

Parent

Ice

Cream

Social

This informal meeting is held prior to the start of school for families, who are new to Infinity. New parents have said it helped them feel a part of the Infinity community from the start.

Back-to-School

Night

Infinity has a special evening event in the fall for parents of students attending the school. The staff is introduced, educational programs are described, and opportunities for being involved in the school are discussed.

Parent

Committees

Infinity does not have a formal PTA/PTO group. However, we do have very active parents, who address needs as they arise. Several committees have been active during the 2007-2008 school year. These included:

- Staff Appreciation Committee
- Fundraising Committee
- Library Committee
- Facilities Committee
- Yearbook Committee
- Holiday Shop Committee
- Hot Lunch Committee
- Family Activities Committee
- Odyssey of the Mind Committee

Each committee continued to make significant contributions to the school during the 2007-2008 school year.

Partnership Picnic

Infinity scheduled its fifth annual Partnership Picnic in June 2008. This social get-together reinforces Infinity's philosophy that it takes both parents and staff working together to accomplish the most for the children.

We know that Infinity would not be as successful as it is, without the commitment and efforts of our parents.

SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Major fund-raising activities

During the 2007-2008 fiscal year, Infinity did not participate in any major fundraising activities.

Infinity Charter School had a parent Fundraising Committee during the 2007-2008 school year. Activities included:

- Collecting soup labels, box tops, grocery receipts, used printer cartridges, and Target purchases.
- Giant A+ Rewards
- Lavender's sale (gift wrap and miscellaneous items)

The majority of money raised (\$2,870) supported school spirit and/or school social activities. However, some of the funds (\$420) supported curricular programming, including our symphony field trip.

While no major fundraising activities are currently planned for the 2008-2009 school year, activities similar to those described above are expected to continue.

During the 2007-2008 school year one family contributed \$500 that was matched by an employer contribution program through Microsoft.

This donation was not solicited by the school. Payments were deposited to a special “Pledges and Donations” account held at Commerce Bank. These monies were used by the school during the 2007-2008 school year to purchase CompassLearning Odyssey software.

In addition, the school received a \$3500 cash donation from Colonial Park Mall as part of their “Earning for Learning” promotion.

<u>AMOUNT</u>	<u>CONTRIBUTORS</u>
\$1-\$500	0
\$501-\$1,000	1
\$1,001-\$2,000	0
\$2,001-\$3,000	0
\$3,001-\$4,000	1

Fiscal Solvency Policies

Infinity utilizes the following procedures to maintain fiscal solvency.

Budget Preparation: Infinity’s annual General Fund budget is prepared by the Business Manager, in conjunction with the CEO and presented annually to the Board of Trustees for approval. A balanced budget is designed using a lower revenue figure than expected, combined with higher expenses than anticipated. For example, if Infinity is expecting 115 students to be enrolled for a particular school year, the revenue might be based on ADM revenue from 107 students. However, the expenses would be calculated on an enrollment of 115 students. This provides a “cushion” which can absorb changes in enrollment, if needed.

Budgetary reserves are also held to offset possible cash flow problems, due to such things as delays in ADM payments from sending districts or increased student services’ expenses.

Budget Transfers: The Board of Trustees approves all transfers between budgeted line items to reallocate monies from one account to another.

Financial Reports: The Business Manager prepares a financial report for each Board meeting. This monthly report includes details of revenue received, and expenses incurred, by account. The budget figures are also provided to allow for regular monitoring of actual year-to-date expenses in comparison with budgeted expenses. A list of checks and deposits is presented for Board review.

ICS uses an accrual basis of accounting, which conforms to generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). All financial reports are based upon an accrual basis.

Contracts: Contracts are approved by the Board of Trustees before being entered into.

Purchases: Efforts are made to purchase goods and services at low prices, and the school utilizes the PEPPM education technology bid/buy program when available. Property, plant and equipment purchase are capitalized if they meet the requirements of the school's Capitalization and Depreciation policy. Infinity utilizes the EasyProcure education procurement card for all credit card purchases. Pre-defined limits on each of the cards restrict overspending by the cardholder, which improves purchasing control for the business office. The program is sponsored by PASBO, PASA, PSBA, and PSDLAF.

Investments: The ICS Board has directed the Business Manager to invest the bulk of previous years' carryover with the Pennsylvania School District Liquid Asset Fund (PSDLAF). This money will remain available to Infinity for use with future facility plans, or other special needs, while earning significantly higher rates of return than previously used money market accounts. The PSDLAF is a well-respected fiscal fund that is used by many Pennsylvania School Districts for their investments. The fund's investment focus is safety of principal, liquidity and yield. This focus matches the strategies recommended by Infinity's audit firm—to maximize the school's interest earnings and to protect the school's assets. Additional funds are held in a money market account at a local bank.

Audit: An annual audit is performed on the school's accounts and financial transactions. The audit is conducted in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and is initiated as soon as all income and expenditures for the fiscal year are entered, typically within the month after the end of the fiscal year. At the completion of the audit, the Board receives a copy of the audit report and the audit firm's management letter, which may provide recommendations for additional internal control practices to improve the efficiency of the accounting and financial reporting functions for the school. The Board then reviews the audit and recommendations, and takes action, as it sees fit.

Accounting System

Infinity Charter School uses QuickBooks 2007 Pro Edition for its accounting system. For the reports that are submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education, the budget and financial reports are converted to the standard Chart of Accounts.

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

Infinity's audit firm is Brown, Schultz, Sheridan, and Fritz (BSSF). Since an annual financial audit cannot begin until the school's fiscal year is complete, and all income and expenditures are reconciled, the actual audit of the 2007-2008 school year began in June of 2008.

As a result, the Auditor's Report Summary for 2007-2008 is not yet available. The Auditor's Report Summary from 2006-2007 school year is included in **Attachment K**. The 2007-2008 Audit Report will be uploaded as soon as it becomes available.

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

- Attachment K - Auditor's Annual Report Summary FY 2006-2007

Citations and follow-up actions for any State Audit Report

Infinity has no citations or follow-up actions from any State Audit Report.

SECTION VII. FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Facility (2007-2008)

Infinity Charter School began its operations in a former Central Dauphin school building at 51 Banks Street in Penbrook. This space is within the Central Dauphin School District boundaries, and is the facility originally planned for the school (See the Infinity Charter Application, July 2001). Although expanding into additional space within the building, Infinity has remained in the Penbrook facility for its entire existence. There have been no significant changes to the spaces or areas leased during the 2007-2008 school year. ICS currently maintains a year-to-year lease with the church, and plans to continue to be located in this space for the immediate future.

Furniture and Fixtures

The only significant furniture or fixtures purchase during the 2007-2008 school year was 50 classroom chairs, for a total of \$2,762.

Equipment

We purchased 13 new desktop computers and three new laptop computers for a total of \$12,529 during the 2007-2008 school year.

Future Facility Plans and Other Capital Needs

At this time, Infinity plans to remain at the same facility for the 2008-2009 school year. As a result, having reached capacity in our current building, we do not anticipate any significant capital needs for the current facility.

However, due to our current growth plans, Infinity is exploring the possibility of purchasing property and building a new, larger facility. While no specific site for such expansion has yet been selected, two sites within the Central Dauphin School District boundaries are being actively investigated, and it is possible one of these sites will be purchased before the end of the 2008-2009 school year. ICS has set aside approximately \$500,000 for this purchase.

Infinity has also contracted with Greenfield Architects (Lancaster, PA) to develop a set of architectural drawings and video "fly-through" of the new facility. These plans are expected to be complete by September 1, 2008.

Infinity has designated the majority of its carryover from the 2007-2008 budget for facility planning, development, and possible additional lease costs. We anticipate additional monies will be set aside each year. Once Infinity moves to a new facility additional equipment will be leased or purchased on an as-needed basis.

All of these plans are part of the Board's strategic planning for the school.

SECTION VIII. HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Describe how the charter school has complied with health and safety requirements (e.g. fire prevention, safety standards, requirements to hold fire drills), and provide appropriate evidence of maintaining health and immunization records for students.

Health and safety requirements are a high priority for Infinity. Therefore, we have engaged in the following activities during the 2007-2008 school year.

Emergency Procedure Manual
Infinity's Emergency Procedure Manual, developed in cooperation with the Penbrook Police Department and the Penbrook Emergency Management, is still being used. The Manual is distributed to, and discussed with, Infinity staff on an annual basis. Copies of the Emergency Procedure Manual are in all classrooms, and used during emergency drills.

Emergency Plan for Incidents at TMI

Evacuation Plan
In July 1982, the Pennsylvania Emergency Planning Agency approved the Central Dauphin School District's Radiological Emergency Response Plan for Incidents at the TMI Nuclear Station. Central Dauphin School District includes Infinity in its Evacuation Plan, in case of such an emergency.

Potassium-Iodide

Pills

Infinity also obtained K-I pills from the Pennsylvania Department of Health for administration to staff and students in the case of a Radiological Emergency at TMI.

Parents completed and returned permission slips for this medication, and Infinity's School Physician completed standing orders related to this medication.

Fire/Severe

Weather

Drills

Infinity has held 11 fire drills during the 2007-2008 school year. We also conducted one severe weather drill and one intruder drill. These were conducted in coordination with the other tenants of the facility.

Security

Infinity currently shares space in a facility with one other tenant—The Penbrook Learning Center. Infinity has coordinated its security measures with PLC to maximize the safety of our children.

All doors into the building are kept locked (from the outside) at all times. All exterior doors are equipped with panic hardware to facilitate exiting in an emergency. No required exits are ever barred or chained shut. Handicapped levers have been installed on all classroom doors.

Handicapped access to the various floors is by elevator. This elevator has been equipped with a user-code, which restricts access to the third floor and the basement, where Infinity classrooms/offices are located.

Primary access to the school is through the entrance on the east side of the building. Infinity has installed a security camera and call system at this entrance that allows school personnel to inspect and “buzz-in” visitors to the school. Only parents/guardians or those having legitimate business with the school are allowed into the facility. Once in, visitors are directed to the main office, where they must register and wear a visitor's badge while in the school. Any visitors within the building who are not recognized, or do not have a visitor's badge are asked to report to the main office. Visitors must also check out in the main office prior to leaving the school.

Parents who arrive or leave with their child outside of the regular arrival and dismissal times, must check their child in and out of the school at the main office.

Infinity staff and volunteers also wear official badges for identification and security purposes.

Volunteers

Infinity has many individuals who volunteer at the school. For security reasons, the school requests a criminal background check, child abuse clearance, and FBI clearance for these individuals. Infinity also conducts a motor vehicle check for those volunteers who drive on field trips.

School

Health

During the 2007-2008 school year, Infinity had difficulty finding its own part-time certified school nurse to provide school nursing services and to review and securely maintain appropriate student health and immunization records. As a result, we worked with the Visiting Nurses Association (VNA) to complete required screenings, collect height and weight data, and complete recordkeeping. Towards the end of the year, we were able to hire a registered nurse (RN) to provide daily services.

Infinity requires that parents/guardians provide student immunization records when admission paperwork is submitted. Once a student is officially enrolled, health and immunization records are requested from his/her previous school. When these records are received, they are reviewed and filed by our nursing staff. If any required exams or other necessary information is missing, the nursing staff contacts the parent/guardian to remedy the situation. If necessary, Infinity will contract with a qualified dentist or physician to conduct any necessary exams.

Infinity also contracted for the 2007-2008 school year with a certified School Physician and a certified School Dentist for services on an as-needed basis.

Provide evidence that the Request for Reimbursement and Report of School Health Services has been submitted.

The Request for Reimbursement and Report of School Health Services is not due until September 30, 2008. However, we have included an electronic copy of what we submitted for the 2006-2007 school year, as well as a copy of our Division of School Health Reimbursement Voucher.

Describe how the charter school is complying with the Federal Wellness Policy and Pennsylvania Chapter 12 requirements.

Infinity recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students' physical well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. While we are always exploring how to better promote student wellness, we are not required to comply with the new Wellness Policy requirements because we do not participate in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Program.

Infinity completed and submitted its Chapter 12 Student Services Plan, and it was approved on April 2, 2008.

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

- Attachment L(1) - Report of School Health Services
- Attachment L(2) - School Health Reimbursement Voucher

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs

During 2007-2008, the Rigg Darlington Group acted as Infinity’s insurance broker. Working with Rigg Darlington, Infinity developed the following school insurance coverage package:

Policy Type	Term	Provider & Policy Number	Cost
Accident	08/29/07-08/29/08	American Management Advisors ACE American Insurance Company #N01024097-3933-4-K12	\$520
Non-Profit Organization Directors & Officers	08/18/07-08/18/08	Cincinnati Insurance Company #BCP8667256	\$2,147
Workers Compensation	09/05/07-09/05/08	Cincinnati Insurance Company #WC1840979	\$4,943
Package: Including Property, Business Income Loss, General Liability, Overnight Events, etc.	09/05/07-09/05/08	Cincinnati Insurance Company #CPP0886422	\$6,965

Infinity is currently finalizing arrangements for similar coverage for the 2008-2009 school year.

Health Insurance: All Infinity full-time certified employees have been offered medical, prescription, and vision benefit packages through Highmark Blue Shield. Dental coverage is through United Concordia. This is comparable to what is offered to Central Dauphin School District employees.

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs - Attachment

- Attachment M - Insurance Policies - Declaration Pages

SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff

QUALITY OF TEACHING AND OTHER STAFF: Describe the professional staff of the school, including total number of personnel, how many are returning from the 2006-2007 school year and how many were with the school for the entire 2007-2008 school year.

Professional Staff

In summary, the total number of professional staff was:

- Six (6) full-time classroom teachers for the entire 2007-2008 school year.
- Four (4) part-time specials teachers (Art, German, Music and Physical Education). All specialist teachers stayed for the entire year.
- One (1) Counselor. This person was hired in November and stayed for the rest of the year.
- One (1) Learning Specialist. This person stayed the entire year.
- One (1) part-time registered nurse for the last few weeks of the school year.

Returning

Staff

Of the six full-time classroom teachers in 2006-2007, three returned for the 2007-2008 school year. Nancy Hall, returned to a classroom teaching position for the 2007-2008 school year, after having left that position for the 2006-2007 school year. Our Learning Specialist returned for the 2007-2008 school year. Of the five part-time instructional support personnel, three returned for the 2007-2008 school year. Infinity’s CEO/Director has remained the same since the school started.

QUALITY OF TEACHING AND OTHER STAFF: Discuss staff turnover and retention patterns and possible reasons for each.

Non-returning staff from 2006-2007

Name	Position	Reason for Leaving
Stacey Chyr	K-1	Non-renewed
Eileen Rausch	4-5	Position no longer available
Jon Gott	6-7-8	Not certified for position changes
Elizabeth Rehrig	German	Obtained a full-time job
Patti Thompson	Counselor	Family Health Issues

Staff

Turnover/Retention:

There are many reasons for staff changes. In a small school, such as Infinity, staffing needs may change. Sometimes the case that a staff member and a school are not “in-sync.” Whether personally, or professionally, a good match is critical for all long-term relationships. When this is not the case in a teaching position, a nonrenewal is often the best solution for both parties. In addition, as we stated in our 2006-2007 Annual Report, it is also not unexpected that part-time staff may not return, since most are seeking full-time positions. Infinity understands that this may continue to be the case until we can grow sufficiently to support full-time specialist positions.

Infinity’s instructional, specials, support, and administrative staff were quite stable over the course of the 2007-2008 school year. We have a very dedicated staff, who are recognized and appreciated. It is our belief that our staff members consider Infinity to offer a unique and challenging educational opportunity, which they find rewarding.

QUALITY OF TEACHING AND OTHER STAFF: Complete the PDE-414 to provide percentages for certified and non-certified professional staff members. Provide a copy of, or evidence that, the Elementary and Secondary Professional Personnel report was filed with PDE as Attachment O.

Attachment O is a copy of Infinity's Staff ACS, showing that our ESPP report was submitted through the PIMS system in February 2008. We have not received confirmation that the report has been approved.

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff - Attachments

- Attachment N - PDE-414
- Attachment O - Evidence of Submission of ESPP Report

Student Enrollment

Describe the charter school's student enrollment procedures and policies, including the admissions policy.

According to 1723-A (a) of the Charter School Act, all resident children in this Commonwealth qualify for admission to a charter school within the provisions of subsection (b).

When a parent/guardian is interested in having his/her child attend Infinity, s/he is required to submit a completed copy of the Infinity Enrollment/Registration Form, a Home Language Survey, the PDE Charter School Student Enrollment Notification Form, proof of residency, proof of student's date of birth, and a copy of required student immunizations, and if applicable, verification of a sibling already enrolled at Infinity. This information is put into a file for each student and kept until the next lottery. Potential parents are also required to attend an information meeting or tour.

Section 1723 — A (b) of the Charter Act states, "If more students apply to the charter school than the number of attendance slots available in the school, then students must be selected on a random basis from a pool of qualified applicants meeting the established eligibility criteria and submitting an application by the deadline established by the charter school..." Therefore, if there are more applicants than spaces available, Infinity conducts an annual lottery of students whose applications are complete. (See details below.) If there is only one applicant for an open space, that applicant is accepted.

Section 1723-A (b) (2) states, "A charter school shall not discriminate in its admission policies or practices on the basis of intellectual ability, except as provided in paragraph (2), or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a person with a disability, proficiency in the English language or any other basis that would be illegal if used by a school district."

Therefore, there are no requirements for admission to Infinity, other than those noted above. Although we had indicated our intent to have parents complete and submit a Parent Questionnaire in our initial application, we have never done so. Despite our mission, admission decisions at Infinity are not based on intellectual or academic ability.

Infinity has an Information Packet that is sent to anyone expressing an interest in enrolling his/her child in the school. Most of the information contained in that packet is also available on our web site. In addition, Infinity holds monthly school information meetings/tours for interested parents. In the spring, Infinity conducts special evening information meetings for potential parents.

There was one lottery conducted at Infinity for the 2008-2009 school year. It was held on May 2, 2008, and parents were notified by mail of the results within ten (10) days.

ANNUAL LOTTERY: The following rules were reviewed and approved by the Infinity Board, and were used during the 2007-2008 school year for enrollment in the 2008-2009 school year. These same rules and procedures will be used (with a change of specific deadline dates) for all future Lotteries, unless amended by the Board.

INFINITY CHARTER SCHOOL

RULES FOR THE 2008-09 STUDENT ADMISSION

LOTTERY AND ENROLLMENT PROCESS

1. To be complete, an Application for the ICS Lottery must include the following material:
 - a. ICS Enrollment/Registration Form
 - b. PDE Enrollment Form
 - c. Birth certificate
 - d. Proof of the applicant's residence (*utility bill, mortgage statement, lease, tax bill*)-not to be dated **before** February 1, 2008
 - e. Copy of the applicant's immunization record
 - f. Verification of sibling(s) attending ICS, if applicable
 - g. ICS Home Language Survey
 - h. Documentation that a parent/guardian has attended an Infinity tour/information meeting

2. If an applicant does not have all the necessary, completed documents in their file, their parent or guardian will be notified by letter or telephone concerning the items which need to be submitted to complete the application. All submitted enrollment/registration forms will be reviewed by ICS.

3. All ICS Enrollment/Registration forms must be received at the ICS office no later than **4:00 p.m. on Friday, April 25, 2008**. Any form submitted after this time will not be accepted for the Lottery. It is the responsibility of an applicant's parent or guardian to verify receipt of the enrollment/registration form by ICS. If there is any question, contact the office at (717) 238-1880.

4. Each complete application will qualify the applying child as an eligible applicant to be entered in the enrollment process. If an application is only partially complete by 4:00 p.m. on **Friday, April 25, 2008**, that applicant will not be eligible for the lottery enrollment process.

5. ICS will have prepared for the day of the Lottery a list of the grade level spaces available to be filled by the enrollment process. Parents of students currently enrolled at ICS must notify ICS by March 14, 2008 as to whether they intend to return for the 2008-09 academic year.

6. A lottery will be conducted for admission to the available spaces. Preference in the Lottery for the available classroom spaces will be given in the following order:

(i) All eligible applicants who reside *within* the Central Dauphin School District and have a sibling or siblings *currently enrolled* at ICS;

(ii) All eligible applicants who reside *outside* the Central Dauphin School District and have a sibling or siblings *currently enrolled* at ICS;

(iii) All eligible applicants who reside *within* the Central Dauphin School District;
and

(iv) All eligible applicants who reside *outside* the Central Dauphin School District.

7. The Lottery will be conducted by members of the ICS Board of Trustees at 4:30 p.m. on **Friday, May 2, 2008**. The name and grade of each eligible applicant in the Lottery will be written on a plain piece of paper and placed in a container for random selection. The names will be withdrawn one at a time, numbered sequentially and recorded on a list (the "Lottery List").

8. Once all the names of the eligible applicants in the Lottery have been randomly selected and numbered, a list will be compiled for purposes of determining the order of enrollment by applying the categorical preferences listed in paragraph 6 to the sequential order in which the applicant names have been randomly selected (the "Enrollment List"). Specifically, the Enrollment List will be compiled by moving to the top of the Lottery List all in-district sibling applicants, maintaining the order in which they were randomly selected and placed on the Lottery List; next on the Enrollment List will be placed all out-of-district sibling applicants, again maintaining the order in which they were selected; third on the Enrollment List will be inserted all remaining in-district applicants in their

Lottery List order; and fourth will be placed all remaining out-of-district applicants, again in their Lottery List order.

9. After the Enrollment List is prepared, any remaining available classroom spaces will be filled from the Enrollment List. The first name on the list will be assigned to the first space available in the appropriate grade; the second name will be assigned to the next space available in the appropriate grade, and so forth until the available spaces are filled. *Even if an applicant is number one on the Enrollment List, that applicant will only be admitted to a particular grade if there is an opening in that student's grade. Placement depends both on the applicant's order on the Enrollment List and on the number of spaces available in each grade.*

10. Once all available classroom spaces are filled, the remaining eligible applicants will be entered onto a waiting list for each grade in the order in which they occur on the Enrollment List.

11. Applicants seeking admission to ICS for the 2008-09 school year who submit a complete enrollment/registration form *after* the submission deadlines for the 2007-08 lottery (and thus are not eligible for the lottery) will be added to the end of the applicable grade's 2008-09 waiting list *in the order in which the completed registration forms are received by ICS.*

12. If spaces become available in the classrooms at any time after the lottery enrollment process has been completed (i.e., a vacancy arises during the 2008-09 school year), the first applicant on the applicable grade's waiting list will be offered the available space. The Director will notify the eligible applicant and that student will have ten (10) calendar days to decide if she wants to accept the space. Upon acceptance, the student must transfer to the school as soon as possible (but not to exceed 30 days). If the offer of admission is declined, the available space will be offered to the next eligible applicant on the 2008-09 waiting list, who will then have ten days to decide whether to accept or decline the position, and so forth down the list.

13. An eligible applicant will not be eligible for more than one grade level per year (e.g., if unsuccessful getting into a particular grade, they cannot move into a lower or higher grade that has spaces available).

14. Any issue, concern, conflict, or disagreement with the process or outcome of the ICS Lottery must be presented in writing to the Board of Trustees.

Describe how all policies and procedures comply with state law. The policies outlined above were developed to meet all applicable State Laws and requirements, specifically Section 1723-A of the Charter School Act. All resident children in the Commonwealth qualify for admission; if more students apply than the number of spaces available, Infinity conducts a lottery; Infinity does not discriminate in

admissions; and Infinity enrolls nonresident students on a space-available basis (See above for more details.).

Describe if a lottery was used, how students were placed on a waiting list and how those students were enrolled from the list.
See “Rules for the 2008-09 Student Enrollment Process and Admission Lottery” above.

If Kindergarten or First Grade is offered, provide a description of the admission policy with age requirements.
A full-day Kindergarten and First Grade are offered at Infinity. The general admission policy for these grades is no different than for any other grades.

At this time, students must be at least five years of age by September 1st of the year of entry, in order to enter Kindergarten, and at least six years of age by September 1st of the year of entry, in order to enter first grade at Infinity. However, if a student had already completed an approved, accredited Kindergarten program, that student would then be eligible for first grade, even if s/he did not meet the usual age requirements. Infinity may also make an exception to these age guidelines, if a child has been grade-skipped by his/her home district.

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

Enrollment history for 2007-2008:

Grade	# initially enrolled '07	# withdrew during year	# added during year	# ended with	To School
K	15	0	0	15	
1	13	4	0	9	1. Agora CyberCharter 2. CD — Chambers Hill 3. Steelton-Highspire 4. St. Catherine's
2	10	0	0	10	
3	14	1	0	13	1. Agora CyberCharter
4	19	2	0	17	1. CD - Linglestown 2. St. Catherine's
5	15	3	0	12	1. Agora CyberCharter 2. CD- Southside 3. Steelton-Highspire
6	16	1	0	15	1. CD — East Middle

7	11	0	0	11	
8	9	0	0	9	

Provide the number of students who completed the 2007-2008 year who are currently enrolled to return in September.

Infinity’s nine (9) eighth graders from 2007-2008 will not be returning in 2008-2009, since we do not offer ninth grade at this time. Of the remaining 111 students who completed the 2007-2008 school year, 98 are currently enrolled to return in August.

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

There were no students who were required to leave the school during the 2007-2008 school year.

During the 2007-2008 school year, there were eleven students who left Infinity voluntarily.

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

Student Turnover: We had one more student leave Infinity during 2007-2008 than we did in the previous year. Six students returned to their home schools; three students (two from one family) began cyber charter education. Two students (from the same family) left to return to a Catholic school.

There were a variety of reasons that students will not be returning to Infinity for the 2008-2009 school year. The first is that all of our nine eighth grade students graduated, so they will not be returning to Infinity next year.

Parents don’t always share with us why they are choosing not to return. To the best of our knowledge, we have students, who have moved into districts that are too far to provide busing, left to attend Christian schools, or cyber charter schools, are returning to their home schools due to location and convenience of the family, are returning to their home schools for middle school to adjust to a larger school prior to entering high school, or who may have left due to the rigor of the program. We do know some parents did not

submit a letter of intent for their children by the designated deadline.

There are three more students, who completed the 2007-2008 year and are currently enrolled to return in September, than we had last year.

We do not believe this data reflects any significant trends, other than we have a transient society. While we try to meet the needs of all of our students at Infinity, we recognize that charter schools are designed to be schools of choice and will not always be a good “match” for a specific child/family at a particular time. An example of this was a family, who withdrew two of their children to attend a cyber charter school, while leaving three of their children at Infinity.

Over/Under Enrollment: Infinity currently has fewer students enrolled than was initially projected in our charter application. This is primarily due to the lack of space in our current facility. While we are able to maintain enrollment K-8, we do not have space to expand to any significant degree. However, the advantage of this, is that Infinity can maintain a small, safe school that is able to focus on the needs of individual children.

Transportation

In accordance with Section 1725-A of the Charter Act, school districts of residence provide transportation for Infinity students. Names and addresses of the Infinity students are provided to each applicable district’s transportation department, busing assignments are made by the district, and then are communicated by the district to the parents, or to Infinity. When Infinity is notified directly by the district, we then notify the parents. In those cases where no district transportation is provided, Infinity works with the parents to arrange possible carpooling.

Special Education Students: During the 2007-2008 school year, Infinity did not have any special education students requiring special transportation arrangements, enrolled in the school.

Food Service Program

During the 2007-2008 school year, Infinity did not provide any formal food service program for any students, in large part because there is no kitchen/cafeteria in the facility. All students bring their lunches to school.

Infinity does not participate in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program, because no formal food service program is offered by the school.

Student Conduct

Describe your expectations for student behavior and discipline. Explain how your discipline policy complies with Chapter 12 of the Public School Code, particularly
--

with respect to due process. Attach a copy of the Charter School’s Discipline Policies as Attachment P.

The following are guidelines that govern student behavior at Infinity. Specific policies and procedures were adopted by the Board of Trustees that comply with all requirements related to student behavior as required in the public school code, such as Section 1317.2, relating to the prohibition of weapons and ammunition.

Student Behavior Standards

Infinity's Behavior Standards are what most schools call a discipline policy. We have purposely not used that terminology because we want to focus on a more positive approach. We have included student rights and student responsibilities. It is important to make sure the students understand the expectations and abide by them, so we can all work together constructively. The following was published in our Parent Handbook to introduce parents and students to our philosophy regarding student behavior.

We ask that you sit down with your child/ren and discuss these Behavior Standards. If you do not agree with our standards, please contact the Director and make an appointment to discuss your concerns.

At Infinity, we believe children who learn to solve problems constructively at an early age develop lifelong skills that will help them solve more complex problems as they get older. Our behavior plan is based on the following principles:

- *Children should learn from their experiences.*
- *Children should solve their problems without making additional problems for anyone else.*
- *Children should do as much or more thinking about their behavior than adults do.*
- *Children should think, make decisions, and live with the consequences of their actions.*
- *Children who experience consistent, logical, and realistic consequences learn that they themselves have positive control over their lives.*

The following is **written for children in language easily understood** and is also published in our Parent Handbook.

In order for school to be a safe, happy place for learning, we need to honor everyone's rights, act responsibly, and follow certain rules.

**INFINITY CHARTER SCHOOL
STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

I. Safe Environment:

A. *I have the right to learn in a safe environment.*

School should be a place where I can feel comfortable and not be afraid.

B. I have a responsibility to help create a safe environment at school.

I will not intentionally hurt other children or adults. I will not bring these things to school: weapons or weapon-type items (guns, swords, knives), skates, roller-blades, or skateboards.

II. Fairness:

A. I have the right to be treated fairly at school.

I should be treated fairly regardless of my abilities or differences, whether I am tall or short, boy or girl, have blond, brown, red or black hair, have red, brown, white, or yellow skin, have glasses, braces, or other special equipment.

B. I have the responsibility to treat others fairly at school.

I should treat others fairly regardless of their abilities or differences, whether or not they look like me, have glasses, braces, or other special equipment.

III. Respect:

A. I have a right to be treated with respect at school.

I deserve to be treated with respect. Other children or adults should not laugh at me, make fun of me, or intentionally hurt my feelings.

B. I have the responsibility to treat others with respect at school.

I have the responsibility to treat other children and adults with the same respect I expect. Name-calling, put-downs, insulting words and gestures are not allowed at Infinity.

IV. Property:

A. I have the right to expect that my personal belongings will be safe at school.

I expect that my personal belongings will not be intentionally damaged or stolen.

B. I have the responsibility to respect the property of others.

I will not intentionally damage or steal things that belong to another student, a staff member, or the school.

V. Communication:

A. I have the right to tell my side of the story.

When I have a disagreement with another person, I may talk about or write down my behaviors, ideas, and feelings without being disrespectful to, or about, anyone else.

B. I have the responsibility to listen to the other person's side of the story.

I need to listen/read carefully to what the other person says/writes about the situation and to think about what they said/wrote.

VI. Mistakes:

A. I have the right to make mistakes.

I have the right to try new skills, explore new ideas, and make mistakes without having others criticize or make fun of me. School should be a place where I can “fail” in a safe environment.

B. I have the responsibility to stretch myself.

If I only repeat skills I have already mastered, and I only repeat information I already know, I will never learn anything new. In order to grow, I must take some risks.

VII. Education:

A. I have the right to a free appropriate education.

I will not have to pay to go to school. My teachers will work hard to address my intellectual, academic, and social-emotional needs.

B. I have the responsibility to actively participate in my education.

No one can teach me anything if I am determined not to learn. I will attend school regularly, I will arrive at school on time, and I will make my best effort to learn and participate in class and homework.

Due Process

All students are entitled to:

1. Oral or written notice of the charges, or of the rule that has been broken.
2. An explanation of the evidence.
3. An opportunity to present his/her side of the story.

(A more formal treatment of due process is included in the discussion of exclusion from school.)

At Infinity, student’s rights and responsibilities are underlaid by behavioral expectations which are written in language targeted for older students and adults. These Behavioral Expectations listed below, were also published in our Parent Handbook.

Behavioral Expectations

It is Infinity’s goal for behavior expectations to work in conjunction with academic standards to create a total learning environment for all students, at all grade levels. The eight (8) behavior expectations are:

Work Habits/Time Management:

Students, staff, and parents will develop and use productive work habits.

Indicators:

- Complete work to the best of their ability.
- Strive for excellence in all their work.
- Honor time commitments.
- Arrive at school prepared to work.
- Work cooperatively with others and independently when appropriate.
- Persevere even when tasks are difficult.

School Climate:

Students, staff, and parents will behave in a manner that fosters a positive school environment.

Indicators:

- Participate actively in the learning process.
- Encourage parent/community involvement.
- State expectations clearly.
- Show sensitivity toward others.
- Use courteous and polite language and behavior.
- Exercise self-discipline.
- Follow school rules.

Dress:

Students, staff and parents will dress appropriately for the school environment.

Indicators:

- Dress in a clean, neat, and safe manner.
- Dress in a manner that is non-demeaning to self or others.
- Dress in a manner that promotes practices that are consistent with Infinity dress codes.
- Dress in a manner that is conducive to the activity in which engaged.

Physical and Emotional Safety:

Students, staff, and parents will promote, create, and maintain an environment free from physical and emotional harm.

Indicators:

- Ensure conflicts are resolved through non-violent means.
- Ensure school is free from weapons.
- Ensure school is free from harmful substances.
- Ensure that school is free from intimidation, discrimination, and harassment.

Respect for Grounds and Property:

Students, staff, and parents will be thoughtful caretakers of the school property and the property of others.

Indicators:

- Use property and materials for their intended purpose.
- Take responsibility for maintaining school property.
- Show respect for the personal property of others.

Integrity and Responsibility:

Students, staff, and parents will accept personal responsibility and accountability for their actions or inactions.

Indicators:

- Accept responsibility for one's actions.
- Be honest in communications with others.
- Promote excellence by setting challenging and attainable goals.
- Serve self and others through community involvement.
- Take the initiative to help others.
- Determine the right thing to do and do it.

Diversity:

Students, staff, and parents will respect the unique attributes and qualities of every individual.

Indicators:

- Treat others with fairness, respect, and compassion.
- View diversity as enhancing the school environment and community.
- Promote and encourage increased knowledge and understanding of diversity in the curriculum.

Communication:

Students, staff, and parents will communicate effectively to build a more positive school environment.

Indicators:

- Communicate with positive intent.
- Communicate in an open, trusting, and truthful manner.
- Express ideas clearly.
- Communicate in a timely and on-going manner.
- Discuss misunderstandings or concerns directly with the source.

SUSPENSIONS AND EXPULSIONS: Provide the number of suspensions and expulsions by student. [Example: 12 students were involved in 21 suspension incidents and 1 student was expelled.]

Nine students were involved in 13 suspension incidents. There were no expulsions.

Student Conduct - Attachments

- Attachment P(1) - Student Code of Conduct Policy #309
- Attachment P(2) - Suspensions Policy #316

ASSURANCE FOR THE OPERATION OF CHARTER SCHOOL SERVICES AND PROGRAMS

School Year: 2008

The Infinity CS within Capital Area IU 15 assures that the charter school will comply with the requirements of 22 PA Code Chapter 711 and with the policies and procedures of Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). PDE will specify, in writing, policies and procedures to be followed. Requests for any deviations from these regulations, policies, and procedures must be made in writing to PDE. The charter school assures:

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

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

Board President

Date

Chief Executive Officer
2008 - 2009 Annual Report for Pennsylvania Charter Schools

Date

Verify that all DATA reports to PDE are complete

YES _____ **NO** _____

SIGNATURE PAGE

Identify the charter school's Chief Executive Officer.

Name Nancy J. Hall

Title Ms.

Phone (717) 238-1880

Fax (717) 238-1190

E-mail infinitygifted@aol.com

Signature of the Chief Executive Officer and Date

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

Name Carol Hilty

Title Mrs.

Phone (717) 238-1880

Fax (717) 238-1190

E-mail infinitycharter@aol.com

Signature of the President of the Board of Trustees and Date

Identify the charter school's Special Education Contact Person.

Name Cindy Walker

Title Mrs.

Phone (717) 238-1880

Fax (717) 238-1190

E-mail infinitycharter@aol.com

Signature of the Special Education Contact Person and Date

Signature Page

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