
Pennsylvania Department of Education



Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Education
333 Market Street
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Charter Annual Report
Monday, December 28, 2009
(Last Accepted: Monday, December 28, 2009)

Entity: Avon Grove CS
Address: 110 E State St
West Grove, PA 19390

CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

Summary Data Part I

Charter School Annual Report Summary Data 2008 - 2009

Name of School: Avon Grove CS

Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval: July 27, 2006

Length of Charter: Renewed to 2011 **Opening Date:** September 3, 2002

Grade Level: Kindergarten- 12th **Hours of Operation:** 7:45am - 2:10pm (Main Site) / 8:30pm - 2:45pm (ELC)

Percentage of Certified Staff: 92% **Total Instructional Staff:** 110

Student/Teacher Ratio: 14 to 1 **Student Waiting List:** 626

Attendance Rate/Percentage: 94.51%

Second Site Address, Phone Number and Site Director:

Kemblesville Early Learning Center opened in September of 2008. The location of the site is: 1769 New London Road, Landenberg, PA 19350. The telephone number is 610-255-5325. Mrs. Kristen Bishop is the Director.

Summary Data Part II

Enrollment: 1415 Per Pupil Subsidy: \$9591

Student Profile

American Indian/Alaskan Native:	7
Asian/Pacific Islander:	62
Black (Non-Hispanic):	48
Hispanic:	75
White (Non-Hispanic):	1166
Multicultural:	70

Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch: 9.4%

Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December: 19%

Instructional Days and Hours

Number of:	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (F.Time)	Elem.	Middle.	Sec.	Total
Instructional Days	0	0	182	182	182	182	182
Instructional Hours	0	0	983	983	1031	1074	4071

SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Educational Community

The Avon Grove Charter School is a K-12 educational community located in southern Chester County, Pennsylvania. School enrollment will exceed 1200 students during the coming school year, making AGCS the largest charter school in Chester County and one of the largest in the state. AGCS has a very solid record of academic successes, and the school has made some very impressive strides since its founding. Among the school's accomplishments: significantly strong performance in standardized testing; a sustained emphasis on discovery-based and project-based learning methodologies; a groundbreaking special education program; an innovative program for academically talented students; an growing environmental sciences strand, a geography program; Middle State Accreditation for the High School program, and other milestones too numerous to mention.

The School was founded in the Summer of 2002, and was the culmination of the efforts of parents who were seeking a regional educational alternative for their children. AGCS was established at a time of public school consolidation of historic proportions. The parents who led the movement to establish a charter school in the Avon Grove community had as one of their immediate goals the preservation of neighborhood-based schooling which the establishment of AGCS largely accomplished. The opening of the Kemblesville Early Learning Center next year will renew the school's commitment to providing instruction in intimate and self-contained settings.

In many ways, the structure of the charter school's organizational structure and overall character is largely an outgrowth of the values which brought AGCS into being in the first place. An

excellent illustration of the uniqueness of the schools organizational model is the "Team Chart" which was put in place following a discussion of new models of management and decision making at one of the school's Board retreats. I have attached the "Team Chart" to the last page of the Annual Report. The chart places and emphasis on the power of small groups to make decisions that have a broader scope of ownership and meaning to the groups themselves, and by extension the larger school community.

Mission

Avon Grove Charter School Mission

The Avon Grove Charter School educates each student through a constructivist approach in a cooperative environment which honors differences and fosters acceptance.

Vision

—

Vision

To transition each student into the world with the capability to discover where they can make significant contributions within global cultures.

Shared Values

- Students learn best when expectations are high and instruction is engaging.
- Parents must take an active role in their child's education.
- All students are capable of success and should be actively encouraged to reach their potentials.
- The school must be intimately connected to the local community and should serve as a resource for community organizations and partners.

Academic Standards

The Avon Grove Charter School is committed to making certain that all students meet or exceed PA state standards in all of the major content areas. As a means to this end, AGCS has implemented a "curriculum mapping" initiative to make certain that all students at all grades are receiving targeted and effective instruction. AGCS has also established a system of ongoing progress monitoring supported by the use of the "study island" on-line resource and sharply-focused systems of lesson planning a differentiated instruction to make certain that all students regardless of their academic strengths or learning challenges are being met at an appropriate instructional level.

AGCS also has a strong system of on-going assessment in place consistent with

the PDE requirement for a local assessment plan mandated under 25 Pa.C.S. 4.52 (relating to local assessment system). AGCS student progress is carefully and consistently monitored throughout the year with ongoing curricular, reference-based, informal and normed assessments.

Environmental Standards

In many ways, Pennsylvania is significantly ahead of other states in its approach to environmental education. Toward this end, Pennsylvania already has Environmental and Ecology Standards already in place to guide the creation of environmentally-g geared programming and to help teachers identify what students need to know in this critical and increasingly important content area.

AGCS has used the Pennsylvania State Environmental and Ecology Standards to establish a framework for its evolving "Green Initiative" and is in the process of gathering as many curricular resources as possible to ensure that students receive instruction that is tied into well defined performance indicators which have grown from the newly established state standards.

Admittedly, environmental education is new territory for many schools in Pennsylvania, and AGCS is very excited about the opportunity it now has to establish a program which is both new, innovative, and standards-based.

Strengths and Challenges

Strengths:

Environmental Science and "Green Initiative" - Over the course of the last three years, AGCS has been deeply committed to developing an environmental initiative which will connect the school with conservation and environmental efforts throughout the state and will enable students to meaningfully explore environmental science in a hands-on manner. Throughout the course of the last school year, three veteran AGCS teachers were provided with a lighter prep schedule so that they could conduct standards-aligned environmental instruction in grades 3-5. These efforts were so successful that AGCS has now committed to science instruction with an environmental focus and has hired a full-time Green Initiative instructor.

AGCS has also formed partnerships with: SECCRA, Trout Unlimited, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, the White Clay Watershed Association, the Brandywine Valley Association, and the Stroud Water Research Center to facilitate in-depth seminars, projects and classroom presentations on environmental and conservation issues.

Geography Instruction- American Students consistently score poorly on tests that require them to show any geographical awareness. AGCS did a comprehensive needs assessment last spring to determine the familiarity of students with basic political maps. Predictably, our students showed some significant deficiencies. This year (2008) AGCS launched a program which provided targeted geography instruction to students twice each week.

Special Education — The Special Education Department at AGCS has done extraordinary work over the course of the last five years, leading to praise from impartial observers, the PDE, the local media, and the state's Bureau of Autism Affairs. We have also hosted seminars in topics as diverse as "dual exceptionalities" and "an Introduction to Autism" which have drawn audiences from AGCS, the local community, and even neighboring districts. AGCS (as you will see in the challenges section) is looking forward to meeting and surpassing the guidelines set by the PDE

with regard to RTI. AGCS has become, and will continue to be, a model of best practices in special education as we move into the future.

Parental / Community Involvement -- AGCS has partnered with a number of local organizations which address the needs of students and adults with special needs over the course of the last school year, and now works hand-in-glove with organizations such as ASCEND (autism issues) and CHADD (attention deficit issues) to meet the needs of our increasingly diverse student body. Both of these groups meet in the school building and an "exception child committee" formed last year, regularly interfaces with staff and administration on issues in special education.

Academically Accelerated / Gifted Enrichment — As a charter school, AGCS receives no Chapter 16 funding. However, due to a significant percentage of the AGCS population entering with the GIEP or similar documentation, it became immediately apparent that AGCS would need to develop a program for academically accelerated students. This program would need to address the unique needs of our gifted and talented population as well as high achieving students who might not receive gifted services in a traditional IQ-based gifted enrichment setting.

At AGCS, the gifted program is known as CAAP (Cooperative Academically Accelerated Program) and includes students who may have entered the school with a GIEP as well as high-ability students who have been identified through the AGCS CAAP screening process. The CAAP program includes a number of high-level middle school seminars, partnerships with Colleges and Universities, as well as intensive small group and individualized projects designed to challenge and motivate. Children in the CAAP program receive pull-out and inclusion based enrichment each day.

Therapeutic Support Services — Therapeutic support services: Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech Therapy are currently provided by Pediatric Therapeutic Services, Inc (PTS). The PTS team is currently quite large, and provides excellent support for students in need of PT, OT or Speech services. The presence of PTS enables AGCS to keep its Special Education teacher/student ratio low, and makes it possible for students to meet with therapists as often as three times per week (depending on the student's level of need). Through its Occupational Therapist, AGCS also provides extensive support for students struggling with Sensory Integration Disorder, and a school-wide program to increase teacher and parent awareness of SI issues was initiated at the beginning of the 2003-2004 school year.

AGCS High School Program — The AGCS High School received Middle States Accreditation last year. This is a tremendous milestone for the school, and provides independent support of the claims the school makes about program quality. This achievement is also important because it enables AGCS to use the Middle States logo on its diploma and promotional materials.

University Teaching Partnerships— Over the course of the last two years, AGCS has cultivated partnerships with a number of universities, most notably, the University of Delaware. This year, University of Delaware "methods" students and students from

Immaculata University will spend a significant portion of their year working with AGCS teachers, staff and students. AGCS has received significant support from University of Delaware professors and education department's staff, who are routinely stationed at the school to assist students and work with staff.

Challenges:

Special Education -- The number of students at AGCS with special education diagnoses continues to grow. The excellent name AGCS has gained in the community for serving students in this category has resulted in many families making the choice to send their children to the charter school in the hopes of receiving improved levels of responsiveness from staff and support workers. Many of the students who have been joining us over the course of the last two years are in the "severe needs" category. These students often require intensive one-on-one supervision and guidance. This year, AGCS set a medical-access billing system to address the need for personal care assistants and therapeutic support staff. Unfortunately, reimbursement on these expenses hovers around, 50% and AGCS continues to incur significant expenses in this area.

Unexpected Tax Burden and Fiscal Pressure - This year, Avon Grove Charter School was struck by significant and unexpected tax burden which (in spite of the school's independent, non-profit history) has stripped over \$500,000 from the school's coffers. This was a significant blow to our school community during a period in which AGCS was already seeing some significant decreases in the per-student allotment from the sending school districts. It is also important to keep in mind that AGCS is located within an area (Southern Chester County) in which educational funding has historically been among the lowest in the state.

AGCS sought the assistance of state Senator Dominic Pileggi, to address this issue and requested that Senator Pileggi sponsor legislation which would deliver AGCS and other public charter schools of this unfair burden. Senator Pileggi responded immediately, and a bill recently passed the Senate designed to correct this very costly problem. The bill is now before the house for consideration. AGCS has not received any statement from the PDE regarding its position on this issue. However, we are confident that the PDE will make a statement defending the right of charter schools to exist unhindered by unfairly applied taxation in the near future.

SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Strategic Planning Process

The Avon Grove Charter School was established by a group of parents and community members dedicated to providing an educational alternative which would meet the needs of a diverse group of families and which would serve as a community resource, rooted within the local neighborhood. From the school's inception, grassroots organizing and consensus building has characterized the way in which all of the stakeholders have been actively brought into the decision making process. Our school is, in many ways, naturally oriented toward inclusive dialog and response.

The strategic planning process is, therefore, a natural fit for a community-engineered charter school like AGCS, which through the process of grassroots organizing has put into place many of the processes and structures that enable real strategic planning to take place in an effective and

meaningful manner.

Bi-Annual Retreat

Throughout the course of the year, the AGCS Board of Trustees commits to schedule retreats. These meetings bring together members of the AGCS community, outside consultants, board members, administration and other stakeholders. The objective of these retreats is to engage in goal-centered planning in an atmosphere in which the daily distractions of the school day do not hinder meaningful and in-depth discussion about critical issues. Students are also invited to these retreats, and their input becomes part of the strategic planning process.

Committees

At any one time, at least a dozen committees are in operation and meeting regularly at AGCS. Some of these committees grow directly out of needs identified at the AGCS retreats. Each one of these committees contributes to the overall strategic planning process. Reports of each of these committees are shared publicly at AGCS board meetings, and their goals are identified and honed both during the course of the year and during the bi-annual retreats. Committees are designed to include as many community stakeholders as possible, and committee heads actively recruit to ensure a diversity of opinions within these groups.

Data Collection

At every stage of the AGCS strategic planning process, data plays an important role. Throughout the course of the year, concrete data is used to address pressing issues in a meaningful way. Sometimes meaningful data is not yet available and the strategic planning team (or appropriate committee) will need to engage in active research. For example, the Future Growth Committee (a subset of the strategic planning group) recently contracted with an architectural firm to collect and interpret staff and community opinions about the future allocation and usage of space. The result was an extremely detailed report which will guide the school growth plans moving forward. In this case, the assembling of high-quality data made it possible for the school to move forward with facilities improvement with the maximum amount of community buy-in.

Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Adrienne Malchione	Assistant to CAO	Administrator	Kevin Brady
Beth Skalish	Parent / Community Member	Community Representative	Kevin Brady / AGCS Board
Carin Herman	6th Grade Teacher - AGCS	Middle School Teacher	Kevin Brady
Cheryl Hickman	4th Grade Teacher	Elementary School Teacher	Kevin Brady
David Conner	Special Education Director	Special Education Representative	Kevin Brady
Donna Archer	Business Manager	Administrator	Kevin Brady
Donna Archer	AGCS Business Manager	Administrator	AGCS Board
Donna Kaiser	Parent Rep -AGCS	Parent	AGCS Parent
Edward Delfin	Dean of Students		Kevin Brady
Gail Townsend	Planning Consultant		AGCS Board
Gwen Galligan	Parent	Parent	Kevin Brady
Jenifer	K-5 Director	Administrator	Kevin Brady

MacFarland			
Joe DiGiacomo	Board President	Board Member	AGCS Board
Julius Tilley	Technology Coordinator	Board Member	Kevin Brady
Kathy Irving	Behavioral Specialist	Special Education Representative	Kevin Brady
Laura MacKelcan	Teacher - CAAP -- AGCS	Elementary School Teacher	Kevin Brady
Mark Cirino	Board Vice President	Board Member	AGCS Board
Matt Heckendorn	Consultant - Hooper Shiles	Business Representative	AGCS Board
Michelle Kochan	CAAP Teacher -- Act 48 Coodinator	Elementary School Teacher	Kevin Brady
Michelle Kochan	3-5 Director-AGCS	Administrator	Kevin Brady
Olivia Brinton	High School Student		Kevin Brady
Steven Strang	High School Student - AGCS		Kevin Brady
Tosha Brooks	Human Resources Coordinator	Administrator	Kevin Brady

Goals, Strategies and Activities

Goal: MATHEMATICS

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

Strategy: Increased Afterschool Support

Description: AGCS will work with teachers to increase the rigor of afterschool tutoring in mathematics. The school will require this kind of tutoring for students scoring in the bottom 20% of the school in the math section of standardized assessments. The school will work to secure volunteer tutors for this purpose. - The school will use classroom spaces at times when they would otherwise lay vacant.

Activity: Recruit Additional Volunteers to work with teachers and students

Description: Parents will play a role in the after school mathematics tutoring program. This initiative will take the same form as the previous boosting of the Reading Assist program which has a healthy parents support base.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dave Conner	Start: 1/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Activity: Tutoring Afterschool Each Tuesday

Description:

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dave Conner	Start: 1/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Study Island

Description:

Activity: Assign Study Island at School and Home

Description: Increase exposure to "Study Island" resources through home assignments and continuous progress monitoring. Increase use of study island in school through more intensive (an cost free) use of school technology resource.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kevin Brady	Start: 1/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Goal: READING

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

Strategy: Fluency Intervention

Description: As a part of its system of targeted intervention for students who struggle with basic literacy, AGCS will offer intensive one-on-one and small group tutoring sessions designed to increase reading fluency and accuracy. This step is meant to round-out reading interventions and will be used in conjunction with the school's existing "Reading Assist" program which places most of its emphasis on decoding through multi-sensory phonemic methodologies.

Activity: Teachers, tutors and students will work with "Read Naturally" curriculum and associated resource to develop fluency.

Description: Teachers and tutors will use "Read Naturally" to increase student reading fluency.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kevin Brady	Start: 1/1/2008	\$6,000.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Reading Assist Intervention

Description: Continue to fund, staff and support the Reading Assist Intervention Program and increase the number of students served each week by at least one dozen. Use alterations in physical space to provide more tutoring space for the program and purchase more multi-sensory phonics support materials.

Activity: Create a working space for the program for the coming school year.

Description:

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kevin Brady	Start: 1/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Activity: Hire full and part-time staff

Description:

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kevin Brady	Start: 1/1/2008	\$40,000.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Goal: TRANSITION PLANNING

Description: this is a very comprehensive undertaking, as clarified by the performance indicators. AGCS plans to launch, staff, and organize the most an intensive and meaningful battery of transition strategies aimed a special needs student who will be moving into the world of work, higher education, or other placements. AGCS will create a physical space for the program, hire staff, and establish community connections

Strategy: Establish, staff and organize new program

Description: The school will establish a new and comprehensive approach to transition planning using material, staff and community resources.

Activity: build transition center by subdividing existing "common space"

Description:

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kevin Brady	Start: 1/1/2008	\$5,000.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Activity: construct comprehensive plans for all transitioning students

Description:

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kevin Brady	Start: 1/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Activity: Hire full and part-time staff

Description:

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kevin Brady

Start: 1/1/2008
Finish: Ongoing

\$60,000.00

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Statement of Quality Assurance

There is currently no data saved for this section.

Statement of Quality Assurance - Attachment

- School Report Card

SECTION III. QUALITY OF SCHOOL DESIGN

Rigorous Instructional Program

The Avon Grove Charter School is currently a K-12 institution. Therefore, the school draws upon a variety of curricular resources (aligned to ability and grade level) which are regularly reviewed and assessed by key instructional and administrative staff. Below is a chart designed to address the use of specific curricular resources in specific chapter 4 content areas. While it provides a relatively detailed picture of instruction at AGCS, it includes only the major content areas and not the sub-categories identified in Chapter 4. In the interest of space, AGCS has avoided inserting a full scope and sequence in favor of this summary. However, more comprehensive information including specific content alignment strategies and curriculum mapping products are available upon request. Please note, that most of the curricular resources chosen by the AGCS leadership team, have been "crosswalked" to the PA standards by their publishers, others have been specifically designed to address the state standards in the subject area.

Chapter 4 Content Area	Lower School	Middle School	Upper School
Mathematics	Combined use of the <i>Investigations</i> mathematics series (experiential mathematics) and a number of more algorithmically oriented resources including the <i>Saxon</i> mathematics series. — The use of both products was necessary to ensure mastery of all	Holt Mathematics is the primary curricular resource for general mathematics instruction in the Middle School. The series has been extensively cross-walked with the PA state standards. — The school also makes limited use of Connected	Holt Mathematics is the main resource used for students at this level. The series covers all of the competencies outlined in the PA standards, and provides excellent subject specific resources in: Algebra, Algebra II, Trigonometry, Geometry, Pre-

	<p>mathematics standards at all levels.</p>	<p>Mathematics (CMP) at this level.</p>	<p>Calculus and Calculus.</p>
<p>Language Arts</p>	<p>The lower school uses the Harcourt Brace reading series in conjunction with the Reading A-Z series for intensive work on literacy skills. The school also uses the Reading Assist system for targeted reading interventions.</p>	<p>The Middle School uses the Holt Reading series as its primary language arts resource. However, students often examine content aligned to the PA standards through guided reading of whole works of literature.</p>	<p>The content for High School literature classes is drawn from anthologized works of literature as well as complete novels selected by the Language Arts task force. — The content at this level was carefully aligned to the PA standards during the AGCS petition for Middle States Candidacy.</p>
<p>Social Studies / History</p>	<p>The Lower School uses the <i>Core Knowledge Sequence</i>. — Unfortunately, this series did not contain units on Pennsylvania history identified in the PA state standards. As a result AGCS teachers have developed local history units to fill the gap.</p>	<p>The Middle School Uses the <i>History Alive</i> curriculum. Students also do a significant amount of targeted reading in areas identified in the PA state standards.</p>	<p>World History, European History, and other targeted history subject matter is delivered mainly through the use of textbooks provided by McGraw-Hill. These texts have been cross walked with the PA state standards. In many cases, students will also read full texts and original sources, especially in preparation for the Advanced Placement</p>

			examination.
World Language (Chinese, Spanish, Latin, French)	In the lower school, language instruction takes place through a total physical response methodology which included games, songs, stories, and role play. Teacher draw upon a number of curricular resources by students are not assigned a text.	Middle School Students use language specific curricular resource provided by major publishers (including Holt). Language teacher also begin introducing students to world language literature and periodicals.	Texts from a number of educational publishers are provided to students in addition to novels, periodicals, and anthologized literature in the targeted language,
Arts and Humanities	All lower school students have art and music “specials” once each week. The AGCS music program is based on the Orf systems which employs simple instruments for teaching musical concepts. — This curriculum is well aligned to the state standards for music. Art classes for lower school students were designed by the art department with activities and projects specifically aligned to the state standards.	Students in the middle school have the ability to take core courses in visual and performing arts; however, student with a particularly well-developed interest in this area may explore visual and/or performing arts through electives and individualized projects. Dance is also available to Middle School students.	AGCS offers Visual and Performing arts courses and electives closely aligned with the PA state standards. Dramatic performances are usually drawn from whole literature content, although anthologized theatre pieces may be employed periodically. Art History and Art production delivered through both textual and audio visual resources. Dance clinics are adjusted to the ability of the individual performer.

Documentation documenting the school compliance with chapter 4 is available in a variety of forms. 1) Crosswalk documents created by the educational publishers supplying the AGCS curriculum; 2) Scope and sequence documents developed by instruction teams at various grade levels. 3) Curriculum mapping documents (in production) created through the school-wide curriculum mapping initiative; 4) within the core sections of the Middle States document produced by AGCS as part of its Middle States application.

AGCS is deeply committed to making certain that all students, regardless of their strengths and challenges are able to experience academic success. Therefore, we employ a system of intensive differentiation at every grade level. In the lower school, instruction in all of the major subjects takes place at five levels of differentiation (within each grade). In the middle school, subjects such as Mathematics and Language Arts are offered at as many as six levels of differentiation. As a result, many core-subject classes in the middle and high school may have class sizes as small as ten or twelve. The individualized attention students receive as a result is invaluable. Special educators are also integrated into regular education classes and routinely work with individual students or small groups on specific assignments. These special educators will also “team teach” with their colleagues to make certain that all students are being reached.

Academically talented students are able to take advantage of the AGCS CAAP program (Cooperative Academically Accelerated Program). These students are exposed to challenging academic content every day, for all of their core subjects.

AGCS has a five-year long history of promoting inquiry and discovery-based learning. The roots of the Avon Grove Charter School are solidly constructivist. AGCS has been careful to respond to the increasing state and federal emphasis on outcomes by “embedding” state provided standards and anchors within its existing educational methodologies. Project-based activities which require inquiry and promote discovery are encouraged at AGCS, and the school has formed a curriculum committee to ensure the survival of this educational approach into the future. AGCS students routinely apply grade-level mathematics to design community gardens, or emergent literacy skills to describe life inside of medieval castles. Our students are encouraged to employ creativity and ingenuity to solve problems. From a curricular standpoint, AGCS teachers meet regularly in small groups to design new ways to showcase the ingenuity of their students through the medium of “Curriculum Nights” evenings devoted to celebrating the power of inquiry and discovery based learning.

AGCS provides targeted interventions for students struggling in core academic areas through the Reading Assist program. This program provides students with an opportunity to achieve greater phonemic awareness and fluency through small group and individualized instruction. At present, AGCS hosts the largest Reading Assist intervention program in Pennsylvania. Teachers, aides and parents have all received training in the program. The school makes extensive use of aides and parent volunteers to provide one-on-one tutoring. Students also receive assistance in reading and mathematics through the AGCS Title I program. Title I students meet with the Title I teacher every day of the week.

Teachers at the Avon Grove Charter School engage students in a variety of ways; however, few are more effective than project-based learning. The school makes extensive use of project-based learning across all grade levels. Project-based units enable students to work as members of a larger group and draw upon “hidden” skills and talents that are not always stimulated through the medium of “paper and pencil” activities. AGCS students are also encouraged to explore content across the curriculum through the vehicle of the visual and performing arts. Students routinely explore literature and history by integrating music and drama into their work, and the results can be very impressive. Many students “process” classroom content more effectively when they have

the ability to act or sing their way through the material. Anecdotally speaking, content retention and comprehension seem to increase as a result of this approach.

Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachments

- induction plan approval letter
- Professional Development Approval
- Signature Page Approval Pro. Dev Plan

English Language Learners

AGCS provides a comprehensive program for each student whose dominant language is not English. The vast majority of English Language Learners at AGCS are Spanish speakers. AGCS ESL staff work with students one-on-one and in an inclusion settings to facilitate achievement of English proficiency and the Pennsylvania Academic Standards. There is a strong emphasis on inclusive practices wherever possible: ESL staff “push-in” much more frequently than they “pull out.” Students are identified for the ESL program through a Home Language Survey. The survey is used identify students with a primary or home language other than English. AGCS maintains a list of students with a foreign language in their background.

The amount of ESL support is dependent on the student's English proficiency level and the level of mastery of the English language as well as the Pennsylvania Academic Standards. English Language Learners are instructed in the same content areas as other students at AGCS. Instruction is modified and adapted to meet the needs of English Language Learners.

In 2005, AGCS contracted with the Chester County Intermediate Unit to provide additional ESL support in the form of additional instructional staff (AGCS already had one, full-time, certified, ESL instructor on staff). The number of students requiring ESL services (although small) is increasing significantly each year, and AGCS is committed to providing high-quality and comprehensive services for each of these students.

In the coming school year (2007-2008) AGCS will increase the amount of support provided by the instructional staff from the Intermediate Unit to ensure consistent and comprehensive coverage of the school's ESL population continues.

There are currently no supporting documents selected for this section.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation Requirements

The Board of Trustees of the AGCS has adopted requirements for graduation that are aligned to Pennsylvania Department of Education standards and consistent with the

admission requirements of challenging post-secondary institutions. AGCS has developed a rigorous, college preparatory curriculum designed to equip all of our students to succeed not only in high school, but throughout their lives as life-long learners.

Our graduation requirements are as follows:

English	4 credits	Visual & Performing Arts	2 credits
Social Sciences	3 credits	Physical Education	1 credit
Math	3 credits	Health	.5 credit
Science	3 credits	Technology	.5 credit
World Language	2 credits (same language)	Electives	3 credits
		TOTAL	22 credits

Also:

Completion of approved community service requirement of 15 hours/year

Completion of approved culminating Graduation Project

Credit Accumulation

During the 2004-05 academic year, core instructional periods were 47 minutes in length, and each class met daily (180 days of instruction) for a total of 141 hours of instruction per class. Beginning in the 2005-06 academic year, instructional periods will be 42 minutes in length, and each class will meet for 9 instructional periods each 8-day cycle, for a total of 141.75 hours of instruction during the 180-day academic year.

AGCS awards one credit for a full-year class that meets daily (141.75 hours). A full-year class that meets 4 days per 8-day cycle will be awarded $\frac{1}{2}$ credit (70.875 hours). Trimester-long (12-week) classes will be awarded either $\frac{1}{3}$ credit for a class that meets daily (47.25 hours) or $\frac{1}{6}$ credit for a class that meets 4 days per cycle (23.625 hours).

In order to receive graduation credit for a course, a student must receive a minimum grade of D- (D-minus), using the following grade distribution:

A+ = 98-100 A = 93-97 A- = 90-92

B+ = 88-89 B = 83-87 B- = 80-82

C+ = 78-79 C = 73-77 C- = 70-72

D+ = 68-69 D = 63-67 D- = 60-62

F = 59 or below

Additional Requirements

In addition, each student must complete approved community service hours amounting to not less than 15 hrs for each year of enrollment in AGCS. Finally, each student must complete an approved culminating graduation project involving a research, a written, and a presentation component as approved by the high school committee. Upon the successful conclusion of the project, the student must have demonstrated his/her ability to apply, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information and to communicate significant knowledge and understanding.

Assessments

Each year, high school students in grade 11 will take the PSSA examination to determine proficiency in math, reading, and writing. Students who do not demonstrate proficiency in one or more tested area during the 11th grade will be provided additional instruction in preparation to retake the PSSA in grade 12.

In addition, students in grades 9 and 10 are given the Terra Nova test in math and reading/language arts to provide benchmark data of their progress toward mastering state standards in math, reading, and writing. This data will be used to inform both classroom and individual instruction to assist these students in attaining greater levels of mastery.

As AGCS has just completed its first year with a high school program, PSSA and Terra Nova testing during the 2004-2005 academic year will be used to establish a base-line to guide instruction and curricular decisions. Test results for the 2004-2005 academic year have not yet been made available.

Curriculum

The AGCS curriculum is college-preparatory in focus and designed to ready every student for post-secondary education and life-long learning. In major subjects, students must complete a minimum four years of English, three years each of math, social science and science, and two successive years of the same world language. Students must also complete health, physical education, technology, and visual/performing arts requirements.

In addition, students applying to competitive colleges are encouraged to complete up to four years in all major subjects, including world language. Students also have the option of contracting for honors or AP level instruction in each of our high school courses. Currently, AGCS offers AP instruction in English Literature and Composition, English Language and Composition, World History, American Government, United States History, European History, Biology, and Chemistry. Additional AP courses will be added as the high school population continues to grow. Finally, truly advanced students have the opportunity to take courses through the MIST (Monitored Independent Study Tutorial) program or to complete college courses online as offered through the University of Delaware. Successful completion of these course options will count toward the student's graduation requirements.

All high school students are required to complete a mandatory technology requirement involving the use of microcomputers and software. Students are expected to demonstrate competency in keyboarding, word processing, and basic computer applications.

In addition, high school students must complete physical education and health requirements, including instruction in concepts and skills which affect personal family and community health and safety, nutrition, physical fitness, movement concepts, and motor skill development, safety in physical activity settings, and the prevention of alcohol, chemical, and tobacco abuse. Physical education classes are adapted for students with disabilities as required.

Special Education

Avon Grove Charter School provides Special Education services and supports in an inclusion setting. Inclusive education of children with special needs has been an integral part of the AGCS philosophy since the school was chartered in 2002. As AGCS has grown, so has the population of students receiving special education services. At mid year there were 220 students at AGCS who were receiving special education. As the school's population has stabilized, AGCS expects to experience a similar stability in the growth of its population of special needs students, allowing for program building and innovation. AGCS serves all exceptional students in the regular education environment with the exception of two students: one student is placed at the Child and Career Development Center of the CCIU #24. This student is slated to return in the fall of 2008 for his senior year and a subsequent career path in the United States Army. A second student is educated at a private school for students with severe learning disabilities by agreement of the parents and AGCS.

AGCS offers a full continuum of Special Education Services. AGCS has had success in serving students of all exceptionalities in an inclusion environment, with particular success in serving students with Autism Spectrum Disorders, (ASD). Consequently, the school has drawn an increasing number of students with ASD. AGCS currently serves 22 students with ASD, which is 10% of the total number of students who are served by special education services. A similar number of students who may not fully meet the criteria for DSM-IV diagnoses of Autism are identified with diagnoses of Other Health Impairments or Specific Learning Disabilities. Consequently, AGCS sees the continuing increase of Autism Spectrum disorders in the school age population. AGCS added a third Learning Support teacher at the k-1 level, making the ratio of LS teachers to IEP students in the k-1 area a more manageable 1:8. Learning Support teachers at the k-1 level served 12 students with Autism (ASD), 2 students with Multiple Disabilities (MDS), 4 students with Other Health Impairments (OHI), 5 students with Specific Learning Disabilities, and 1 student with an Emotional Disturbance.

AGCS contracts for the services of three PA Certified School Psychologists; two are also a clinical Psy.D. level psychologists. AGCS also contracts with a PhD. Psychologist for supplemental evaluations and testing. AGCS provided 8 Independent Educational evaluations in the 2008-09 school year. 3 of these evaluations were provided at school request.

AGCS contracts with Pediatric Therapeutic Services to provide Speech and Language, Occupational Therapy and Physical Therapy to its students. Caseloads for these Related Services are significant enough to require 2 Speech and Language Therapists and 2 Occupational Therapists and a Physical Therapist. AGCS devotes a large classroom for therapies and has committed significant school resources to furnishing and equipping the rooms to facilitate services. AGCS broadens traditional services in Speech and Language Therapy and Occupational Therapy to target the needs of students with Autism Spectrum

Disorders, Non-verbal Learning Disabilities, severe ADHD and other diagnoses that require sensory approaches in OT and pragmatics instruction in Speech and Language.

AGCS has expanded the use of assistive technology. The use of *DANA* and *NEO* units by *AlphaSmart* has been initiated school-wide with extensive use of *DANA* word processors by high school students.

Increasingly, AGCS is obligated to serve students who have moderate to pervasive learning disorders coupled with exceptional cognitive abilities. This has created renewed challenges for regular education and special educators to collaborate to provide programming that serves the high cognitive abilities and accommodates the learning differences required for this significant population of students at AGCS.

In 2007-2008 AGCS implemented plans for Transition Planning and programming for special needs students. AGCS partnered with the University of Pennsylvania's New Bolton Center to allow AGCS students to serve extended internships in the bovine department. Plans to replicate the program in other departments at New Bolton were frustrated by changes in leadership at New Bolton Center. Nevertheless, the student intern was successful beyond the expectations of all, and will continue during the 08-09 school year. Interns were also very successful at the Southern Chester County YMCA. AGCS found that the greatest challenge to successful community based transition activities was the prohibitive cost of transportation.

AGCS graduated 9 special needs students in a class of 22 in June. Of these students, six will attend four year colleges beginning in the fall of 08, one will enter a community college, and one will enter the US Marines. Students were accepted to colleges that include Virginia Polytechnic Institute, Temple University, Penn State University, and Cedar Crest College, Goldey Beacom College, and West Virginia University. The eighth student will return to AGCS for transition programming that will include college level academics integrated with transition programming skills and training to enable a student with Autism Spectrum Disorder to integrate successfully into post secondary academic and career endeavors.

AGCS began to participate in the Pennsylvania School Based ACCESS Program (SBAP) in the 2006-07 school year. In 2007-08, AGCS will be eligible for approximately \$200,000 in reimbursement for Medical Access qualified services. Based on the most recently available statistics, AGCS is predicted to be in the top three charter schools in the state of Pennsylvania in SBAP reimbursements.

AGCS has responded to mandates for school-wide systems of *Positive Behavioral Support* by managing Personal Care Assistants (PCA) that are employed by AGCS and also contracted through Chester County Respite Network. In house behavioral support planning was coordinated by a Special Educator with BSC and TSS experience. Numerous students received Behavioral Health Rehabilitative Services (BHRS "wraparound") through outside sources. The AGCS Special Education Department takes

an active role in managing, implementing and supporting BHRS to ensure student success, and agency accountability.

AGCS implemented Response to Intervention (RTI) as a progress monitoring initiative and pre-referral structure in 2007-08. This effort included the following elements or processes:

℞• The formulation, training and implementation of a School/grade-Wide Assessment Team. These teams met on a bi-weekly basis by the end of the year to evaluate assessment data and to make recommendations for intervention or possible Special education testing and identification

℞• AGCS has had the Reading Assist Institute as a primary intervention for struggling readers for the past five years. Reading Assist includes Orton-Gillingham based direct instruction in reading. The RTI coordinator and a Master's level Reading Paraprofessional created structures for gathering and retrieving data, and making recommendations for interventions at the Tier II or Tier III levels.

℞• All regular and special educators and some paraprofessionals were trained in the DIBELS assessment. For benchmarking and progress monitoring. All students in grades k-5 were administered the DIBELS assessment at least three times during the year. (approximately 2100 assessments) Students scoring in the *at risk* range received weekly progress monitoring.

℞• The Qualitative Reading Inventory-IV and the DRA-II have been adopted as standard reading assessments school-wide.

℞• *Read Naturally*, a web-based reading comprehension/fluency intervention was used with success in k-5 classrooms. A computer lab was created for the ESY session that allowed all students in ESY to utilize Read Naturally, and to create additional progress monitoring data for the RTI initiative.

℞• All teachers maintained an RTI file for each student. Technology capacity issues necessitated a hybrid system that utilizes the electronic recording and storing of data and a portfolio of hard copy data. This system proved to be adequate and hard copies allow teachers to share portfolios of work in addition to statistical data. AGCS plans to implement the use of PDE and other progress monitoring templates in the 08-09 school year, as more technology capacity is achieved school-wide.

℞• The GMADE Assessment was utilized in a limited fashion to determine Math achievement levels at the middle and high school levels. The GMADE has been purchased as a diagnostic, intervention and progress monitoring tool for grades k-5 for the 08-09 school year. The *Key Math-R* is used as an assessment tool for further planning for Tier II and Tier III interventions. AGCS has purchased the integrated *Investigations-Scott Foresman, Addison Wesley* math program to supplement RTI efforts in Math.

Special Education - Attachments

- Special Education

Special Education Program Profile - Chart I

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Kathryn Irving	1.0	Transition Planning/Autistic Support	AGCS	3	Autistic Support grade K-12
Holly Vischer	1.0	Learning Support	AGCS	15	Learning Support grade 3
Donna Fox	1.0	Learning Support	AGCS	12	Learning Support grade 7
Sara LaBarca	1.0	Learning Support	AGCS	14	Learning Support grade 8
Kristy Cameron	1.0	Learning Support	AGCS	17	Learning Support grade 4-5
Rosemary	1.0	Learning Support	AGCS -	17	Learning Support Grades K-2

Gwynn			Kemblesville		
Joan Gravatt	1.0	Learning Support	AGCS	23	Learning Support High School 10-12
Kelly Dinan	1.0	Learning Support	AGCS - Kemblesville	19	Learning Support Grades K-2
Margaret Finnegan	1.0	Learning Support	AGCS	14	Learning Support grade 7 (second 1/2 of year replacing leave of Tellez)
Patricia Sharpe	1.0	Learning Support	AGCS	16	Learning Support Grade 9-10 Contract from CCIU for AGCS Learning Support program
Lisa Sides	1.0	learning Support	AGCS	10	Learning Support k-1
Mary Culler	1.0	Learning Support	AGCS	10	Learning Support Grade 6
Meghan Garchinsky	1.0	Learning Support	AGCS - Kemblesville	11	Learning Support Grades K-2
Kimberlee Scoffone	1.0	Learning Support	AGCS - Kemblesville	12	Learning Support Grades K-2
Nicole Nunn	1.0	Learning Support	AGCS	10	Learning Support Grade 7
Kimberlea Latsha	1.0	Learning Support	AGCS - Kemblesville	10	Learning Support Grades K-2

Special Education Program Profile - Chart II

Organization	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
CCIU #24	N/A	emotional Support	Child and Career Development Center, Coatesville PA	1	IEP team placement. Student to return to AGCS for senior year w/US ARMY training

Special Education Program Profile - Chart III

Title	Location	FTE
David E. Conner- Special Education Supervisor	AGCS	1.0
Michele Tyndall- School Psychologist	AGCS	1.0
Lynn Anskis PCA- Child Specific	AGCS - Kemblesville Site	.8
Beatrice Hudson PCA- Child Specific	AGCS - Kemblesville Site	.8
Vernon Reynolds PCA- Child Specific	AGCS	.8
Nicole Roberts PCA- Child Specific (1/2 year)	AGCS	.8
Jackie Kennedy- Paraprofessional	AGCS	.5
Patricia Stevenson - Transition Coordinator	AGCS	1.0
Nina Campagna - Federal Programs Coordinator	AGCS - Kemblesville Site	.8
Dr. Suzan Steadman - Psychologist	AGCS	.5
Thomas Pittman - Personal Care Assitant	AGCS	1.0

Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV

IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual	Title/Service	Amount of Time Per Week
CCIU #24 Cindy Zeigler	Hearing Impaired Teacher	.05FTE
Ann Campbell-Pediatric Therapeutic Service (PTS)	Speech and Language Therapist	.80FTE
Julie Guerin-Pediatric Therapeutic Service (PTS)	Speech and Language Therapist	.60FTE
Helen Thompson (PTS)	Occupational Therapist	.60FTE
Deb Christini (PTS)	Physical Therapist	.20FTE
Dr. Suzann Steadman- Chester County Respite Network (CCRN)	Cinical Psychologist; BSC Services; Certified School Psychologist	.25FTE
Heather Aubry - Chester County Respite Network	Personal Care Assistant (PCA)	.9
Diane Humphrys- Chester County Respite Network	Personal Care Assistant (PCA)	.9
Jen Markward - Chester County Respite Network	Personal Care Assistant (PCA)	.9
Steph Kilby - Chester County Respite Network	Personal Care Assistant (PCA)	.9
Leslie Phillips - Chester County Respite Network	Personal Care Assistant (PCA)	.9
Rachel Bettcher - Chester County Respite Network	Personal Care Assistant (PCA)	.9
Wendy Meenan - Chester County Respite Network	Personal Care Assistant (PCA)	.9

SECTION IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Student Assessment - Primary

Test/Classification K	1	2	3	4	5	
PSSA	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
PASA	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
GMADE / GRADE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
DIBELS	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

Student Assessment - Secondary

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

GMADE/GRADE Yes Yes Yes No No No No

Student Assessment

Avon Grove Charter School Assessment Analysis

The Assessment Climate at AGCS and New Challenges

The Avon Grove Charter School has made AYP (Adequate Yearly Progress) since its inception in 2002. According to the preliminary AYP results available in the DRC (Data Recognition Corporation) website, AGCS has, once again, made AYP for the 2008-09 school year. This is a significant accomplishment considering the school's relatively young age (7 years), and some of the considerable challenges it currently faces. This year, the decline in the per student funding calculation coming from two of the school's sending districts, as well as a burdensome series of local real estate tax bills which targeted the school's supporting foundation as if it were a for profit entity, made it more difficult than ever for AGCS to use the approximately 68% of the per student allotment coming from the districts it serves, to educate children. For the first time, AGCS has had to postpone curricular purchases as a result of this pressure.

AGCS also serves an ever-increasing number of special education students. The school takes very seriously its obligation to serve exceptional students exceptionally well. However, the cost of personal care assistants (PCAs), new testing resources, health-related services, and educational staff and materials represents a very real burden for AGCS. The cost of special education and related services this year outstripped school expectations significantly. Yet, parents who do not feel well-served in a variety of school settings continue to send students to AGCS in very large numbers. This creates a total special education percentage that well exceeds that of many local districts. Many of these children have profound needs to which AGCS responds sensitively and compressively. The school's history of success and measurable gains in serving students with challenges of all kinds is part of the reason for its stellar reputation.

Finally, the NCLB proficiency bar was lifted considerably during the last testing cycle. Pennsylvania's AYP website states:

To meet the Performance Target required for AYP, schools and every measurable subgroup in the school must have at least 56% of the tested students achieve Proficient or higher on the mathematics assessment and 63% of the tested students achieve Proficient or higher on the reading assessment.

Again, based on the preliminary data, AGCS handily achieved this goal. However, in the subgroups category, there has been some fluctuation in both the "Student with IEPs" category, and in some populations which are not of a sizable enough number to be included as a "subgroup." The statistical data provided by DRC has increased in its detail and complexity over the course of the last few years, and the information on

subgroups in particular (measured and unmeasured) has been very useful in identifying overall trends in the data.

School Wide Assessment Data

The assessment news, from a schoolwide perspective, is good. AGCS students have improved their overall scores according to the most recent verified data available on the AYP website.

Schoolwide Proficiency Rates

School Year	Mathematics	Reading
2008	78.7 %	78 %
2007	74.5 %	75.3%
Improvement	4.2%	2.7 %

Although the gains are modest, they are meaningful. After all, consistent improvement intervals of genuine significance become increasingly challenging to demonstrate as scores climb near 80-90%.

What we do not see here is the impact of changes made during the summer of 2008. '08-'09 reading scores, in particular, will be particularly significant in light of curricular changes made during the summer after the 2008 assessment cycle. At that time, the school purchased its first research-based, standards-driven Language Arts product aimed at grades 3-5. At this point, it is not entirely clear how that curricular investment has changed student performance.

Economically Disadvantaged

School Year	Mathematics	Reading
2008	64.3 %	67.9 %
2007	46.9 %	44.9 %
Improvement	17.4%	23 %

What is also not entirely clear is the substantial leap in scores in the “economically disadvantaged” category. These kinds of double-digit gains are unusual, and the school does not have specific curricular interventions or programming aimed at this population. It would be very useful, to look at these students individually, assess the services that they receive, and gather some evidence of trends that is somewhat more sophisticated than the data above. AGCS will look into this trend this year.

Students with IEPs

School Year	Mathematics	Reading
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2008	46.9 %	53.1 %
2007	58.2%	56.7 %
Improvement	-11.3 %	- 3.6 %

Data on students with IEPs has been kept by the school for a number of years; however, with the ongoing and universal use of data from the GMADE / GRADE system, tracking student performance on a regular basis will be a far less cumbersome task. AGCS made an investment in a scanning system at the end of the 2009 school year, and the school has been collecting GMADE and GRADE data at every grade level for a few years now. The speed and efficiency through which this data is utilized as performance monitoring benchmark information will help AGCS to track trends like the one highlighted above.

It is, however, important to recognize, that the number of student at AGCS with IEPs grows each year, and unlike traditional public schools, the very large number of students entering a charter school at any one time can initiate new trends in the data that had previously not been visible. One explanation for this dip in performance could be that both the number of students with IEPs and the severity of the needs of these students increased during the 2008 school year. Anecdotally, this certainly seems to be the case, but it is an area which AGCS will research prior to the start of the 09-10 school year.

Departmental Data — Highlighted

The 2008 assessment data, when examined departmentally, also reveals some very interesting trends. At AGCS, there are four divisions K-2, 3-5, Middle School, and the High School. According to data from the 2007-08 PSSAs, there has been an overall trend of significant improvement in all of these divisions; however, there are a number of areas which AGCS should look at very carefully, and identify as targets for improvement over the course of the coming year.

Third Grade 2008 Math and Reading

School Year	Mathematics	Reading
2008	88 %	87 %
2007	79%	73 %
Improvement	9%	14%

By and large, the gains of the 2008 AGCS third grade are indicative of the overall gains realized schoolwide. In both of the major areas assessed, the third grade lifted their scores significantly.

Fifth Grade 2008 Math and Reading

School Year	Mathematics	Reading
2008	70 %	72 %
2007	77 %	66 %
Improvement	-7%	6%

The drop in proficiency levels in the 5th grade in mathematics is problematic. Although the drop is not precipitous, it does speak to a well-documented shortcoming of the “Investigations” curriculum used at this level. Investigations, as a stand-alone curriculum does more to engender “mathematical thinking” than it concentrates on skill building. This has prompted the school to take an approach to mathematic which weaves-in gradually more algorithmic and skill building elements into the mathematics curriculum. It will be very interesting to see if this “blended” approach has a visible effect on the 2000-10 5th grade PSSA scores.

The ACCS Middle School

Sixth Grade 2008 Math and Reading

School Year	Mathematics	Reading
2008	80 %	78 %
2007	68 %	67 %
Improvement	12 %	11%

Seventh Grade 2008 Math and Reading

School Year	Mathematics	Reading
2008	79 %	81 %
2007	79 %	81 %
Improvement	0%	0%

Eighth Grade 2008 Math and Reading

School Year	Mathematics	Reading
2008	88 %	90 %
2007	70 %	83 %
Improvement	18 %	6 %

The performance of the Middle School in all the major assessed areas was strong. This was particularly the case with the 8th grade students who scored a very impressive 90% in the reading assessment. Generally speaking, the only unusual trend in this group is the unusual flat-line in the 7th grade in which scores neither descended nor ascended. This is the only case of this kind of “level” performance school wide. The gains made by 6th graders and 8th grades were, however, in the double digits and significant increases in both assessed areas indicate that the enhancements made to the curriculum over the course of the previous year were worthwhile and positive.

AGCS High School

11th Grade 2008 Math and Reading

School Year	Mathematics	Reading
2008	51 %	78 %

2007	50 %	81 %
Improvement	1 %	-3 %

In the High School, AGCS students continue to struggle with Mathematics proficiency. Although the scores of AGCS high school student continue to hover around the state average, this is perhaps the only group at AGCS which is performing so close to the overall state level and not significantly higher. This is a clear area AGCS must target for improvement. The modest increase in scores in High School Mathematics is, given the lower level of overall math performance more significant than the 3 percent down-tick in Reading.

Student Assessment - Attachment

- Student Assessment

Teacher Evaluation

Teachers at AGCS are formally and informally observed every two months. These evaluations may take three forms. 1) The teacher may be evaluated with the school's internally produced instrument. 2) The teacher may be reviewed using a "short form" providing short but useful feedback on an informal observation. 3) Finally, teacher may be evaluated using PA State evaluation forms 426-428A. Teacher at AGCS are observed formally and informally, by peers from within their grade groups, teacher-mentors, and members of the AGCS Administration.

The Avon Grove Charter School Teacher Evaluation Plan is designed to cultivate excellence in the AGCS teaching staff. In order for teachers to understand the criteria by which their work is being evaluated and their responsibilities to connect classroom instruction to state standards and school-wide initiatives, AGCS has created a simple evaluation plan which is made available to teachers at the beginning of each school year. Effective evaluation is one of the keys to ensuring continuous improvement in teacher performance and to promote overall program quality.

Individuals responsible for teacher and staff evaluations with administrative certificates: Dr. Kevin Brady, David Detzel, Deborah Denson, Kristen Bishop and David Conner. In addition, Michelle Kochan is also responsible for teacher and staff evaluations. She is currently pursuing principal certification.

Teacher evaluations are conducted by grade-level directors. Each of these evaluators have received training in evaluation through graduate study, principal certification, local training sponsored by the Intermediate Unit or PATTAN, or training at professional conferences. Throughout the summer and the academic year, AGCS provides each of the area directors with both general managerial/leadership training, and professional development relating to best practices in their areas of responsibility in addition to frequently providing time for the directors to collaborate as a professional learning community.

Teacher Evaluation - Attachments

- HARTER ANNUAL REPORT: REPORT SECTION - TEACHER EVALUATION
- AGCS Teacher Summative Performance Evaluation

SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

Leadership Changes

Board of Trustees

The bylaws of the Avon Grove Charter School establish terms of service for board members, and it is, therefore, necessary for a small number of new board members to be appointed every two years while others will leave the board upon the completion of a longer period of service.

During the 2008-2009 school year there were no changes in the make-up of the AGCS Board of Trustees or the designation of officer roles. This is the first year in the school's history in which this has been the case, and is largely the result of none of the officers' terms expiring.

Administration

During the 2008-2009 school year, AGCS hired Ms. Kristen Bishop as the K-2 Director for its newly opened Kemblesville site. Prior to this point, the K-2 Director position did not exist. It was necessary to expand the school's administrative capacity to ensure that full-time supervision and oversight was occurring at the Kemblesville Early Learning Center.

Finally, the school Middle School Director, Terry Idelson, passed away at the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year. Her passing was a significant blow to the AGCS community. Mrs. Idelson was replaced by Mrs. Deb Denson, who has served in the Middle School Director position throughout this school year. She is a very welcome addition to the AGCS administrative team.

Board of Trustees

<u>Name of Trustee</u>	<u>Office (if any)</u>
Mark Cirino	President
Deborah Harper	None
Glenn Hamilton	Vice President
David MacKelcan	None
Gene Steger	Treasurer
Chris Campagna	Secretary
Ken Thurston	None

Professional Development (Governance)

The Avon Grove Charter School Board of Trustees is committed to on-going professional development and training. Currently, the school's solicitor, Latsha, Davis, Yohe and McKenna provides the Board of Trustees with ongoing training in the areas of the Public Official Act and the Sunshine Law. The Board of Trustees also conducts bi-annual retreats to address pressing issues and receive updates on charter school law and effective governance.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School

The AGCS Board of Trustees works closely with administration to ensure the effective governance and oversight of the school. The Board operates a number of committees which meet on a regular basis to address issues as the effectiveness of curricular resources or the overall morale of AGCS staff. Each Board Member is expected to play a meaningful role on a major committee and by doing so, to contribute to the overall success of the school. The Board of Trustees also requires regular reports and updates from the CEO and other key staff on issues identified throughout the course of the year. Board members also regularly review the schools assessment data and other measures of performance to judge program effectiveness. The Board of Trustees does, however, understand the importance of avoiding micro-management. While Board members demand that school administration effectively manage the school they are careful not to interfere with daily operations.

Both the administration and Board of the Avon Grove Charter School are in regular contact with the Avon Grove School District's Board of Directors. The relationship between these two entities has been very positive from the school's inception. The Board of the authorizing district has always shown a willingness to work toward common goals with Charter School Leadership. To facilitate communication, the AGCS Board of trustees regularly appoints a "district liaison" -- this individual is responsible for discussing critical issues with the Avon Grove School District Board. This system has worked extremely well throughout the years. Further testament to the health of this relationship is the unanimous approval of the charter school's petition for renewal by the AGSD Board. The Avon Grove Charter School is also in the process of negotiating with the School District for the purchase of a currently inactive school building. This site would provide the AGCS community with significant additional instructional space. The on-going talks to secure the property have required continuous communication between the two school boards.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School - Attachment

- AGCS 2008-2009 Board Meeting Calendar

Community and Parent Engagement

Throughout the course of the year, the AGCS Board of Trustees interacts with members the leadership of the AGCS PTO (Parent and Teacher Organization) to brainstorm strategies for increasing parental and community involvement in the school. There are also bi-annual retreats, to which AGCS parents and community members are invited. One of the objectives of these retreats is to thoroughly discuss the way in which community support is most effectively garnered and how such support might be maintained in the future. The majority of the Avon Grove Charter School Board of Trustees are parents with children attending the school and as such have a unique connection with the local community.

SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Major fund-raising activities

Fiscal Year: 2008-2009

There were no major fundraising campaigns conducted in the 2008-2009 fiscal year.

As in previous years, there were several small classroom fundraisers held throughout the year. Fundraising guidelines and processes were followed to provide a full check and balance system for selected staff members conducting a fundraiser.

The fundraising policies and procedures implemented in prior years were strictly monitored and all fundraiser organizers and events were reviewed and found to be in compliance with all Avon Grove Charter School mandates.

The existing Avon Grove Charter School guidelines and procedures are stated below. There were no modifications made to the existing procedures during the 2008-2009 academic year.

Fund Raiser Guidelines for all AGCS Fundraisers

Steps to planning a successful Fund-raiser:

- Each student group needs to develop a fund-raising objective.

What is your student group raising the funds for?

How much money are you looking to raise?

What kind of fund-raisers does your group want to try?

Determine how you will go about your task.

- When will the fund-raiser be?
- How will this fund-raiser be communicated to the school?
- Who will be participating in the fund-raiser?
- Who will be working the fund-raiser?
- Submit a request to the Administration listing the details of the proposed fundraiser to the Administration for approval.

Make sure all students involved have specific responsibilities.

Recruit volunteers (Parents and additional staff)

Make sure the fund-raising activity is approved by Administration. Be sure to check your state laws before committing to a raffle or casino night.

Verify Insurance coverage for all events. For all off-sight fundraising, a chaperone or parent is required.

No student is allowed to fundraise outside of any business establishment without adult supervision.

These persons should be cleared by the Administration to serve as a chaperone. Additionally, the Avon Grove Charter School must ensure that any person(s) acting as a chaperone has the proper clearances.

Any performer brought in to perform a service is required to submit a certificate of insurance and background clearances to the Business Office prior to the event.

Be sure to keep accurate records of all funds received and receipts for all expenditures.

If a check is required for vendor payment, all requests must be submitted to Accounts Payable ten days prior to the event. The Fundraiser must reimburse the school all prepaid expenses within one week of the event.

Once the event or fundraiser is completed, all funds need to be counted and submitted to the Accounts Receivable using a deposit summary sheet within one week of the event's conclusion. The advisor is responsible for submitting the collected funds to the Business Office (if the Main Office is holding fundraising money under lock & key. It is the fundraiser advisor's responsibility to pick up all funds/orders by fundraising due date and submit all cash/check to the Business Office).

Be sure to thank all volunteers for their time.

All Student Council fundraisers must be student managed events. The students are responsible for deciding on the type of fundraiser, running and staffing the fundraiser and making the final decision regarding what the funds will be used for.

A provision should be included to explain what will happen to any remaining funds. This is especially true for senior class account which must be closed when the students graduate. Pursuant to the PDE Manual on Financial Accounting and Procedures, the money is vested in the School for "school related purposes" and can not be used to fund class reunions.

AGCS BUSINESS OFFICE PROCEDURE

"Fundraising Procedures and Definitions"

1. All fundraising initiatives or events for student activities must be presented and approved in advance by the Academic Director and Principal.
2. Fundraising activities may only benefit a student activity and not an individual's personal gain.
 - A. Personal gain is defined as the sale of goods or services or the sponsorship of any fundraising activity on school property by any individual or group that is intended to improve the personal financial status of any person or group of persons involved in the sponsorship of the activity. Fundamental to this definition is the premise that funds raised by student activities are to be used to expand or enhance the activities of those organizations and not to financially subsidize an individual's personal interests or needs.
3. Permission for all fundraising activities is extended only to Avon Grove Charter School (AGCS) recognized student groups and is subject to the following regulations:
 - A. Fundraising is defined as the sale of products, the solicitation of money or contributions, the collection of dues or donations, the charge of admission, or any other means of collecting revenue.
4. The AGCS principal and academic director must approve all fundraising activities at least two (2) weeks in advance. Permission shall not be granted for products and services that conflict with the policies of AGCS. (Example: No candy is allowed be sold in the cafeteria)
5. Pre-established fees for facility use, equipment rental, and other direct costs must be paid in advance. Check requests for all required fees must be submitted to the Accounting Office two weeks prior to the vendor payment due date.
6. Funds raised must benefit a recognized student activity or a bona fide charitable organization. No funds may be used for personal gain as previously defined in this section. The AGCS reserves the right to review the financial records of student activities that have been allowed to raise funds on behalf of the school to determine if the funds are being used for the purpose for which they were raised.
7. Please make sure your forms include the person's name To whom they need to be returned. The Main Office will hold any money/forms that are turned in thru the attendance folders or dropped off to the office will be locked in a cabinet. It is the Advisor's responsibility to pick up the money/forms from the office daily.

Fiscal Solvency Policies

The Avon Grove Charter School

Fiscal Solvency Policy

1. Introduction

The Budgetary process at the Avon Grove Charter School is an integral part of carrying out the mission of the school. The budget is prepared prior to the beginning of the fiscal year and is approved by the Board of Trustees in advance of its implementation.

2. Accountability

The school has a fiduciary responsibility to effectively manage and use its financial resources. The Board of Trustees and Administration are ultimately responsible for the fiscal solvency of the school.

The school is committed to effective resource management and accountability. Ongoing budget oversight is provided to ensure that resources and expenditures are occurring in general conformity with the approved budget. Throughout the fiscal year, the Accounting/Business Office, Principal, Directors and Department Managers shall monitor and oversee operating budgets ensuring that:

Year-to-date resources and expenditures are occurring in a manner consistent with the departmental budget.

Resource shortfalls and expenditure overages are identified and resolved.

Deficit spending at the department level does not occur.

3. Employee Hiring and Compensation

Salaries and benefits represent the largest expenditure for the academic entity. It is important to manage this expense effectively. A staff list is provided to each department in their budget packet. The staff list is an effective tool used to provide each Academic Director and Administration with the necessary information required to make decisions on whether to recruit and /or refill a position vacancy.

4. Fiscal Year End Purchase Requisitions

Generally accepted accounting principles for the Not-for-Profit Organization require the school to record the expense at the time it was received or the service was rendered. Expense items incurred prior to June 30th will be expensed to the current fiscal year and not held and expensed against the following fiscal year.

Outstanding purchase orders on which delivery is not received before June 30th will be expensed against the following fiscal year.

5. Capital Expenditures

A capital expenditure is the purchase of furniture, equipment, vehicles, facilities, etc., with a price (or fair market value in the case of a gift) of \$ 5000 or more and a useful life of two or more years.

Capital Expenditures over \$ 5000.00 or more required the approval of the Board of Trustees and are expensed to the departmental budget and charged to object codes

700 — Computers

710 — Furniture & Equipment

6. Budget Reallocations

The Board of Trustees approves the budget for each Department based on the initial allocations submitted; therefore, it is imperative that adherence to these budget allocations be maintained. During the course of the academic year, adjustments to allocations may need to be made due to unforeseen circumstances and changes. All budget reallocations must be approved by the Board of Trustees.

7. Departmental Account Deficits

Deficits in a school department budget account are not permitted. The budget is approved by the Board of Trustees and departments should not deviate from their budget. In all cases, Academic Directors and Department Managers are ultimately responsible for the financial management of their accounts and should take immediate action to prevent or correct any deficit problems.

Certain circumstances may require a written explanation explaining a current deficit or the necessity of deficit for an unforeseen event or situation at the budget was created and approved. Any deficit or planned deficit due to unforeseen circumstances requires the approval of the Board of Trustees.

AGCS BUSINESS OFFICE PROCEDURE

"Budget and Approval Process"

1. Initial Budget Committee Meeting: (On or about March 1st)

A. Attendees should be:

- 1) Principal**
- 2) Business Manager**
- 3) Representation from AGCS Board of Trustees**

B. Review current year and discuss initial budget objectives for the next fiscal year:

- 1) Projected Revenue**
- 2) Enrollment**
- 3) Capital Expenditures**

C. Review and make any changes to the Budget Estimates Worksheet

2. Initial Department Budget Estimates are then requested from each Academic Director and Department Supervisor.

A. Initial Department Budget Estimates are due on or about March 15th.

B. Appointments are scheduled with each director to discuss the budget estimates worksheet. (Template attached)

3. Meetings are scheduled to discuss each Academic Director and Department Supervisor Initial Budget Requests.

A. These meetings should be scheduled on or about March 30th.

B. The main purpose of these meetings is to determine student needs and prioritize each request.

C. Based on the discussions, the director or supervisor may be asked to edit and/or adjust their budget requests.

4. Once all Initial Departmental Budget Estimate Meetings have taken place, the Business Manager prepares the first round draft of the next fiscal year's budget.

A. This first round draft should be complete the first week in April.

5. When the first draft is completed, the Principal, Business Manager and a Representative of the Board of Trustees will meet for discussion.

A. The first round cuts or additions are made at this time based on information gathered during the departmental meetings.

B. Based on the decisions made in the above mentioned meeting, the budget is adjusted accordingly and departmental budgets will then be printed for each director or supervisor.

6. The Academic Directors or Departmental Supervisors review the newly

released proposed budget reports.

A. Additional requests are made as the directors/supervisors feel necessary.

B. Due Date for additional requests will be slated for the end of the third week in April.

7. The Business Manger will then finalize the proposed budget and prepare for the Board of Trustees Public Session Meeting Presentation.

8. The Proposed Budget is presented to the Board of Trustees at the regularly held monthly meeting and questions and concerns are addressed from Board Members, Faculty and Staff, Parents of our enrolled students and any other individual attending the public session meeting.

9. Once all questions, and concerns have been addressed and any changes have been identified, the Board of Trustees will make motion to approve the public posting of the new fiscal year budget.

A. This posting will include any changes discussed at that meeting.

B. The posting is in the Main Office of the AGCS and will remain posted for thirty days.

10 At the end of thirty days, the proposed budget is again presented to the Board of Trustees for a motion to approve this document as the final Budget for the next fiscal year.

A. This must happen before the last meeting in June.

11. Once approved, the newly approved budget is formatted and electronically filed with the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

A. Filing with Pennsylvania Department of Education must take place within 15 days of the Board of Trustees Approval, or July 31 of the new fiscal year.

12. The finalized Department Budgets are entered into the accounting software and distributed appropriately.

Fiscal Year: 2008-2009

There were no modifications to the existing Avon Grove Charter School during the 2008-2009 Fiscal year.

Accounting System

Fiscal Year: 2006-2007

The Avon Grove Charter School uses the QuickBooks Premier Nonprofit Edition 2006 Accounting Software. This version integrates the Pennsylvania State Chart of

Accounts for Pennsylvania Public Schools and the Annual Financial Report utilizing the Generally Accepted Accounting principals for the school's budgeting, accounting and reporting practices.

Fiscal Year: 2007-2008

The Avon Grove Charter School uses the updated QuickBooks Premier Nonprofit Edition 2007 Accounting Software. This version integrates the Pennsylvania State Chart of Accounts for Pennsylvania Public Schools and the Annual Financial Report utilizing the Generally Accepted Accounting principals for the school's budgeting, accounting and reporting practices.

Fiscal Year: 2008-2009

The Avon Grove Charter School uses the updated QuickBooks Premier Nonprofit Edition 2007 Accounting Software. This version integrates the Pennsylvania State Chart of Accounts for Pennsylvania Public Schools and the Annual Financial Report utilizing the Generally Accepted Accounting principals for the school's budgeting, accounting and reporting practices.

Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances

Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances - Attachments

- 2007-2008 Signed Report replaced this file.
- 2008-2009 AGCS Furniture & Equipment Purchases

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

Fiscal Year: 2006-2007

Avon Grove Charter School has engaged Umbreit and Associates as its auditing firm. The last school audit was completed in August of 2006. The auditor's annual report summary for 2005-2006 fiscal year has been forwarded to the PDE. The 2006-2007 audit is scheduled to begin in early September of this year. There were no significant findings identified by the auditor for the 2005-2006 school year. AGCS has been in the process of scheduling this year's audit for the last few months and was only able to schedule the audit for the 2006-2007 school year very recently. AGCS has traditionally conducted its annual audit during the month of August, following the close of the fiscal year. Therefore the data attached to this report is a copy of the audited financial statements for the Fiscal Year ending June 30, 2006. Attached please find the electronic pdf copy of the prepared audit financial statements conducted in August 2006.

Fiscal Year: 2007-2008

Avon Grove Charter School has again engaged Umbreit and Associates as its auditing firm. The last school audit was completed in August of 2007. The auditor's annual report summary for 2006-2007 fiscal year has been forwarded to the PDE. The 2007-2008 audit is scheduled to begin in late August of this year. There were no findings identified by the auditor for the 2006-2007 school year. AGCS has traditionally conducted its annual audit during the month of August, following the close of the fiscal year. Therefore the data attached to this report represents the last fiscal year audit completed. Attached please find the summary from the last audit.

Fiscal Year: 2008-2009

Avon Grove Charter School has again engaged Umbreit, Korengel & Associates, P. C. as its auditing firm. The last school audit was completed in August of 2008. The auditor's annual report summary for 2007-2008 fiscal year has been forwarded to the PDE. The 2008-2009 audit is scheduled to begin on August 31, 2009. There were no findings identified by the auditor for the 2007—2008 school year. AGCS has traditionally conducted its annual audit during the month of August, following the close of the fiscal year. Therefore the data attached to this report represents the audited financial statements from the audit conducted on August 27, 2008. Attached please find the summary from the last audit.

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

- CHARTER ANNUAL REPORT: REPORT SECTION - AUDIT FIRM, DATE OF LAST AUDIT, AUDITOR'S OPINION, AND ANY FINDINGS RESULTING FROM THE AUDIT
- CHARTER ANNUAL REPORT: REPORT SECTION - AUDIT FIRM, DATE OF LAST AUDIT, AUDITOR'S OPINION, AND ANY FINDINGS RESULTING FROM THE AUDIT
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- 2007-2008 AGCS Audited Financial Statements

Citations and follow-up actions for any State Audit Report

Fiscal Year: 2006-2007

The Department of the Auditor General conducted an audit of the Avon Grove Charter School throughout the months of September and October of 2006. During this time, staff members from the office of the Auditor General's office were present at the charter school every day, sorting through records from previous years. Although a number of charter schools were similarly audited during this time period, the results of the audit of AGCS have not yet been made public. Initially, the office of the Auditor General indicated that all charter school audit results would be released on June 19, 2007. The Avon Grove Charter School Board and Administration

met with representatives from the Auditor General's office in late November, at which time the preliminary data from the audit were reviewed. At this point, AGCS has received no further information from the office of the Auditor General. AGCS would be more than happy to provide information related to the findings of the Auditor General's office when they become available.

Fiscal Year: 2007-2008

The Auditor General released the AGCS 2006 Audit Report on February 27, 2008. The complete report and findings can be found in an attached file in the audit section of this annual report.

The findings are also stated below:

1. **Eleven Different Noncertified Teachers Lacked Physician's Certificates At Some Time During the Audit Period.**
2. **In Violation of the Public Official and Employee Ethics Act, A Total of 10 of 14 Board Members, Plus the School Principal/Chief Administrative Officer, Failed to File Statements of Financial Interests At Some Time During the Audit Period.**

Follow up actions taken by the school were to hire a **Business Manager and Human Resources Coordinator** to oversee and manage all required reporting and filings for timely submission going forward.

Fiscal Year: 2008-2009

No State Audits were performed in the Fiscal Year 2008-2009. The Avon Grove Charter School Administration has closely monitored and managed all required reporting and return filings to ensure all state mandates are met and the school has remained in full compliance.

SECTION VII. FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Fiscal Year: 2008-2009

The Avon Grove Charter School Community began the 2008-2009 academic year with the opening of its second campus, fondly known as the Avon Grove Charter School, Early Learning Center @ Kemblesville. The new campus is located in Landenberg, Pennsylvania and houses our youngest students in grades kindergarten through second. The total enrollment for this new site for the 08-09 academic year

was four hundred and ninety students. The largest percentage of our furniture and equipment purchases for this fiscal year were incurred to better outfit the new campus enabling staff to adequately service our student's curricular needs.

The Main Campus, located in West Grove, Pennsylvania gained approximately eighteen classrooms when the younger students relocated to the Early Learning Center in Landenberg. Increasing the student population to seven hundred and ninety, in grades three to twelve and the utilizing the additional instructional space made available created a need for additional furniture and equipment purchases. The purchases for this campus during the 08-09 Fiscal Year greatly enabled the Avon Grove Charter School staff in meeting the curricular needs of the elementary, middle and high school population.

A complete listing of furniture and equipment purchases for the fiscal year 2008-2009 has been included with this report.

Fiscal Year: 2007-2008

In our pervious annual report, the Avon Grove Charter School projected a total student population of 1167 for the 2007-2008 school year. All of our projections regarding increases in student population were, as a rule, on target. Unfortunately, the increasing student population at the school 110 East State Road site made it increasingly difficult for us to assign shared spaces and arranges schedules as effective as we would have liked to. One of the qualities that have characterized the AGCS community and charter schools in general has been flexibility. In spite of the increasingly tight space available at AGCS, parents, teachers, students and administrative staff redoubled their efforts to make the most of the limited space available. The AGCS community resolved itself to make some sacrifices throughout the school year, while the new Kemblesville Early Learning Center was being completed.

Future Facility Plans and Other Capital Needs

In the summer of 2008, AGCS opened a K-2 "Early Learning Center" in the village of Kemblesville, PA. The opening of the new site (located in a disused public school building) was met with a great deal of support from the local community, and encouragement from the Avon Grove School District. The new AGCS Early Learning Center has continued to draw large numbers of students from the surrounding districts, and interest in the overall AGCS community has increased. Parents who have chosen the AGCS Early Learning Center for their children have been extremely satisfied with the level of instruction and personalized attention their children have received. The new school is beautiful, thriving, and on a excellent footing for future success.

The main AGCS site (3-12) is undergoing a major "facelift" this summer. The vintage 1928 building was originally owned by the Avon Grove School District, and was in structural decline when AGCS acquired the site. In 2002, the District had constructed a new state-of-the-art elementary school a few miles away and was phasing out the smaller regional elementary buildings as part of its development plan. For many years, AGCS has been planning to overhaul the site. After years of careful planning, AGCS finally launched this restoration project this summer.

There capital investments were part of a detailed strategic planning process initiated five years ago by the school's "Future Growth Committee" and they have addressed the most pressing needs of our school community.

SECTION VIII. HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

AGCS does a monthly review of the facility to ensure that exits, safety lights, alarms, fire extinguishers, and first aid equipment are functioning properly. Monthly fire drills are conducted by the Director or Building Services, and a calendar of drills is kept on record in his office. Health and immunization records are kept by Ingrid Wertz, AGCS's registered school nurse. These records are kept in a locked cabinet and their accuracy is reviewed each year by the Offices of Latsha Davis & Yohe, P.C. and again at the end of the year by Larson Allen Weishair & Co., LLP. Health and Safety-Since the June 2005 Board of Trustees Meeting, an interim health and safety handbook has been adopted. There is a Health and Safety Committee/Task Force assigned to complete a "Safety Planning Response Check list". This list is in compliance with PDE and Homeland Security Standards.

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

- CHARTER ANNUAL REPORT: REPORT SECTION - COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS AND MAINTENANCE OF HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATIONS RECORDS FOR STUDENTS
- CHARTER ANNUAL REPORT: REPORT SECTION - COMPLIANCE WITH HEALTH AND SAFETY REQUIREMENTS AND MAINTENANCE OF HEALTH AND IMMUNIZATIONS RECORDS FOR STUDENTS
- AGCS 2008-09 Reimbursement Report

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs

Insurance Coverage

MEDICAL (100% paid by the employer)

Independence Blue Cross Flex HMO - This is a health maintenance organization (HMO). This is a managed care program. Coverage is available when you seek a physician within the network. (**Employee - \$341.34; Employee Spouse -\$786.16; Employee Child(ren) - \$608.89; Family - \$1,002.44**)

Personal Choice / Blue Cross — This is a Preferred Provider Organization (PPO), which allows you the choice of seeking a physician in the network or out of the network. An employee

can choose their own doctor or hospital. **Employee - \$491.69; Employee Spouse -\$1,132.11; Employee Child - \$744.41; Employee Children - \$1,070.12; Family - \$1,443.54).**

*The above plans are provided by Independence Blue Cross and offer a **standard prescription drug** and **vision program**.

DENTAL (100% Paid by the Employer)

MetLife — is a traditional fee-for-service dental plan. This program gives the freedom to choose any dentist to provide care; however, member savings are maximized when selecting a participating dentist. (**Employee - \$24.49; Employee and Dependents -- \$71.30**).

Voluntary Elective Insurance Plans

INSURANCE

DISABILITY INCOME PROTECTION INSURANCE — This is disability insurance that pays benefits if you cannot work because of illness or injury. Avon Grove Charter School has made it possible for an employee to obtain this type of insurance with lower cost group rates, no physical examination, and convenient payroll deduction. The employee chooses the amount of coverage they need and can afford.

Short Term Disability (VIP 530230) — An employee can elect an amount of \$100.00 to \$1,250.00 per week in \$25.00 units, as long as their selected amount doesn't exceed 60% of covered earnings.

Long Term Disability (VIP 530231) — An employee can elect an amount from \$500.00 to \$5,000.00 per month in \$100 units, as long as their selected amount doesn't exceed 60% of covered earnings.

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs - Attachments

- Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs
- Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs

SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff

Number of Teachers -- 96

Grades K — 2 (teachers) — 18

Grades 3 — 5 (teachers) — 16

Middle school (teachers) — 22

High school (teachers) — 23

Special Education (teachers) — 14

Guidance Counselors — 6

Librarians — 2

Administration Staff (Managers) — 13

- Principal
- Dean of Discipline
- Business Manager
- Human Resources Director
- Executive Assistant
- Office Manager
- Facilities Manager
- Cafeteria Manager
- Special Education Director
- High School Director
- Middle School Director
- Elementary School Director
- Information Technology Manager

Administrative Support -- 20

Support Staff - 24

Health Services (Nurses) — 2

Facilities (janitorial) — 11

Food Services (Cafeteria) — 6

Student Activities — 1

How many are returning staff from the previous school year, and how many were with the school for this entire school year. As of July, 167 out of a total of 171 have indicated that they will be returning for the 2008-2009 school year.

Discuss staff turnover and retention patterns and possible reasons for each.

Reasons:

Very few teachers left AGCS this year, one or two cited financial reasons for their departure, while others moved out of the area.

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff - Attachments

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

Student Enrollment

AGCS selects students by lottery when spaces are available in the appropriate grades AGCS maintains a database of student applicants from all of the surrounding districts — names on this database make up the pool for the AGCS lottery. Initially students were drawn exclusively from the Avon Grove District. After AGCS exhausted the pool of Avon Grove students interested in applying to the school, first preference was given to Avon Grove students in accordance with state law: “Nonresident students may also be enrolled with first preference given to resident students.” Dean of Students, Ed Delfin, is responsible for hand-drawing names from the lottery, the date of these drawings is made known to parents and they may attend the drawing if they wish. All drawings take place in the AGCS main office.

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

Students must be 5 years old by September 8th of the year of entrance to be admitted to the AGCS Kindergarten. Students must be 6 years old by September 8th of year of entrance to be admitted to the AGCS First Grade

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.

Below please find a chart detailing the fluctuations in enrollment during the course of the 2006 - 2007 academic year. Schools dis-enrolling students selected: Avon Grove Intermediate School, Fred S. Engle Middle School, Avon Grove High School, Oxford Area High School, Ursuline Academy, Saint Mark’s (Delaware), Wilmington Friends, and Kennett Middle School.

ENROLLMENT HISTORY 2008 - 2009

Grade	Enrolled on First Day of School	Added by End of Year	Dis-enrolled by end of year	Net Gain/Loss	Enrolled Last Day of School
K	168	5	9	4	172
1	163	2	8	6	169
2	146	2	0	2	148
3	123	5	3	-2	121
4	126	3	2	-1	125
5	137	6	3	-3	134
6	105	5	4	-1	104
7	60	1	4	3	63
8	62	1	2	1	63
9	51	1	1	0	51
10	50	1	3	2	52
11	39	2	1	-1	38
12	42	3	2	-1	41
Total	1272	37	46	9	1281

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.

A clear trend each year is a drop-off in enrollment at the very beginning of the year. Since the opening of the school it has been the practice of some parents to enroll their students at AGCS while waiting for another placement (often in a private setting). This practice tends to artificially inflate our numbers at the beginning of the year. The Administration has recommended that the Board over enroll by 3-5 percent to lessen the impact of this problem. In parent surveys and through informal discussions, we have learned that many Middle School students leave AGCS because of the school's small size \ and lack of a PIAA sports program. AGCS currently does not conduct exit interviews. We are currently on target with the number projected in the school's charter.

At this point, Approximately 1390 total students will return. However, that number may fluctuate slightly during the summer. We are planning on enrolling an additional 134 students before September bringing our total number to approximately 1415.

There are currently no supporting documents selected for this section.

Transportation

The Avon Grove Charter School (AGCS) contracts and utilizes the local school districts' transportation services. AGCS transports students from the Avon Grove, Kennett Consolidated, Oxford, Coatesville, Octorara, Unionville Chadsford school districts.

At present, AGCS relies on its local "feeder" districts to provide transportation for students who attend the school. No major transportation problems have arisen since the school's inception. The individual school districts offer a variety of accommodations that are but not limited to an individual bus, van or adjusting a bus route and stop for the special education students.

Food Service Program

Food services at AGCS for the 2008-09 school year were contracted through the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. The Archdiocese provides ready-to-heat lunches for all AGCS students who pay \$2.25 (elementary) and \$3.00 per entrÃ©e. New and existing students who are eligible to receive assistance through the Free and Reduced Lunch Program are identified at the beginning of each year.

Student Conduct

The AGCS school discipline code was developed in conjunction with the school's legal counsel to ensure that the subsections of Pa Code chapters 12 of the Pennsylvania School Code were addressed directly and completely. The Avon Grove Charter School Discipline Policy specifically addressed the right of families to due process including hearing before the charter school's Board of Trustees.

A total of 27 students were involved with 38 suspension incidents.

No AGCS students were expelled during the 2008-2009 school year.

Student Conduct - Attachments

- Student Code of Conduct
- Discipline of Students with Disabilities
- AGCS Bullying Policy

Signature Page

Assurance for the Operation of Charter School Services and Programs

School Year: 2008

The Avon Grove CS within Chester County IU 24 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 _____

