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# Pennsylvania Department of Education

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

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

**Charter School:** Mariana Bracetti Academy CS  
**Address:** 2501 Kensington Ave.  
Philadelphia, PA 19125  
**Phone:**  
**Contact Name:**

## CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

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

**Name of School:** Mariana Bracetti Academy CS

**Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval:** August 2004

**Length of Charter:** Five years    **Opening Date:** August 2000

**Grade Level:** 6-12    **Hours of Operation:** 8:00am to 3:15pm

**Percentage of Certified Staff:** 90.8%    **Total Instructional Staff:** 69

**Student/ Teacher Ratio:** 28:1    **Student Waiting List:** 160

**Attendance Rate/Percentage:** 91.73%

**Enrollment:** 1155    **Per Pupil Subsidy:** Regular \$7,708.33 year, SPED \$16,760.03/year

#### Student Profile

**American Indian/Alaskan Native:** 1%  
**Asian/Pacific Islander:** 1%  
**Black (Non-Hispanic):** 26%  
**Hispanic:** 72%  
**White (Non-Hispanic):** 0  
**Multicultural:** 0

**Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch:** 93.4%

**Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December:** 165

Number of:	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (FTIME)	ELEM	MIDDLE	SEC.	TOTAL
<b>Instructional Days</b>	0	0	0	0	187	187	187
<b>Instructional Hours</b>	0	0	0	0	1262:15	1262:15	1262:15

## SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Organization Description

In August 2000, the charter application filed by the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) to open the doors of Mariana Bracetti Academy (MBA) was approved. In September 2000, the school opened its doors in the heart of the Kensington neighborhood of Philadelphia. Located at 2501 Kensington Ave, the school consists of middle school grades 6 through 8 and high school grades 9 through 12. MBA's population of more than 1155 students is almost entirely

minority consisting of 72% Latino, 24% African-American and 3% non-Hispanic Caucasian students.

## **Core Purpose**

### **Mission**

The mission of Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School is to establish and maintain a culture of high academic achievement using innovative teaching strategies, effective assessment techniques and ongoing technology support in an environment that recognizes and supports individual talents and abilities.

### **Vision**

The vision of Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School is to ensure that all of our students have the knowledge, skills and beliefs to assume leadership roles in the knowledge economy, their communities and their own lives.

## **Shared Values**

The MBA community embraces core beliefs and values that we impart to our students. We encourage our students to not only adopt these values and beliefs, but to promote them in the surrounding community. Our shared values and beliefs are:

- Effort - not race, gender, or neighborhood - determines how successful one may become
- Initial failure to reach an academic target is only evidence of not yet finding the right learning strategy; it is not evidence of some innate deficiency
- School success depends on learning to manage one's own learning processes and ultimately to become a self-directed learner
- Students, as members of the MBA community, have a responsibility to help each other reach their learning goals as this is the essence of being part of a learning community
- Individual responsibility, discipline and self-management must become tools to shape individual behavior and limit negative outside influences.

## **Academic Standards**

The MBA curriculum is aligned with state academic content standards. Teachers provide students with the instruction they need to attain these standards, and MBA's Professional Development offerings help teachers to implement the standards as part of their lesson plans and classroom practice. Graduating students accumulate 28 credits in high school, a culminating senior project and 90 hours of community service. The course sequence for core subjects includes:

**English** — Survey of Literature, World Literature, American Literature, and British Literature.

**Mathematics** — Pre—Algebra, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus, Calculus

*A student may place out of Pre-Algebra and Algebra I.*

**Science** — Physical Science, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics

**Social Studies** — World History, American Government, American History, and Economics

## **Strengths and Challenges**

During the 2007-2008 school year, our administrative structure provided significant increased attention to supporting teachers in the classroom. In addition, the change in school structure has allowed for comprehensive professional development in the areas of data-based instruction and curriculum planning and design. Other highlights of the 2007-2008 school year are as follows:

- Staff stability at MBA continues to improve with the lowest turnover rate in school history
- The graduation rate exceeded AYP targets and the high number of students attending established college or training programs has been a cause for enthusiasm among the MBA faculty
- Standardized assessment (PSSA) scores of each (all subgroups) continue to improve as our students remain in our school

During the 2007-2008 school year, teachers completed a year-long curriculum writing project, which they have begun implementing. This comprehensive curriculum review and planning process supported the ongoing redesign and restructuring of the high school, which completed its first year in the spring of 2007 under a reform effort begun during the 2005-2006 school year. Specific initiatives include:

- A new high school curriculum which offers 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders the opportunity to major in Health Science, Business Information Technology or Language, Law, and Government. This year's tenth grade students were the first to choose majors. We are now developing integrated internship and senior project programs that will be aligned with the academic majors.
- The introduction of curriculum mapping using the *Understanding by Design* model sponsored by ASCD and the training of all staff in this method.
- Implementation of high school literacy and numeracy classes designed to target student need and provide specific, needs-driven interventions.
- Design and preparation for the implementation of pull-out reading instruction to begin in the fall of 2007 using the Read Right reading intervention system.
- The redesign of middle school English language arts courses to create leveled reading groups and to focus student learning on strategic reading.
- The redesign of middle school mathematics courses to focus on depth of learning rather than breadth of learning by narrowing the range of topics taught while ensuring that students master each topic covered.
- The implementation of Pearson Benchmark and Pearson Inform -- two powerful technology tools to allow for creation of grade appropriate formative assessments (benchmarks), plus analysis and reporting of results from those assessments
- Implementation of a comprehensive Academic Support Program at the high school level with after school and Saturday components designed to ensure that all students receive the academic support they need and that student who have been frequently truant can make up for lost time and get back on track towards graduation.

- Implementation of Read Right, a constructivist, brain-based reading program designed to eliminate our incoming students' reading problems

These are developments that we expect will drive greater improvements in student performance.

Student performance data on the 2008 PSSA show that individual student cohorts continue to improve throughout middle school at MBA. Although MBA did not meet AYP performance targets, the student growth is evident. We have added two more Read Right tutors to the current staff of four to provide this service to more struggling readers.

The redesigned high school curriculum scheduled to be implemented during the 2006-2007 school year and includes literacy and numeracy courses has already shown sizable improvements in eleventh grade PSSA performance. However, our 2008 scores did not meet our expectations, nor did they mirror our students' 4Sight Benchmark scores. This situation requires detailed analysis of both the test and the students' struggles with the material.

Truancy and tardiness are daily challenges that the school faces. Both of these issues have a clear connection rooted in our students' socio-economic needs that frequently trump their educational priorities. The academic support program is intended to address both academic need and chronic truancy and we plan to continue its implementation to help our students succeed.

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

### **Strategic Planning Process**

During the past school year, MBA's leadership team and faculty worked to implement the School's Student Achievement Plan that articulated strategies for improvement across eight focus areas:

- Program implementation
- Test administration
- Embedding test expectations into instruction
- Data analysis
- Meeting individual student needs
- Professional development
- Monitoring implementation, and
- Creating a culture of achievement.

The strategic planning committee leadership teams, village teams and department teams met regularly to monitor the plan and to make the necessary adjustments.

MBA made AYP through PPI in 2005. However, we did not make AYP in 2006 and 2007, and we are now in "School Improvement I" based on the results of the 2007 PSSA. The school's leadership team has already initiated the process of school improvement planning; and will move forward to complete the school improvement plan that meets both state and federal requirements. After thoroughly analyzing the 2007 PSSA results, we will articulate specific process and results

oriented goals. And by utilizing regular, grade appropriate benchmark assessments as well as other sources of data including surveys and observations, we will regularly monitor our progress towards attaining them.

**Strategic Planning Committee**

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Adrienne Davids	Employee	Administrator	CEO
Angela Villani	Employee	Administrator	Board of Trustees
Charles Priestley	Employee	Administrator	CEO
Debra Harris	Employee	Special Education Representative	CEO
Jana Somma	Employee	Administrator	CEO
Ronald Nordmeyer	Employee	Administrator	CEO
Tracey Macklin	Employee	Special Education Representative	CEO
Tracy-Elizabeth Clay	Board	Board Member	Board
Virginia Neiswender	Board	Board Member	Board

**Goals, Strategies and Activities**

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

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

**Strategy: Support at-risk students**

*Description:* The MBA student support program targets our most at risk students for intensive academic support and remediation. In this way, we help students who are struggling academically or who suffer from chronic absenteeism to get back onto the path towards graduation.

*Activities:*

Activity	Description
Student Support Program	<p>Program Design — It is essential to the success of our students and of our school that we provide an intensive, comprehensive, and mandatory student support program. This program will feature both Saturday and after school support for all students. A variety of academic and participatory metrics will be used to assign students to the program. Students will be entered into the program for a minimum of one academic quarter.</p> <p>2 components:                      1) Saturday Support — Allows students to make up school hours towards minimum attendance requirement                      2) After School Support — Study hall format</p> <p>Entrance Requirements — Students who do not meet performance standards for attendance, academic performance, homework completion, and participation. Standards will be assessed throughout the year.</p> <p>Performance Standards</p> <p>-Attendance:                      o Any student who has missed three days of school in a given standard-session (3-week session)                      o Any student who has missed five school days in any combination of standard-</p>

	sessions within a given semester  -Academic Performance: o Any student who is reported by a classroom teacher or support person (inclusion teacher) to have missed three or more homework assignments in a given standards-session o Any student who has missed seven homework assignments in a given semester o Any student who maintains a cumulative grade of less than 70% in any instructional class  - Behavior: o Any student who is expelled from a class or who refuses to participate may be entered into the program based on consultation with the student's academic advisor, parent/guardian, and Student Assistance Team	
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Not Currently Assigned	Ongoing	\$40,000.00

**Goal: MATHEMATICS**

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

**Strategy: Assessment-Anchor-Focused Instruction Across Curriculum**

*Description:* All math curriculum is designed and appropriately aligned with the state standards. Assessment Anchors guide unit and lesson design, and classroom learning experiences.

*Activities:*

Activity	Description	
Data analysis of benchmark performance		
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$0.00

Activity	Description	
Use Data to Guide Instruction	Use Data to Guide Instruction	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$12,000.00

**Strategy: Narrow curriculum to focus on depth over breadth**

*Description:* By teaching fewer units at greater depth and ensuring that students master that which is taught, we will align the school with the research-based principles of reform mathematics. In this way we will ensure that students master the essential skills needed for success on the PSSA and in future use and study of mathematics.

*Activities:*

Activity	Description
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Mariana Bracetti Academy CS - Charter Annual Report

Assessment-Anchor-Focused Instruction		
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$0.00

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	
Curriculum Writing	Using the principles of "Understanding by Design" promoted by ASCD and working with grade-level teachers and teacher leaders, the curriculum and instruction team will lead a curriculum design process during the summer	
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$20,000.00

**Strategy: Student Incentives**

*Description:* Reward students for effort and improvement on Benchmark exams, classwork, responsible behavior and PSSA exams.

*Activities:*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	
Celebrations	Teams, grades, and/or entire school conducts a large-scale celebration of student effort and achievement. Field trips and pep rallies were the avenues used to celebrate our students' successes and efforts.	
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$10,000.00

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	
Student Awards/Recognition	Students earned awards in individual classes and on the village level for their academic improvement and successes.	
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$10,000.00

**Goal: Parent Involvement**

*Description:* Add Goal Statement here..

**Strategy: Parent Education**

*Description:*

*Activities:*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	
Book Talks	Parents, students and staff read the same novel (in either English or Spanish), and then met to discuss different aspects of the book and its relationship to their own experiences.	
<b>Person</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>

Mariana Bracetti Academy CS - Charter Annual Report

<b>Responsible</b>		
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$1,000.00

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	
Curriculum Nights	Parents will be invited to attend a series of workshops regarding math and reading curriculum, test preparation and home support of student learning.	
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$2,000.00

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	
Parent Group	In a group setting, parents met with school counselor to share and discuss common concerns and issues relating to raising and educating their children.	
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$1,000.00

**Goal: READING**

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

**Strategy: Assessment-Anchor-Focused Instruction Across the Curriculum**

*Description:* Evidence-based use of assessment anchors to focus instruction.

*Activities:*

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	
Data Analysis of Benchmark performance	Ongoing analysis of student performance on 2 types of benchmark exams	
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$0.00

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Description</b>	
Use results to guide instruction		
<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$0.00

**Strategy: Embed Tested Reading Strategies Across the Curriculum**

*Description:* Based on NCTE and IRA data, teachers were trained in using reading strategies when working with any content area reading with their students.

*Activities:*

Activity	Description	
Use Reading Strategies to Frame all Content Reading	All teachers were trained on and required to use content-area reading strategies. Strategies focused on ways students could make meaning of difficult text and how ALL teachers must first be literacy teachers. Students were provided necessary tools.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$0.00

**Strategy: Student Incentives**

*Description:* When students are provided positive incentives, they are more likely to achieve.

*Activities:*

Activity	Description	
Celebrations	Teams, grades, and/or entire school conducts a large-scale celebration of student effort and achievement. Field trips and pep rallies were the avenues used to celebrate our students' successes and efforts.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$2,000.00

Activity	Description	
Student Awards/Recognition	Students earned awards in individual classes and on the village level for their academic improvement and successes.	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$2,000.00

**Strategy: Target at-risk students**

*Description:*

*Activities:*

Activity	Description	
Saturday School	Targeted reading instruction for at-risk students	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$10,000.00

Activity	Description	
Small Group Instruction	Students who are reading two or more years below grade level will receive targeted reading instruction using a brain-based constructivist reading program	
Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Angela Villani	Ongoing	\$140,000.00

**Statement of Quality Assurance**

Charter school has not met AYP.

Charter school has created a School Improvement Plan.

Charter school has submitted and reviewed its School Improvement Plan with the Intermediate Unit designee.

**Intermediate Unit designee met with and when meeting occurred:**

Angela Villani, CEO, met with two School District of Philadelphia officials--Susan Ostrich and Margaret Sears on November 15, 2007. They both reviewed and approved Mariana Bracetti's School Improvement Plan for the 2007-08 school year

**Statement of Quality Assurance - Attachment**

- Assurance of Quality Statement

### **SECTION III. QUALITY OF SCHOOL DESIGN**

#### **Rigorous Instructional Program**

#### **Rigorous Instructional Program**

Under the Pennsylvania Accountability System, all schools will need a rigorous instructional program to meet the academic targets. For example:

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->*What curriculum does your charter school utilize?*

During the 2007-2008 school year, MBA completed a holistic revision of its curriculum, a project that began in 2006. Designated teams of teachers and administrators revised existing curriculum and outlined new curriculum using the “backwards planning” approach promoted by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD). These curriculum maps were developed to support students’ attainment of state academic content standards in English / Language Arts, mathematics, science and social studies at every grade level. Additional maps were created to support teaching and learning in the arts and technology. Each map was then revised by teacher curriculum teams as part of ongoing analysis, development, and revision.

While these maps have been used for core instruction, teachers have supplemented them as necessary to ensure that at-risk students, special-education, gifted and ELL students receive instruction defined by the required standards.

This year, we added the Read Right program to provide targeted reading assistance to our middle school students. After determining that our students' reading issues were clearly impeding their academic success, we researched and implemented a constructivist, brain-based reading program designed to eliminate reading problems. The initial data is encouraging, as our Read Right students' academic performance and reading assessment

scores are showing improvement. We look forward to a second year of data on the program.

The high school implemented a program of *academic majors* offered in Health Science, Business Information Technology, and Humanities. These majors will afford students the opportunity to focus their learning more intensively in a particular course of study, while still completing a broad program of core requirements in English, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics.

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->***Do you have documentation that shows that your curriculum meets the Chapter 4 content standards and all requirements?***

The MBA curriculum is aligned with state academic content standards. Teachers provide students with the instruction they need to attain these standards, and MBA's Professional Development offerings help teachers to implement the standards as part of their lesson plans and classroom practice. Graduating students accumulated 28 credits in high school. The course sequence for core subjects includes:

**English** — Survey of Literature, World Literature, American Literature, and European Literature

**Mathematics** — Pre—Algebra, Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Pre-Calculus, Calculus

**Science** — Human Diseases, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics, Honors Chemistry (beginning 2008-2009)

**Social Studies** — World History, American Government, American History, and Economics, Music History, World Geography, Honors Geography (beginning 2008-2009)

The current graduation requirements meet the minimum state requirements. In order to create a truly rigorous academic program, however, these basic requirements must be augmented with an innovative and experience-rich range of course offerings. The high school will implement a college style course of *academic majors*. Academic majors give students the opportunity to focus their learning more intensively in a particular course of study, while still completing a broad program of core requirements in English, Social Studies, Science, and Mathematics.

**Minimum Graduation Requirements** (through 2009)

In order to graduate, you **MUST** have completed the following requirements:

- 4 Full Years of English (4 credits)
- 3 Full Years of Math (3 credits)
- 3 Full Years of Science (3 credits)
- 3 Full Years of History (3 credits)
- 1 Full Year of Phys. Ed (1 credit)
- 0.5 Year of Health (.5 credit)
- 2 Full Years of Foreign Language (2 credits)
- Electives (11.5 credits)

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**•28 Total Credits**

- 90 Hours of Community Service
- Completion of Senior Project

**Promotion Requirements:**

To be promoted, students must accumulate credits as indicated below.

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Minimum Credits for promotion</b>	<b>Promotion to</b>
9 <sup>th</sup> grade	7 credits (earned in 9 <sup>th</sup> grade)	Grade 10
10 <sup>th</sup> grade	14 credits (earned in 9 <sup>th</sup> & 10 <sup>th</sup> grade)	Grade 11
11 <sup>th</sup> grade	21 credits (earned in 9 <sup>th</sup> , 10 <sup>th</sup> , & 11 <sup>th</sup> grade)	Grade 12

*<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->How is the curriculum organized to meet the developmental and academic needs of students?*

The curriculum's sequenced units of study emphasize conceptual understanding and problem-solving in addition to basic skills and knowledge.

Academic Majors: We believe in empowering students to make meaningful educational choices as a part of their learning. After completing a rigorous arts and sciences curriculum emphasizing literacy and numeracy in 9th and 10th grades, students will choose an academic major in Health Sciences; Business Information Technology; or Language, Law and Government. Students will continue to take their required distribution classes in math, science, and English language arts, as well as a sequence of

courses and several electives through their academic major. Majors will also drive the selection of a 45-hour internship experience in a major-related business or organization.

Honors and Advanced Placement Courses: We believe all students should have the opportunity to achieve at the advanced placement level. We want to build a strong cohort of students achieving high levels of proficiency on the College Board's advanced placement exams. We will offer honors level courses that will lead into AP classes in each core content area at the upper grade levels. Honors classes will be developed according to our honors course rubric to be implemented in core areas and grade levels during 2008-2009. Students will be enrolled in honors courses based on past performance and teacher recommendation. AP courses will be designed based on a template provided by the College Board, including specialized summer training for AP teachers and summer course preparation for students.

Dual Enrollment: We encourage students to participate in dual enrollment courses and related activities so they have access to college level courses and credit offered by local colleges and universities, including a developing dual-enrollment partnership with the Community College of Philadelphia's Advance at College program.

Senior Projects: Every student at MBA will conduct an independent research project during the senior year. Students choose topics, form theses, investigate using a variety of sources, and produce a minimum ten page research paper with accompanying presentation. The 12th grade team of teachers works together to advise students and provide assistance. Students may enroll in a semester or year long research course as needed.

**Accommodations for ELL, Poverty Impacted, and Students with Disabilities:**

English Language Learners (ELLs) - ELL students at the entering or beginning levels are provided separate, small-class English instruction for 90 minutes per day. These students are also supported in the regular education classrooms through resource room options or in-class support. ELLs at the developing or expanding levels are provided with in class support and resource room support in both the English and Math content areas. For extended support, the program also offers homework support and activities once a week after school to ensure students' comprehension of content classes and extended projects.

Special Education - We provide our students with appropriate and individualized services by offering itinerant, resource and part-time learning support classes. Inclusion teachers provide instruction to itinerant and resource level students. Each of these students has daily access to a resource room where they receive one-on-one or small group instruction, extra time to complete class work, and a nurturing environment for individualized instruction. Students in part-time learning support receive modified instruction in the

general education curricula from special education teachers. In order to further accommodate our students' needs, we added a life skills program in the 2007-2008 school year. This program serves students who benefit from hands-on experiences that the general education curriculum does not provide. We also incorporated service-learning in our life skills and learning support courses in 2007-2008 by partnering with agencies and businesses in the community to help our students develop the skills that are necessary for becoming productive, contributing members of society.

Literacy and Numeracy Course Sequence - All students will participate in numeracy and literacy classes to strengthen basic skills in mathematics and reading or provide enrichment opportunities for proficient students. Literacy and numeracy courses will be developed using best practices in adolescent literacy and reform math instruction established by the International Reading Association (IRA), National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM).

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->***How does the charter school promote in-depth and inquiry-based teaching and learning?***

MBA provides its teachers with ongoing professional development in using various teaching strategies and techniques to engage all students in the learning process and to reinforce academic content standards. They have learned to use cooperative learning and differentiated instruction as well as an overall hands-on approach. Professional development and teacher observations focus on effective instructional design using the *Understanding by Design* model promoted by ASCD including a strong emphasis on open-ended "essential questions" as the drive force behind student inquiry. In addition, our staff is trained and help accountable for using research-based cooperative learning structures in all classes. As a school, we ascribe to the proven theory that students learn best when they are engaged in meaningful activities and inquiries with one another.

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->***What strategies does the school use to accelerate academic skill development, content knowledge and learning strategies of students performing significantly below standards in literacy and mathematics skills?***

The results of monthly, online benchmark tests administered to students in Reading / Language Arts and math are used to assess students' strengths and weaknesses in specific content standards within each subject. Teachers work together in instructional groups to analyze classroom and benchmark data and target specific areas of need and specific students with need.

Middle school students who read significantly below grade-level will continue to be enrolled into the Read Right pull-out reading program. We will continue to collect data to analyze the success of the program.

In addition, the English language arts curriculum and the mathematics curriculum have been significantly altered to reflect best practice in both areas. In reading this change entails the inclusion of more time spent reading leveled texts in class including through leveled literature circles. In mathematics, the focus for the upcoming year is on narrowing the curriculum so that fewer content topics are taught, but greater mastery is achieved.

At the high school level, all students take courses in literacy and numeracy in order to build foundational understanding of the processes of reading and problem-solving across the curriculum.

Additional academic support is provided through the student support program which has both a daily homework club function and a weekly Saturday remediation function.

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

Teachers encourage students' explorations of subject content using multiple intelligences. Students are able to demonstrate their learning through dramatic presentations, debates, as well as student poetry and journals that reflect on their personal reactions to literature. Teachers also approach subjects using multi-disciplinary foci. For example, English teachers encourage students' investigation of cultural and historic contexts of world literature that the students read. ADD KAGAN AND INITIATIVES

<!--[if !supportFootnotes]-->

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<!--[endif]-->

[1](#) See amendment at conclusion of document

[2](#) Students may substitute Financial Education for Pre-calculus.

## **Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachments**

- Professional development and Induction approval letters
- Courses

## **English Language Learners**

### **Program Overview Senior Academy:**

In the senior academy ESL students are evaluated for program placement upon entry to MBA using two criteria; the student's Home Language Survey and/or the S21 screen on PennData. If the student has no previous placement status on PennData and the Home Language Survey indicates a possible ESL placement, the student is tested for English proficiency prior to scheduling using the W-APT placement test. A letter is then sent home stating the student's ESL level and program placement with the option for parents to schedule a conference to discuss the ESL program and his/her child's placement. A copy of this letter is placed in the ESL section of the student's file.

If a student tests on the beginning level (WIDA levels 1-2), he/she is scheduled to take Beginner ESL class for 90 minutes every day. In addition, beginning level students are supported in the content classroom through resource room and pull-out tutoring. ESL staff members are always available to assist ESL students with coursework questions after school as well.

If a student tests on the intermediate level (WIDA levels 3-5), he/she is either scheduled for Intermediate ESL class 90 minutes every day, or is scheduled in content English class with resource room support. This determination is made through a thorough examination of his/her previous grades and performance in English classes. All intermediate students are supported in all other content area classes through resource room, pull-out tutoring, and after school tutoring.

In the spring of each year, all ESL students (WIDA levels 1-5) are tested using the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs exam. The testing takes place in small group and individual settings. Upon receipt of the WIDA ACCESS scores, all students' schedules and program placements are reevaluated based on his/her WIDA assessment. The original WIDA scores are placed in the student's file.

Any student who demonstrates proficiency on the WIDA ACCESS assessment is officially exited from the ESL program and is labeled as "Monitored" for 2 years after exiting. During the 2 years of monitoring the student's performance in English are monitored using an evaluation form that is completed 2 times every year by the student's English and content area teachers. If there is concern about the English performance of the student during the 2 year monitoring the student can be re-evaluated and placed back in the ESL program.

Mariana Bracetti Academy is proactive in educating all content teachers about ESL methodology and modifications. During the 2007-2008 school year all teachers attended four ESL-based professional development trainings. The ESL department is also proactive in working with content teachers to develop appropriate classroom modifications and/or assessments for all ESL students. This is accomplished through attending village meetings, curriculum meetings, and through individual teacher conferencing.

Currently the Senior Academy services 160 ESL students (28 beginner, 82 intermediate, and 50 monitored).

### **Program Overview Junior Academy:**

In the junior academy, ESL students are evaluated for program placement upon entry to MBA using two criteria, the student's Home Language Survey and/or the S21 screen on PennData. If the student has no previous placement status on PennData and the Home Language Survey indicates a possible ESL placement, the student is tested for English proficiency prior to scheduling using the W-APT placement test. A letter is then sent home stating the student's ESL level and program placement with the option for parents to schedule a conference to discuss the ESL program and his/her child's placement. A copy of this letter is placed in the ESL section of the student's file.

If a student tests on the beginning level (WIDA levels 1-2), he/she is scheduled to take Beginner ESL class for 90 minutes every day in a self contained setting. Also, that same group of students goes into a self contained ESL Math class with an ESL Math teacher. The teacher together with the grade content Math teacher work and plan together to support the students to enhance the understanding of the language in Math. All students are encouraged to attend the after school Center Mix ESL club to receive support in homework and researching project topics for all core subjects. ESL staff members are always available to assist ESL students with coursework questions after school as well.

If a student tests on the intermediate level (WIDA levels 3-5), he/she receives additional support in their content ELA class which has a bilingual teacher assistant assigned to the classroom. This determination is made through a thorough examination of his/her previous grades and performance in English classes. This group of students also attends the Center Mix ESL Club and receives much support for all content subjects.

In the spring of each year, all ESL students (WIDA levels 1-5) are tested using the WIDA ACCESS for ELLs exam. The testing takes place in small group and individual settings. Upon receipt of the WIDA ACCESS scores, all students' schedules and program placements are reevaluated based on his/her WIDA assessment. The original WIDA scores are placed in the student's file.

Any student who demonstrates proficiency on the WIDA ACCESS assessment is officially exited from the ESL program and is labeled as "Monitored" for 2 years after exiting. During the 2 years of monitoring the student's performance in English are monitored using an evaluation form that is completed 2 times every year by the student's English and content area teachers. If there is concern about the English performance of the student during the 2 year monitoring the student can be reevaluated and placed back in the ESL program.

Mariana Bracetti Academy is proactive in educating all content teachers about ESL methodology and modifications. During the 2007-2008 school year all teachers attended 4 ESL-based professional develop trainings. The ESL department is also proactive in working with content teachers to develop appropriate classroom modifications and/or assessments for all ESL students. This is accomplished through attending village meetings, curriculum meetings, and through individual teacher conferencing.

Currently the Junior Academy services 167 ESL students (34 beginner, 108 intermediate, and 25 monitored).

## **English Language Learners - Attachment**

- LEp Report 07-08

## **Graduation Requirements**

In order to graduate, you **MUST** have completed the following requirements through grades 9-12:

- 4 Full Years of English (4 credits)
  - 3 Full Years of Math (3 credits)
  - 3 Full Years of Science (3 credits)
  - 3 Full Years of History (3 credits)
  - 1 Full Year of Phys. Ed (1 credit)
  - 0.5 Year of Health (.5 credit)
  - 2 Full Years of Foreign Language (2 credits)
  - Electives (11.5 credits)
- 

• **28 Total Credits**

- 90 Hours of community service
- Completion of culminating senior project

## **Special Education**

The Special Education Program at Mariana Bracetti Junior Academy provides a full continuum of services to students with special needs who require specially designed instruction, meaning that services and supports are tailored according to the needs of your child. Through our Special Education Program, he/she may receive support within the general education classes, receive additional resource support outside of the general education classes, or receive their instruction in the learning support classes for all or some of the academic subjects.

A certified special education teacher supports students within the general education classes by collaborating and co-teaching with the general education teachers. The special education teachers may also do “pull outs” to provide specific skill building, extended time for test taking, pre-teaching of content, or Direct Reading Instruction.

For those students who cannot make adequate progress in the general education curriculum, specially designed instruction is provided in the Learning Support classes. A student may be assigned to the Learning Support classes for one or more academic subjects. Each Learning Support class has an enrollment capacity of 15 students .

In addition to these services, MBA currently contracts the services of a school psychologist, bilingual school psychologist, speech therapist, occupational therapist, hearing therapist and physical therapist.

### ***Special Education Teachers***

Dana Ortiz: *8<sup>th</sup> Grade Special Education Inclusion Teacher*

Nicholas Pascale: *7<sup>th</sup> Grade Special Education Inclusion Teacher*

Claude Reifsnnyder: *6<sup>th</sup> Grade Inclusion Special Education Inclusion Teacher*

Renee Kain: *6th-8th Grade Special Education Learning Support Teacher*

Tracey Macklin: *Junior Academy Special Education Coordinator*

The Special Education Program at Mariana Bracetti Senior Academy provides a full continuum of services to students with special needs who require specially designed instruction. What that means is that depending on the needs of your child, he/she may receive support within the general education classes, receive additional resource support outside of the general education classes, or receive their instruction in the learning support classes for all or some of the academic subjects.

A certified special education teacher supports students within the general education classes by collaborating and co-teaching with the general education teachers. The special education teachers may also do "pull outs" to provide specific skill building, extended time for test taking, pre-teaching of content, or Direct Reading Instruction.

For those students who cannot make adequate progress in the general education curriculum, specially designed instruction is provided in either the Learning Support classes or the Functional Academics class. A student may be assigned to the Learning Support classes for one or more academic subjects. Students who participate in the Functional Academics class receive support and instruction in basic and vocational skills in order to prepare them for life after high school. Each Learning Support and Functional Academics class has an enrollment capacity of 15 students.

MBA currently contracts the services of a school psychologist, bilingual school psychologist, speech therapist, occupational therapist, hearing therapist and physical therapist.

### ***Special Education Teachers***

Justin Pascale: *Special Education Inclusion Teacher*

Shaun Daniels: *Special Education Inclusion Teacher*

LaJoya Robinson: *Special Education Inclusion Teacher*

Patrick Humphries: *Special Education Learning Support Teacher For English/Language Arts & History*

Kate Barbato: *Special Education Learning Support Teacher for Math & Science*

Rachel Kohen: *Special Education Functional Academics Teacher*

Debra Harris: *Senior Academy Special Education Coordinator*

### **Special Education - Attachments**

- Special Education Screening and pre-referral, enrollment policy and policies and procedures
- December 2007 Penn Data
- June 2008 Penn Data

**Special Education Program Profile - Chart I**

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Kain, Renee	1.00	Learning Support, Self Contained	Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School	24	1.00
Dana Ortiz	1.00	Learning Support, Inclusion	Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School	17	1.00
Pascale, Nicholas	1.00	Learning Support, Inclusion	Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School	19	1.00
Reifsnyder, Claude	1.00	Learning Support, Inclusion	Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School	15	1.00
Pascale, Justin	1.00	Learning Support, Inclusion	Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School	15	1.00
Daniels, Shaun	1.00	Learning Support, Inclusion	Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School	15	1.00
Robinson, LaJoya	1.00	Learning Support, Inclusion	Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School	15	1.00
Humphries, Patrick	1.00	Learning Support, Self Contained	Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School	12	1.00
Barbato, Kate	1.00	Learning Support, Self Contained	Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School	13	1.00
Kohen, Rachel	1.00	Learning Support, Self Contained	Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School	7	1.00

**Special Education Program Profile - Chart II**

Organization	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Wordsworth Academy	1.0	Emotional Support	Fort Washington, PA	3	Approved Private School
The Valley Day School	1.0	Emotional Support	Morrisville, PA	2	Approved Private School
Delta School	1.0	Emotional Support	Philadelphia, PA	1	Approved Private School

**Special Education Program Profile - Chart III**

Title	Location	FTE
Tracey Macklin, Junior Academy Special Education Coordinator	Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School	1.0
Debra Harris, Senior Academy Special	Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter	1.0

Education Coordinator	School	
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**Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV**

IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual	Title/Service	Amount of Time Per Week
Therapy Source, Inc.	Speech Therapist	4 days per week
Therapy Source, Inc.	Occupational Therapist	1 day per week
Therapy Source, Inc.	Physical Therapist	1 day per week
Therapy Source, Inc.	School Psychologist	1 day per week
Therapy Source, Inc.	Bilingual School Psychologist	1 day per month
The School Therapy Zone	Hearing Therapist	1 day per month
All City Transportation Inc.	Transportation	5 days per week

**SECTION IV. ACCOUNTABILITY**

**Student Assessment - Primary**

Test/Classification	K	1	2	3	4	5
MBA serves grades 6-12	No	No	No	No	No	No

**Student Assessment - Secondary**

Test/Classification	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
PSSA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No
Terra Nova	No						
WIDA - ACCESS for ELLs	Yes						
Scholastic Reading Inventory	Yes						
Pearson Benchmarks	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Woodcock Johnson	Yes						
Classroom Reading Inventory	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Success for All 4Sight Benchmarks	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No

**Student Assessment**

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

*<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->How these results influence development of new or revised annual measurable goals and targets.*

*<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->If locally developed tests are used, discuss how they are used and what impact they have on the curriculum, student improvement, and decision making.*

<!--[if !supportLists]--> <!--[endif]-->***Please describe features of the student achievement plan and note the usage of teacher observations, surveys, portfolios or other local instruments to measure student progress.***

The 2008 PSSA results show that MBA met six of the twelve AYP Safe Harbor targets (4 in math, 2 in reading -1 with a Confidence Interval). Although the majority of students at MBA have performed below the performance thresholds in reading and math on the PSSA, and MBA did not make AYP overall, we are encouraged by the progress our students are making throughout middle school. As our students move from 6th to 7th and 7th to 8th grade, each cohort made statistically significant improvements in reading and math scores.

We are concerned about our eleventh grade PSSA performance, particularly in reading. The students' Success for All 4Sight Benchmark scores indicated proficiency rates much higher than those achieved on the actual exam. We plan to continue to analyze trends in students' performance as well as those of the neighborhood schools' students to help us fully evaluate these scores. In 2007, our students outperformed almost every neighborhood school in both reading and math, and although we did not make AYP overall, we are encouraged by our students' performance in relation to that of students in neighboring schools.

After thoroughly analyzing the 2008 PSSA results, we will articulate specific process and results oriented goals for improved student performance particularly in reading. By utilizing regular, grade-appropriate, benchmark assessments as well as other sources of data including local assessments, report card grades, the results of teacher made tests, surveys and observations, we will regularly monitor our progress towards attaining these goals.

In the beginning of the school year, every student takes the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI). The results of the SRI are used to make placement decisions. The test is administered subsequently on a quarterly basis and is used to measure improvement. MBA also utilizes periodic on-line, standards-based benchmark assessments to monitor student performance in Reading / Language Arts and Math throughout the year. In the 2008-2009 school year we will continue using Pearson Benchmark and Success for All 4Sight Benchmarks to further assess student performance for ongoing analysis.

Using a team protocol presented by the Philadelphia School District and the University of Pennsylvania, teachers will work in teams to apply data from classroom, benchmark, reading and state assessments to inform and improve their classroom practice. In addition, they will identify students who are working below standards in literacy and math and provide direct remediation to these students both in class and through the student support program. Teachers will determine which skills and strands within each subject area need to be reinforced. Accordingly, they will be able to plan lessons that support students' attainment of the standards.

Our student achievement plan is focused on maintaining rigor while building basic skills. We use a combination of formative assessment, benchmark assessment, and regular teacher observation in conjunction with PSSA and TerraNova data to triangulate student

performance. Teacher teams analyze this performance and develop specific instructional interventions to address student need.

***b.) Describe the strategies and interventions that are in place to ensure that students who are at-risk of failure, or those not making reasonable progress, are being addressed. What opportunities are they afforded in order to help them succeed? Provide clear evidence that demonstrates how those strategies are proving to be effective in terms of improved academic performance.***

Early identification of the academic needs of at-risk students begins at the beginning of the year when teachers analyze PSSA, SRI, WIDA, benchmark and other assessment data for individual students. Ongoing monitoring includes regular team analysis of classroom data, triangulated using the data sources listed above, to determine individual needs and tailor instruction based on the evidence of student performance. Teacher teams also confer with parents and colleagues in order to implement appropriate instructional and behavioral strategies. If further monitoring shows that the strategies are unsuccessful for any individual student, teachers refer the student to the Student Support Program (SSP) or to the Student Assistance Program (SAP) as appropriate.

We believe that it is essential to the success of our students and of our school that we provide an intensive, comprehensive and mandatory student support program. The SSP uses teacher advisors and school counselors as the primary organizers of support for students. Working with classroom teachers and parents, advisors and counselors identify students in need of additional support and enter them into the SSP. Students who do not meet performance standards for attendance, academic performance, homework completion, and participation on a variety of metrics are assigned to the program. Once entered, students are enrolled into the SSP for a minimum of one academic quarter.

The program features both Saturday and after school support for all students in need. The Saturday support sessions focus on credit recovery through tutoring and online course work using the online course warehouse Educere for both supports. The Saturday program also allows students to make up school hours they have missed with the aim of achieving the minimum attendance requirement. The after school support sessions use a study hall format to help students in need of assistance or remediation. Additional support is offered regularly by classroom teachers.

Students with severe emotional or behavioral needs that cannot be met through the support program are entered into the SAP process. In SAP, a team of counselors, administrators, and teachers work with students and parents to ensure that students receive all the social and emotional support they need.

### **Student Assessment - Attachments**

- Aggregate scores from local test data (benchmarks)
- PSSA report
- Aggregate scores from local test data
- 07-08 AYP results

### **Teacher Evaluation**

MBA teachers receive extensive support from school administration and support staff. The teachers are evaluated based on formal and informal classroom administrator observations, in addition to interactions and conversations outside the classroom. Curriculum coordinators and lead teachers also have input on teacher evaluations. Curriculum coordinators meet with their team on a weekly basis and complete observations throughout the school year. The achievement and assessment coordinator, assistant principal, and principal also meet with teachers during planning time and complete walkthrough observations monthly for each teacher. Administrators observe each teacher twice during the school year; the first is an announced observation and the second is an unannounced observation.

Teachers' performance is measured in five dimensions; curriculum implementation, student engagement, differentiation, cooperative learning, and teamwork. Each dimension is measured on a four-point scale ranging from 'beginning' to 'exemplary'. Towards the end of the school year (May) the assistant principal and principal meet with each teacher to review the final performance evaluation. This final evaluation meeting is an opportunity for the principal to review the evaluation with the teacher and for the teacher to ask any questions.

Over the past year our leadership has attended a number of professional conferences to improve ourselves and the school. Our curriculum and instruction team have attended the NCTM, NCTE, NCSS, NCS, and the International Reading Conference. Our ELL and sped team have attended numerous conferences provided by PATTAN throughout the school year. Our administration along with a few lead teachers attended the national ASCD Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana. In July our leadership team attended Kagan's Cooperative Learning Conference (KCLC) in Orlando, Florida. At the KCLC conference, the leadership team attended the following workshops: *Multiple Intelligence*, *Win-Win Discipline*, *Student Engagement in the Secondary Math classroom*, *Student Engagement in the Secondary Social Studies classroom*, *How to Create a Brain Friendly Classroom*, and ESL.

Cooperative learning/Student Engagement is an initiative at our school and we will continue a whole staff training with a Kagan trainer in August. The new teachers will receive a two-day training during induction and all staff will receive an additional two-day training the following week (August 25th). The leadership team will attend the Franklin Covey leadership training workshops while other staff members attend the "Seven Habits of Highly-Effective People" workshop.

MBA's administration takes great pride in offering these diverse opportunities for our leadership team to develop by staying informed of the latest educational best practices. These conferences allow our staff to interact with teachers and administrators from around the country and hear what is and what is not working in other schools and districts. Staff also have the chance to see the

new technology being introduced at the conferences. In addition to the conventional conferences and trainings, MBA also sends staff to turn-around trainings, where school representatives are sent to bring information back to the school to share with the staff.

Angela Villani- CEO  
Jana Somma- Principal  
Adrienne Davids - Junior Academy Assistant Principal  
Charles Priestley- Senior Academy Assistant Principal  
Stephanie Bungard - Director of Curriculum and Instruction

### **Teacher Evaluation - Attachment**

- Teacher Evaluation Form 2007-2008 & 2009

## **SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Leadership Changes**

The following changes occurred in school leadership structure of the school during the 2007-2008 school year:

- The senior academy assistant principal Siouda Chestnut resigned;
- Charles Priestley became our high school assistant principal. Prior to this position he was our junior academy assistant principal and a middle school Math teacher for six years at MBA;
- Adrienne Davids became our junior high assistant principal. Ms. Davids was our middle school Math teacher for five years.

The positions were posted and a diverse interview committee interviewed the candidates for the positions.

The following board changes occurred in September 2007. The members have remained the same but titles changes were voted and approved upon.

Virginia Neiswender- Board chair  
Colleen Davis- Vice Chair  
Tracy-Elizabeth Clay- Treasurer  
Dr. Jorge Santiago- Secretary

### **Board of Trustees**

<b>Name of Trustee</b>	<b>Office (if any)</b>
Virginia Neiswender	Board chair
Colleen Davis	Board vice chair
Ramon Dourado	Member
Tracy-Elizabeth Clay	Treasurer
Dr. Jorge Santiago	Secretary
Leah Popowich	Member

### **Professional Development (Governance)**

The school's solicitor has provided the board with a workshop outlining responsibilities under the Public Officials Act and also covered the following topics--Special Education laws, Right to Know,

Sunshine Law, Public Officials' & Employee Ethics and FERPA on April 16, 2008. The facilitators were Maria Ramola and Kevin McKenna from Latsha Davis Yohe and McKenna. On August 2, 2008, board chair and MaST founder, Karen Del Guercio is conducting a workshop on board governance.

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

The board holds publicly announced monthly governance meetings to discuss and implement the policies required for the school to effectively carry out its educational mission. Every other month, committees of the board meet to draft necessary policy documents, plan board-related activities that impact the school, and meet with school personnel to address on-site management issues or initiate planning for future school activities. The CEO makes a formal management report directly to the board at public meetings. Board members also communicate informally with the CEO on an ongoing basis in the event that a school-related activity requires the advice or input of board members in order to run smoothly and within the requirements of the law.

The Board of Trustees and the CEO maintains cordial and constructive relationships with the local School Districts board and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. When necessary, the board chair contacts the appropriate district and/or state personnel to consult on policy or operational questions.

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

- Board Meeting Schedule 08-09

## **Community and Parent Engagement**

In order to promote opportunities for community and parent engagement in school activities, the Board of Trustees of Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School (MBA) has appointed a full time Community Relations Director. As per the approved job description of the Director of School and Community Relations, the job purpose is as follows: ***Strengthening, creating and supporting the school and community's relationship. Serve as liaison for MBA with community stakeholders for communicating issues relevant to community and school concerns and issues.*** The community relations director has successfully created and cultivated new strategic alliances with community stakeholders and strengthened existing partnerships.

## **Staff Development**

The week before school begins, all new staff are taken on a neighborhood tour which concludes with lunch in a local community garden. During lunch, new staff members meet community leaders and the directors of community and youth service organizations. By familiarizing our staff with the culture of our neighborhood and the rich resources that are available to them, they are able to incorporate these resources into their classrooms.

## **Parental Engagement**

In the Fall of every academic year, MBA hosts Back to School Night for our families. Back to School Nights are festive environments that encourage dialogue and information sharing. On this night, we apprise our parents of all of the in-school and after-school activities that are available to them, the students and their siblings. We also use this opportunity to sign parents up to our parents association which is led by our parent representative on our Board of Trustees.

Mariana Bracetti Academy CS - Charter Annual Report

This past year, MBA has published and sent home quarterly newsletters that highlighted special events and activities. In addition, MBA has had a series of events that were organized in conjunction with the MBA Parent’s Association and Student Council. The Parents Association organizes an annual fundraiser in the early Fall, the proceeds of which were used to fund rewards for the students and new school equipment. Our parents are an integral part of all of our events. Following is an abbreviated summary of some of the highlights of the 2007-2008 academic year:

Event	Summary
Talent Festival	This past academic year, MBA held it’s first talent show. The show drew a capacity crowd was emceed by a celebrity DJ and judged by our partners in the community. Our judges included a staff member from State Senator Tartagione’s office, a police officer from our district, the executive directors from Corporate Alliance Drug Education, Norris Square Neighborhood Project, Motivos Magazine, Raices Culturales. Our parents held a baking contest and provided the food for the event.
Community Building Events	Every homebase advisory at MBA is charged with carrying out a community building event at the end of the school year. This year the seniors organized their second annual senior carnival for the entire school under the recurring theme: Peace - bringing people together build safe and non-violent communities. Our parents were integral in providing ideas for the carnival booths and food for the fundraising component.  Additionally, our 7 <sup>th</sup> grade class conducted a neighborhood street cleaning that was sponsored by State Senator Tartaglione, Hispanic Association of Contractors and Enterprises and other community groups. Pictures of these events are on our website: <a href="http://www.mbacs.org">www.mbacs.org</a>
Atrium Project	MBA is equipped with an atrium in our 8 <sup>th</sup> grade wing. Every year, our parents come together to help to maintain the garden with our students.
Red Cross Blood Drives	MBA hosts blood drives twice a year every December and April. Our blood drives are student organized, staffed by parent volunteers and attract donors from the community at large. Our 4 <sup>th</sup> blood drive in April of 2008 drew over 100 pints of blood.

**Community Engagement**

Mariana Bracetti Academy continued our successful outreach campaign from the preceding year. The main objective of the campaign was to strengthen partnerships with local non-profit youth service agencies, community development corporations and other stake holders. The success of our outreach effort has allowed us to affect the lives of our students by increasing our capacity to serve through joint efforts with our partners. Below is an abbreviated list of our partnerships.

Organization	Description
Boys and Girls Club (BGC) New Kensington	BGC has a chapter at MBA. BGC administers our afterschool programs.
Community Development Corporation (NKCDC)	In the Fall of 2007, we planted trees in front of our school. MBA hosts community meetings for NKCDC.
Red Cross	We had two successful blood drives on 12/07 and 4/08. Our blood drives are organized by a student committee.
Safe Haven Committee	This committee meets on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 10AM. The committee consists of representatives from local non-profits including: CADE, Shalom, EG, Phila. Weed and Seed, BGC, US Attorney's office, Norris Square Neighborhood Project, Lighthouse, and others. The objective of these meeting is to direct our efforts at prevention programs.
Deloitte & Touche	Deloitte employees serve as mentors for our seniors. This was the second year of our

## Mariana Bracetti Academy CS - Charter Annual Report

HACE	partnership with Deloitte. The Hispanic Association of Contractors and Enterprises (HACE) is a Community Develop Corporation that targets Eastern North Philadelphia. We continue to send student and staff volunteers for various clean-up and beautification efforts.
Wireless Philadelphia	Wireless Philadelphia is a non-profit that is charged with providing low-income residents of Philadelphia with technology to begin using wireless internet. In the Fall of 2007, MBA opened up a sign-up center for the Wireless Philadelphia service. Through our joint efforts, fifty families now have access to free wireless internet service.
Cardinal Bevilacqua Community Center (CBCC)	MBA serves on the safe-haven committee with CBCC. We continue use their facility for basketball games and graduation ceremonies. Additionally, one of our afterschool clubs visited the center weekly to teach the children at the center to dance.
Temple Youth Voices Project (YVP)	This year, MBA sent 4 student interns to participate in the YVP project . The students examined community issues and produced documentaries.
26 <sup>th</sup> Police District	The 26 <sup>th</sup> Police District has been a good community partner with us through the academic year. There have been three changes in leadership in our police district over the past year, but we continue to have a very fruitful relationship with them.
Congreso	In the summer of 2008, MBA hosted Congreso's entrepreneurship encampment. Over 2/3 of the students that participate come from MBA. They will spend one week at Villanova University and end the camp with a business expo.
University of Pennsylvania	NanoDay — every year a group of our high school students participate in Nano Day. The goal of NanoDay is to expose our students to the wonders of nanotechnology.  Robotics - Penn continues to sponsor our robotics program by providing us with mentors.  PCs to Seniors — Every year, Penn donates computers to our graduating seniors
Empowerment Group (EG)	SPARK! - a National Science Foundation grant administered through the collaborative efforts of Penn's Engineering and Education schools. SPARK! is an afterschool program that provides science enrichment to our middle school students.  Conducts afterschool entrepreneurship classes for our high school students.  Every year, the Empowerment Group teaches a class about entrepreneurship to our middle school students. The culminates in a business expo. Photos are available on our website.
Taller Puertorriqueno	Taller Puertorriqueno teaches an afterschool art class for our middle school students.

## SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

### Major fund-raising activities

The school's primary funding sources come from the state and federal funding streams allotted to public charter schools based upon student enrollment. The school has also received the following grant funding during the 2007-2008 school year:

- Safe Schools Initiative grant: \$17,090.00

- Best Buy Teacher grant (for classroom technology purchases): \$2,000.00
- Youth Literacy Grant (for student literacy club): \$500.00
- Children Can Shape the Future (funding to support expansion of the school's music program): \$4,937.00

In addition to these funds, the board continues to solicit funding for the school for ongoing support as well as scholarships for our graduating senior class.

## **Fiscal Solvency Policies**

**The Board of Trustees has adopted financial policies and procedures which include the topics - budgeting, accounting practices, procurement, contracts, internal control, cash management, grants management, time and attendance, contracted services, etc.**

**The school's budget, adopted in accordance with the timetable prescribed by the Commonwealth, serves as a blue print for financial decision making during the fiscal year. The budget provides for the educational, building and administrative needs of the school community and also includes a reserve for contingencies. All purchases and personnel decisions are reviewed for budgetary funds available prior to the issuance of a contract or purchase order.**

**The business office provides interim financial reporting for the board of trustees and CEO on a monthly basis. The business manager meets with the school administrative team regularly and attends all board and finance committee meetings. Through careful monitoring of expenditures and revenues the school is able to assure that all expenditure and revenue categories remain within budget.**

## **Accounting System**

**Santilli & Thomson, LLC provides accounting services to MBA per its agreement. Santilli & Thomson, LLC uses the Quickbooks financial system as the cornerstone of operations. The system meets both internal analysis requirements and external reporting needs.**

**The School has adopted the provision of Statement No. 34 ("Statement 34") of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board "*Basic Financial Statements — and Management's Discussion and Analysis — for State and Local Governments.*" Statement 34 established standards for external financial reporting for all state and local governmental entities, which includes a statement of net assets, a statement of activities and changes in net assets. It requires the classification of net assets into three components — invested in capital assets, net of related debt; restricted; and unrestricted. These calculations are defined as follows:**

- **Invested in capital assets, net of related debt — This component of net assets consists of capital assets, including restricted capital assets, net of accumulated depreciation and reduced by the outstanding balances of any bonds, mortgages, notes, or other borrowings that are attributable to the acquisition, construction, or improvement of those assets. If there are significant unspent related debt proceeds at year-end, the portion of the debt attributable to the unspent proceeds are not included in the calculation of invested in capital assets, net of related debt. Rather, that portion of the debt is included in the same net assets component as the unspent proceeds. The School presently has not incurred any related debt.**

- **Restricted** — This component of net assets consists of constraints placed on net asset use through external constraints imposed by creditors such as through debt covenants, grantors, contributors, or laws or regulations of other governments or constraints imposed by law through constitutional provisions or enabling legislation. The School presently has no restricted net assets.

- **Unrestricted net assets** — This component of net assets consists of net assets that do not meet the definition of “restricted” or “invested in capital assets, net of related debt.”

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

- SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES - PRELIMINARY STATEMENTS OF REVENUES, EXPENDITURES & FUND BALANCES FY 2008

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

The school’s auditing firm is Larson, Allen, Weishair & Co., LLP. The last audit is dated March 25, 2008 for fiscal year 2006-2007 with two findings.. It is impossible to submit an audit for 2007-2008 by August 1, 2008.

#### **Finding 07-01:**

**Criteria:** For the accrual basis of accounting, expenditures are to be recorded as incurred.

**Condition:** For the year ended June 30, 2006, rent for July 2006 was paid in June 2006 but was included in expenditures rather than as prepaid expense (\$127,400). Also, the School had leasehold improvements of \$240,000 which were properly capitalized. The School executed a note with Edison Schools for these improvements. At June 30, 2006, the note plus accrued interest totaled \$252,244. The note payable was properly recorded including accrued interest, however, it was also included in accounts payable with an offsetting charge to management fees.

**Questioned Costs:** None.

**Effect:** Expenditures were overstated for the year ended June 30, 2006 by \$379,624 and therefore, net assets at July 1, 2006 were understated by this amount.

**Cause:** There was a changeover of accounting services as of July 1, 2006 due to the termination of the management agreement with Edison Schools and accurate data was not available.

**Recommendation:** Closing procedures for the year should include verification of 12 months of certain expenditures such as rent and a review of the recording of debt transactions.

**Explanation of Disagreement with Audit Finding:** This finding relates to the fiscal year 2006 conversion of financial data from EMO provider (Edison Schools), which is a single one time event not expected to be repeated. No such findings were present during the audit year in question.

**Actions planned in Response to Findings:** The recommendation will be implemented.

## **Finding 07-02:**

**Criteria:** Agreements with an effect on the financial statements should be properly recorded.

**Condition:** An agreement relating to the management fee for Edison Schools executed in February 2006 was not reflected in the management fee expense recorded for the year ended June 30, 2006.

**Questioned Costs:** None.

**Effect:** Expenditures were overstated for the year ended June 30, 2006 by \$109,890 and therefore, net assets at July 1, 2006 were understated by this amount.

**Cause:** Management oversight.

**Recommendation:** Closing procedures for the year should include a review of significant documents to ensure that any financial statement effects are properly recorded.

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

**Actions planned in Response to Findings:** The recommendation will be implemented.

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

- Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School Financial Audit 06-07

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

The school has completed its 8<sup>th</sup> year of operation and has not been audited by the State Comptrollers Office.

## **SECTION VII. FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

The School leases classroom and office space in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. The lease ends October 2011. In June 2004, the lease was amended due to an additional expansion of space from 91,041 to 103,178 square feet to accommodate full enrollment of 1155 students. No further expansion or acquisition of facilities has occurred since.

Approximately expenditures this past year:

\$50K on replacement of damaged furniture, fixtures, and equipment.

\$50K to purchase computers, software, and network.

\$100K to modify/repair the building

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

Mariana Bracetti Academy Charter School leases a facility at 2501 Kensington Avenue. The current facility provides adequate space for the foreseeable future; the lease currently in place is within the limits of the school's future projected budgets and expires on April 30, 2011.

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

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

Our school designed a Crisis Management Plan that provides staff and faculty with critical information about what to do if an emergency should arise.

It is imperative that all staff and faculty members are prepared to respond to any crisis and have a clear understanding of their roles during an emergency situation. Violence prevention efforts and programs that address the personal and emotional needs of students help reduce the likelihood that a crisis will occur at our school. Our crisis management plan will ensure that the response to a crisis will be thorough and consistent and will disrupt the school routine as little as possible.

The Crisis Management Plan includes information about how to deal with any crisis that could occur on school grounds. This includes suicide, bomb threats, serious assaults on students or staff, kidnapping, natural disasters, an armed intruder or any situation that could occur that would place the safety of students and staff at risk.

Our school invites the local fire and police department to hold fire prevention, drug and alcohol, and safety assemblies yearly. In addition, our school holds monthly fire drills and quarterly weapons searches.

Our health and immunization records have been updated and kept on file. All new students must submit an updated immunization chart.

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

- Wellness Policy
- School Health 07-08

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

- General & Professional Liability
- Directors and Officers Liability
- Property and Contents
- Accident & Health
- Workmen's Compensation

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

- Insurance certificates 07-08
- Insurance certificate 08-09

## **SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS**

**Quality of Teaching and Other Staff**

At the end of the 2007-2008 school year, thirteen professional staff members resigned. One accepted an administrative position at a local charter school, two returned to graduate school full time, three left education, five relocated and two accepted teaching jobs closer to home. . Three teacher contracts were not renewed. This school year, MBA was able to retain the professional staff throughout the year. The majority of our teachers have been with us for the past six to seven school years.

**Quality of Teaching and Other Staff - Attachments**

- ESPP 2007-08
- PDE 414, page 1
- PDE 414, page 2

**Student Enrollment**

In mid March, our enrollment coordinator distributes Intent to Return forms to all students and parents. Out of (excludes seniors) students, responded that they were going to return. Once a student withdraws from our school, the parent and student meet with the CEO. Parents and students have chosen to withdraw from our school for various reasons ranging from relocation to non-compliance of the student code of conduct. Our population is also transient and many relocate to Puerto Rico.

**Description of Enrollment Procedures and Policies**

Parents/guardians fill-in a pre-registration card with name, address, phone number and grade level during our open enrollment. The school then mails the parent/guardian a registration packet that includes the authorization to request records from the previous school. When the packet is returned, the student is either accepted or placed on a waiting list depending on whether seats are available. If the student is accepted, the school registers the student in the School District of Philadelphia network and on the school's student information system. If the student is put on the waiting list, the parents/guardians are notified. Acceptance comes on a fist come first serve basis.

**Enrollment History for 2007-08**

Grade level	Number of students enrolled on 8/28/07	Number of students dropped	Number of students added	Transferring School
6	145	23	14	Julia De Burgos, Fairhill, Stetson, Potter Thomas, Clemente, Penn Treaty
7	197	22	1	Stetson, De Burgos, Fitzsimons, Jones, Phila. Comm. Academy
8	198	21	3	Central East, De Burgos, Shaw, Stetson, Potter Thomas
9	248	54	10	Benjamin Franklin,

				William Penn, Kensington, Northeast H.S., Central East, Edison
10	164	31	9	Benjamin Franklin, William Penn, Kensington, Northeast H.S., Central East,
11	112	19	8	Benjamin Franklin, William Penn, Kensington, Northeast H.S., Central East,
12	90	7	9	Benjamin Franklin, William Penn, Kensington, Northeast H.S., Central East,
Total	1154	187	55	

**Returning Students from 2007-08 school year**

The number of students that will return from the 2007-2008 school year is 980.

**Number of students who left voluntarily and who left at the requirement of the school**

The number of students who left voluntarily is 22 (for 08-09 school year) and the number who left at the request of the school is 20.

**Student Enrollment - Attachments**

- Special Ed enrollment procedures
- Enrollment policy

**Transportation**

Mariana Bracetti Academy is able to provide free trans-passes for all students in grades six to eight through the School District of Philadelphia. Two-hundred and thirty students throughout grades nine, ten, eleven and twelve qualified for free trans-passes. In the past year there was one student whose IEP required transportation and MBA has paid for it as required by law. There were nine transported by the School District of Philadelphia to Approved Private Schools. Students are also entitled to any services offered through the city of Philadelphia and SEPTA.

**Food Service Program**

Food services at Mariana Bracetti Academy are contracted for with the School District of Philadelphia. Nutritious breakfasts and lunches are provided. Families apply for free and reduced price meals through the FRL Program.

## **Student Conduct**

The discipline policy at Mariana Bracetti Academy has been carefully constructed to ensure the physical safety and emotional well-being of all its community members. In addition we have developed appropriate behavior support program for students in need.

Our students continue to progress both socially and morally. Their self-esteem is growing, as is their understanding of good citizenship. Student growth is supported through the school's Character Education curriculum, which is based on our school's core values around character and ethics. Education in character and ethics is about the application of student understandings to their own behavior. Learning the core values also provide opportunities to explore the reasons behind school and class policies and to provide instruction and practice to help students successfully live up to these and other expectations.

In the classroom, teachers are expected to integrate character education goals into their regular instruction and the daily homeroom period. This instructional time allows teachers to instruct, model, and monitor good character values in action for students. The core values provide a common set of attributes that can used in the following ways for classroom discussions:

- frame a lesson on moral questions behind a character's choices in a novel;
- the underlying principles behind a political idea, such as democracy or the creation of written laws;
- the courage of individuals in defying unjust systems.

Lastly, the school celebrates character education by scheduling monthly breakfast programs; a positive incentive program based on earning school dollars; monthly award assemblies and community service.

## **Due Process**

The Board recognizes that exclusion from the educational program is a severe sanction that is only imposed when a student is determined to have committed a prohibited act that warrants such a sanction under the School's discipline policy.

The CEO has the authority to impose short-term suspensions (up to 10 days). In such cases, the student shall be informed of reasons for suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of suspension need not be given when health, safety, or welfare of the school community is threatened. The student's parents shall be notified immediately in writing when the student is suspended. When a suspension exceeds three school days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing.

Expulsion (exclusion for more than 10 days) requires a formal hearing. During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the Board, the student shall be placed in his or her normal class except if it is determined after an informal hearing that the student's presence in his or her normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals, or welfare of others and it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension. Any student excluded from school for more than 10 days shall be provided with alternative education, which may include home study.

The formal hearing in expulsion cases shall observe all due process requirements, including notification of the charges in writing to the student and his or her parents; notice of the time and place of the hearing, sufficiently in advance to allow adequate preparation for it; a fair and impartial officer; the right to representation by counsel; the disclosure of the names of witnesses and the testimony they have made; the right to cross-examine such witnesses; the right to

present witnesses and testimony on the student's behalf; recordation of the proceedings and a copy of the transcript.

When issues of exclusion arise with respect to students with disabilities, the School shall observe all of the requirements of state and federal law, including those relating to stay put (especially as it relates to a pattern of suspensions exceeding 10 days), manifestation determination reviews, functional behavior assessments, and behavior intervention plans. In situations involving dangerousness, drugs, or weapons, the School may seek to place a special needs student in an interim alternative educational setting for up to 45 days.

**Student Conduct - Attachments**

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Final Discipline Report 07-08
- Student Handbook 07-08
- Discipline Special Ed student policy

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

**School Year: 2008**

The Mariana Bracetti Academy CS within Philadelphia IU 26 assures that the charter school will comply with the requirements of 22 PA Code Chapter 711 and with the policies and procedures of Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). PDE will specify, in writing, policies and procedures to be followed. Requests for any deviations from these regulations, policies, and procedures must be made in writing to PDE. The charter school assures:

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Board President**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

**Verify that all DATA reports to PDE are complete**

**YES** \_\_\_\_\_ **NO** \_\_\_\_\_

**SIGNATURE PAGE**

*Identify the charter school's Chief Executive Officer.*

**Name** Angela Villani

**Title** Ms.

**Phone** 215-525-3620

**Fax** 215-291-4985

**E-mail** avillani@mbacs.org

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*Signature of the Chief Executive Officer and Date*

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

**Name** Virginia Neiswender

**Title** Ms.

**Phone** 215-569-5439

**Fax** 215.832.5439

**E-mail** Neiswender@BlankRome.com

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

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

**Name** Tracey Macklin

**Title** Ms.

**Phone** 215-291-4436

**Fax** 215-291-4985

**E-mail** tmacklin@mbacs.org

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*Signature of the Special Education Contact Person and Date*

**Signature Page**

**Signature Page - Attachment**

- Signature Page