
Pennsylvania Department of Education



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

Charter Annual Report
Thursday, February 10, 2011
(Last Accepted: Thursday, February 10, 2011)

Entity: Philadelphia Montessori CS
Address: 2227 Island Rd
Philadelphia, PA 19142-1009

CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

Summary Data Part I

Charter School Annual Report Summary Data 2009 - 2010

Name of School: Philadelphia Montessori CS

Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval: March 17, 2004 initial / May 20, 2009 renewed for current term

Length of Charter: 1 year **Opening Date:** September 23, 2004

Grade Level: PK (3yrs) - 6th grade **Hours of Operation:** M-Th: 8:30 - 3:30; F: 8:30 - 2:15

Percentage of Certified Staff: 67% (year average) **Total Instructional Staff:** 22 (13 teachers, 9 assistants)

Student/Teacher Ratio: 17:1 (student:teacher) or 10:1 (student:adult) **Student Waiting List:** 216

Attendance Rate/Percentage: 93%

Second Site Address, Phone Number and Site Director:
N/A

Summary Data Part II

Enrollment: 226 (PreK-6) **Per Pupil Subsidy:** \$8,183.58 (for regular ed), \$17,788.75 (special ed.)

Student Profile

American Indian/Alaskan Native:	0
Asian/Pacific Islander:	1
Black (Non-Hispanic):	200 (88.5%)
Hispanic:	5 (2.2%)
White (Non-Hispanic):	4 (1.8%)
Multicultural:	16 (7.1%)

Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch:
92%

Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December: 42

Instructional Days and Hours

Number of:	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (F.Time)	Elem.	Middle.	Sec.	Total
Instructional Days	0	0	181	181	0	0	181
Instructional Hours	0	0	1010.75	1010.75	0	0	1010.75

SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Educational Community

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School (PMCS) is currently the only public Montessori school serving children from preschool through sixth grade in the city. Montessori is a child-centered educational approach which highlights student autonomy and problem-solving skills, hands-on learning, and student initiated learning. The curriculum emphasizes topics which are of interest to the students, with subjects studied in depth. The ability to do this is grounded by the fact that students remain with the same teacher for three years in multi-age classrooms. Peace education and the interdependence of all things are at the core of the Montessori curriculum.

The school opened in 2004 with preschool through third grade, and has added a grade each year. During the 2009-10 school year, PMCS graduated its third class of sixth graders. PMCS is located near the corner of two busy streets in Southwest Philadelphia — Island and Woodland Avenues — less than ten minutes from the Philadelphia International Airport. During the 2009-10 school year, PMCS enrolled 226 students in prekindergarten through sixth grade, while maintaining a sizable waiting list. The majority of our students come from the following zip codes: 19142, 19143, 19151 and 19153, although we do attract students from throughout the city.

Mission

The mission of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School is to provide early elementary school children in Philadelphia with a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, innovative educational environment that will enable them to become young adults possessing strong self-discipline, independent and analytical thinking skills, and an enduring love of learning.

Vision

The overarching vision of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School is to offer a fully implemented Montessori program in an urban, public school setting. Building on the School District of Philadelphia's history of Montessori education — the School District has implemented Montessori programs in some variations at the Thomas Mifflin School, Alexander Wilson School, William C. Longstreth School and Overbrook Elementary School — the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School will offer a program for students ages 3 to 12 in which the Montessori method is implemented by specially trained teachers who pay special attention to the unique developmental needs of individual students.

Shared Values

The core beliefs and values of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School:

1) Focus on Education for Life:

The purpose of PMCS goes beyond helping students to acquire basic academic skills. Students should graduate with both academic skills and the ability to act independently, think analytically, resolve conflicts peacefully, and realize their responsibility to others and to our world.

2) Student-Centered Classrooms:

Following the Montessori method, PMCS gives children, within a controlled environment, the freedom to choose their own activities. This stems from the belief that children learn by doing, and this requires movement and spontaneous investigation. Individualized "lesson plans" are developed for each child based on observations of the child's previous skill attainment. Each child is given lessons at his/her own developmentally appropriate level in all subject areas. Lessons are re-presented until the child attains mastery. Presentations and teacher follow-up establish the foundation for spontaneous choice.

3) Specially Trained Teachers:

Because of the unique role of the teacher in the Montessori classroom, the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School requires its teachers to have undergone specific Montessori education, which includes rigorous training in child development, psychology, observation, student teaching, use of Montessori materials, and classroom management.

4) Multi-Age Classrooms:

The charter school organizes children in multi-age class groupings that correspond with the developmental stages of childhood (ages 3-6 and 6-9) rather than traditional grade groupings (K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd). Younger students are stimulated by older role models, who in turn blossom with the responsibilities of leadership. Students not only learn *with* each other, but also *from* each other.

5) **Prepared Environment:**

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School has carefully prepared each classroom environment to reinforce the children's independence and intellectual development.

Rather than rows of desks, the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School's classrooms are set up to facilitate student discussion and stimulate collaborative learning.

6) **Montessori Materials:**

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School uses hands-on Montessori learning materials (other than textbooks and workbooks) that are designed to stimulate the child into logical thought and discovery. The materials are provocative and simple; each carefully designed to appeal to children at a given level of development. Each material isolates and teaches one thing or is used to present one skill at a time, as the child is ready.

7) **Focus on Peace Education:**

In the Montessori classroom, peace education is not taught as a separate curriculum but is the unifying thread throughout the child's academic, social and emotional experience in the classroom. It is "taught" through the interactions between teacher and child, child and child(ren), and children and their use of the materials in the environment. Children are taught continually to respect everyone and everything in the environment and to solve problems through peaceful means. At the elementary level, children will move from the ability to solve problems in their own classroom into a growing understanding, compassion, and tolerance for their world.

Academic Standards

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School has a Primary through 6th grade PA Academic Standard-aligned Montessori curriculum, which has been in place since the school's opening. In 2009-10, as part of our extensive educational reform efforts, PMCS created a scope sequence curriculum, so that teachers in multi-year classrooms will be aware of the eligible content at each grade level throughout the year.

A brief synopsis of the minimum requirements of our school in order to be promoted from one grade level to the next is included in this section of the report. This is not a full description of our academic standards.

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School groups children in three year, developmental age groups: (3-6 years), (6-9 years), and (9-12 years). These are roughly equivalent to preschool - kindergarten, 1st - 3rd grade, and 4th - 6th grade. Below are the minimum academic requirements for moving from kindergarten to first grade, from 3rd grade to 4th grade, and for graduation from 6th grade. During the 2009-10 school year, this document was shared with and actively reviewed by all instructional staff on numerous occasions, during professional development meetings on topics of monitoring individual student progress, portfolio assessment, and student promotion and retention. As a result, one student will spend an additional developmental year in kindergarten during 2009-10. We will also be revisiting these criteria this

year to ensure students meeting our promotion standards will be successful in the next grade. In addition, these criteria are tied to the Montessori curriculum. When revisiting the criteria, we will also take into consideration how the criteria compare to state anchors in math and reading.

Criteria for Moving from the Primary (3 years - 6 years/kindergarten) Level to the Elementary (6 years/1st grade - 9 years/3rd grade) Level:

At the end of his first three years (i.e. equivalent to kindergarten completion), the child will be proficient in the following areas:

Academic Areas

Language

The child will:

- Be able to read phonetic words, identify a variety of sight words and recognize consonant blends in words.
- Be able to read level-one easy readers.
- Be aware of the function of words and describe them as action, descriptive, naming, connective or positional words (i.e. verb, adjective, noun, etc.).
- Be able to express his/her thoughts in writing and have the hand and finger dexterity to use pencils as instruments for writing.

Mathematics

The child will:

- Be able to count from 1-100 or beyond.
- Be able to identify tens and teens.
- Be able to identify units, tens, hundreds, thousands.
- Be able to add and subtract (with concrete materials) single digit problems.
- Be able to add and subtract (with concrete materials) complex numbers up to 9,000.
- Be able to count by 2's, 3's, 4's, 5's, 6's, 7's, 8's, 9's, and 10's up to 100.
- Have an understanding of addition and subtraction.

Geography

The child will:

- Have some knowledge of the 7 continents, their names and locations.
- Know some simple facts about the people from each continent, their houses, common customs, common religions and livelihoods.
- Will have a developing concept of land and water forms.

Nonacademic Areas

The child will:

- Have a sense of process (be able to follow multi-step directions).
- Have a well-developed sense of order (organization) and control of movement (fine and gross motor skills).
- Be able to concentrate on a task for at least 45 minutes.
- Have developed a good degree of self-control.

Because there is some overlap between the 3-6 curriculum and the 6-9 curriculum, children who have not mastered everything in each area of the curriculum can often be promoted because the receiving teacher will be able to address the skills that have not yet been attained.

Criteria for Moving from the Elementary Level (6-9) to the Elementary (9-12)

At the end of the second three-year curriculum (i.e. when leaving the third grade), the child will be proficient in the following areas:

Academic Areas

Language

The child will:

- Be reading at or above the grade level appropriate for his age.
- Have an understanding of and ability to apply the rules of grammar and syntax.
- Be able to produce a finished piece of writing having gone through rough draft, editing, polishing the piece.

Mathematics

The child will:

- Be able to count from 1-1000 and beyond.
- Be able to use math operations in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division using complex numbers.
- Be able to read and solve math word problems and describe the process used.
- Have an understanding of squares and cubes of numbers, and multiples of numbers.
- Understand basic geometric principles

Geography

The child will:

- Have in-depth knowledge of the 7 continents; comparing them in size and population.
- Have begun to study a particular continent in depth, including its countries.
- Have a working knowledge of the United States.
- Have made a state book for each of the 50 states.
- Have identified land and water forms on various maps of the world.

A child of 9 will be able to select an area of study, know how to research it and organize the information in at least one way to produce a finished product.

Nonacademic Areas

The child will:

- Have a well-developed sense of process.
- Have a well-developed sense of right and wrong.
- Be able to accept responsibility for his/her behavior.
- Be able to solve conflicts peacefully.

Criteria for Graduating from the 6th Grade at PMCS:

At the end of six years in the PMCS elementary program, the child will be able to:

Academic Areas

Language

The child will:

- Be reading at the appropriate grade level or above.
- Have an understanding of noun and adjective classification, compound and complex sentences.
- The child will have completed an in-depth study of literature and have developed an appreciation of style.
- Be able to express thought through various forms of writing: persuasive, expository, narrative, poetry, etc.

Mathematics

The child will:

- Have an understanding of squaring and cubing, negative numbers, powers of numbers, non-decimal bases, ratio and proportion, and algebra.

Geography

The child will:

- Have an understanding of the nature of the elements.
- Have an understanding of the relationship between the sun and the Earth.
- Have an understanding of the work of air and water.
- Have an understanding of the interdependencies of people.
- Have knowledge of natural resources and the development of industry.

The child of 12 will be able to select several areas of study, know how to research an area using many kinds of sources, and have the ability to organize the information in several ways according to the subject.

Nonacademic Areas

The child will:

- Be able to work independently.
- Be able to help younger children organize a project.
- Be able to mediate problems between other children.

Strengths and Challenges

On May 20, 2009, the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School was granted an unprecedented one-year charter renewal term (as opposed the traditional five), with the understanding that we would have one additional year to demonstrate the quality of our educational program and the ability of our program to successfully raise student achievement.

The 2009-10 school year has, consequently, been a year of strategic planning and strategic reform at our Montessori school, which resulted in a year of many successes.

Our Successes

1. Achieving AYP

Philadelphia Montessori is thrilled to announce that we made AYP in 2010! PMCS students have shown dramatic improvements in PSSA scores over the last two years. In 2010, 33.7% of Philadelphia Montessori students scored at or above proficient on the Math PSSA Exam. This represents a 9.3% increase over 2008-2009 results and a 25.7% increase over results two years ago when only 8% of our students met proficiency in 2007-2008. Improvements in reading have been more modest with an increase of 4.6% since 2008. PMCS is implementing a reading curriculum in 2010-2011 to accelerate the improvements in reading scores.

School Year	Math PSSA % Proficient or Better	Reading PSSA % Proficient or Better
2010	33.7%	28.9%
2009	24.4%	24.4%
2008	8%	24.3%
2007	6%	14%
2006	3%	5%
2005	10%	7%

While we are thrilled that PMCS students have shown dramatic improvements on PSSA scores and achieved AYP in 2010, our excitement is tempered by the fact that we still have a long way to go before we are at the expected levels of achievement. We understand that more than two-thirds of the students are still struggling to perform at grade level on the PSSA in math and reading, which is why we have implemented the actions identified previously in order to improve student achievement.

2. Continued Belief In the Montessori Model - PMCS gives children, within a controlled environment, the freedom to choose their own activities. This is based on the belief that children learn by doing, which requires movement and spontaneous investigation. Children may select an activity and work with it as long as they wish, so long as they do not disturb anyone or damage anything, and they put it back where it belongs when they are finished. Both the teacher and the Montessori materials help to facilitate this child-directed learning. Individualized "lesson plans" are developed for each child based on the child's previous skill attainment. Each child is given lessons at his/her own developmentally appropriate level in all subject areas. Lessons are re-presented until the child attains mastery. Presentations and teacher follow-up establish the foundation for spontaneous choice.

3. Data Based-Instruction — PMCS has realized the importance of using data to track their student's progress to inform instruction and school programming. In 2009-2010, Philadelphia Montessori continued to implement the Study Island benchmarking system. Study Island is based on Pennsylvania content standards and the PSSA assessment. Students at PMCS completed the assessment three times throughout the year. Additionally, students in grades K-3 were given the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). Students in grades 3-6 took the Developmental Reading Assessment, 2nd Edition (DRA). Both tests are administered three times a year to evaluate literacy skills, from letter recognition to reading comprehension. Teachers and administrators used the information to guide student groupings, lesson plans, and teaching strategies. Additionally, the results were vital in identifying students who were performing below level and needed intervention.

4. Balanced Literacy Approach — Through the past several years we have refined our literacy curriculum to apply direct instruction methods to address our students' deficiencies in literacy skills while maintaining the spirit of the Montessori model. The school has the raw materials (a full guided reading library, SRA kits for all classrooms, American Reading Company leveled libraries in every classroom, Montessori reading materials in the preschool classrooms to teach phonetic skills, YET after-school reading program which uses a balanced literacy approach with 50 children, Wilson Reading Program to reinforce basic skills with young struggling readers) and the expertise at the leadership level to build a successful literacy program.

The substantial tension between our Montessori model and a more traditional pedagogical approach became apparent in the 2003 charter application: our

concentration upon explaining the nature of the child-centered, holistic, process-oriented Montessori method overshadowed the accountability plan, which addressed the national emphasis on testing and assessment in public schools. Our clear intentions were to deploy our resources towards implementation of the Montessori design. However, over the last five years, we have become fully aware that we must adopt a two-pronged educational approach: continuing to develop and embrace the Montessori philosophy, and finding innovative ways to integrate and apply methodologies which can boost the requisite high-stakes testing results.

Accordingly, over the last 3 years, we have adopted a portfolio of intervention strategies, programs, and staffing changes, all of which have been developed and implemented to create a balanced approach for improving test scores and maintaining the Montessori environment. We have built a culture at PMCS which features great amounts of individual teacher contact with students and their families, while at the same time, we are adapting the curriculum to meet the core needs of students, a high proportion of which entered PMCS with remedial and/or disciplinary issues.

Opportunities:

Recruit Highly Qualified Teachers with Montessori Training - In order to meet the Highly Qualified Teacher requirements and certification requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act, we have sometimes had to hire state certified teachers who were not fully familiar with the Montessori curriculum. Although these are often gifted teachers, there is a great adjustment to the rubrics and culture of the Montessori model, particularly because Montessori teacher training is hands-on and requires hours of practice with the hands-on materials that teach abstract concepts in a concrete manner. Moreover, there are no traditional textbooks for an untrained teacher to rely upon as direct instruction models, and furthermore, there are limited Montessori-certified training programs across the country. We are fortunate to have a training program for primary teachers (Preschool — Kindergarten) in Philadelphia at Chestnut Hill College, and for elementary teachers, the closest high quality programs are in Baltimore, Maryland or New Rochelle, New York. We have actively encouraged our non-Montessori certified teachers to seek this training, but the logistics and costs to do so have become obstacles to completing this particular objective. At this writing, we have two Teaching Assistants going through the Montessori program at Chestnut Hill College. We expect that both of them will be supported through the state-sponsored TEACH program.

Student and teacher attrition - The performance objectives defined in our Charter are (1) Students will become competent, independent readers; (2) Students will become effective oral and written communicators; (3) Children will be able to reason mathematically and think scientifically, and effectively present their thinking in these disciplines to others. In order to accomplish these objectives, we expected to see gains

from students who had been with us for at least three years. When the charter was written, we did not anticipate the volume of student and teacher attrition that we have experienced. Over the last 5 years, attrition has become a key variable in determining the continuity and quality of student learning and school climate. In our case, of the 102 second through sixth graders who took the Terra Nova and PSSA in reading in math last year only 63% had been with us for three years. Ideally, a Montessori student/teacher relationship would form over the 3-year cycle, allowing both parties to understand how to tackle specific learning challenges and to create a trusting environment. During our December 2008 parent focus groups, it became apparent that very strong student-teacher-parent affinities have formed, and that the longevity of those relationships matter greatly in the child's overall progress. Anecdotally, two of the founders of this school (the CEO Kathleen Dzura and a former board member, Colleen Mele) taught Montessori together at Longstreth Elementary School in Philadelphia. Children who remained in that small program from the time they were three years old through the third grade tested significantly higher on the PSSA's in third grade than other students in the same elementary school and higher than the city average.

We attribute teacher attrition to the growing pains of fitting the Montessori model into the public education paradigm. We have lost state certified teachers either because they were not able to easily access Montessori training, or who were not comfortable with the Montessori model. We have also lost Montessori certified teachers who were not accustomed to teaching in an urban school.

Despite the aforementioned factors, our expectations have not been lowered for student achievement. Rather, these issues have served to refocus our intervention strategies so that we will be able to address these root causes and meet our stated academic goals in the next 2-3 school years. Intervention strategies are described later in this document.

SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Strategic Planning Process

a.) List the main features of the school's teacher evaluation plan.

During the 2009-2010 school year, Dale Kelley conducted formal observations of our teachers. PDE forms 426 and 5501 were used. The forms cover the following categories and performance:

- Planning and preparation
- Classroom environment
- Instructional delivery
- Professionalism

Observations include a meeting between observer and teacher to discuss the results of the observation. If a teacher does not receive a satisfactory rating, they are given a corrective plan and are re-evaluated in approximately two weeks.

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

- Dale Kelly, CEO of Philadelphia Charter School, conducted all the teacher evaluations.

c.) Describe professional development for the evaluators, particularly in the areas of Special Education and instructional techniques, that is unique to the mission of the charter school.

Ms./Dr. Kelly has a Master of Science in Educational Leadership and holds a K-12 Principal Certification.

Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Anne Arfaa	Teacher / Founder	Elementary School Teacher	Kathleen Dzura
Bourne Ruthrauff	PMCS - Board member	Board Member	Board of Trustees
Dale Kelly-CEO	PMCS	Administrator	Board of Trustees
Jill Fisher	PMCS - Board member	Board Member	Board of Trustees
Julie Stapleton Carol	Foundations	Administrator	Board of Trustees
Letty M. Rising	PMCS	Administrator	Board of Trustees
Nicole Walker	PMCS - Board member, parent	Parent	Sue Manix
Pauline Sachar	PMCS - Early Childhood Teacher	Regular Education Teacher	Teachers
Sue Manix	Philadelphia Montessori Charter School	Board Member	Kathleen Dzura

Goals, Strategies and Activities

***Goal:* ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT - MATHEMATICS**

Description: At least 63% of all students in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 will be proficient in Mathematics, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments. In the event that we have not achieved 63% proficiency, our secondary progress goal will be at least a 10% reduction each year in the percentage of these students not proficient in math as measured by PSSA assessments or we will meet AYP in math via the growth model.

Strategy: Data Driven Instruction

Description: Disaggregating data to identify strengths and weaknesses. Use the summative and formative assessment data together to implement strategic, targeted, focused instructional interventions to improve student learning.

Activity: Benchmark Assessments

Description: Students in the 9-12 year old classrooms take the Study Island Benchmark Test. This program is a web-based instructional program that is aligned to the PSSA and Pennsylvania Benchmarks.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Creating detailed student observational records

Description: PMCS teachers are trained to be keen observers and diagnosticians and are constantly making decisions based on observational assessment. Our teachers keep careful records documenting the lessons a child has received, the practice they have completed, and the level of mastery the child has achieved. This is the main form of assessment that our teachers use to inform their planning and instruction.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Curriculum Team

Description: A curriculum team consisting of the CEO, Director of Montessori, and PMCS teachers will revisit the curriculum and ensure that content is grade and age appropriate. The team will utilize samples of effective and rigorous curriculums from other high performing Montessori public/charter schools. All instructional and curriculum planning will be “begin with the end in mind”; clear measurable benchmarks will be identified at each grade level in order to ensure the preparedness for the next grade and the students’ success upon moving to middle school from PMCS. Additionally, the Director of Montessori will ensure that an array of instructional materials is available in all classrooms from primary through 6th grade.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2010	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Effective Instruction

Description: Student achievement depends on high quality teaching. Invest time in monitoring instructional practices and providing for professional development as means of raising student achievement.

Activity: Montessori Made Manageable Program

Description: In 2009-2010, PMCS continued the implementation of the Montessori Made Manageable program, which entails daily practice pages in math and language problems that are assigned as homework or classroom reinforcement and are aligned with state standards.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 8/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Provide more hands-on learning opportunities in the classroom.

Description: Teachers will provide more hands-on learning opportunities for students to increase student engagement and develop inquiry skills.

Activity: Montessori Math Curriculum

Description: In the lower elementary grades, we will continue to use Montessori Math which utilizes exercises that give sensorial foundations for counting, arithmetic, geometry, algebra, and fractions of whole numbers. In the elementary class stories are told and experiments carried out

to show children how humans used their imaginations in the past, and how they are using them today, to solve problems and come up with great inventions—the use of fire, measuring the earth, compasses, boats, and many others. They see how inventions, geometry and math came about as the result of human progress, to meet specific needs.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Saxon Math

Description: For grades 4-6, we use Saxon Math, a teaching method for incremental learning of mathematics. It involves teaching a new mathematical concept every day and constantly reviewing old concepts. The day's work is typically split evenly between practicing the new material and reviewing old material. Its primary strength is in a steady review of all previous material, which is especially important to students who struggle with retaining the math they previously learned. Currently, PMCS has a limited edition of Saxon Math.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2010	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Support students identified as "at-risk."

Description: Provide additional support for students that are identified as "at-risk."

Activity: Employ a Full-Time Art Therapist

Description: Since our second year, we have always employed a full-time art therapist who has serviced on the average of 20 — 26 children annually. Our art therapist uses art and creative processes that enable students to increase a student's coping skills so that he/she can more effectively manage himself/herself in the overall school environment. Students are usually referred by either teachers, the principal, or the art therapist, for the service support. Parents receive a letter that identifies reasons for referral, service goals, objectives, as part of an art therapy support plan. Students may be placed in individual one-to-one sessions or a group setting depending on the needs of the student and space availability.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Provide a Comprehensive Student Assistance Program (CSAP)

Description: PMCS' Comprehensive Student Assistance Program (CSAP) supports students who were identified by teachers or parents as having concerning behavioral or academic challenges. CSAP added structure to an informal process that was already occurring in our school and helped to define which situations could best be supported by art therapy, counseling, targeted academic interventions by the regular classroom teacher, targeted academic interventions outside of the regular classroom or an evaluation for special education services.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 8/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: SES Tutoring

Description: Students participated in after school tutoring in reading, writing and mathematics. T Providers included: One-on-One Tutoring Company (which provided services at our school after school hours); Sylvan Learning Center, Huntingdon Learning Center, Club Z In-Home Tutoring, and Intellectual Pursuits.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Summer School

Description: PMCS offers a Summer School for students who need additional academic support. Students attended the program from 8:30 to 3:00 Monday - Thursday. Mornings were highly structured academic curriculum to master discrete skills. Afternoons used fun activities and learning games to reinforce concepts. Children also participated in art, physical education and ballroom dance to make summer learning fun. Breakfast and lunch were served and busing was provided.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Test Preparation

Description: Provide explicit test prep to all students to increase familiarity with PSSA and provide opportunity to show their mastery math, reading, writing, and science content using Study Island, a web-based program that is aligned with the PSSA. This is especially important for PMCS students who do not take standardized tests on a regular basis.

Activity: Study Island

Description: Computers were installed in each elementary classroom and a license with Study Island was secured, and students continued to work with this test preparation program in 2009-2010. Study Island is an online program which supports both math and reading skills and which prints regular reports on student progress toward proficiency.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 8/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Goal: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT - READING

Description: At least 72% of all students will be proficient in Reading, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments. In the event that we have not achieved 72% proficiency, our secondary progress goal will be at least a 10% reduction each year in the % of students not proficient in reading as measured by PSSA.

Strategy: Data Driven Instruction

Description: Disaggregating data to identify strengths and weaknesses. Use the summative and formative assessment data together to implement strategic, targeted, focused instructional interventions to improve student learning.

Activity: Administer the DIBELS Exam

Description: PMCS administered the DIBELs test to students in grades K-3 and any deficits shown are addressed with more intensified use of Montessori materials.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Benchmark Assessments

Description: Students in the 9-12 year old classrooms take the Study Island Benchmark Test. This program is a web-based instructional program that is aligned to the PSSA and Pennsylvania Benchmarks.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Creating detailed student observational records

Description: PMCS teachers are trained to be keen observers and diagnosticians and are constantly making decisions based on observational assessment. Our teachers keep careful records documenting the lessons a child has received, the practice they have completed, and the level of mastery the child has achieved. This is the main form of assessment that our teachers use to inform their planning and instruction.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Curriculum Team

Description: A curriculum team consisting of the CEO, Director of Montessori, and PMCS

teachers will revisit the curriculum and ensure that content is grade and age appropriate. The team will utilize samples of effective and rigorous curriculums from other high performing Montessori public/charter schools. All instructional and curriculum planning will be “begin with the end in mind”; clear measurable benchmarks will be identified at each grade level in order to ensure the preparedness for the next grade and the students’ success upon moving to middle school from PMCS. Additionally, the Director of Montessori will ensure that an array of instructional materials is available in all classrooms from primary through 6th grade.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2010	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Literacy skill diagnosing and benchmarking

Description: PMCS used the DRA I test for grades K-3 and DRA II for grades 4-6. The test is used to determine the reading level of the student. Teachers use the data to great reading groups, create lesson plans and interventions. Additionally, the test provides an approximate grade level that is easily communicated to parents and guardians.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kathleen Dzura	Start: 8/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Effective Instruction

Description: Student achievement depends on high quality teaching. Invest time in monitoring instructional practices and providing for professional development as means of raising student achievement.

Activity: Balanced Literacy Approach

Description: Through the past several years we have refined our literacy curriculum to apply direct instruction methods to address our students’ deficiencies in literacy skills while maintaining the spirit of the Montessori model. The school has the raw materials (a full guided reading library, SRA kits for all classrooms, American Reading Company leveled libraries in every classroom, Montessori reading materials in the preschool classrooms to teach phonetic skills, YET after-school reading program which uses a balanced literacy approach with 50 children, Wilson Reading Program to reinforce basic skills with young struggling readers) and the expertise at the leadership level to build a successful literacy program.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 8/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Fully Implementing the Great Lessons

Description: PMCS will implement the Great Lessons, which are the basis for the Montessori science and social studies curriculum. The CEO will assemble a team of Montessori elementary teachers to plan for a shared teaching of the Great Lessons. There are five Great Lessons. Teams of teachers and assistants will learn one lesson well, and deliver it in each elementary classroom with other teachers observing and taking notes. Then lesson plans, feedback, and ideas will be shared during team meetings. Eventually, all teachers will be able to deliver all great lessons.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Harcourt StoryTown

Description: Harcourt Storytown- A core reading program will be implemented for grades 1-6. Storytown offers:

- Explicit instructional strategies for Phonemic awareness, phonics and high-frequency words, reading fluency, robust vocabulary, and comprehension skills and strategies.
- Instructional sequences coordinated within the daily lesson plan and by strand of instruction.
- Abundant resources that provide practice opportunities (guided and independent practice activities, decodable books, practice books, small-group instruction, spelling practices books, phonics practice book, and grammar practice books).
- Student materials aligned with instruction.
- An instructional design that considers time allocation.
- Resources for three types of assessments that inform instruction (Entry-Level Assessment, Ongoing Assessments, Summative Assessments).
- Technology components that support instruction.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2010	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Activity: Literacy Coach

Description: In 2009-2010, PMCS hired a literacy coach. The coach is responsible for providing professional development for teachers on guided readings, reading conferences and building literacy skills.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 8/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Montessori Made Manageable Program

Description: In 2009-2010, PMCS continued the implementation of the Montessori Made Manageable program, which entails daily practice pages in math and language problems that are assigned as homework or classroom reinforcement and are aligned with state standards.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 8/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: SRA Reading Labs

Description: PMCS purchased McGraw Hill's SRA reading laboratory that provides a wide range of reading levels that enables all students to learn independently and at their own pace.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Students Perform a Weekly Poem

Description: PMCS students are required to memorize and perform a poem each week.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Support students identified as "at-risk."

Description: Provide additional support for students that are identified as "at-risk."

Activity: 100 Book Challenge

Description: YET has been so successful in improving student progress that we have purchased \$20,000 worth of 100 Book Challenge books and we are mandating that there is at least a 1 hour literacy block in the classroom daily following the YET model where all children are participating either in guided reading using the scholastic books or in independent reading using the 100 Book Challenge books. 100 Book Challenge aligns all of the existing reading materials and assessment tools using one simple color-coded leveling platform, keyed to Common Core Standards, that students, teachers, and parents can understand and use to ensure every student is making expected progress towards proficiency.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Bi-Weekly Reading Interventions

Description: Students identified as reading below level were pulled out as individual or small groups twice a week to receive reading interventions by our Special Education teachers. DRA and Study Island data was used to identify skills to target.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Employ a Full-Time Art Therapist

Description: Since our second year, we have always employed a full-time art therapist who has serviced on the average of 20 — 26 children annually. Our art therapist uses art and creative processes that enable students to increase a student's coping skills so that he/she can more effectively manage himself/herself in the overall school environment. Students are usually referred by either teachers, the principal, or the art therapist, for the service support. Parents receive a letter that identifies reasons for referral, service goals, objectives, as part of an art therapy support plan. Students may be placed in individual one-to-one sessions or a group setting depending on the needs of the student and space availability.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Implement Wilson Reading Program

Description: PMCS implemented the Wilson reading at the primary level for children who are failing to progress adequately in the Montessori model. The Wilson reading program directly addresses student decoding and spelling skills. Through a set of activities students gain early literacy skills that build their vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 8/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Provide a Comprehensive Student Assistance Program (CSAP)

Description: PMCS' Comprehensive Student Assistance Program (CSAP) supports students who were identified by teachers or parents as having concerning behavioral or academic challenges. CSAP added structure to an informal process that was already occurring in our school and helped to define which situations could best be supported by art therapy, counseling, targeted academic interventions by the regular classroom teacher, targeted academic interventions outside of the regular classroom or an evaluation for special education services.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 8/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: SES Tutoring

Description: Students participated in after school tutoring in reading, writing and mathematics. Providers included: One-on-One Tutoring Company (which provided services at our school after school hours); Sylvan Learning Center, Huntingdon Learning Center, Club Z In-Home Tutoring, and Intellectual Pursuits.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Student Reading Conferences

Description: Teachers meet with students to discuss benchmarks and progress towards goals. Conferences also included coaching and guided practice.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Summer School

Description: PMCS offers a Summer School for students who need additional academic support. Students attended the program from 8:30 to 3:00 Monday - Thursday. Mornings were highly structured academic curriculum to master discrete skills. Afternoons used fun activities and learning games to reinforce concepts. Children also participated in art, physical education and ballroom dance to make summer learning fun. Breakfast and lunch were served and busing was provided.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Youth Education for Tomorrow

Description: The YET Program stands for Youth Education for Tomorrow. This is a Literacy Initiative in partnership with Public/Private Ventures. The program operated four days a week (M-Th) after school for 2 hours. Children participated in a balanced literacy curriculum including: Read Alouds, Shout Outs, Journal Writing, 100 Book Challenge independent reading, and more. Reading was assessed using the IRI assessment. This is a city-wide program and our average daily attendance was above average. YET always does one exceptional group project, and this year was no different. The children put on a "Living Library" where they researched a favorite character in a fiction or non-fiction book, created a science-fair-like demonstration board, dressed up fully in costume and prepared oral presentations to give to parents, teachers, students and board members who attended. We had students dressed as a piece of broccoli, a volcano, Harriet Tubman, Maya Lin (creator of the Vietnam Memorial), and the lead character in the book Bud, not Buddy, a cat, three fluorescent jellyfish, Babe Ruth, and an immigrant on Ellis Island, among many others.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Test Preparation

Description: Provide explicit test prep to all students to increase familiarity with PSSA and provide opportunity to show their mastery math, reading, writing, and science content using Study Island, a web-based program that is aligned with the PSSA. This is especially important for PMCS students who do not take standardized tests on a regular basis.

Activity: Study Island

Description: Computers were installed in each elementary classroom and a license with Study Island was secured, and students continued to work with this test preparation program in 2009-2010. Study Island is an online program which supports both math and reading skills and which prints regular reports on student progress toward proficiency.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 8/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Goal: ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT - SCIENCE (4th grade as measured on the PSSAs)

Description: Although the state has not set a goal for the PSSA science exam we will continue to show improvement in 4th grade by decreasing the percentage of students scoring below proficiency by 5% over year prior.

Strategy: Data Driven Instruction

Description: Disaggregating data to identify strengths and weaknesses. Use the summative and formative assessment data together to implement strategic, targeted, focused instructional interventions to improve student learning.

Activity: Curriculum Team

Description: A curriculum team consisting of the CEO, Director of Montessori, and PMCS teachers will revisit the curriculum and ensure that content is grade and age appropriate. The team will utilize samples of effective and rigorous curriculums from other high performing Montessori public/charter schools. All instructional and curriculum planning will be “begin with the end in mind”; clear measurable benchmarks will be identified at each grade level in order to ensure the preparedness for the next grade and the students’ success upon moving to middle school from PMCS. Additionally, the Director of Montessori will ensure that an array of instructional materials is available in all classrooms from primary through 6th grade.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2010	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Effective Instruction

Description: Student achievement depends on high quality teaching. Invest time in monitoring instructional practices and providing for professional development as means of raising student achievement.

Activity: Fully Implementing the Great Lessons

Description: PMCS will implement the Great Lessons, which are the basis for the Montessori science and social studies curriculum. The CEO will assemble a team of Montessori elementary teachers to plan for a shared teaching of the Great Lessons. There are five Great Lessons. Teams of teachers and assistants will learn one lesson well, and deliver it in each elementary classroom with other teachers observing and taking notes. Then lesson plans, feedback, and

ideas will be shared during team meetings. Eventually, all teachers will be able to deliver all great lessons.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Project-Based Learning

Description: Project-based learning helps make learning relevant and useful to the students by establishing connections to life outside the classroom, addressing real world concerns, and developing real world skills. Many of the skills learned through PBL are those desired by today's employers, including the ability to work well with others, make thoughtful decisions, take initiative, and solve complex problems.

Activity: FOSS Science Kits

Description: PMCS purchased the FOSS Science kits for the 2009-2010 school year. The kit provides hands-on learning opportunities for students in science in the following areas: fabric, weather, rocks and minerals, and electricity. FOSS is a research-based science curriculum for grades K—8 developed at the Lawrence Hall of Science, University of California at Berkeley. The FOSS program materials are designed to meet the challenge of providing meaningful science education for all students in diverse American classrooms and to prepare them for life in the 21st century. Development of the FOSS program was, and continues to be, guided by advances in the understanding of how youngsters think and learn.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Science Fair

Description: Children at all grade levels begin to learn about the scientific method (in a manner that is developmentally appropriate) and begin learning to ask questions and think scientifically about how they might discover answers to their questions. In the primary grades, teachers guide students in whole class projects, such as watching celery "drink" water with food coloring in it, while individual students test scientific concepts such as which objects will sink or float and which objects are magnetic or non-magnetic. In the elementary grades, children begin to conduct more complex experiments. For several weeks prior to the fair, elementary students work individually or in small groups to develop and test a question of inquiry and then spend considerable time and

energy on how that information will be presented during our science fair. Science fair projects are shared with students during the day and with parents and guests in the evening.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Goal: Realization of Mission and Vision

Description: We will create a community that embodies the mission of PMCS and the Montessori model for education.

Strategy: Educate the Whole Child

Description: Provide educational opportunities across all subjects and a variety of topics beyond the core curriculum.

Activity: Conduct longitudinal study of PMCS alumni

Description: Initiate a PMCS Alumni longitudinal study, with the goal of tracking their life progress and academic successes (i.e., set up the framework/planning and initial data collection). This data will be used to instruct the overall curriculum and programs provided at PMCS.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Emphasize Character Education Lessons

Description: In 2009-2010, PMCS re-emphasized our character education lessons (Montessori's "grace and courtesy" programming).

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Peace Education

Description: : Peace education is a common theme that runs throughout the general curriculum. The Montessori model allows children to develop as compassionate and intelligent human beings in an atmosphere of love and respect. Children will be taught continually to respect everyone and everything in the environment and to solve problems through peaceful means. The ultimate aim of the peace education component of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School will be to develop children with strong, active commitment to solving problems and living together peacefully. That way, children will be able to break the cycle of distrust, anger and fear, and will carry this spirit of peace and cooperation with them into adulthood.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Provide extra-curricular education during afternoon "specials"

Description: Special classes in 2009-2010 included art, physical wellness, gardening, and African Drumming. Additionally, Singing City, a group of professional singers and musicians, came and visited us all year during our afternoon "specials" period and worked with two of our first-third grade classrooms to teach them skills in choral singing and composition. Music was composed collaboratively to accompany several children's poems and then sung by the group. This also resulted in several boys participating in the Philadelphia Boys' Choir.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Dale Kelly-CEO	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Provide Transition Support for PMCS Graduates

Description: Improve the transition support services for PMCS graduates and their families to facilitate their movement from PMCS to other charter, magnet, private, or public schools.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Increase Parent Involvement

Description: Increase the amount of parent involvement with PMCS activities and student support during out-of-school time.

Activity: The Parenting Groups

Description: Three parenting groups have been conducted for our parents by staff from Resources For Change. Gwen Davis and Beth Clauss ran these evening meetings for a small group of parents who agreed to commit to a 12-week course. PMCS often provided babysitting and refreshments. The parents who completed the course with less than three absences, received a stipend and a certificate. Because the same group met weekly, a bond was formed which enabled the group to look at hard issues which often get in the way of effective parenting. All the parents who attended had nothing but words of praise for the leaders, the program and the process. PMCS is committed to offering this program yearly to our parents.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 8/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Goal: RECRUIT AND RETAIN MONTESSORI & STATE CERTIFIED TEACHERS

Description: PMCS will work to recruit and retain Montessori and state certified teachers to meet NCLB requirements by maintaining a staff that has the following qualifications: 75% or more of all certifiable staff will possess a valid PA certification in the subject area in which they are assigned. 100% of all core content teachers will meet the NCLB definition of highly qualified.

Strategy: Ensure Every Classroom has a State Certified/Highly Qualified and Montessori Trained Teacher

Description: Every classroom will have a teacher that possess all three qualifications or two teachers that between the two have all of correct qualifications.

Activity: Designing the School Roster

Description: PMCS required that a Montessori trained teacher was in every classroom. To meet this goal we had one classroom that had two paid teachers (one Montessori and one state certified) to co-teach. We continued this effort in 2009-10.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 8/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Support Emergency Certified Teachers

Description: Provide financial and academic support for emergency certified teachers to obtain their full certification

Activity: Provide Teacher Bonuses

Description: PMCS is giving teachers that are both state and Montessori certified.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Provide Tuition Assistance

Description: PMCs will provide tuition assistance for Montessori training. We have money designated in the budget for three Montessori tuition. Teachers are required to stay for 3 years once Montessori certified or they have to repay the tuition.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Teacher Praxis Study Group

Description: PMCS provided teachers with emergency certification with an in-house study group to assist them in passing the July 25 Praxis exam.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Statement of Quality Assurance

Charter school has met AYP.

There are currently no supporting documents selected for this section.

SECTION III. QUALITY OF SCHOOL DESIGN

Rigorous Instructional Program

What curriculum does your charter school utilize?

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School uses the Montessori curriculum. Through the past several years we have refined our literacy curriculum to apply direct instruction methods to address our students' deficiencies in literacy skills while maintaining the spirit of the Montessori model. The school has the raw materials (a full guided reading library, SRA kits for all classrooms, American Reading Company leveled libraries in every classroom, Montessori reading materials in the preschool classrooms to teach phonetic skills, YET after-school reading program which uses a balanced literacy approach with 50 children, Wilson Reading Program to reinforce basic skills with young struggling readers) and the expertise at the leadership level to build a successful literacy program.

PMCS teachers have access to documents in English Language Arts and Mathematics that reference state standards, related content and Montessori materials/lessons with other curriculum materials. Teachers use the documentation to identify gaps between traditional Montessori lessons and state standards (such as the absence of clock work, or lessons dealing with money). These documents help the teachers ensure that students have opportunities to learn important information and skills included in the state standards but excluded from the traditional Montessori program. All teachers have the appropriate curriculum for their students' grade level and the Primary through 6th grade PA Academic standard-aligned Montessori curriculum is attached to this report.

Specific approaches and curriculum models we use include: A Balanced Literacy Approach, 100 Book Challenge, Montessori Math, and Saxon Math. Descriptions these interventions follows:

Balanced Literacy Approach- Through the past several years we have refined our literacy curriculum to apply direct instruction methods to address our students' deficiencies in literacy skills while maintaining the spirit of the Montessori model. The school has the raw materials (a full guided reading library, SRA kits for all classrooms, American Reading Company leveled libraries in every classroom, Montessori reading materials in the preschool classrooms to teach phonetic skills, YET after-school

reading program which uses a balanced literacy approach with 50 children, Wilson Reading Program to reinforce basic skills with young struggling readers) and the expertise at the leadership level to build a successful literacy program.

100 Book Challenge- YET has been so successful in improving student progress that we have purchased \$20,000 worth of 100 Book Challenge books and we are mandating that there is at least a 1 hour literacy block in the classroom daily following the YET model where all children are participating either in guided reading using the scholastic books or in independent reading using the 100 Book Challenge books. 100 Book Challenge aligns all of the existing reading materials and assessment tools using one simple color-coded leveling platform, keyed to Common Core Standards, that students, teachers, and parents can understand and use to ensure every student is making expected progress towards proficiency.

Montessori Math- In the lower elementary grades, we will continue to use Montessori Math which utilizes exercises that give sensorial foundations for counting, arithmetic, geometry, algebra, and fractions of whole numbers. In the elementary class stories are told and experiments carried out to show children how humans used their imaginations in the past, and how they are using them today, to solve problems and come up with great inventions—the use of fire, measuring the earth, compasses, boats, and many others. They see how inventions, geometry and math came about as the result of human progress, to meet specific needs.

Saxon Math- For grades 4-6, we use Saxon Math, a teaching method for incremental learning of mathematics. It involves teaching a new mathematical concept every day and constantly reviewing old concepts. The day's work is typically split evenly between practicing the new material and reviewing old material. Its primary strength is in a steady review of all previous material, which is especially important to students who struggle with retaining the math they previously learned. Currently, PMCS has a limited edition of Saxon Math.

Academic Rigor- has been the primary focus of instructional support during the 2009-2010 academic year. A 90 minute reading block was introduced for the first time in November 2009 and teachers were trained on the effective methods of implementation. The process of restructuring reading instruction led to an increased focus on reading fundamentals and deliberate literacy instruction. While the standards of academic rigor across the school are not to the level we expect next academic year, they reflect a significantly greater emphasis on standards, rigor and high expectations for student performance. This restructuring also occurred in a similar manner for math instruction. (More from Annual Report)

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

The Montessori curriculum meets and often exceeds the Pennsylvania State Standards. PMCS has attached documents labeled Correlation of Montessori with Pennsylvania State Standards below. There are three documents attached, one labeled 3-6 (or pre-K and Kindergarten), another labeled 6-9 (or first to third grades) and a third labeled 9-12 (or fourth to sixth grades). These documents align the three age groupings of the Montessori educational approach with the traditional grades referenced in the PA State Standards.

The Montessori curriculum was developed well before the Pennsylvania content standards, in the early to mid-1900's, through years of observation and research. "Maria Montessori began her work as a scientist in the early part of the twentieth century, willing to delay judgment until adequate observation had been done and willing to change beliefs if convincing evidence was presented. As a medical doctor, she was trained to observe her subjects in a holistic manner; consequently, her

research was naturalistic or ethnographic. From her first observations of children in psychiatric wards to her final work in the experimental elementary classes in Holland, she was constantly the scientist: observing, manipulating the environment or conditions, observing again, revising her approach, seeking other knowledge, and continually experimenting.”[\[1\]](#)^[1]

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

The Montessori curriculum is organized into a spiral of integrated studies, rather than a traditional model in which the curriculum is compartmentalized into several separate subjects, with given topics considered only once at a specific grade level. In the early years, lessons are introduced simply and concretely and are reintroduced several times over succeeding years at increasing degrees of abstraction and complexity.

The course of study at the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School uses an integrated thematic approach that ties the separate disciplines of the curriculum together into studies of the physical universe, the world of nature, and the human experience. Literature, the arts, history, social issues, political science, economics, science, and the study of technology all complement one another.

The curriculum is divided into two levels: Primary (ages 3 to 6) and Elementary (ages 6 to 12).

The Primary Curriculum (Ages 3 to 6)

Dr. Maria Montessori noted that children under six have extraordinary powers of mind. They “take in” their environment, the physical space, the language and movement of adults and children, with what Dr. Montessori called the absorbent mind — the brain’s malleability in the early years. The absorbent mind is at its peak receptively before the age of 6.

Because of the absorbent mind, the child learns easily from his/her interactions with the teacher, other children, and the instructional materials. The prepared environment allows him/her to touch, move, manipulate, and explore — learning at his/her own pace. The classroom is designed for children of mixed ages, with three, four and five year-olds all sharing the same space and teacher for three years. Because of their constant interaction, the children learn to take responsibility for themselves and for each other. They also learn to get along with children of different ages and abilities, to respect each other’s work and workspaces, and to treat each other with courtesy.

At this age, the curriculum is organized around five areas:

1. **Practical Life** - These exercises are designed to enable independent functioning, social grace, and self-esteem among children three to six years of age. Content includes development of coordinated movement, health, safety, in both indoor and outdoor environments and play (spontaneous, free choice of activities.)
2. **Sensorial** — These perceptual-motor development activities are designed to lead the child to an intelligent and imaginative exploration of the world. Content includes identification of a child's process of classifying his world, problem solving, and critical thinking.
3. **Language** — This area of the curriculum focuses on the development of spoken and written language in the areas of daily life, storytelling, composition, literature, geography, history, biology, science, music, art, as well as the functional aspects of grammar, syntax and reading analysis.
4. **Math** - These mathematics exercises give sensorial foundations for counting, arithmetic, geometry, algebra, and fractions of whole numbers.

5. Culture — These exercises expose children to geography, history, biology, botany, and the physical sciences.

The Elementary Curriculum (Ages 6-9 and 9-12)

The Elementary Montessori curriculum is broad in scope and provides for in depth learning, which results in well-educated and socially responsible human beings. It builds on the rich foundation the child has already received in the Primary Montessori Program (ages 3-6). There are five main themes from which the Elementary curriculum flows:

1. The Story of the Universe (General Science) — The origins and development of the universe are explored through this theme.
2. Life on Earth (Botany, Zoology, Geography) — Biology and botany are introduced to give an understanding of the interdependencies of life on earth. In addition, physical and political geography are introduced to give an understanding of the interdependencies of the Earth and life upon it.
3. History of the Civilization of Humans (History) - Social Studies is introduced to give an understanding of human beings' relationships to the development of the universe.
4. History of Written and Spoken Language (English/Language Arts) - Children are introduced to the concept of the development of spoken and written language. They also learn important functional aspects of grammar that are appropriate for children from 6 to 12 years of age.
5. History of Math — Children are provided with an understanding of and proficiency with key ideas in mathematics. Links between arithmetic and geometry are explored and the importance of problem solving is stressed.

While this curriculum is interdisciplinary by design, the child also learns by following the developmental inner structure of each discipline. Thus, skills and proficiency are developed at the same time, as learning flows from the child's individual interests. For example, while the child is learning the history of math as developed through the ages, the child is using math in all disciplines and moving through all stages of math proficiency. The child learns by practicing and moving forward, fueled by the desire to learn and facilitated by a research based model with the help of structured materials and research instruments. The fact that the Montessori curriculum is organized in three-year segments supports the child in his or her pursuit of curriculum mastery at his/her own rate. (Although with annual testing, this puts the school at a disadvantage).

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

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School promotes cross-curricular learning. The intent behind this approach to teaching and learning is described quite articulately by Angeline Stoll Lillard in her recent book *Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius*.

"Dr. Montessori believed interest comes in part through integration and interconnection, and the Elementary curriculum is taught with an eye to making connections across disciplines in what she called Cosmic Education. As the Montessori trainer Phyllis Pottish-Lewis described it to me, 'Cosmic Education is a way to show the child how everything in the universe is interrelated and interdependent, no matter whether it is the tiniest molecule or the largest organism ever created. Every single thing has a part to play, a contribution to make to the maintenance of harmony in the whole. In understanding this network of relationships, the child finds that he or she also is a part of the whole, and has a part to play, a contribution to make.'" This interrelationship is one reason that Dr. Montessori advocated having only one teacher teach all subjects: it enables topic connection. In traditional schooling, when different teachers teach different subjects, at each hour a new teacher will "talk about something completely different, which has no logical connection with the

preceding topic.' (1989, p.88 as quoted in Lillard). Interest, she believed, is stimulated by seeing the interrelationships among things."

Elementary research projects, a regular part of the daily curriculum, are intended to inspire an individual child or a small group of children to develop and pursue an area of research based on their own individual interests, carry it out over a few weeks, and then write a report or choose another type of culminating project. These research projects cover topics ranging from science to social studies and projects range from reports to computer generated comic books to three dimensional art projects. Students present their research findings to their classmates and are also permitted to visit other school adults (the CEO, administrative assistant, etc.) to practice conducting oral presentations of their work.

Our annual school wide science fair is another example of inquiry-based learning. Children at all grade levels begin to learn about the scientific method (in a manner that is developmentally appropriate) and begin learning to ask questions and think scientifically about how they might discover answers to their questions. In the primary grades, teachers guide students in whole class projects, such as watching celery "drink" water with food coloring in it, while individual students test scientific concepts such as which objects will sink or float and which objects are magnetic or non-magnetic. In the elementary grades, children begin to conduct more complex experiments. For several weeks prior to the fair, elementary students work individually or in small groups to develop and test a question of inquiry and then spend considerable time and energy on how that information will be presented during our science fair. Science fair projects are shared with students during the day and with parents and guests in the evening.

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 Montessori three-year curriculum gives a child ample time to master content. Hands-on materials are thoughtfully designed to isolate and teach one skill. Materials are sequenced (in each subject area) from simple to complex. There is limited time spent in whole group instruction, instead instruction is differentiated based on the needs and interests of each child. Lessons are based on a combination of the child's interest and observations of the child's developmental readiness. Teachers must be subtle investigators, observing how often a child practices with a given material and when s/he attains mastery. Because the Montessori materials are self-correcting, most children recognize their own mistakes and "teach themselves." The teacher's job is to record what s/he observes, and then to remain vigilant to ensure that the child is progressing in a manner appropriate for his or her developmental age. During the 2007-08 school year, not all of our teachers were Montessori trained, which meant that we had to spend more time during professional development on how to monitor individual student progress and differentiate instruction to children in a three year continuum. Despite our excellent teachers, this was very challenging. We actively recruited Montessori teachers for the 2008-09 school year to ensure that the strengths of the Montessori instructional methods and hands-on materials will be maximized. For 2009-10, all four of our primary teachers and two additional elementary teachers are Montessori trained.

Teachers at the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School maintain detailed observational records on each student's academic progress. Portfolios are also developed and maintained for each child throughout their tenure at PMCS. DIBELS and DRA tests are given throughout the year to assess language/reading skills. All students participated in a school-wide screening using the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT). Students who initially tested far below average were watched more closely, and different interventions were attempted to help the struggling students make progress

toward grade level performance. Because so many children are not performing at grade level, many of our interventions are school-wide. Only a few (such as the Wilson Reading Program, the after-school YET reading program and our summer academic enrichment program) are targeted specifically to the lowest performing students.

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

“Dr. Montessori recognized that the only valid impulse to learning is self-motivation of the child. Children must move themselves toward learning. The teacher (director) prepares the environment, programs the activity, functions as the reference person and exemplar, offers the child stimulations; but it is the child who learns, who is motivated through the work itself (not solely by the teacher’s personality) to persist in his chosen task. If the Montessori child is free to learn, it is because he has acquired from his exposure to both physical and mental order an ‘inner discipline.’ This is the core of Dr. Montessori’s educational philosophy.”

— From the PMCS Charter Application

Prepared environment:

Montessori teachers are trained to prepare a learning environment that will be aesthetically pleasing, that will convey a sense of order and calm, and that will stimulate interest in a wide variety of activities. Montessori classrooms are set up with what might be known as “interest centers” or “learning centers” in a traditional classroom. The room is divided into sections that relate to the curriculum. Within a learning center, hands-on learning materials are organized along a shelf from simple to complex. There is typically only one of each type of activity, so children must learn to take turns. A few highlights of the prepared environment include pets and/or plants to teach care of living things, a peace table for resolving disputes, a cabinet with chains of glass beads to teach square and cube roots, a cabinet with drawers full of geometric puzzle pieces, the “movable alphabet” — with large letters to initiate writing words and stories with four and five-year-olds, a robust classroom library, large puzzle maps of the different continents, and individual set-ups for “practical life” activities such as washing dishes, coring and slicing an apple and serving pieces to friends, or scrubbing a table.

Hands-on materials:

In a Montessori environment, hands-on materials are used at all levels of the curriculum. Rather than teaching place value as an abstract concept to be deciphered on paper, the Montessori Golden Bead materials present place value in a concrete form which is interesting to and easily comprehended by very young children. Four and five-year-old children work with “unit beads” (individual glass beads), “ten bars” (ten glass beads held together by a wire), “hundred squares” (ten “ten bars” tied together by wire to form a square of 100 beads), and “thousand cubes” (ten “hundred squares” wired together to form a cube). Children can manipulate these objects to see relationships (for example: ten unit beads can be lined up to form one ten bar or ten hundred squares stacked on top of one another is the same as a thousand cube). Children of five and six can perform simple operations with very large numbers using these concrete materials. While young children are not yet ready to grasp the abstract concept of place value, they are engaged by these materials, and they are able to gain an impression of number size that creates a foundation for later number learning. Hands-on materials are not restricted to the math curriculum; they are used for language, geography, science, and practical life activities as well.

Freedom and choice:

In a Montessori classroom, children are free to choose their own learning materials, where they will work (on a mat on the floor or at a table), whether to work alone or with friends, and when

they are finished. They are limited only by practical concerns. For example, they may not choose something that is already in use, and they may not disturb a friend who is concentrating on another task. They may only choose materials which have been presented to them by a teacher (or a designated student in the case of peer instruction); this ensures that they work on activities at their developmental level. They must treat the materials (and other members of the class) with respect, and they must always put away their work when finished.

Individual and small group instruction:

Rather than whole group instruction, teachers in a Montessori environment observe children at work and then give individual or small group lessons based on their observations of children's skills, interests, and developmental readiness. For example, a child in a first-third grade classroom continually expressed an interest in reptiles. It wasn't necessarily a part of the lesson plan, he was just interested. The special ed. teacher doing interventions with him noticed this as well. She brought two additional books at his level and helped him to read them. In his regular classroom, he wrote a report on reptiles. It was not assigned, he completed the report because he was interested in what he was learning.

Other strategies for engaging students:

This year, all classrooms held weekly poetry circles and monthly student reports (when students can present results of their research projects or stories to the group). In addition, we held a school-wide science fair and all students (either individually or in groups) were eager to be involved in demonstrating their knowledge of the scientific method. All of these strategies are described in more detail earlier in this report.

Copies of Philadelphia Montessori's Induction and PD Approval Letters are attached to this report.

Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachments

- PMCS INDUCTION APPROVAL
- PMCS PA/Montessori Correlation (3-6)
- PMCS PA/Montessori Correlation (6-9)
- PMCS PA/Montessori Correlation (9-12)
- PMCS PD Approval

English Language Learners

To date, no ELL students attend PMCS. However, we recognize that we need to have a comprehensive ELL Plan in place which could be quickly implemented upon enrollment of an ELL student. This plan is attached.

The purpose of our ELL plan is to increase the English language proficiency of eligible students so that they can attain the statewide academic standards and achieve academic success.

PMCS is prepared to implement a variety of ESL program models, including pull-out, push-in, and sheltered instruction. To determine which educational approach(es) will be used for individual students, multiple factors are considered. These factors include, but are not limited to, English language proficiency data, other evaluation data that may be available, previous school records, teacher recommendations, parent recommendations, and CEO/ESL Coordinator input.

PMCS' ESL program is designed to provide a rich learning environment that is student-centered, developmentally-aligned, and research-based. The program is designed to:

1. Facilitate English language acquisition through communication skills of comprehension, listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
2. Ensure an effective and meaningful participation in regular education.
3. Facilitate the acculturation process in a complex society that is multicultural by exposing students to the customs, traditions, and expectations of their new environment.

English Language Learners - Attachments

- PMCS ELL PLAN
- PMCS LEP EdHub Report 09-10

Graduation Requirements

Not applicable - Philadelphia Montessori Charter School only serves students through prekindergarten through sixth grade.

Special Education

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School provides Learning Support and Emotional Support to students who are in need of Specialized Services. There are two special education teachers and three behavior support aides to provide specially designed instructions and services. The goal is educate our special education students in the least restrictive environment. Self-contained classrooms will be used only for students who require intensive level of services that cannot be provided in the regular education classroom. Placement in the self-contained classrooms is not permanent as the placement of students is determined by individual progress on IEP goals and objectives. The Wilson Reading Program has been implemented in the Learning Support and Emotional Support classes. Small math groups with adaptive materials have been implemented for all children identified with Special Needs. Behavior Plans and Supports are in place for the students with behavioral needs. The Learning Support and Emotional Support students receive one to one or small group instruction. There is ongoing collaboration between regular education and special education teachers to ensure that modification and adaptation of instructional material is done as per IEPs. The Special Education team consists of Special Education Director, LEA, Regular Classroom teacher, School Psychologist, Speech and Occupational therapist, parent and Special education teacher. These individuals work together to provide exceptional service to our special needs students.

A copy of the Philadelphia Montessori Special Education Policy is attached to this report along with the PENN Data files from December 2009 and June 2010.

Special Education - Attachments

- PMCS SPED POLICY
- PMCS PENN DATA- DEC
- PMCS PENN DATA- JUNE

Special Education Program Profile - Chart I

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Hillary El	1.00	Learning Support	PMCS	22	Ms. El also serves as Special Education Director.
Erica Abts	1.00	Learning Support	PMCS	15	N/A

Special Education Program Profile - Chart II

Organization	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Silver Springs -- Martin Luther,	1.0	Approved Private School -- Day Program -- Full Time Emotional Support	Plymoth Meeting, PA	1	One student places in this setting as an approved private placement.

Special Education Program Profile - Chart III

Title	Location	FTE
Director of Family and Support Services	PMCS	1.0
Classroom Assistant	PMCS	1.0
Classroom Assistant	PMCS	1.0
Behavior Support Aide	PMCS	1.0
Behavior Support Aide	PMCS	1.0
Behavior Support Aide	PMCS	1.0

Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV

IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual	Title/Service	Amount of Time Per Week
Therapy Source	Speech and Language Therapy	1 day a week
Germantown Psychological	Assessment and Evaluation Services	as needed
Therapy Source	Occupational Therapist	3.25 hours a week
Burke Educational Testing and Consulting	Assessment and Evaluation Services	as needed

SECTION IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Student Assessment - Primary

Test/Classification	K	1	2	3	4	5
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PSSA - Math and Reading	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
DIBELS	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
DRA	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PSSA - Science	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
PSSA - Writing	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Study Island	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Student Assessment - Secondary

Test/Classification	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
PSSA	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
DRA II	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Study Island	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No

Student Assessment

Using the most recent PSSA 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.

PSSA:

Philadelphia Montessori is thrilled to announce that we made AYP in 2010! PMCS students have shown dramatic improvements in PSSA scores over the last two years. In 2010, 33.7% of Philadelphia Montessori students scored at or above proficient on the Math PSSA Exam. This represents a 9.3% increase over 2008-2009 results and a 25.7% increase over results two years ago when only 8% of our students met proficiency in 2007-2008. Improvements in reading have been more modest with an increase of 4.6% since 2008. PMCS is implementing a reading curriculum in 2010-2011 to accelerate the improvements in reading scores.

School Year	Math PSSA % Proficient or Better	Reading PSSA % Proficient or Better
2010	33.7%	28.9%
2009	24.4%	24.4%
2008	8%	24.3%
2007	6%	14%
2006	3%	5%
2005	10%	7%

While we are thrilled that PMCS students have shown dramatic improvements on PSSA scores and achieved AYP in 2010, our excitement is tempered by the fact that we still have a long way to go before we are at the expected levels of achievement. We understand that more than two-thirds of the students are still struggling to perform at grade level on the PSSA in math and reading, which is why we have implemented the actions identified previously in order to improve student achievement.

Benchmarks:

PMCS has realized the importance of using data to track their student's progress to inform instruction and school programming. In 2008, PMCS purchased the Study Island benchmarking system. Study Island is based on Pennsylvania content standards and the PSSA assessment. Students at PMCS completed the assessment three times throughout the year. Additionally, students in grades K-3 were given the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). Students in grades 3-6 took the Developmental Reading Assessment, 2nd Edition (DRA). Both tests are administered three times a year to evaluate literacy skills, from letter recognition to reading comprehension. Teachers and administrators used the information to guide student groupings, lesson plans, and teaching strategies. Additionally, the results were vital in identifying students who were performing below level and needed intervention.

How these results influence development of annual measurable goals and targets?

The 2009-2010 school year was the sixth year of operation for the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School. Our first year's test scores were considered our baseline data (2004-05). We are consciously following our children's progress from one year to the next to look for improvements. We are not interested in comparing our third grade PSSA scores last year to our third grade PSSA scores this year, because this represents two different sets of children — apples to oranges, so to speak. Instead, we compared last year's third grade scores to this year's fourth grade scores. We feel this is a more accurate predictor of our academic progress. Our longer term goal is to track the progress of each individual child over time, controlling for factors that might impact performance such as: number of years attending our school, attendance, number of disciplinary actions, etc. In 2009-2010 we used a variety of diagnostic and benchmarking tests to determine student skill levels and growth. Study Island was used to assess math and reading in grades 3-6. DRA I measured literacy skills in K-3 and DRA II completed the same task for grades 4-6. Additionally, we look at the PSSA scores to determine achievement at the classroom and building level.

After each set of benchmark tests, our teachers meet in Team Meeting to discuss with an administrator our students' progress. In this meeting, at-risk students are identified, interventions are planned and scheduled, student groups are created based on skill level, and instructional strategies are identified.

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

We use the following locally developed tests:

- 1. Screenings:**

Brigance: This screening tool is used every Fall with three, four, and five-year-old students to help primary teachers gain a basic understanding of where their students are with regards to a variety of skills that are

thought to predict success in early schooling. This tool can also be used to determine if students should be referred for further evaluation/early intervention.

Special Education Evaluations: Special needs students participate in the PSSA Examinations. Students are provided accommodations as per IEPs. Consistent with the assessment goals of our school, special needs students participate in the monthly benchmark testing (Study Island) and portfolio assessment. (Accommodations are provided for all testing). In addition, all special needs students are administered the Brigance Diagnostic at the beginning and end of the school year to measure projected annual academic gains.

2. Formative assessment tools:

Teacher observation: Montessori instruction relies heavily on the teacher's observation of the child. Because children work independently each day during a three-hour work block, teachers are able to circulate and observe each child at work. Teachers also have time to conference with individual or small groups of children about their progress in different subjects. From these observations and conversations, the teacher is able to help guide the child to the next appropriate stage of work. The Montessori teacher is trained to be a keen observer and diagnostician and is constantly making decisions based on observational assessment. Our teachers keep careful records documenting the lessons a child has received, the practice they have completed, and the level of mastery the child has achieved. This is the main form of assessment that our teachers use to inform their planning and instruction.

Portfolios: Student portfolios have been used since the inception of the school. These collections of student work are used to measure progress over time, to communicate with parents, and to place summative test results into a broader framework. All of our students have a portfolio that follows them from the time they enter the school until they graduate. Portfolios are housed centrally in a location where teachers have full access.

Examples of work collected for student portfolios are samples of work include: a self-portrait and personal statement (done annually by all students), writing samples, research projects, photos of students engaged in solving an involved math problem using Montessori materials such as the bead chains (square root) or the "checkerboard" (division). Other items collected ask students to reflect on social responsibility and service to others. For example: "How do you solve problems differently at PMCS than in your previous school?" or "What have you learned from helping students in Ms. _____'s classroom?"

Use of portfolios to inform instruction currently is not consistent between classrooms. Future goals for portfolios include: tying work collected to specific instructional goals in order to clearly see progress against an academic (or social) goal over time; including students in the development of their own portfolios to increase their responsibility for their own learning; and using portfolios as a tool to explain to parents (and other interested parties) how children learn differently in a Montessori setting. We are pilot testing the Work Sampling System (a commercial portfolio assessment program that has the potential to be used from preschool through sixth grade) in our primary classes this year and next year in order to see if it will be a useful tool to help us improve the use of portfolios to inform and shape instruction.

DRAs: We have used Developmental Reading Assessments to determine independent and instructional reading levels, show student progress, and plan instruction. We have used DRAs consistently since the school's inception as the assessment provides a thorough assessment of a student's reading accuracy, fluency, comprehension and reading engagement. We have provided training for staff each year related to testing administration and how to use the data collected to inform instruction. DRA scores are used to substantiate referrals for additional student support and make recommendations for reading interventions. Teachers determine the DRA scores, preceding the report card cycle. The results are

communicated on report cards and during conferences to support families in selecting appropriately leveled text for children at home.

DIBELS: Each year the school has been in operation the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) test has been used at least twice a year to obtain information on students' early literacy skills. This information is used to identify individual students who need additional reading support. The results of DIBELS test, which is performed by the same individual for all students in the school, are shared with teachers and is used to differentiate instruction related to letter names, sounds, phoneme segmentation and retelling skills. The DIBELS results are particularly helpful with our primary and lower elementary students who are in the emergent stage of reading, while the DRA gives us a more complete understanding of students' comprehension and decoding skills in the context of a whole text.

Study Island- Computers were installed in each elementary classroom and a license with Study Island was secured, and students started working with this test preparation program in 2008-09. Study Island is an online program which supports both math and reading skills and which prints regular reports on student progress toward proficiency.

Numerous programmatic decisions have been informed by data we have gleaned from data on student performance on state standardized tests, internal tests of reading ability, and from teacher observations and collections of student work. These include:

- Modifying our school schedule to create an hour and a half long block of time for professional development weekly.
- Adding 10 additional days to our school year.
- Purchasing 100 Book Challenge leveled libraries for every classroom and conducting professional development to support teachers' comfort with independent reading and conferencing.
- Purchasing the Fountas and Pinell Guided Reading library to support guided instruction.
- Ordering SRA Reading Laboratories that will support students' reading comprehension while familiarizing them with usual test format.
- Purchasing Saxon Math materials in classrooms that do not have a Montessori trained teacher (as a direct result of our poor standardized math test scores).
- Contracting with a math specialist to score math constructed response work samples and provide follow up training for teachers in problem solving and communication.

In addition to program changes in response to test data, instructional modifications have also resulted from our analysis of student assessment data. After each "Paper and Pencil" test and each Study Island benchmark, we meet in grade level groups and discuss instructional changes or additions that would be appropriate based on test scores. Teachers may go back and re-present a topic in a whole group setting if much of the class struggled, or work with an individual child if appropriate. The discussion of assessment data provides time for teachers to collaborate and share practices that they have found successful and raise questions when they are struggling.

We are continuing to use the DIBELS to assess reading fluency for our K-3 students and the DRA to assess fluency and basic comprehension for 1st through 6th grade students. Now that we have 100 Book

Challenge libraries in all classrooms as well as Fountas and Pinell Guided Reading, this year we will evaluate the appropriateness of the DRA, considering it is time consuming, and our teachers have two systems with which to determine a child's reading ability.

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.

Montessori teachers record their observations of student progress on a daily basis. Montessori teachers are trained to record which lessons are given, how the child receives the lesson (Do they seem interested? Is it at the appropriate level or is the child confused? Are they distracted by some other factor? Does the lesson need to be re-presented at another time?), when the child practices with the material, and when the child masters the material. In addition, teachers take note of socio-emotional developments and other milestones. These daily observational records for children are used to inform weekly plans that teachers create for each individual child.

Each child has a portfolio that follows them throughout their time at the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School. Items collected in portfolios include writing samples from several dates throughout the school year, samples of math, science, and social studies/geography work, reflections on peace education, community service and other aspects of social responsibility. Book logs are collected to promote reading outside of school, especially reading with a parent or caregiver. Portfolios are reviewed to assess children's progress as teachers plan for parent-teacher conferences and progress reports.

As described above, student achievement in reading is also measured several times during the year using the DRA and the DIBELS assessment.

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.

Specific academic strategies for supporting at-risk students:

PMCS has a detailed School Improvement Plan that was revised in Fall 2008, in which we organized the following resources and strategies.

- Online test prep program, Study Island, will be available on our newly leased computers.
- Over the past year, we conducted professional development on the Wilson Reading Program; using DRAs and DIBELS to inform reading instruction; how to use guided reading in the classroom; using Portfolios; and working with special education students
- Classroom teaching assistants were trained to work with individual, targeted children using the Wilson materials and other materials to reinforce basic reading and math skills.
- The YET after-school reading program, targeted children who are not reading at grade level, doubled in size and added grades 4-6 (previously only offered to 1st - 3rd grades). This grant funded program teaches specific reading strategies, reviews vocabulary, plays reading "games," and provides time for independent reading using leveled readers.
- As mandated by NCLB, we are now providing SES tutoring. Math tutoring was provided two days a week from November to June by SES certified tutors.

- PMCS paid for SES tutors to provide tutoring for students because of the limited spaces offered with SES funding. These students received Math tutoring two days a week from November to June.

Student Assessment - Attachment

- PMCS AYP Results 2009-10

Teacher Evaluation

Through its restructuring year in 2009-2010, Foundations Inc. worked with PMCS Administration to develop a robust teacher evaluation tool and to train personnel in evaluating teachers with fidelity. Through frequent visits to classrooms and data analysis, the new CEO Dale Kelly monitors the effectiveness of instruction at PMCS.

Formal and informal evaluations are conducted on a regular basis and at least three different evaluation forms are utilized- an informal evaluation form, a formal evaluation template, and a state-required template. These tools document teacher practice and meet state teacher evaluation requirements.

In 2009-2010 the interim leadership team has established professional expectations for teachers, school-wide supports, and clarified roles and responsibilities among staff.

Particularly, the CEO/Principal has clearly emphasized the alignment of the academic program with state standards, and holds teachers accountable for meeting this expectation through the review of lesson plans, as well as observations.

PMCS also uses action plans and makes mid-year staffing decisions based on teacher progress toward the goals identified. Additionally, the assistant principal attends grade-level meetings and is focused on building capacity around understanding data and guided reading.

Dale Kelly, CEO of PMCS was responsible for all teacher evaluations in 2009-2010. Ms. Kelly has a strong academic background with seven years as an elementary teacher in the Philadelphia School District. Additionally she has over 7 years of experience as an administrator, acting as a Principal for over 4 years before joining PMCS.

Teacher Evaluation - Attachments

- PMCS EMPLOYEE EVALUATION I
- PMCS EMPLOYEE EVALUATION II

SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

Leadership Changes

There were no additions to the Board in 2009-10. Ms. JoEllen Muntz left the Board as of April 23, 2010.

As leadership of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School considered its strengths and weaknesses during this renewal year, and worked together to plan for the next five years, the Board and key leadership staff concurred that it was essential to put in place additional organizational infrastructure.

The Board of PMCS hired Foundations, Inc. to conduct a thorough review of existing structures as well as the roles and responsibilities of existing leadership staff. Foundations used this information to propose a plan to build organizational infrastructure to help ease the transition from start-up to more mature, established school.

As the school prepares for its full charter renewal term beginning 2010-11 we will be lead by a new CEO, Ms. Dale Kelly as well as a new Director of Montessori, Ms. Letty Rising. As CEO, Ms. Kelly brings over 14 years experience in education, as a teacher, administrator, and Principal. Last year, Ms. Kelly served as the Assistant Principal at Philadelphia Montessori, She has been very hands on in the school's transitional year. Ms. Rising , who will PMCS as the new Director of Montessori Programs, has extensive experience as a Montessori teacher, Lead Teacher, and Director. She has a Masters in Education from Loyala University as well as an AMI Montessori Diploma. Together, these new administrators will lead the PMCS educational program pairing both Montessori methods with traditional academic methods.

Board of Trustees

Name of Trustee	Office (if any)
Susan Manix	Chair
Dean Michelson	Vice Chair
Nicole Jones-Walker	Parent Representative
Jill Fisher	member
Jeff Macel	Treasurer
Bourne Ruthrauff	member

Professional Development (Governance)

A board training session was conducted in July 2008 and was designed so that attendees would have an understanding of the history and background of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School (PMCS), the strategic direction for the 2008-2009 school year and the role of the board in general, and their personal role specifically, in achieving PMCS goals. The training included a presentation by experienced charter school law attorney Bob O'Donnell on the legal obligations of the charter school board. This included discussion of the non-profit corporation law generally and specifically covering governance and conflict of interest; the Pennsylvania Ethics Act including frequently encountered issues; fiduciary duties of board members; governance responsibilities including relationships among Board, Administration, and Staff; Act 22/The Charter School Law and usual issues; Sunshine Act; Conduct of meetings and record keeping; and how to deal with advisors, vendors, the school community, public at large. Ms. Melanie Reiser from OmniVest Properties Management presented on understanding AYP (including a review of PMCS' assessment results) and on the renewal process. Mr. James Cella of OmniVest Properties Management presented on charter school accounting and fiscal management issues.

In 2009-10, the Board received ongoing strategic planning professional development facilitated by Foundations, Inc.

In 2010-11, the Board, as it anticipated recruiting new members, will hold at least one training related to legal obligations of the Board.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School

The Board of Directors functions primarily as a policy-making body, delegating day-to-day administration to the CEO. Its roles and responsibilities include: financial development and management, fiduciary oversight, and programmatic oversight. The board is responsible for: coordination of long-range planning and resource development; overseeing and evaluating the work of the CEO; setting a framework for the budget process and authorizing the annual budget; approving large resource expenditures, significant changes in program or facility use, and expansion into new program areas; exercising final authority over personnel and faculty issues; and, serving as a court of last resort for resolving complaints. The CEO is an ex-officio member of the board and attends all meetings.

An affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the board, duly recorded, showing how each member voted, is used in order to take action on the following subjects pertaining to school management: school calendar; adopting textbooks; appointing or dismissing school administrator or staff members; adopting the annual budget; purchasing or selling land; locating new buildings or changing location; creating or increasing indebtedness; adopting courses of study; designating depositories for school funds; entering into major contracts; fixing salaries or compensation of administrator, teachers, or other employees of the charter school; and, entering into contracts with and making appropriations to an intermediate unit or school district for the charter school's proportionate share of the cost of services provided or to be provided by the foregoing entities.

Relationship with School District of Philadelphia

PMCS went through the renewal process in 2009-10, which included an audit by the School District of Philadelphia; a two site visits by District personnel visit that included a records review, classroom visits, and interviews with Board members, administration, and teachers; and frequent follow-up to requests for additional information. This renewal process provided PMCS with an opportunity to truly demonstrate the uniqueness of our program to the District, and resulted in the renewal of our charter for one year (extended renewal is based on AYP results in 2009-10) .

In 2009-10, we again worked closely with the District during frequent meetings related to our renewal status and an additional site visit from both the District and SchoolWorks, Inc.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School - Attachment

- PMCS Board Meeting Schedule 2010-11

Community and Parent Engagement

The Board recognizes and embraces the community around PMCS, and have enjoyed strong, positive relations with nearby houses of worship, community groups such as Bartram's Garden, City Lights, the Paschall Library, the Police District Advisory Committee, and the Southwest Community Development Corporation (donated the trees and conducted a presentation for the staff and students who planted the trees on Island Avenue), and has been recognized as a safe place for the community's children. We believe that our current waiting list of 216 children is a strong indication of the community's positive and affirming perception of our school.

The Board of Trustees, in cooperation with the CEO and staff, provided opportunities for community and parent engagement in school activities, such as:

- o Parent Meetings (school-wide and grade-specific)
- o Parenting classes (run by Resources for Change)
- o Recruiting parents to serve as staff and volunteers
- o Soliciting feedback and suggestions through an annual parent satisfaction survey
- o Home and School Association
- o School-wide events/celebrations such as:
 - o Third Annual Poetry Cafe (a night where students served their parents appetizers and then took the microphone to recite poetry);
 - o The Second Annual Science Fair;
 - o Volunteer school clean-up days (including MLK, Jr. Day of Service)
 - o Graduation ceremony

SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Major fund-raising activities

In 2009-10, the School's and the Board's emphasis lay solely on activities aimed at raising student achievement. As such, the school did not conduct its usual level of fundraising this past year. However, the Board has already named a member to steer the school's fundraising efforts, which will include both a drive for private donations and grants. In the current fiscal year, the school has already applied for a 3-year \$1.5 million Title I School Improvement Grant.

Fiscal Solvency Policies

To improve the school's fiscal solvency in 2010-11 and beyond, PMCS' Board has begun to establish stricter spending controls, including a more detailed review of contracts. PMCS understands that a positive fund balance is a necessary buffer in the event of unforeseen circumstances such as unscheduled repairs and maintenance, delay in the receipt of federal funds, lower than anticipated student enrollment, etc.

Accounting System

The School has contracted with OmniVest Management LLC to provide back office and fiscal management services. OmniVest ensures that the general ledger structure and account classifications are in accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Education guidelines. The School also utilizes OmniVest Management, LLC's internal controls and procedures, which include annual and monthly budgeting, cash management, general ledger control, monthly financial reporting, and account reconciliation. The accounting software system used is QuickBooks Premier Accountant Edition 2009. This software is customized with the Pennsylvania State Chart of Accounts for Pennsylvania Public Schools. The school is 100 percent compliant with the Pennsylvania State Chart of Accounts for PA Public Schools. All of the school's financial and budgetary reporting is prepared in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and the applicable standards set by the Government Accounting Standards Board(GASB).

Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances

Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances - Attachment

- PMCS PRELIMINARY STATEMENTS 09-10

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

The School's Board of Trustees has engaged J Miller & Associates, Certified Public Accountants (1221 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107) to conduct our audit for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2010. The audit report for fiscal year ended June 30, 2010 is expected to be completed in November 2010. The School will provide PDE and the School District of Philadelphia with a copy of this audit report immediately upon its completion.

To date, the school has an audit report for each fiscal year through June 30, 2009. The Independent Auditor's Report for fiscal year ending June 30, 2009 is attached to this report. The audit was performed by Zelenkofske Axelrod LLC (2370 York Road, Suite A-5, Jamison, PA 18929). The audit found that:

There were two findings in this audit, one for failing to obtain Child Abuse Clearance Statements for four employees and the other for not obtaining FBI criminal background checks for five employees. PMCS recognizes the severity of this oversight and has already put in place strict human resources control procedures. These measures have proven effective, as evidenced by a favorable review of our employee records by the School District of Philadelphia's Charter School Office in June 2010.

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

- PMCS AUDIT 08-09

Citations and follow-up actions for any State Audit Report

The School did not undergo a state audit conducted by the Auditor General in 2007-2008, 2008-2009 or, to date, for 2009-2010. In 2009-2010, the School forwarded our Financial Statements and Supplementary Information for the year ended June 30, 2009 to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Office of Budget, Bureau of Audits. We understand that the Auditor General has the right to review expenditures and to audit the expenditures made from state appropriated moneys.

SECTION VII. FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

The School leases a 14,400 square foot facility from an affiliated company, Montessori Initiative for Education, a non-profit organization who purchased the property from the City Of Philadelphia in February, 2006. The result of this lease is a newly renovated and modern school facility that will serve the needs of the School for the long term future.

In 2009-2010, the only major capital investment was in a new computer lab with 24 computers.

Future Facility Plans and Other Capital Needs

The school would eventually like to renovate our existing building and/or build on our existing property in an effort to enhance our abilities to offer subjects such as physical education and simply to support our growth and expansion. This is not planned during the current (2010-2011) school year however.

SECTION VIII. HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Safety

In accordance with the Philadelphia Fire Prevention Code, fire drills are conducted throughout the year for the charter school (in accordance with The School District of Philadelphia Policy and Procedure Number 110.4 and Sections 703.1& 2 of Chapter 7 of the Philadelphia Fire Prevention Code).

The school follows the foregoing fire evacuation procedures:

- There will be an "all clear" issued, to advise persons in the fire drill exits to return their floor upon completion of the drill.
- The date and time of fire drill will always be announced in advance. Every student and employee of the school is instructed as follows: If you hear a fire alarm and there has been no prior notification, you must assume that there is a real fire emergency.

- All fire alarm drills are recorded in a logbook with all of the relevant information; date, time of drill, the actual time forevacuation, and any other factors. The Philadelphia Fire Department is free to inspect this logbook and typically inspect it annually.

A copy PDE-4101 Certification is attached to this report.

Health

Philadelphia Montessori contracts with the Bayada Nurses who are responsible for checking the vision, height, weight, and hearing of students and making necessary referrals to parents when problems are founded.

Upon admission to the school, each student is required to submit a physical examination, proof of appropriate immunizations, and dental, audio, and visual screenings. Each student is given an individual file which contains physical, copy of immunization records, screening results, pupil medical history, emergency contact form, any professional observations, progress notes, problem list with follow up, copy of any nursing care visits, medical administrative release forms, and doctors' prescriptions. Certificates of immunization are kept under separate cover. All student health information is kept in a secured health room at PMCS in a locked file cabinet, available to the nursing staff and is the property of the charter school.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health's "Request for Reimbursement and Report of School Health Services" for 2009-2010 must be submitted by PMCS to the Division of School Health in September 2010.

At the time of this report's submission, PMCS had not submitted the 2009-10 reimbursement form, but we will forward a copy of this reimbursement form to the charter authorizer upon our submission to the PA Department of Health. A copy of our 2008-09 request for reimbursement is attached.

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

- PMCS WELLNESS POLICY
- PMCS HLTH.REIMB. REQUEST 08-09
- PMCS HLTH.REIMB. RECEIPT 08-09
- PMCS PDE-4101 09-10
- PMCS Health Reimbursement 09-10

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs

For the 2009-10 school year PMCS procured liability insurance coverage through the insurance brokerage firm Boardman-Hamilton Company as follows:

Type of Insurance Coverage	Limit
Professional Liability	\$2,000,000/\$1,000,000
Commercial General Liability	\$2,000,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products-completed operations aggregate • Per Occurrence 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2,000,000 • \$2,000,000

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal & advertising injury • Damage to Rental Premises (ea. Occurrence) • Medical expense (any one person) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2,000,000 • \$300,000 • \$10,000
(includes sexual molestation and physical abuse)	
Automobile Liability	\$1,000,000
Excess Liability/Umbrella	\$5,000,000
Workers Compensation & Employers' Liability	\$500,000

A copy of the 2009-2010 ACORD Certificate of Liability Insurance is attached to this report as well as the 2010-2011 ACORD.

All full time employees receive health, dental and vision coverage through Keystone Health Plan East. Staff is enrolled in the Pennsylvania School Employees Retirement System as well. The school has purchased life and disability insurance for its employees.

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs - Attachments

- PMCS ACORD 09-10
- PMCS ACORD 10-11

SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff

PMCS employed 16 professional staff members during the first year of operations in 2009-2010 (See attached PDE-414). One member of staff left during the school year. As of June 1, 2010, 84.1% of our professional staff met Pennsylvania certification requirements, exceeding the 75% certification requirement.

Staff turnover and retention:

Recruiting and retaining teachers in a public Montessori school brings with it many inherent challenges. The first is the need to find teachers who are both Montessori and state-certified. Because there are many more private than public Montessori schools, most Montessori trained teachers do not seek state certification. Additionally, it is challenging to find teachers who have experience teaching the Montessori method *and* teaching urban students.

A copy of the PMCS LEA Staff Profile and HQT ACS for 2009-2010 is attached to this report as well as the PDE-414 mentioned earlier.

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff - Attachments

- PMCS PDE-414 09-10
- PMCS LEA STAFF PROFILE & HQT ACS 09-10

Student Enrollment

As part of our renewal process, the School District of Philadelphia’s Auditing Services Department conducted an enrollment audit in December 2008. The final report, released in January 2009, stated, “We noted no exceptions in our tests of student enrollment. PMCS accurately reported the student data that the District used to make per pupil subsidy payments.”

In the admission of students, the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School complies with § 17-1723-A of the Charter School Law. Specifically, the charter school is open to all resident children in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. If more students apply to the charter school than the number of attendance slots available in a given year, then students are selected on a random basis (a lottery) from a pool of qualified applicants meeting the established eligibility criteria and submitting an application by the our deadline. However, preference is given in enrollment to siblings of students presently enrolled in the charter school. Also, first preference is given to students who reside within the School District of Philadelphia.

For the 2009-2010 school year, we did not have any openings except in our incoming 3-year old slots. Students who applied for the other age group slots were placed on a waiting list. The three year olds who had applied by the stated deadline were eligible for the lottery, and the position of students on the waiting list was also determined by a random lottery. As seats opened in the school during 2009-10, enrollment was extended to the highest ranked student on the waiting list in the grade with the corresponding opening.

Applications for parents of new students wishing to attend the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School may submit an application to the office at any time to be placed on the waiting list. Students are placed on the waiting list, by grade level, in the order that applications are received. Applications can be obtained from the school office or downloaded from our website: www.philadelphiamontessori.org- click on Register Your Child.

The cut off for birthdays is September 1st (i.e. to be eligible for enrollment for 2010-11, the youngest children must turn three by September 1, 2010; to be eligible for Kindergarten, a student must turn five by September 1, 2010).

Based on the charter school law, siblings of students already attending the previous school year as well as children of the school’s founding members receive first preference, unless that number exceeds the number of spots available; then, those students will be placed into a separate sibling/founder lottery. The grade that is filled out on the application is the grade in which the student will be entered into the lottery; students may not be moved from one grade’s acceptance/waiting list to another after the lottery has taken place. As spots become available throughout the school year, we will pull from the waiting list and contact the parent.

Philadelphia Montessori Charter School is a free, public school open to Philadelphia residents. There are no tuition or application fees.

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.

	Initial Enrollment	Number Dropped	Number Added	Year End

K	20	2	11	30
1	27	7	8	28
2	20	6	10	24
3	26	4	6	28
4	28	5	4	27
5	16	4	6	18
6	19	1	1	19

Provide the number of students who completed the 2009-10 year who are currently enrolled to return in September

203 of the 225 3 year old through 6th grade students enrolled at the close of the school year are returning in the fall.

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

No students were expelled in 2009-10

Student Enrollment - Attachment

- PMCS ADMISSIONS POLICY

Transportation

The School District of Philadelphia provides transportation to our students in grades 1-6. Kindergarten students are not eligible to receive bus service and those parents (as well as parents of our preschool students) drop their children off and pick them up daily. In 2009-10 PMCS paid to hire bus aides in each of the two school buses that pick up our students in order to ensure discipline on the bus and the safety of all students.

Food Service Program

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School offers all students the option of school breakfast and/or lunch. We also serve snacks to children in our after school reading program and our after school daycare. We participate in the National School Lunch Program - with about 90% of our students qualifying for free or reduced price breakfast/lunches. Some parents choose not to participate and send bagged lunches. We contract out to Linton's Managed Services which prepares the food off site and brings it to us in temperature controlled containers. We are very pleased with this vendor because they serve fresh fruits and vegetables and the food seems to be less processed and healthier than the typical school lunch. Milk is delivered each morning and we have a milk refrigerator in our food preparation area.

Food is served family-style, a requirement for our Head Start children and something that fits in with our Montessori philosophy of creating a home-like environment. Children sit at tables of four and serve themselves from large bowls and platters, just as you would at home. We use this opportunity to teach etiquette such as: don't reach - instead ask, "Please pass the mashed potatoes."

In 2010-11 we plan to partner with the Archdiocese of Philadelphia for the provision of nutritious meals through the NSLP.

Student Conduct

a.) Describe your expectations for student behavior and discipline. Explain how your discipline policy complies with Chapters 12 of the Public School Code, particularly with respect to due process.

For a full copy of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School Code of Responsibility, Respect and Self-Control, please see attached. It articulates compliance with all necessary laws and lays out due process procedures. In terms of expectations of student behavior and discipline, the following is excerpted from the Code of Responsibility, Respect and Self-Control.

Responsibilities of Students

- Children will be involved in making classroom rules and are expected to follow all classroom and school rules.
- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- Use calm, quiet voices and kind words.
- Listen to what other children and adults say. Try to listen to both their words AND their feelings.
- Treat your classmates, your teachers, classroom pets, classroom materials and the school environment with respect. Think of how you would like to be treated.
- Do not disturb another student who is concentrating on his or her work.
- Never hurt another living thing.
- If you have a problem, use your words to work it out.
- If you make a mess, clean it up.
- If you see someone who needs help, see if you can help them.
- If you do something wrong, or break something, tell the teacher and ask him or her to help you figure out a way to fix it or make it better.
- Come to school every day, unless you are sick.
- Always do your homework.
- Think about how you can make the world a better place.

b.) Provide the number of suspensions and expulsions by student.

In 2009-10, we had 10 students involved in 14 suspension incidents.

Student Conduct - Attachment

- PMCS CODE OF RESPONSIBILITY

Signature Page

Assurance for the Operation of Charter School Services and Programs

School Year: 2010

The Philadelphia Montessori 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
2009 - 2010 Annual Report for Pennsylvania Charter Schools

Date

**Verify that all DATA reports to PDE are
complete YES _____ NO _____**

Assurance for Compliance with the Public Official & Employee Ethics Act

The original Public Official and Employee Ethics Act (the “Ethics Act”) was amended and reenacted in 1989 by Act 9 of 1989 and in 1998 by Act 93 of 1998. (See Act 9 of 1989, 65 P.S. §401, et seq. and Act 93 of 1998, Chapter 11, 65 Pa.c.s. §1101 et seq.) The Act provides that public office is a public trust and that any effort to realize personal financial gain through public office is a violation of that trust. The Act was passed to strengthen the faith and confidence of the people of the Commonwealth in their government. The Act established the State Ethics Commission to administer and enforce the provisions of the Act and to provide guidance regarding the standards established by the Act.

The Philadelphia Montessori CS assures that it will comply with the requirements of the Public Official and Employee Ethics Act (the “Ethics Act”) and with the policies, regulations and procedures of the Pennsylvania State Ethics Commission. Additional information about the “Ethics Act” is available on the Ethics Commission's website at: <http://www.ethics.state.pa.us/ethics/site/>

The assurance must be signed by the Chief Executive Officer and Board of Trustees President of the charter school.

Identify the charter school’s Chief Executive Officer.

Name: Ms. Dale Kelly **Title:** Chief Executive Officer

Phone: 215-365-4011 **Fax:** 215-365-4367

E-mail: d.kelly@philadelphiamontessori.org

Signature of the Chief Executive Officer and Date

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

Name: Ms. Susan Manix **Title:** Board Chair

Phone: 215-365-4011 **Fax:** 215-365-4367

E-mail: susan.manix@verizon.net

Signature of the President of the Board of Trustees and Date

Identify the charter school’s Special Education Contact Person.

Name: Ms. Dale Kelly **Title:** Chief Executive Officer

Phone: 215-365-4011 **Fax:** 215-365-4367

E-mail: d.kelly@philadelphiamontessori.org

Signature of the Special Education Contact Person and Date

Signature Page - Attachment

- PMCS Annual Report Signature Sheets