
Pennsylvania Department of Education



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

Charter Annual Report
Monday, February 14, 2011
(Last Accepted: Monday, February 14, 2011)

Entity: Commonwealth Connections Academy CS
Address: 4050 Crums Mill Rd.
Harrisburg, PA 17112
Phone:
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CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

Summary Data Part I

Charter School Annual Report Summary Data 2009 - 2010

Name of School: Commonwealth Connections Academy CS

Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval: May 2003 and renewed June 2006

Length of Charter: 5 years **Opening Date:** Sept 2003

Grade Level: K-12 in 2008-09 **Hours of Operation:** 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM

Percentage of Certified Staff: 98% **Total Instructional Staff:** 150

Student/Teacher Ratio: 27 to 1 **Student Waiting List:** none

Attendance Rate/Percentage: 98%

Second Site Address, Phone Number and Site Director:

2085 N. 63rd Street
Philadelphia, PA 19151
Susan Shubert

Grant Professional Plaza
#203 613 Blakeslee Boulevard Drive East Leighton, PA 18235
Anthony Rusnak

Penn Center Monroeville
#400 201 Penn Center Boulevard
Pittsburgh, PA 15235
David Potts

Summary Data Part II

Enrollment: 3958 **Per Pupil Subsidy:** Cyber schools are paid by districts/No direct state subsidy

Student Profile

American Indian/Alaskan Native:	17
Asian/Pacific Islander:	41
Black (Non-Hispanic):	595
Hispanic:	168
White (Non-Hispanic):	2884
Multicultural:	247

Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch:
49

Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December: 633

Instructional Days and Hours

Number of:	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (F.Time)	Elem.	Middle.	Sec.	Total
Instructional Days	180	180	180	180	180	180	180
Instructional Hours	900	900	900	900	990	990	n/a

SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Educational Community

Commonwealth Connections Academy Charter School (CCA) provides a unique form of free public school that students attend from home. This is a program that combines strong parental involvement, the expertise, certified educators, the accountability of public funded education, and the flexibility of online classes. The mission of CCA is to help each student maximize his or her potential and meet the highest performance standards. Connections Academy is a high-quality, high-tech, high-touch “school without walls” that brings out the best in every student.

With CCA, parents or other “Learning Coaches” facilitate the day-to-day instruction using our proven curriculum that incorporates comprehensive daily lesson plans, textbooks from leading educational publications, and exciting online lessons. Our experienced certified teachers grade all assessments, monitor progress, deliver online instruction, and support the Learning Coaches by creating a Personalized Learning Plan that is customized for each child. Teachers communicate regularly with parents and students to review assignments and discuss student work.

Who has already chosen Commonwealth Connections Academy? Parents from across the state who have students with a broad range of academic and personal strengths and concerns have chosen CCA. These include:

Parents with exceptional children who are far ahead or far behind their peers

Parents whose children are at risk of academic failure

Parents with homebound children with medical issues

Parents who live in isolated rural areas

Parents whose children are pursuing artistic or athletic careers that require flexible schedules

Basically, parents who think their children would benefit from one-on-one personalized instruction in the home, with a challenging curriculum and support from certified school teachers.

Mission

The mission of Commonwealth Connections Academy is to leverage virtual school technology to help each of its students maximize his or her potential and meet the highest performance standards. This mission is accomplished through a uniquely individualized learning program that combines the best in virtual education with unique technology-based teacher productivity tools and very real connections among students, family, teachers, and the community. Every student has a Personalized Learning Plan and an entire team of adults (including a parent or other Learning Coach and a Pennsylvania certified teacher) committed to the student's successful fulfillment of that plan. Commonwealth Connections Academy is a high-quality, high-tech, high-touch virtual "school without walls" that brings out the best in every student through Personalized Performance Learning. At CCA, experienced certified teachers support parents or other "Learning Coaches" in delivering day-to-day instruction using the school's proven curriculum that incorporates comprehensive daily lesson plans, textbooks and related materials from leading educational publications, and exciting online lessons.

Vision

Studies show that greater parent participation in education can lead to higher student grades and test scores, higher graduation rates and greater enrollment in post secondary education. At Commonwealth Connections Academy, parents generally serve as personal, face-to-face learning coaches facilitating the delivery of their children's instructional program. Parents may also get involved as local community coordinators who create opportunities for special projects, field trips, and group meetings with other students and parents. CCA also provides an orientation program along with access to discussion groups and counselors to help Learning Coaches who are new to the challenges and responsibilities of this important role.

Studies have shown that in conventional classrooms, many tasks are mismatched to students' skill levels. At Commonwealth Connections Academy, each student receives individualized instruction, including lessons tailored to that student's academic strengths and weaknesses. Our school year begins with the development of a Personalized Learning Plan (PLP) — the blueprint for the student's lessons that year. Throughout the year the teacher can adjust the lessons to emphasize areas where the student is deficient or step up instruction in a subject where a student has a particular strength or interest.

While there are other cyber schools in Pennsylvania, CCA is unique. The school uses a proprietary curriculum accredited by Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools that combines online synchronous and asynchronous instruction, multimedia traditional printed textbooks and supplementary materials, including science supplies. CCA also emphasizes the direct involvement and responsibility of the instructional staff in assuring that students have mastered required skills and uses an innovative assessment engine to increase teacher productivity by auto-grading objective answers to permit teachers to devote their expertise to subjective measures. The school's learning management system also provides innovative tools to deliver instruction, measure progress, enhance teacher productivity and meet regulatory requirements.

Shared Values

The CCA Board of Trustees and school staff fervently believe that:

- Greater parent participation in education can lead to higher student grades and test scores, higher graduation rates and greater enrollment in post secondary education.
- Technology and innovations to the traditional classroom-based teaching model combined with dedicated educators and rigorous curriculum can provide a solution for currently unmet student needs.
- Students learn best when lessons match their interests and abilities.
- There is a need to provide a more flexible and personalized form of public school education.

Designed with these beliefs in mind, CCA is a high-quality, high-tech, high-touch "school without walls" that brings out the best in every student

We are committed to measuring our success through evaluations of our parent and student satisfaction; academic performance and fiscal responsibility. We are also committed to providing opportunities for our students and parents to be active in their communities.

Academic Standards

- The K-8 curriculum integrates textbooks, lesson plans, digital versions of textbooks, and other content from a variety of leading publishers and school programs including McGraw-Hill, Scott Foresman, Glencoe, Houghton Mifflin, Zaner-Bloser, Prentice Hall, the Calvert school, iSAFE, and others. The curriculum also features technology-based content from "best of breed" providers such as Hooked on Phonics®, BrainPop®, Compass, Discover Education *streaming*, EBSCO, SkillsTutor, Connect-a-Majig, and Grolier Online®.
- CCA teachers use the LiveLesson® tool, which provides real-time web conferencing with small groups of students using voice over IP, chat, electronic whiteboard, and shared web surfing.

- The curriculum for grades 9 through 12 provides more online experience, as appropriate for secondary school learners. The Pennsylvania standards-aligned high school curriculum integrates digital versions of textbooks from major publishers (Prentice Hall, Glencoe, and McGraw-Hill) enhanced by multimedia, interactive material, communication/conferencing tools, and team projects. Top-quality third-party courseware elements from providers such as Discover Education *streaming* (digital video on demand), Groliers (reference databases), BrainPop®, and Eureka Labs® (interactive online science labs) are also licensed as part of the 9-12 curriculum.
- CCA utilizes online, interactive instructional movies that incorporate graphics, video, and audio to explain the concepts and ideas the student needs to complete a lesson. These interactive, online “Teachlets®” are significantly more effective and entertaining than text alone. Interactive online instruction known as “LiveLesson®” is also used to enhance instruction and communications. With this tool, teachers can conduct live teaching sessions over the Internet to either a single student or a group. This new technology is ideal for explaining difficult concepts, conducting review sessions or promoting discussion. Individual tutorial sessions can also be arranged to assist students with specific needs.
- CCA utilized Study Island®, a leading provider of web-based state assessment preparation programs and standards based learning programs, to obtain more accurate bench marks and provide students practice and instruction in the targeted areas.
- CCA used “Math 24 — First in Math” to provide students with on line interactive challenges to develop and improve critical math skills. This is highly motivating program and has been proven to increase achievement in mathematics.
- Products of Learning A-Z were also used to supplement reading and literacy skills. “Raz Kids,” a program within Learning A-Z, provides an animated leveled reading library and online progress management system.
- In 2009-2010, CCA implemented the use of Fast ForWord products in grades K-8. Fast ForWord is a web-based brain training program that develops a strong foundation of cognitive and reading skills for a lifetime of successful learning. Used in conjunction with the previously described programs, Fast ForWord will assist in improving PSSA scores.
- CCA implemented Reading Horizons in 2009-2010 for students in grades 6 and up. Reading Horizons is the premier, proven solution for teaching reading to students of all ages. Our reading strategies focus on five key areas to reading success: Phonemic Awareness, Systematic and Explicit Phonics, Fluency, Vocabulary, and Comprehension. In

2010-2011, CCA will implement the program for all students in grades K-12.

Strengths and Challenges

CCA's strengths have been:

- Its ability to satisfy parents and students (as evidenced by satisfaction ratings above 91% on annual surveys);
- Its responsiveness to stakeholder needs, as evidenced by the expanding community coordinator program, revision of all curriculum grades K-12, and the forecasted establishment of the Williamsport, Scranton, and Philadelphia locations;
- Its ability to attract and retain high-quality teachers;
- Its success in implementing programs to improve PSSA scores despite a mobile student population and higher percentage of FARM and IEP students than the state as a whole; and
- Its ability to accommodate individual learning styles and improve achievement of all students through the use of each student's Personalized Learning Plan (PLP).

CCA implements evidence-based instructional techniques and strategies; provides on-line tutorial and instructional sessions for students and Learning Coaches; provides students identified as basic or below basic with remedial programs directed towards mastery of eligible content; implements programs to support learning coaches and parents.

CCA's weaknesses are clustered around PSSA performance in specific subgroups. In particular, the CCA subgroup of IEP students across all grade levels need more support and focus on the eligible content and anchors in both reading and math. When 2009-2010 AYP information is received, more weaknesses will be identified.

SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Strategic Planning Process

Commonwealth Connections Academy (CCA) is a Public Cyber Charter School. As such, Commonwealth Connections Academy is not required to complete a Strategic Plan that is developed every six years and reviewed every third year. Instead, Commonwealth Connections Academy submits, every 5 years, a Charter Renewal Document, and, every year, an Annual Report.

Although CCA does not complete the state defined Strategic Plan, every year CCA does engage in documented strategic planning.

Every year a planning committee comprised of all the Board of Directors members, the C.E.O., principals, assistant principals, parents, and teachers; reviews and analyzes data pertaining to student achievement and parent surveys. Using this data and teacher input, the curriculum is modified or revised and new programs and curriculum are recommended for review and possible adoption to the Cyber School setting. Procedures for delivery of curriculum and policies pertaining to student accountability are also reviewed. Based upon an analysis of internal and external needs, the board then approves a plan for the school specifying priorities for actions and action plans developed by the committee to achieve long range and short range goals.

There are six members of the Board of Directors for CCA. The Board members are parents of CCA students, professional business people, and community advocates. The members of the Board reside in 6 different counties in Pennsylvania. Three of the Board members have children attending CCA.

Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
August, Frank	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Administrator	Reese Flurie, Assistant to the CEO
Bailey, Rachel	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Administrator	Reese Flurie, Assistant to the CEO
Birmelin, Jerry	Business Community	Community Representative	Board of Directors
Boyd, Amy	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Administrator	Reese Flurie, Assistant to the CEO
Butler, Tim	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Secondary School Teacher	Chris Yerkes, Master Teacher
Camila Kasales	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Administrator	Reese Flurie, Assistant to the CEO
Ciora, Michelle	Commonwealth Connections Academy Community	Community Representative	Board of Directors
Flurie, Maurice	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Administrator	Dennis Tulli, CEO
Fraser, Adam	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Administrator	Reese Flurie, Assistant to the CEO
Gettle, Gregory	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Administrator	Reese Flurie, Assistant to the CEO
Hamilton, Laurie	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Secondary School Teacher	Chris Yerkes, Master Teacher
Hawkins Bush, Gail A.	Community Member	Business Representative	Board of Directors

Hearns, Paula	Community Member	Community Representative	Board of Directors
Hollman, Shana	CCA	Special Education Representative	Chris Moser, Special Education Director
Lozier, Cheryl	Community Member	Community Representative	Board of Directors
Madden, Gary	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Administrator	Reese Flurie, Assistant to the CEO
Moser, Christina	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Special Education Representative	Dennis Tulli, CEO
Mulligan, Marcie	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Parent	Board of Directors
Ochs, Ted	Connections Academy	Other	Connections Academy
Rofel, Marjorie	Connections Academy	Special Education Representative	Connections Academy
Roman, Stacey	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Ed Specialist - School Counselor	Reese Flurie, Assistant to the CEO
Rusnak, Anthony	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Administrator	Reese Flurie, Assistant to the CEO
Shane, Natasha	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Parent	Board of Directors
Shelley, Joanna	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Elementary School Teacher	Chris Yerkes, Master Teacher
Shubert, Susan	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Administrator	Reese Flurie, Assistant to the CEO
Taylor, David	Business Community	Board Member	Board of Directors
Tulli, Dennis	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Administrator	Board of Directors
Williamson, Brianne	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Elementary School Teacher	Chris Yerkes, Master Teacher
Yerkes, Chris	Commonwealth Connections Academy	Secondary School Teacher	Reese Flurie, Assistant to the CEO

Goals, Strategies and Activities

Goal: Demonstrate Student Academic Growth

Description: CCA students will improve overall academic performance. Chart shows satisfactory progress as the percent of students by grade on the LEAP test for 2009-10 (i.e., at least a 10% gain from Pretest to Posttest OR a Posttest score of at least 75%)

Strategy: Demonstrating One Year Academic Growth

Description: CCA students will demonstrate at least one year's academic growth in grades K-8.

Activity: LEAP test

Description: CCA will use a paper and pencil based standardized pre-test and post-test to gauge yearly progress. The test is administered at the beginning and end of the year and it is directly aligned with state standards to predict success on the PSSA test.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2010	\$30,694.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Direct Instruction

Description: CCA will provide direct instructional opportunities for all students.

Activity: After School Program

Description: in 2009-2010, CCA implemented an afterschool program, providing online tutoring for all students in grades K-12 Monday through Friday from 4:30 to 8. Teachers will be available to provide one-on-one and small group sessions to support students in reaching mastery.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Rusnak, Anthony	Start: 7/1/2009	\$45,000.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: LiveLesson® sessions

Description: Teachers in grades K-12 will average 2 LiveLesson® sessions each week. Teachers will archive LiveLesson® sessions by use of message boards.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009	\$321,000.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Mobile Lab

Description: In 2010-2011, CCA will be premiering its Mobile Lab. The Mobile Lab will be a recreational vehicle designed for the purpose of teachers traveling the state of Pennsylvania to provide extra opportunities for students to participate in academic challenges, labs, and interactions.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Flurie, Maurice	Start: 7/1/2010 Finish: Ongoing	\$200,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Technology

Description: CCA will utilize all available technology to provide high quality educational opportunities for their students.

Activity: Provide prompt technical assistance to students and field sites

Description: Technology Managers (2 part-time positions) will be hired for the 2009-2010 SY
Laptops for Staff (\$700 per unit x 35 units)
Student printer cartridges
Internet, dial up
Internet, broad band

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Boyd, Amy	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$1,650,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Upgrade Telecommunications

Description: Replacing Telecommunications System
Copiers/Fax Machine maintenance
Tech Support and Repairs
High Speed Internet
Telephone and additional conference line

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Boyd, Amy	Start: 1/1/2008	\$520,256.00
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Finish: Ongoing

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Upgrading Instructional Technology

Description: 85 flat screen monitors
75 additional Starboards
Wireless headsets for teachers
Education Resource Center
Curriculum Software

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Boyd, Amy	Start: 1/1/2008	\$6,177,697.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Upgrading online instructional delivery method

Description: CCA will acquire curricular programs and delivery methods for providing students with high quality educational opportunities.

Activity: Fast ForWord

Description: Fast ForWord is a web-based brain training program that develops a strong foundation of cognitive and reading skills for a lifetime of successful learning. Used in conjunction with the previously described programs, Fast ForWord will assist in improving PSSA scores.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009	\$1,000,000.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Professional Development on new technology

Description: Teachers will be trained on the use of wireless headsets, starboards, web cams,

and other new technology. Professional development will be presented by vendors and our in-house technology managers.

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Boyd, Amy	Start: 6/1/2010 Finish: 6/1/2011	\$45,700.00

Professional Development Activity Information

Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
1.00	3	160
Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
Connections Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School Entity 	Not approved

Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish
Participants will be able to effectively create and present LiveLesson® sessions utilizing all available technological equipment to ensure lessons are meeting individualized needs of students.	Differentiating instruction and using technology to enhance curriculum have proven to improve academic success of students.	<p><i>For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increases the educator's <u>teaching skills</u> based on research on effective practice, with attention given to interventions for struggling students. Empowers educators to work effectively with <u>parents and community partners</u>. <p><i>For school and district administrators, and other educators seeking leadership roles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provides leaders with the ability to <u>access and use appropriate data</u> to inform decision-making.

Educator Groups Which Will Participate in this Activity

Role	Grade Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom teachers Principals / asst. principals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early childhood (preK-grade 3) Middle (grades 6-8) Elementary (grades 2-

- School counselors
- High school (grades 9-12)

Follow-up Activities

Evaluation Methods

- Team development and sharing of content-area lesson implementation outcomes, with involvement of administrator and/or peers
- Creating lessons to meet varied student learning styles

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Goal: Ensure Student Participation in State Assessments

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

Strategy: Test Site Placement

Description: CCA recognizes the importance of site location and availability for PSSA testing. CCA will improve access to test sites.

Activity: Test Sites Available

Description: CCA will have at least 35 sites around the state for students to attend state testing.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Shubert, Susan	Start: 7/1/2010 Finish: Ongoing	\$200,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

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

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

Strategy: Direct Instruction

Description: CCA will provide direct instructional opportunities for all students.

Activity: After School Program

Description: in 2009-2010, CCA implemented an afterschool program, providing online tutoring for all students in grades K-12 Monday through Friday from 4:30 to 8. Teachers will be available to provide one-on-one and small group sessions to support students in reaching mastery.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Rusnak, Anthony	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$45,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: LiveLesson® sessions

Description: Teachers in grades K-12 will average 2 LiveLesson® sessions each week. Teachers will archive LiveLesson® sessions by use of message boards.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$321,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Mobile Lab

Description: In 2010-2011, CCA will be premiering its Mobile Lab. The Mobile Lab will be a recreational vehicle designed for the purpose of teachers traveling the state of Pennsylvania to

provide extra opportunities for students to participate in academic challenges, labs, and interactions.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Flurie, Maurice	Start: 7/1/2010 Finish: Ongoing	\$200,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Tutoring

Description: Teachers will provide in-person and/or LiveLesson® session tutoring whenever appropriate (through office hours and by appointment).

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Shubert, Susan	Start: 1/1/2008 Finish: Ongoing	\$47,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Supplemental Programs

Description: CCA will utilize a variety of programs in order to improve performance of students in the area of reading.

Activity: Fast ForWord

Description: Fast ForWord is a web-based brain training program that develops a strong foundation of cognitive and reading skills for a lifetime of successful learning. Used in conjunction with the previously described programs, Fast ForWord will assist in improving PSSA scores.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$1,000,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: FOCUS (Facilitating Online Curriculum Using Standards)

Description: CCA will implement the FOCUS (Facilitating Online Curriculum Using Standards) program providing small group tutorials for students scoring at-risk on local assessments and/or the Terra Nova in Language Arts and/or Math.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Boyd, Amy	Start: 9/1/2008 Finish: Ongoing	\$600,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Hotmath

Description: CCA high school students will have access to hotmath.com which provides a tutorial program delivering step by step answers to math homework problems anytime they are needed, day or night.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Gettle, Gregory	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	-
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Learning A-Z

Description: CCA will utilize resources available at Learning A-Z.com providing students with both online and print literacy practice.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Bailey, Rachel	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	-
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Math 24

Description: Math 24 is an interactive website used to increase student performance in Math skills using games and skills activities

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$3,200.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: PACE (Program for ALL Children to Excel)

Description: PACE provides individualized lessons and practice to students performing below proficient on state testing directly related to state standards and areas of weakness as seen on PSSA results. Students are provided weekly pre and post tests to assess mastery of each skill presented.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Shubert, Susan	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$232,440.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Skills Tutor K-12

Description: Skills Tutor is a technologically-based, online program aimed at building basic skills in order to improve performance in Math and Language Arts.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Shubert, Susan	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$39,900.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Study Island

Description: Study Island is an interactive web-site directly linked to Pennsylvania State Standards used to improve performance for all students.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$28,800.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Upgrading online instructional delivery method

Description: CCA will acquire curricular programs and delivery methods for providing students with high quality educational opportunities.

Activity: Curriculum Expansion and Revision

Description: Improve and expand the curriculum with focus on the PSSA in term of coverage, sequencing, and emphasis. In 2009-2010, grades 1-2 will have a newly revised and technologically enhanced Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies Curriculum and grades 1-2 will also have a newly revised and technologically enhanced Math curriculum. The Kindergarten curriculum will also be revised to provide a more rigorous program.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$1,247,400.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Professional Development on new technology

Description: Teachers will be trained on the use of wireless headsets, starboards, web cams, and other new technology. Professional development will be presented by vendors and our in-house technology managers.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Boyd, Amy	Start: 6/1/2010 Finish: 6/1/2011	\$45,700.00
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Professional Development Activity Information

Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
1.00	3	160
Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
Connections Academy	• School Entity	Not approved
Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish

Participants will be able to effectively create and present LiveLesson® sessions utilizing all available technological equipment to ensure lessons are meeting individualized needs of students.

Differentiating instruction and using technology to enhance curriculum have proven to improve academic success of students.

For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:

- Increases the educator's teaching skills based on research on effective practice, with attention given to interventions for struggling students.
- Empowers educators to work effectively with parents and community partners.

For school and district administrators, and other educators seeking leadership roles:

- Provides leaders with the ability to access and use appropriate data to inform decision-making.

Educator Groups Which Will Participate in this Activity

Role	Grade Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom teachers • Principals / asst. principals • School counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early childhood (preK-grade 3) • Middle (grades 6-8) • Elementary (grades 2-5) • High school (grades 9-12)

Follow-up Activities	Evaluation Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Team development and sharing of content-area lesson implementation outcomes, with involvement of administrator and/or peers • Creating lessons to meet varied student learning styles 	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Upgrading Instructional Technology

Description: 85 flat screen monitors
75 additional Starboards
Wireless headsets for teachers
Education Resource Center
Curriculum Software

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Boyd, Amy	Start: 1/1/2008 Finish: Ongoing	\$6,177,697.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Goal: Improve Student Academic Achievement in Mathematics

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

Strategy: Curriculum Alignment

Description: CCA with the Educational Management Organization (EMO) support will participate and initiate regular curricular alignment activities ensuring alignment with establish PA standards.

Activity: Curriculum Alignment and Benchmarking

Description: CCA teacher and administrators, with the Educational Management Organization (EMO) support, will participate and initiate regular curricular alignment and benchmarking activities ensuring alignment of curriculum with establish PA standards.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Flurie, Maurice	Start: 9/1/2010 Finish: Ongoing	-
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Supplemental Resources

Description: CCA used multiple resources as described below to improve performance for all students in Math skills by using various technology-based programs.

Activity: After School Program

Description: in 2009-2010, CCA implemented an afterschool program, providing online tutoring for all students in grades K-12 Monday through Friday from 4:30 to 8. Teachers will be available to provide one-on-one and small group sessions to support students in reaching mastery.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Rusnak, Anthony	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$45,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: FOCUS (Facilitating Online Curriculum Using Standards)

Description: CCA will implement the FOCUS (Facilitating Online Curriculum Using Standards) program providing small group tutorials for students scoring at-risk on local assessments and/or the Terra Nova in Language Arts and/or Math.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Boyd, Amy	Start: 9/1/2008 Finish: Ongoing	\$600,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Hotmath

Description: CCA high school students will have access to hotmath.com which provides a tutorial program delivering step by step answers to math homework problems anytime they are needed, day or night.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Gettle, Gregory	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	-
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Math 24

Description: Math 24 is an interactive website used to increase student performance in Math skills using games and skills activities

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$3,200.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Mobile Lab

Description: In 2010-2011, CCA will be premiering its Mobile Lab. The Mobile Lab will be a recreational vehicle designed for the purpose of teachers traveling the state of Pennsylvania to provide extra opportunities for students to participate in academic challenges, labs, and interactions.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Flurie, Maurice	Start: 7/1/2010 Finish: Ongoing	\$200,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: PACE (Program for ALL Children to Excel)

Description: PACE provides individualized lessons and practice to students performing below proficient on state testing directly related to state standards and areas of weakness as seen on PSSA results. Students are provided weekly pre and post tests to assess mastery of each skill presented.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Shubert, Susan	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$232,440.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Skills Tutor K-12

Description: Skills Tutor is a technologically-based, online program aimed at building basic skills in order to improve performance in Math and Language Arts.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Shubert, Susan	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$39,900.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Study Island

Description: Study Island is an interactive web-site directly linked to Pennsylvania State Standards used to improve performance for all students.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$28,800.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Goal: Improve Student Academic Achievement in Reading

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

Strategy: Curriculum Alignment

Description: CCA with the Educational Management Organization (EMO) support will participate and initiate regular curricular alignment activities ensuring alignment with establish PA standards.

Activity: Curriculum Alignment and Benchmarking

Description: CCA teacher and administrators, with the Educational Management Organization (EMO) support, will participate and initiate regular curricular alignment and benchmarking activities ensuring alignment of curriculum with establish PA standards.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Flurie, Maurice	Start: 9/1/2010	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Supplemental Programs

Description: CCA will utilize a variety of programs in order to improve performance of students in the area of reading.

Activity: After School Program

Description: in 2009-2010, CCA implemented an afterschool program, providing online tutoring for all students in grades K-12 Monday through Friday from 4:30 to 8. Teachers will be available to provide one-on-one and small group sessions to support students in reaching mastery.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Rusnak, Anthony	Start: 7/1/2009	\$45,000.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Fast ForWord

Description: Fast ForWord is a web-based brain training program that develops a strong foundation of cognitive and reading skills for a lifetime of successful learning. Used in conjunction with the previously described programs, Fast ForWord will assist in improving PSSA scores.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009	\$1,000,000.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: FOCUS (Facilitating Online Curriculum Using Standards)

Description: CCA will implement the FOCUS (Facilitating Online Curriculum Using Standards)

program providing small group tutorials for students scoring at-risk on local assessments and/or the Terra Nova in Language Arts and/or Math.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Boyd, Amy	Start: 9/1/2008 Finish: Ongoing	\$600,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Learning A-Z

Description: CCA will utilize resources available at Learning A-Z.com providing students with both online and print literacy practice.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Bailey, Rachel	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	-
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Mobile Lab

Description: In 2010-2011, CCA will be premiering its Mobile Lab. The Mobile Lab will be a recreational vehicle designed for the purpose of teachers traveling the state of Pennsylvania to provide extra opportunities for students to participate in academic challenges, labs, and interactions.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Flurie, Maurice	Start: 7/1/2010 Finish: Ongoing	\$200,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: PACE (Program for ALL Children to Excel)

Description: PACE provides individualized lessons and practice to students performing below proficient on state testing directly related to state standards and areas of weakness as seen on PSSA results. Students are provided weekly pre and post tests to assess mastery of each skill presented.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Shubert, Susan	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$232,440.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Skills Tutor K-12

Description: Skills Tutor is a technologically-based, online program aimed at building basic skills in order to improve performance in Math and Language Arts.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Shubert, Susan	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$39,900.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Study Island

Description: Study Island is an interactive web-site directly linked to Pennsylvania State Standards used to improve performance for all students.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$28,800.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Goal: Parent Satisfaction

Description: CCA will maintain and improve overall parent satisfaction with the program. On the Parent Satisfaction Survey, the Parent Perception of Overall Program Quality will be above 3.4, and the participation rate must be above 60%.

Strategy: Communications with families

Description: Teachers will maintain regular contacts with parents and respond to all communications within 2 days.

Activity: After School Program

Description: in 2009-2010, CCA implemented an afterschool program, providing online tutoring for all students in grades K-12 Monday through Friday from 4:30 to 8. Teachers will be available to provide one-on-one and small group sessions to support students in reaching mastery.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Rusnak, Anthony	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$45,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Instructional Contacts (7-11)

Description: Students in grades 7-11 will communicate with their subject area teachers or homeroom teachers at least biweekly through the use of LiveLesson® sessions and the telephone. Content mastery will be checked through these communications and through curriculum based assessments.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Gettle, Gregory	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$17,880.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Instructional Contacts (K-6)

Description: CCA teachers of students in grades K-6 will make contacts via telephone and LiveLesson® sessions. During these contacts, teachers will perform instructional activities while conversing with students to ensure mastery of previously learned skills.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Shubert, Susan	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$17,880.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Learning Coach Contacts (K-6)

Description: Teachers with students in grades K-6 will communicate with the Learning Coaches at least once per month.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Shubert, Susan	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$20,600.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Tutoring

Description: Teachers will provide in-person and/or LiveLesson® session tutoring whenever appropriate (through office hours and by appointment).

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Shubert, Susan	Start: 1/1/2008 Finish: Ongoing	\$47,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Provide technology support to families

Description: All students and Learning Coaches will have access to technological support as needed.

Activity: Upgrade student technology

Description: Laptops for 6th graders
Technical Assistance for Elementary Students (\$530 per student)
Technical Assistance for Secondary Students (\$777 per student)
K-6 Student Computers
7-12 Student Computers

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Boyd, Amy	Start: 7/1/2010 Finish: Ongoing	\$10,968,062.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Goal: Support Community Involvement and Promote Student Interaction

Description: CCA will develop stronger student/teacher and student/student interactions.

Strategy: Educational/Social Opportunities

Description: CCA students will engage in community activities that will also promote student interaction and provide opportunities for face-to-face meetings with their teachers.

Activity: Community Classes

Description: CCA will provide enrichment activities in music, art and sports for all students. In 2009-2010, 148 students took advantage of community classes.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$44,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Community Coordinators

Description: CCA will secure 42 (anticipated for 2010-2011) Community Coordinators for individual regions. The Community Coordinator will survey all households to solicit ideas for appropriate enrichment activities.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2010 Finish: Ongoing	\$70,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Field Trips/Activities

Description: CCA will provide increased opportunities for students to develop social skills by

offering opportunities to attend field trips which are educational and recreational. Each student will have access to at least 2 activities each month.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Shubert, Susan	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$60,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Mobile Lab

Description: In 2010-2011, CCA will be premiering its Mobile Lab. The Mobile Lab will be a recreational vehicle designed for the purpose of teachers traveling the state of Pennsylvania to provide extra opportunities for students to participate in academic challenges, labs, and interactions.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Flurie, Maurice	Start: 7/1/2010 Finish: Ongoing	\$200,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Robotics Club

Description: CCA will continue a Robotics Club and activities.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Gettle, Gregory	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$10,200.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Science Fair

Description: CCA will organize and implement a Science Faire for all students.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Gettle, Gregory	Start: 7/1/2009	\$500.00
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Finish: Ongoing

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Science Field Trips/Demonstrations

Description: CCA will sponsor science field trips/demonstrations planned by Science teachers

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Gettle, Gregory	Start: 7/1/2009	\$500.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Teacher Attendance on Field Trips/Community Activities

Description: CCA teachers will attend at least two community activities or field trips during each school year.

Activity: Community Classes

Description: CCA will provide enrichment activities in music, art and sports for all students. In 2009-2010, 148 students took advantage of community classes.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009	\$44,000.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Community Coordinators

Description: CCA will secure 42 (anticipated for 2010-2011) Community Coordinators for individual regions. The Community Coordinator will survey all households to solicit ideas for appropriate enrichment activities.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2010	\$70,000.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Field Trips/Activities

Description: CCA will provide increased opportunities for students to develop social skills by offering opportunities to attend field trips which are educational and recreational. Each student will have access to at least 2 activities each month.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Shubert, Susan	Start: 7/1/2009	\$60,000.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Teacher and Community Coordinator Partnership

Description: Teachers will be required to attend at least two field trips assisting the Community Coordinator as necessary.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009	\$25,000.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Goal: Use of Technology to Improve Performance

Description: Further the mission of leveraging technology for personalized performance learning by reaching a broader audience with additional supports and an ever-improving curriculum and instructional program.

Strategy: Data Analysis

Description: CCA will analyze a variety of data to make decisions for expansion of facilities, curriculum, and assessments.

Activity: Curriculum Expansion and Revision

Description: Improve and expand the curriculum with focus on the PSSA in term of coverage, sequencing, and emphasis. In 2009-2010, grades 1-2 will have a newly revised and technologically enhanced Language Arts, Science, and Social Studies Curriculum and grades 1-2 will also have a newly revised and technologically enhanced Math curriculum. The Kindergarten curriculum will also be revised to provide a more rigorous program.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Tulli, Dennis	Start: 7/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$1,247,400.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Statement of Quality Assurance

Charter school has not met AYP.

Charter school has created a School Improvement Plan.

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

Intermediate Unit designee met with and when meeting occurred:

Cheryl Capozzoli and Brian Griffin on September 8, 2009

Statement of Quality Assurance - Attachment

- Statement of Quality Assurance 09-10

SECTION III. QUALITY OF SCHOOL DESIGN

Rigorous Instructional Program

What curriculum does your charter school utilize?

CCA has adopted the Connections Academy curriculum, which combines proven and rigorous print-based materials with the best in technology-enhanced learning such that a significant portion of the curriculum is delivered through the Internet and other electronic means. The Connections Academy curriculum has been Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools accredited.

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

The entire CCA curriculum has been carefully aligned with Pennsylvania Academic Standards. Curriculum staff has developed a core database of the thousands of standards-based learning objectives represented in the Connections Academy curriculum. The learning objectives are organized into areas, standard, level, and

benchmark, correlated with Pennsylvania Academic Standards and supplemented with additional online and other curriculum to ensure that all of the requirements are covered and that complete alignment is achieved. CCA is also Middle States accredited. The accreditation process included a review of the curriculum and how it meets content standards and requirements.

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

The K-8 curriculum integrates textbooks, lesson plans, digital versions of textbooks, and other content from a variety of leading publishers and school programs including McGraw-Hill, Scott Foresman, Glencoe, Houghton Mifflin, Zaner-Bloser, Prentice Hall, the Calvert school, iSAFE, and others. The curriculum also features technology-based content from “best of breed” providers such as Hooked on Phonics®, BrainPop®, Compass, Discover Education *streaming*, EBSCO, SkillsTutor, Connect-a-Majig, and Grolier Online®.

The K-8 curriculum also integrates extensive use of Teachlets® --online animated tutorials developed by Connections Academy to introduce math topics and provide interactive practice. CCA teachers also extensively use the LiveLesson® tool, which provides for real-time web conferencing with small groups of students using voice over IP, chat, electronic whiteboard, webcams, and shared web surfing.

The curriculum for grades 9 through 12 provides more online experience, as appropriate for secondary school learners. The Pennsylvania standards-aligned high school curriculum integrates digital versions of textbooks from major publishers (primarily Prentice Hall) enhanced by multimedia, interactive material, communication/ conferencing tools, and team projects. Top-quality third-party courseware elements are also included, including Aventa.

Students identified as needing additional instructional support are referred to our Student Support Team. The Student Support Team may recommend additional instructional support programs, such as Hooked on Phonics, Hooked on Math, HeadSprout, etc.

CCA employs a multi-tiered intervention model so that every student has access to the resources they need to be successful: Tier 1 — Core Instructional Program; Tier 2 — Supplemental Programs and Supports; Tier 3 — Alternative Programs; The school’s Student Support Team meets on a regular basis to discuss students who are struggling academically to develop an intervention plan and strategies for improvement.

Connections Academy’s curriculum is designed so that students in each progressive grade will work more independently with technology integrated more at each level as well. In Kindergarten students can expect to work with technology approximately 15% of their time while students in 12th grade may expect nearly 75%. The integration of the curriculum and the technology is accomplished through

the numerous programs available, listed above, especially direct instruction through LiveLesson®.

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

CCA utilizes online, interactive instructional movies that incorporate graphics, video, and audio to explain the concepts and ideas the student needs to complete a lesson. These interactive, online “Teachlets™” are significantly more effective and entertaining than text alone. Interactive online instruction known as “LiveLesson™” is also used to enhance instruction and communications. With this tool, teachers can conduct live teaching sessions over the Internet to either a single student or a group. Additionally, courses utilize online asynchronous discussions where students are required to answer open-ended questions and respond to their peers and the teacher. This new technology is ideal for explaining difficult concepts, conducting review sessions or promoting discussion. Individual tutorial sessions can also be arranged to assist students with specific needs.

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 CCA placement test, DIBELS, pre-/post-testing program (LEAP), TerraNova testing, and PSSA tracking helps identify students who are at risk of academic failure. Students identified as working below grade level are provided with personalized instructional and curriculum interventions to bring them up to grade level, to ensure at least a year’s worth of academic growth over the course of each year, facilitate successful completion of core courses, and prepare them for success on the PSSA. Some of the interventions include:

- Implementing the PACE (Program for All Children to Excel) program providing small group tutorials for students scoring below proficient on PSSA Reading and/or Math;
- Implementing the FOCUS (Facilitating Online Curriculum Using Standards) program providing small group tutorials for students scoring at-risk on local assessments and/or the Terra Nova in Language Arts and/or Math;
- Providing Hooked on Phonics to struggling readers in levels K-2 because CCA recognizes the importance of phonics education;
- Providing Hooked on Math to students struggling in basic mathematics skills in levels K-2 because CCA recognizes the importance of early math intervention;
- Providing Skills Tutor to students as supplemental lessons for language arts, math, science, and social studies;
- Providing a computer-aided skills-based “Fast Track” program to students significantly below grade level;
- Providing Fast ForWord, a web-based brain training program that develops a strong foundation of cognitive and reading skills for a lifetime of successful

learning. Used in conjunction with the previously described programs, Fast ForWord will assist in improving PSSA scores.

- The individualized, self-paced nature of the program allows students to attain mastery prior to moving on to the next lesson; and
- On line and in person live tutoring sessions are provided for students struggling with curriculum content. In 2009-2010, CCA will have certified teachers K-12 available from 4:30-8:30 for all students needing extra support and tutoring services.

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

Teachers are as important in a virtual school as they are in a conventional bricks-and-mortar school but since students and teachers are physically apart, it is very important to develop teaching strategies that bridge that gap. CCA teachers receive special instruction in using online communication tools such as email, message boards and interactive online classes to involve their students along with regular contact via telephone where teachers and students discuss their progress and lesson content. CCA's use of Teachlets and LiveLessons has been particularly effective in engaging the students. Older students are also required to participate in discussion groups and research projects where they interact extensively with other students and with their teacher.

Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachments

- Induction Plan
- Professional Development Plan Act 48
- CCA Title I Schoolwide Plan 2009-2010

English Language Learners

English Language Learners

Several aspects of the CCA program prove beneficial for LEP students. The individualized pace of the program allows students to move more quickly through subjects where language is not a factor and spend more time on reading and writing activities; in fact, a teacher might re-prioritize the curriculum for an individual student to enable sustained concentration in a particular area. A CCA Curriculum Specialist and Teacher with ESL/LEP/ELL training and certification collaborate with teachers, Learning Coaches and students. ELL students receive appropriate supplemental resources and adaptations to curriculum. Additionally, CCA has expertise in various technologies that can facilitate language acquisition. The ESL teacher facilitates synchronous lessons using the internet for identified ELL students. A student's level of language acquisition dictates the frequency of LiveLessons® sessions as detailed in the English Language Learner Handbook for 2008-2009 and Pennsylvania Department of Education. CCA does recognize that the virtual environment may not be the best place for students with little or no English speaking proficiency, particularly if that student would be working in a home environment where English is not spoken. CCA had 10 monitor ELL students and 16 students in ELL programs in 2009-2010.

ELL Screening and Program

An ELL Screening is conducted based upon the responses provided on the student's Home Language Survey. The ELL Coordinator contacts the family to determine if an error was made on the Home Language Survey and/or if the student participated in an ESL program at the previous school. If no error was made in completing the Home Language Survey and the family acknowledges a language other than English is spoken in the home the potential ELL students are administered the W-APT test (WIDA- Access Placement Test) to determine their fluency level. Based on their test results they are placed into the appropriate ELL level (non English, beginner, intermediate, high intermediate, advanced). The W-APT is a PA state approved screening program that is part of the WIDA testing program. The W-APT does not require a certified ESL teacher for administration.

CCA uses multiple measures for determining placement and progress. Measures are informal and formal and include the W-APT, curriculum-based assessments, teacher observations, portfolios, and standardized tests. Consideration is given to listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in addition to academic progress. CCA uses the state mandated ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State for English Language Learners) to measure English language learner yearly progress. Please see the attached document for CCA's required exit criteria for English language learners.

English Language Learners - Attachments

- CCA ELL Program Handbook 09-10
- ELL Exit Criteria 09-10

Graduation Requirements

Graduation and Diploma Requirements

To graduate and receive a diploma from Connections Academy, students must be enrolled in a Connections Academy school for at least one whole semester prior to graduation. In addition to meeting all Connections Academy's area and subject requirements and successfully completing 24 credits (in specific subject areas as outlined in this Supplement), students must also pass all state-mandated proficiency exams. Requirements for graduation shall also include completion of a culminating project. The purpose of the culminating project is to assure that students are able to apply, analyze, synthesize and evaluate information and communicate significant knowledge and understanding. Commonwealth Connections Academy has developed specific procedures and options for the culminating project. A student may finish school in the year he turns 21 years old.

Early Graduation

At the close of the second semester, the school principal, counselor, and other staff will review each senior's records to ensure that these students have completed all graduation requirements. The principal will then initiate the "withdrawal for graduation" process in the LMS for those students who have completed all requirements.

Students who have completed all graduation requirements at any time prior to the end of the second semester of their senior year may request early graduation by contacting the school principal. The principal and other appropriate school staff will then review the student's records to ensure that all graduation requirements have been met. After the principal grants approval for early graduation, he/she will initiate the "withdrawal for graduation" process. This includes marking the student's transcript to indicate graduate status. Once the student has graduated, the student will no longer be enrolled in Connections Academy and will not have access to the LMS.

Unofficial transcripts will be available to students via the LMS *as long as the student is enrolled in Connections Academy*, and official transcripts will be available at any time by contacting the school. Early graduates will receive their diplomas *at the end of the second semester*, when the rest of the graduating class receives their diplomas. Early graduates are welcome to join in any and all graduation activities offered by Connections Academy, but must contact the school at least one month prior to the end of the second semester to indicate their wish to participate in the graduation activities.

Area and Subject Requirements

Students must earn the following credits in the following areas and subjects in order to graduate: Area	Subject	# Credits
Language Arts	English	4.0
Mathematics	Algebra	1.0
Mathematics	Geometry	1.0
Mathematics	Any in the Area of Mathematics	1.0
Science	Biology	1.0
Science	Physical Science	1.0
Science	Any in the Area of Science	1.0
Social Studies	U. S. History	1.0
Social Studies	Government	1.0
Social Studies	Any in the Area of Social Studies	1.0
Health and PE	Health	1.0
Health and PE	Physical Education	1.0
Technology	Ed Technology	1.0
Humanities	The Arts and/or World Languages	2.0

Connections Academy uses a standard whereby one credit equals approximately 180 hours of instruction (sometimes referred to as Carnegie Units).

Grades and Grade Point Averages

High school students will be awarded credit only for courses in which they have earned a grade of C- or better. This applies both to courses taken at Connections Academy and at other schools. Previous courses taken at other schools in which the student earned a grade below a C- will not be awarded with transfer credit, but will appear on student records and will be included in a student's grade point average (G. P.A.). Courses required for graduation will need to be re-taken by the student if a grade of C- or higher was not earned, and re-taking such courses may delay the student's graduation.

Semester and year-end G.P.A. calculations will follow a four point scale (below). Grade point averages will only include graded courses; pass/fail courses will not be averaged into a student's G.P.A. Passing grades for Honors courses are weighted with 0.5 extra grade point. Passing grades for Advanced Placement (AP) courses are weighted with one extra grade point.

Grade	Non-Weighted	Weighted (Honors)	Weighted (AP)
A+	4.00	4.50	5.00
A	4.00	4.50	5.00
A-	3.67	4.17	4.67
B+	3.33	3.83	4.33
B	3.00	3.50	4.00
B-	2.67	3.17	3.67
C+	2.33	2.83	3.33
C	2.00	2.50	3.00
C-	1.67	2.17	2.67
D+	1.33	1.33	1.33
D	1.00	1.00	1.00
D-	0.67	0.67	0.67
F	0.00	0.00	0.00

Class Rank

Commonwealth Connections Academy will calculate the class rank for each high school student two times per year, shortly after the conclusion of each semester. Students who have not yet successfully completed any high school courses for credit directly from Connections Academy will be excluded from the class rank calculation.

For the purposes of calculating the class rank, the student's cumulative Grade Point Average (G.P.A.) will be used, which may include weighted grades for Honors or

Advanced Placement courses. Courses transferred in from other accredited institutions will also be included in the class rank as long as there is a grade assigned for that course.

The cumulative G.P.A. is calculated to the thousandth of a point. Students whose class rank rounds off to the same thousandth of a point will be considered tied and will receive the same class rank. The ranking will compare students within the same grade level at the same school. The class rank is included on the student's official high school transcript.

Diploma Requirements

To graduate and receive a diploma from Connections Academy, students must be enrolled in a Connections Academy school for at least one whole semester prior to graduation. In addition to meeting all Connections Academy's area and subject requirements and successfully completing 24 credits, students must also pass all state-mandated proficiency exams. A student may finish school in the year he turns 21 years old.

Release of High School Educational Records

Connections Academy will provide educational records, including official high school transcripts, class rank, test scores, and letters of recommendation to third parties such as post-secondary institutions, scholarship committees, and/or potential employers, only with prior written approval from the student's parent(s)/legal guardian(s), or from the student if he or she is aged 18 or older or an emancipated minor.

In order to ensure that application deadlines are successfully met, we require advance notice of at least 10 working days for requests to provide educational records to students, parents, and/or third parties. We require 30 days' notice for letters of recommendation. Note that class rank is only calculated twice a year. Requests for records should be made using the Authorization for Release of Educational Records Form available in the Virtual Library under Forms, Colleges and Careers.

Prerequisites

Students must meet all course prerequisite requirements prior to registration in them. Prerequisites are listed by each course's overview in the course catalog. Semesters A and B of a course cannot be taken concurrently (during the same semester).

Duplicate Course Work: Repeating a Course

A student may repeat a course in order to improve a grade with school counselor approval. The student's transcript and G.P.A. will incorporate both occurrences of the course, and both grades.

Schedule Changes

Students may request changes to their schedules within the first six weeks of enrollment or in the first six weeks of the semester. To add or drop a course, a parent must make a request of the school counselor.

Transcripts

Students will be able to access ongoing information about their courses through their online grade books within the Learning Management System. To request an official copy of a transcript, families must complete a *Transcript Request Form* (located in the Virtual Library) and submit it to the principal for approval and processing. Official transcripts are generated at the school. They have official school signatures, raised seals, and are sent in a sealed envelope. Parents will be able to view a copy of the transcript through the learning management system.

Credit from other Schools

As part of the enrollment process, families submit their students' most recent report cards and/or transcripts. Counselors analyze previously earned credits and determine which credits will transfer to the Connections Academy school. The school counselor may require complete unofficial transcripts or complete end-of-year report cards before approving a student's grade level and course selection. Official transcripts are required within the first 30 days of school for final credit transfer approval and for final course approval. Upon graduation or withdrawal, the official Connections Academy transcript will display both the credits earned at Connections Academy as well as any transfer credits.

Enrollment After the Start of the School Year or Semester

Students entering mid-year or mid-semester submit report cards, progress reports and/or teacher notes from their previous school as part of the enrollment process. Connections Academy teachers review the student's work and progress up to that point in the semester, and enter an equivalent grade in to the Connections Academy grade book that represents the student's efforts at the previous school. That grade will be averaged in with the Connections Academy grades earned in that same semester.

Credit for coursework completed in a non-standard school program

Students may request to receive credit for courses completed in previous educational settings other than fully accredited schools, including home school, non-accredited public, private, alternative or international schools.

There are three options for requesting and being granted credit by Connections Academy for coursework completed in a non-standard school program. Students are encouraged to contact the school counselor or administrator to discuss the following options:

- 1) **Assessment:** the student takes and achieves a passing grade (C-) on the Connections Academy exam(s) associated with the course. This may be the midterm and final exam or other proficiency exam as determined by the content area teacher.

Alternatively, the student may take a state-approved standardized test. If the student achieves a score of “Proficient” or higher he or she will be granted credit for that course. The test(s) must be taken in a school-approved proctored setting.

2) Portfolio: The student submits a portfolio documenting coursework, which may include:

- Samples of prior work
- List of texts used in prior courses
- Artwork
- Writing samples
- Report card from prior school/home school
- Student Interview
- Other materials as requested by the school counselor

The portfolio will be reviewed by each relevant content area teacher. The content area teachers will make final decisions about credit(s) to be granted for the student’s prior coursework.

For example, a student who shows sufficient evidence of having successfully completed Algebra I, Geometry, English 9 & 10, Earth Science, Biology, U.S. History, Government, and French I & II, will be granted credit by each content area teacher for each of the courses documented, and will be placed in Connections Academy at the grade level appropriate for the number of credits granted.

The school counselor and/or principal may review the student’s portfolio along with the content area teachers, but the content area teachers will be responsible for determining if the student is indeed proficient in the specific subject and whether or not credit is to be granted.

3) Competency: Based on a portfolio of materials similar to, but perhaps less comprehensive than that listed in #2, the subject area teacher makes a decision about where to place the student. After the student has completed one full semester at Connections Academy, the subject area teacher reviews the student’s progress in the Connections Academy course(s). If the student earns a passing grade in the Connections Academy course that follows a course taken in a non-standard school, the principal may award credit(s) for the course(s) taken in the non-standard school. This method of placement is only applicable to foreign language courses and certain other courses that occur in a clearly linear sequence.

Students may use any combination of the above-listed methods for requesting credit. For example, a student may choose option #1 for mathematics and science courses, #2 for humanities courses, and #3 for foreign language.

Credits for courses completed in a non-standard school program are granted as described above, but no grades are assigned. Students receiving credit will be given a grade of "Pass," which is not included in the calculation of the student's G.P.A. These credits are not entered into the student's records until the student has completed a full semester in Connections Academy. The transcript will reflect these credits as "Demonstrated Proficiency."

Middle School Courses

Students may earn high school credit for *high school level* courses taken during the middle school years. However, a *middle school* course for which high school credit is granted must cover the same content as the equivalent high school course, and must be approved by the school counselor in advance. Check with the school counselor for more specific information.

College Courses

Families must consult with the school counselor for permission to earn high school credit for college courses taken while the student is still enrolled in Connections Academy. Students wishing to earn high school credit for college courses must have written approval of the school counselor in advance. The school counselor will work with the parent and student to determine the amount of high school credit that a college course could earn. In order to receive high school credit for a college course, the student must pass the course with a grade of C- or higher and present an official transcript to the Connections Academy school.

Credit for Other Experiences

Many students are involved in activities outside their school experiences, such as: music, dance, and art lessons, foreign language instruction, and participation on athletic teams. While Connections Academy recognizes the value of these activities, they cannot be used to earn high school credit.

Independent Study

Independent Study is a school-approved, student-centered, alternative method of learning that allows a student to earn regular education course credit while working on a standards-based, curriculum-aligned, independent project. Students work independently under the supervision of a certified teacher following a plan created jointly by the student, the parent, and the teacher. Students who wish to earn credit for an Independent Study project must complete an application and have the approval of the teacher, school counselor, and principal in advance.

1. Students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs) that do not pass the state assessments may still be eligible for a diploma, if such an allowance is approved by the IEP team and is clearly indicated on the IEP.
2. Students with Individual Education Programs (IEPs) that do not pass the state assessments may still be eligible for a diploma, if such an allowance is approved by the IEP team and is clearly indicated on the IEP.

Special Education

In accordance with Chapter 711, CCA is committed to serving children with disabilities whether such children are currently or newly identified as disabled. Through a combination of appropriate certifications among our teaching staff, contracts with local school districts and private providers, and expertise in our centralized Education Resource Centers, CCA will be able to meet the needs of special learners. In addition, CCA will consult with resources like Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN) in planning for and acquiring necessary technology to serve students with disabilities.

Since CCA is a program focused on individualization, flexibility and personalization it is often a very good fit for students with special needs. In addition to the regular placement test, CCA's Special Education Director reviews each IEP analyzing the level of functioning, educational needs, and suggested adaptations/modifications to determine how CCA can meet the student's needs in the least restrictive environment. Thus, CCA can be an appropriate setting for students with special needs by providing:

- 1:1 individualized instruction
- A team of adults focused on student success
- Ongoing consultation with special educators, certified teachers, and curriculum specialists to assist with adapting and modifying assignments to meet specific student needs
- Personalized Learning Plans
- A safe and directed environment
- Reduced environmental distractions
- Frequent progress monitoring, evaluations and reports
- Technology to facilitate communication, organization and skill development
- Assistive technology to address special needs (e.g., keyboarding or speech recognition software can address fine motor skills issues)
- Flexible schedule that allows for students to learn at their own pace
- Ability to focus on academic achievement in lieu of social dynamics.

These factors, along with the presence of a caring and a committed adult (the learning coach) enable CCA to address the large majority of special needs students (approximately 75%) through the implementation of specially designed instructional approaches and learning strategies via a consultative service model. Included in this group would be mild to moderate disabilities in the following categories:

- Vision acuity difficulties
- Auditory deficiencies
- Health concerns
- Developmental articulation

- Developmental expressive language
- Developmental receptive language
- Gross motor skills
- Fine motor skills
- Developmental reading (dyslexia)
- Developmental writing
- Oral expression
- Written language
- Spelling
- Memory
- Handwriting
- Developmental arithmetic
- Reasoning
- Emotional/Behavior
- Social communication
- Attention disorder

More serious and profound cases of the above, as well as specific physical and pervasive developmental disorders, neurological disorders (e.g., Multiple Sclerosis), and physical disabilities will require direct service. If it is determined that CCA is a good educational fit for these students, these additional services can be provided through contracts with local school district, hospitals, non-profits, and private providers.

Students entering CCA with an IEP: During the enrollment phase, Connections and CCA staff will review each IEP and determine the level of each student's need and consider the types of services that are required. In most cases, CCA teachers can modify the student's program to provide the necessary accommodations. When possible, CCA will also contract with local service agencies to provide additional related services listed on the IEP that cannot be met directly by staff.

To support students with existing IEPs, CCA will:

- Conduct annual reviews of the IEP including a review of student progress with existing IEP, creating of new IEP goals, and obtaining parent consent for and approval of new IEP.
- Conduct Tri-annual reviews in which students are formally reassessed every 3 years.
- Conduct Bi-annual reviews of students identified as MR.

Referring students for Special Education services: If CCA suspects that a student requires special educational services, the following procedures will be initiated:

- The program teacher consults with the school's Special Education Supervisor and implements suggested modifications, lesson adaptations, and alternative

instructional strategies. The program teacher documents all modifications and the student's level of success with each.

- The program teacher completes official Student Support Team referral. The parent is notified of this referral.
- The Student Support Team meets to review referral. If deemed appropriate by the team and a disability is suspected, the mandatory Special Education referral/evaluation process is begun. If not, the regular education program remains in place with further suggested program modifications.
- Parental consent for the student evaluation is obtained and the appropriate evaluations are arranged. Parents are sent a copy of *Procedural Safeguards*.
- Parent is invited to the multidisciplinary team meeting to review the assessment results. The team determines if the student has a disability and which special education services are required.
- IEP meeting is scheduled, and the parents are invited to attend. IEP goals are formulated and parent signs IEP.
- IEP is implemented.

As a public school CCA shall, through its policies and procedures, comply with all of the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Act, 20 U.S.C. 1400 et. Seq. (IDEA, 2004), and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, 29 U.S.C. 794 (sec. 504). CCA will provide a free appropriate public education (FAPE) to children with disabilities, including, but not limited to, identifying, evaluating, planning educational programs, providing related services and implementing placements in accordance with those Acts.

Special Education - Attachment

- CCA School Handbook 2009-2010

Special Education Program Profile - Chart I

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Schmick, Paige	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	45	N/A
Cohen, Dana	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	40	N/A
Livering, Kathryn	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	34	N/A
Coppes, Ann	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	34	N/A
Young, Casie	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	33	N/A
Walker, Mary	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	40	N/A
Knaub, Regina	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	34	N/A
Reist, Jim	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	43	N/A
Klemen, Kristi	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	45	N/A
Hollman, Shana	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	34	N/A
Jachowicz, Kristin	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	34	N/A
Dress, Lisa	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	45	N/A

Robinson, Melissa	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	41	N/A
Curtis, Diana	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	26	N/A
Shustack, Joy	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	43	N/A
Shaffer, Joni	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	42	N/A
Stevenson, Lindsey	1.00	Learning Support	CCA	56	N/A

Special Education Program Profile - Chart II

Organization	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
NONE	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	N/A

Special Education Program Profile - Chart III

Title	Location	FTE
Rutt, Jan - Supervisor of Special Education	CCA Main Campus, 4050 Crums Mill Road, Suite 303, Harrisburg, PA 17112	1.00
Moser, Christina - Assistant to the Supervisor of Special Education	CCA Main Campus, 4050 Crums Mill Road, Suite 303, Harrisburg, PA 17112	1.00

Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV

IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual	Title/Service	Amount of Time Per Week
Therapy Source	SP/L, OT, PT, Psch	As Needed
Lincoln IU #12	OT, PT	As Needed
Crossroads Speech & Hearing	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Easter Seals, Western PA	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Pediatric Therapy Specialists	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Community Psychiatric Centers	Psych/Ed evals	As needed
Barbara McMillen	Psych/Ed evals	As needed
Vocational and Psychological Services	Psych/Ed Evals	As needed
The Center for Pediatric Therapy, Inc.	SP/L, OT, PT, social skills groups	As needed
Ferrulli Speech Services	SP/L	As needed
BLAST IU #17	Psych/Ed evals, Sp/l	As Needed
Theraplay	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Bloomsburg Psych Center	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed
Capital Area IU #15	Psych/Ed, OT, PT, SP/L	As Needed
Byron Schreck, SLP, CCC	SP/L	As Needed
Allied Services/ John Heinz Institute	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Schreiber Pediatric Rehab Center	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Speech Care	SP/L, LiPS	As Needed
Cynthia Mlles and Assoc.	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Carol Walck Assoc.	SP/L, LiPS	As Needed

James Truscott, Ph. D.	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed
Laurel Assoc.	SP/L	As Needed
Pocono Speech Center	SP/L	As Needed
Geisinger Medical Center	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Easter Seals of S.E. PA	Psych/Ed, OT, SP/L, PT	As Needed
Charles Cole Memorial Hospital	SP_/L, OT, PT	As Needed
The Pottsville Hospital	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Psychological Assoc. of Schuylkill County	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed
G & E Therapies	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Swisher Behavioral Health Services, Inc	SP/L, OT, PT, OCounseling, Psych/Ed Evals	As Needed
Aaron's Acres	Social Skills	As Needed
Adam Berman, Psy.D	Social Skills/Counseling	As Needed
Cherry Tree Rehab Center	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Pediatric Therapy Assoc.	SP/L, OT, PT	As Needed
Brownstone Psych Services	Psych/Ed evals	As Needed
Children's Therapy Place, Inc	Virtual Social Skills, SL	As Needed
Jeffrey Barnhart	Psych/Ed Evals	As Needed
Child Development	OT	As Needed
Stategic Medical Solutions	SPL, OT, PT	As Needed
Sunbelt Staffing	SPL, OT, PT	As Needed
Oxford Consulting Services, Inc.	OT, SPL	As Needed
Sandy Hartzell	Tutoring	As Needed
Duquesne University-SPL Hearing Clinic	SPL, H-AP	As Needed
River Speech and Educational Services	SPL, OT, PT, Psych	As Needed
Dr. Merrill Bowman, OD	Vision Therapy	As Needed
Rehabilitation Innovations, Inc.	SPL, OT, PT	As Needed
Glenn Den Enterprises	SPL, OT, PT	As Needed
Physiotherapy Assoc.	SPL, OT, PT	As Needed
Healthsouth Rehab. Hosp. of Altoona	SPL, OT, PT	As Needed
Virginia Roberts, OT	OT	As Needed
John Noone, PT	PT	As Needed
Frank DiPrima, MS	Psych	As Needed
Jewish Family Services - Mynd Works	OT, Auditory	As Needed
Therapy Bridges	OT, SL, Social Skills	As Needed
Gayle Goepfert, SLP	SLP	As Needed
Denise Dougherty, SLP	SLP	As Needed
Dr. Jonathan Gransee	Psych	As Needed
Vision Development Center of Lancaster	Vision Therapy	As Needed

Student Assessment

Of the 1588 students that took both the pre and post assessment in reading 91% made satisfactory progress on the LEAP Reading assessments. Of the 1723 students that took both the pre and post assessment in math 92% made satisfactory progress on the LEAP Math assessments. (Satisfactory progress is defined as at least a 10% gain from pretest to posttest or a posttest score of at least 75%).

CCA uses benchmarks and a pretest to place students at appropriate levels of instruction. Of course, the goal is to have all students obtain at least a year's growth in an academic term. With continued increase of on-line LiveLesson® sessions and tutoring sessions for students and Learning Coaches, CCA will continue to improve the results of the LEAP assessments.

CCA will continue to identify struggling students and offer more support in their areas of weakness. Examples of such support will include having students participate in the PACE (Program for ALL Children to Excel) or FOCUS (Facilitating Online Curriculum Using Standards) programs which offer small group instruction targeting areas of difficulty determined by weekly pre and post tests. CCA teachers will also continue to implement accommodations and modifications to daily lessons to fit their learning styles and needs of each child. Learning Coaches will be invited to participate in Learning Coach Outreach Sessions around the state to improve their effectiveness. Currently there are many students achieving at a level below their grade of "official" record. The goal is to have students below grade level achieve more than a year's growth in one school term, in order to eventually be prepared to achieve proficiency or above on the state assessments.

Since we have not yet received our 2009-2010 PSSA AYP results, we are unable to comment on them at this time. Understanding that CCA always has areas in need of improvement, the following ideas will be implemented.

In 2010-2011 CCA is also going to continue use of Study Island, a leading provider of web-based state assessment preparation programs and standards based learning programs, to obtain more accurate bench marks and provide students practice and instruction in the targeted areas. CCA will also be using "Math 24 — First in Math" to provide students with on-line interactive challenges to develop and improve critical math skills. This is highly motivating program and has been proven to increase achievement in mathematics.

Fast ForWord was added to CCA's repertoire of curriculum for the 2009-2010 school year. Fast ForWord is a web-based brain training program that develops a strong foundation of cognitive and reading skills for a lifetime of successful learning. Used in conjunction with the previously described programs, Fast ForWord will assist in improving PSSA scores.

Teachers use CCA's Learning Management System to log all student successes and areas in need of improvement. On-line assessments as well as submitted portfolio materials are used to measure academic achievement and to identify areas in need of remediation.

Teachers use data collected from all assessments to determine individual tutoring needs. Teachers offer these tutoring sessions to students daily, Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM. In addition, in 2009-2010 CCA began an after school program. Teachers certified in all areas K-12 will be available for tutoring from 4:30 - 8:00 Monday through Friday.

Head Sprout, Hooked on Phonics, Hooked on Math, Skills Tutor, Teachlets, Brain Pop, and United Streaming are all on line sources available for students to use.

Student Assessment - Attachment

- Local Assessment: CCA-LEAP 2009-2010

Teacher Evaluation

The individuals responsible for conducting evaluations were the Secondary Assistant Principal, Frank August; Title I Coordinator, Amy Boyd; Assistant to the CEO, Maurice Flurie; Secondary Assistant Principal, Adam Fraser; Secondary Principal, Gregory Gettle; Secondary Assistant Principal, Gary Madden; Assistant to the Special Education Director, Christina Moser; Special Education Director, Jan Rutt; Elementary Assistant Principal, Anthony Rusnak; Elementary Principal, Susan Shubert and the CEO, Dennis Tulli.

Frank August has 35.4 years in public education, 17 years as a teacher at Eastern Westmoreland AVTS and Carlisle High School. He has served as High School Principal and Middle School Principal as well as Director of Carlisle Career and Technology Center. He has been a member on 4 Middle States Evaluation Teams state-wide, local Middle State's and a member of the Pennsylvania State Technology Education Evaluation team.

Amy Boyd earned a Bachelor of Science and Pennsylvania elementary teacher certification at Wilson College, Master of Science in Education Administration and Pennsylvania K-12 Principal Certification from University of Scranton. She has eleven years of experience in education as elementary teacher, then working for the Pennsylvania Department of Education in the Bureau of Teaching and Learning Support. She is currently in a cohort based doctoral program in Education Administration and Policy Studies with the George Washington University in Washington, DC.

Maurice Flurie earned his Bachelor of Science in Health and Physical Education at Lock Haven University, Master of Arts in Health and Physical Education at Tennessee Technological University, Master of Education in Educational Administration, Secondary Principal's Certificate, Elementary Principal's Certificate and Superintendent Letter of Eligibility at Shippensburg University and Doctor of Education at Duquesne University. He has 26 years experience in public education including experience as a teacher (7 years), assistant principal (7 years), principal (6 years) and central office administrator (6 years). He is an adjunct professor at Wilkes University (8 years) teaching in the Graduate School of Education.

Adam Fraser has 11 years teaching and 5 years administrative experience that spans over public, private, parochial, international, charter, and cyber charter schools. He received his Master's in Educational Leadership from the University of Delaware in 2006, while receiving a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education degree from Baylor University in 1996.

Gregory Gettle completed his administrative certification at Temple University. He has 35 years experience in public education including experience as a teacher, athletic director, assistant principal, and principal. Additionally he has conducted workshops, directed teacher in-services, participated in the development of teacher evaluation plans and evaluated teachers at the high school level.

Gary Madden received his Bachelor of Science from Shippensburg University as well as a Principal's Certificate and Superintendent Letter of Eligibility. He also holds a Masters Degree from Millersville University. He has over 36 years experience in education holding a variety of positions in teaching and administration. Gary has had the opportunity to present professional development workshops and serve on many educational boards. Jan Rutt acquired his instructional and supervisory certification in special education through Millersville University. He has 41 years experience in public and approved private school education, including experience as a teacher, work-study coordinator,

director of education, CEO and supervisor of special education. He has conducted workshops and in-service programs, presented at various PDE and CEC conferences, and supervised and evaluated teachers and administrative staff K through 12.

Christina Moser earned a Bachelor of Science in Criminal Justice at Old Dominion University, Elementary Teaching Certification at Alvernia University, Master of Science in Education: Administration and Leadership and Pennsylvania K-12 Principal Certification from Wilkes University. She also has a Pennsylvania Instructional II K-6 elementary teaching certification; 15 years combined professional experience in the private sector and public education system.

Anthony Rusnak completed his administrative certification and superintendent's letter from the University of Scranton. He earned a M.A.T. from Colgate University. He has 20 years experience in public education as a Teacher (10 years), Assistant Principal (3 years), and Principal (7 years). He has evaluated teachers at the HS and Elem. levels. He is also an Adjunct Professor for the University of Scranton for the past 3 years. He has recently supervised a student teacher as an Adjunct Professor for St. Joseph's University.

Jan Rutt completed his Special Education Supervisory certification at Millersville. He has 44 years of experience in both public school and approved private school education as a teacher, work-study coordinator, vocational evaluator, Educational Director, Executive Director, consultant and Supervisor of Special Education. He has presented at various conferences, been an evaluator for PDE corrections education programs. directed a GED program in a county prison, and evaluated teachers in K -12 programs.

Susan Shubert has five years of teaching experience and has a Masters Degree in Educational Administration with a Principal's Certification from Gwynedd-Mercy College. She received her Bachelor of Science degree in Elementary and Early Childhood Education from Bucknell University. She has been with Commonwealth Connections Academy for 5 years. Susan has presented professional development workshops for teachers and administrators.

Dr. Dennis Tulli has been in education for over 35 years in various capacities including classroom teacher, guidance counselor, assistant principal, principal, and superintendent. He has a Bachelors degree from Lebanon Valley College, a Masters Degree from Shippensburg University and a Doctorate in Educational Administration from Temple University. Dr. Tulli has been a member of several education organizations in the last 30 years.

All administrators receive ongoing training on management, supervision and employee relations. The Board has instituted the following fair and objective process for teacher evaluations, following PDE requirements. All CCA professional employees are evaluated semiannually. The CCA instructional staff is observed on a regular basis and evaluated using a comprehensive, multi-layered evaluation system. To assure the highest quality teaching, CCA has set as its goal that the average teacher rating will be at least a 2 on scale of 0 to 3, where 3 = Exceeded Goal, 2 = Met Goal, 1 = Partially Met Goal and 0 = Did Not Meet Goal. Instructional I employees are evaluated using the Form PDE 426; Form PDE 428 is utilized for Instructional II employees; when a transition from level I to level II is indicated, Form PDE 427 is used.

Teacher Evaluation - Attachment

- Professional Development Plan Act 48 2009-2010

SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

Leadership Changes

In August of 2009, Maurice Flurie was appointed as Assistant to the CEO. In July 2009, Christina Moser was appointed as Assistant to the Director of Special Education and Anthony Rusnak was appointed as Elementary Assistant Principal.

Board of Trustees

<u>Name of Trustee</u>	<u>Office (if any)</u>
David Taylor	President
Michelle Ciora	Treasurer
Jerry Birmelin	Secretary
Cheryl Lozier	
Gail Hawkins Bush	
Paula Hearn	

Professional Development (Governance)

Professional Training for the Board of Trustees

Connections Academy was invited to conduct its annual Board Academy training at the school's Harrisburg location for all CCA Board members. All of CCA's Board members were in attendance for 2009-2010 school year training session which focused on effective Board governance. The Board Training was provided by Mark Cannon of the Greater Capacity Consortium to train Board members in Governance. Included were the following topics on Effective Board Governance: The Fundamentals, Non-Profit Responsibilities, Efficient Meeting Management and Quality Board Leadership. A portion of the training touched on the Open Meeting Laws and the impact of the law on the school's Board.

Connections Academy also hosted LiveLesson® sessions for its partnering Board members to inform them on the following topics related to the Connections Academy program offering on the following topics: School Board Treasurer Training, Connections Academy Outreach, , Connections Academy Curriculum, Connections Academy Technology and Connections Academy Operations. Several members attended the sessions and all Board members received links to view the recorded sessions so that they can review at their convenience.

During the 2009-2010 school year, Board members were provided the opportunity, and the budget provided for reimbursement to Board members for attending the Pennsylvania Coalition of Charter Schools Conference, State Charter School conferences as well as the National Charter School Conference in Chicago, IL. Ms. Gail Hawkins Bush and Ms. Michelle Ciora are registered for the National Charter School Conference as representatives for the CCA Board. At this Conference, Ms. Hawkins Bush and Ms. Ciora will be able to meet and learn from other Board members from Connections Schools across the country as well as meet with other professionals and Board members in the Charter School movement. As Board designees to attend the conference, they will report back on the Conference to the full Board.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School

Management organization of the school:

Commonwealth Connections Academy Board of Trustees governs the school. The CCA Board has engaged Connections Academy, LLC (Connections) to manage the school under the terms of the Professional Management Services Agreement it has entered into with Connections. The operating structure of the school is similar to a traditional educational environment with school principals who supervise an administrative staff and teachers. The school CEO manages the school day-to-day in accordance with the policies and procedures as approved by the Board. All personnel decisions concerning the CEO and the teachers as well as all financial decisions are the responsibility of the Board. The Board is a policy making Board and responsible for the oversight of the school and for ensuring the performance of Connections, or its successor, in accordance with its obligations under its agreement with the Board. The Board will continue to utilize its accounting and legal advisors, with their significant experience in charter school matters, to assist them in the performance of its duties. The Board ensures it is compliant with the requirements of the PDE as set out in the Charter and also keeps regular communication with the PDE.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School - Attachment

- Board Meeting Schedule 2009-2010

Community and Parent Engagement

School Community

Commonwealth Connections Academy students are members of a variety of communities: the community of their extended family, the geographic community in which they live, the community of CCA, and the broader world to which we are all connected. With the help of technology, the CCA instructional program integrates these communities into students' learning through team projects with family members and local CCA peers, and through local community service activities that allow students to apply their academic skills in a real-world context while interacting with other CCA students in their immediate geographic areas. Some of the community connection initiatives used in other Connections Academy schools that will also be a part of CCA are numerous field trips to educational and entertainment centers, interactive educational initiatives, newsletters, student newspapers, and yearbook. Ultimately, CCA will provide some of the building blocks for each student's sense of community, fostering a very real sense of citizenship.

Relationship of school with the surrounding community: The 20 CCA Community Coordinators draw upon local community resources for information about events, lessons, activities, services, performance and other opportunities that might benefit CCA students and families, and use the technology to make this information easily accessible to all CCA families.

Parent involvement: Parent involvement is a centerpiece of the Commonwealth Connections Academy concept. As Learning Coaches (or those who oversee a designated learning coach), parents/guardians are intimately familiar with their child's progress on a day-to-day basis at CCA. The school offers ongoing training and support to help Learning Coaches carry out their important role while making optimum use of the available technology tools and professional teacher support to

do so. In addition, teachers employ Personalized Learning Plan-based electronic progress reports to formally communicate students' academic achievement to students and their Learning Coaches.

Parental and student involvement in decision-making: In addition to the important role they play in their own children's day-to-day learning, parents/guardians are also integrally involved in shaping CCA and making certain that it fulfills its overall mission. Parents play an active role on the Board of Trustees (see above). In addition, both parents and staff serve in ad hoc work groups and committees as needed to advise the Board or the school administration on specific matters of interest and concern.

The parent or other Learning Coach. The Parent/Learning Coach, under the direction of a certified teacher, uses the CCA online daily lesson plans, technology-based curriculum and print learning materials to fulfill the student's detailed electronic Personalized Learning Plan. Learning Coaches meet regularly via webmail, phone, or LiveLesson® sessions with their CCA teacher to facilitate instruction and review the student's progress. Learning Coaches sign a Learning Coach agreement with CCA, which helps ensure that roles and responsibilities are clear. In addition, the parent/Learning Coach (and the student) is provided a complete Handbook of information regarding the curriculum, attendance procedures, assessments, technology, etc.

The Community Coordinators. These individuals are parents of students in the school who receive a stipend from CCA in order to create opportunities for community projects, field trips and group meetings with other students and parents. The Community Coordinators use technology to post upcoming events to special online forums dedicated to such events, and make extensive use of webmail to mobilize families to participate. Through the technology, Community Coordinators serve as information clearinghouses for local extra-curricular activities and events. Some of the events planned by Community Coordinators have included field trips to science museums, art museums, and zoos; factory tours; and college visits.

SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Major fund-raising activities

In May CCA sponsored a student vs. staff basketball game. Along with the basketball game, we were also involved with Hoops of Hope which is an organization that raises funds to build schools and medical clinics for families who have been affected by the AIDS epidemic in Zambia, Africa. We had two goals for our Hoops of Hope fundraiser. One was, as a group, to shoot 500 free throws in 45 minutes. The other was to raise \$1000 through the event. Entrance to the game was free; however, some students and staff took pledges for the free throw event. We also raised funds through the basket raffle and the half-court challenge. We achieved both of these goals!

Fiscal Solvency Policies

In order to maintain fiscal solvency, Commonwealth Connections Academy Charter School reviews all incoming expenses at the school's public board meetings on a monthly basis. A detailed cash flow is projected on a monthly basis for the fiscal year

and is also reviewed at each board meeting. All projections are made on the basis of conservative assumptions in order to ensure that the school maintains a positive fund balance. The school also manages its finances to ensure that it can meet payroll and other obligations even if there is a delay in payment from school districts or the PDE. Commonwealth Connections Academy plans to continue to build on that balance each year with a goal of having at least several months of operating capital available. Any current cash shortfalls are covered through an arrangement with its management partner to defer payment until the school receives its funding. Due to its continued growth and conservative fiscal management, the school has reserved a portion of its fund balance for future expansion and technology needs.

Accounting System

The school currently uses Quickbooks accounting software which utilizes the PDE Chart of Accounts.

Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances

Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances - Attachment

- CCA FY 2010 Annual Report Revenue and Expenditures

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

The independent accounting firm engaged by CCA Charter School is Siegal and Drossner, PC which issued an unqualified opinion on January 21, 2010 for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2009. The board has engaged this same firm for the sixth year to conduct its audit for the year ended June 30, 2010, which is scheduled to occur by the end of September.

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

- June 30, 2009 Audit report

Citations and follow-up actions for any State Audit Report

In 2007-2008, CCA was audited by the State Auditor General's office. The audit for these procedures was issued on March 25, 2009. As noted in the report, there were two findings. Summary of the findings and corrective action are as follows:

Finding No 1: The Auditor concluded that the school and its billing vendor incorrectly billed tuition for the 2005-06, 2004-05 and 2003-04 school years, resulting in the school being underpaid a net of \$77,659. The problem was primarily caused by the usage of incorrect tuition rates. As a corrective action, the school and its EMO partner have increased our oversight of the outsourced billing process and implemented a periodic review of tuition rates used by its billing vendor to the rates provided online by PDE.

The majority of the incorrect invoices resulted in the school being underpaid. The school, with the support of its governing body, decided not to invoice districts to recover these funds. Any overpayments to the school were refunded in full to the appropriate districts in August, 2008.

Finding No 2: The Auditor concluded that its child accounting vendor incorrectly reported membership days for the 2005-06, 2004-05 and 2003-04 school years, resulting in the sending school district receiving incorrect reimbursement from the Department of Education. The problem was caused by the fact that the CAD report was at certain times not updated when changes to the district/billing data were made. As a corrective action, the school and its EMO partner has implemented a periodic review process to ensure CAD data agrees to district billing data.

SECTION VII. FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

The location of the Mechanicsburg office is: 4050 Crums Mill Road, Harrisburg, PA 17112.

The location of the Philadelphia office is: 2085 N. 63rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19151.

The location of the Pittsburgh office is: Penn Center Monroeville, #400, 201 Penn Center Boulevard, Pittsburgh, PA 15235.

The location of the Pocono - Lehighton office is: Grant Professional Plaza, #203, 613 Blakeslee Boulevard Drive East, Lehighton, PA 18235.

As a virtual charter school, CCA was not required to have a physical facility for day to day learning. Students worked from the setting of their family's choice. Sufficient office furniture, computers, duplicating equipment and other related office equipment was purchased to have the offices fully operational. Additionally, the school purchased student laptops and equipment in order to meet the educational needs of the students in a virtual environment. The school spent approximately \$2,200,000 on furniture, computers, and other equipment during the fiscal year ended June 30, 2010.

Future Facility Plans and Other Capital Needs

Due to expected enrollment growth for 2010-11, the school has made plans to expand its Leighton office, and open four more offices (Williamsport, Scranton, Allentown, and a second Philadelphia location), and potentially identifying a more permanent Western Pennsylvania location during the year. Capital costs related to the expansion will approximate \$400,000. These expenditures would be primarily for employee workstations (cubicles), furniture (chairs, conference tables, etc.), facility build-out, copiers, printers, and fax machines. The school has also budgeted approximately \$2,000,000 for the purchase of additional student and staff technology equipment that is essential for student education in a virtual environment.

SECTION VIII. HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

School Health Services

CCA follows all applicable local and state health regulations and requires parents and guardians of all students to present certificates of PA required immunization upon enrollment. A request for school records (including health records) is made with all districts of residence upon enrollment.

When necessary, school officials work with families to arrange immunizations with local health practitioners. The school communicates with and files all required reports with the Department of Health of the Commonwealth within the prescribed time. The school also maintains health records and has them open for inspection. The school has also contracted with a physician, dentist, and nurse to provide services to students as required. The report for 09-10 has not been submitted and is due in October 2010. The information for 08-09 has been loaded on a file.

Safety

CCA does not have an instructional facility, but instead, operates offices in the Mechanicsburg, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, and Leighton areas for its administrative staff and teaching staff. CCA complies with all required federal, state, and local health and safety laws and regulations regarding these offices. CCA also has a comprehensive Safe School / Emergency Plan.

Commonwealth Connections Academy Comprehensive Safe School / Emergency Plan

Procedures that should be implemented in case of an emergency at all CCA offices:

- All visitors need to sign in/out every visit.

- During an evacuation of the building the principal/designee must remove the sign in register from the building.
- All visitors should receive a name tag.
- An exterior sign should be displayed indicating the main entrance to the school.
- All office entrance doors should have a sign stating the school's name.
- The staff should be made aware when a visitor is in the office.
- Any fire extinguisher cabinets/alarms in a CCA office should be marked.
- All fire exits should be visible and in working order.
- Fire plans/emergency evacuation maps should be posted and practiced. Emergency Red Cross First Aid Kit should be available.
- Schools should use the National Weather Service Web Site for monitoring weather in case of an emergency <http://www.noaa.gov/>
- There should be ongoing training of all staff members in expectations during emergency situations.
- Fire/emergency drills should be held once a month. Date of drill should be recorded with evacuation time.
- The following local and state emergency management agencies' phone numbers should be available at each facility.
 - Fire department
 - Law enforcement
 - Medical emergency services
 - Local and state mental health and medical health officials

Specific Emergency Plans for CCA Schools

In the event of a fire:

- The fire alarm should be pulled if it has not already been done.
- The principal/designee should contact the fire department.
- The visitor sign in/out sheet should (if possible) be taken by the principal/designee. The principal/designee should verify that all visitors have exited the building.
- All staff members should have a designated buddy. The role of the buddy is to verify that their buddy has exited the building.
- All staff and visitors should evacuate and follow the fire drill route whenever possible. If primary route is blocked or dangerous then the alternate route should be followed. These routes should be posted in the office.

- If an individual is trapped then he/she should go to the designated area in which they can seek shelter. This will assist the fire department when searching for individuals.
- The principal/designee should meet with the emergency officials as soon as possible.
- No one should reenter the building until they are declared safe. The principal/designee will notify everyone when and if this occurs.

In the event of a lockdown:

- The principal/designee should announce “lockdown” to all staff and visitors.
- Call 911.
- Everyone should be inside the building with all exterior doors closed.
- All interior doors should also be closed/locked in case an intruder gets inside the building.
- Make sure that a head count is taken of all staff and visitors.
- Keep clear of all windows.

In the event of a medical emergency:

- Call 911.
- Do not attempt to move the victim. This may cause more harm to the victim (unless she/he is in danger).
- Make sure the victim is breathing. Initiate CPR, only staff member who is trained should perform CPR.
- Initiate first aid if needed, only if staff member is trained.
- When emergency staff has arrived provide them with information about the incident.
- The principal/designee will notify the Vice President of Operations of the emergency.

In the event of an evacuation:

- The principal/designee initiates evacuation procedures.
- Based on what type of emergency will determine what evacuation plans should be followed.
- In an event of a fire, follow the fire emergency plans.
- In all other events, all staff and visitors should evacuate following the designated route that has been determined in the building.
 - o The principal/designee should call 911.
 - o The visitor sign in/out sheet should (if possible) be taken with a designee. The designee can verify that all visitors have exited the building.
 - o All staff members should have a designated buddy. The role of the buddy is to verify that their buddy has exited the building.
 - o All staff and visitors should evacuate and follow the emergency route whenever possible. If primary route is blocked or dangerous then the alternate route should be followed. These plans should be posted in the office.
 - o If an individual is trapped then he/she should go to the designated area in which they can seek shelter (if possible). This will assist the emergency staff when searching for individuals.
 - o The principal/designee should meet with the emergency officials as soon as possible.
 - o No one should reenter the building until they are declared safe. The principal/designee will notify everyone when and if this occurs.

CCA schools should have an area that can be used as a shelter in case someone is trapped when an emergency occurs or in case all staff and visitors need to retreat to the shelter for safety because they are unable to evacuate the building. Procedures are as follows:

- Each CCA school should identify an area that is safe within their office.
- Principal/designee should announce that everyone must go to the shelter.
- All windows and doors should be closed.
- Everyone remains in shelter until principal/designee or emergency person declares that it is safe.

- The principal/designee will notify the Vice President of Operations of the emergency.
- All CCA schools should have a shelter away from the school off school property that can be used if evacuation is required and returning to the school is delayed.

* In all of these scenarios the principal/designee should gather and record pertinent information (when appropriate) in order to decide if everyone should be evacuated or try to provide shelter within the building.

* Regular drills of different emergencies should be conducted throughout the school year. This will assure that staff members are trained in case one of these emergencies should occur.

* If students are at any CCA school without their parent then they can only be released to those known parents or guardians that the school has been made aware of.

* Parents/guardians/Learning Coaches should be familiar with the emergency plans in order to ensure the safety of their children.

Wellness Program

The law requires each LEA participating in the NSLP and/or the SBP to develop a local wellness policy. CCA does not provide breakfast or lunch to students and does not participate in the NSLP or the SBP. Therefore, CCA is not required to have a wellness program.

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

- Health Report 2009

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs

Current School Insurance

CCA has obtained property and casualty insurance coverage from OneBeacon Insurance through Diversified Insurance Industries. It has obtained D&O/EPL insurance from Westchester Fire Insurance Company through Arthur J. Gallagher & Co. Insurance Brokers of California, Inc.

The following limits are in effect:

General Liability;

\$1,000,000 each occurrence;
\$500,000 damage to rented premises each occurrence
\$10,000 MED EXP (Any one person)
\$1,000,000 personal & adv injury
\$2,000,000 general aggregate
Automobile Liability
\$1,000,000 combined single limit (ea accident)
Excess/Umbrella Liability
\$20,000,000 each occurrence
\$20,000,000 aggregate
Workers Compensation
\$1,000,000 E.L. each accident
\$1,000,000 E.L. each disease
\$1,000,000 E.L. Disease - policy limit
Blanket EDP of \$2,650,000
D&O/EPL
\$1,000,000 aggregate
Health insurance is provided to teachers through Capital Blue Cross.

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs - Attachments

- 09-10 Insurance Cert., D&O policy
- D & O Insurance 09-10
- Umbrella Policy

SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff

The 2009-10 school year ended with one hundred sixty highly qualified teachers, two School Counselors, one Title I Coordinator, one Community Involvement Coordinator, one Special Education Supervisor, one Assistant Special Education Supervisor, four Assistant Principals, three Principals, one Assistant to the CEO, and one CEO. Of the one hundred sixty highly qualified teachers, one hundred twelve returned to CCA from 2008-2009. Because of increased enrollment at the start of 2009-2010, additional highly qualified teachers were recruited. Also, due to increasing enrollment thirty additional teachers were deemed necessary and hired during the year (included in the one sixty present at the end of the year).

At the end of 2009-2010 year two teachers resigned.

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff - Attachments

- Evidence of submission
- PDE 414 2009 2010

Student Enrollment

Enrollment Procedures

Commonwealth Connections Academy abides by all PDE policies and guidelines for pupil admission and will not impose admission requirements that are inconsistent with PDE policies and guidelines. CCA does not discriminate against pupils on the basis of sex, race, religion, national origin, ancestry, creed, pregnancy, marital status, sexual orientation, or physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability or handicap in its education programs or activities. Through its recruitment/marketing and application guidance activities, CCA discloses full details about its program and encourages families to carefully consider its academic and parental involvement demands before applying. CCA also provides tools (such as an online self-quiz and contact with a Connections Academy education counselor if desired) to help parents decide whether CCA is truly the right fit for their children and themselves.

Upon expressing interest in Commonwealth Connections Academy materials are sent to each family at the home address provided with explicit instructions for completion of the process so that the parent is aware of what to expect. Commonwealth Connections Academy families receive a complete set of enrollment documents and instructions for completion of the enrollment process via the mail and through the web site and upon submission of a complete set of documents to the Enrollment staff an enrollment counselor will verify all required documents within the Learning Management System and determine each student's eligibility. The information collected and verified during the enrollment process are the following:

- family and student information,
- proof of age,
- proof of residency,
- charter school notification form,
- parent/legal guardian (caretaker) acknowledgment,
- a copy of the most recent report card if applicable,
- immunization records,
- student health form
- report of dental examination
- report of physical examination
- statement of disciplinary history,
- family income form,

- report cards
- state testing scores
- unofficial transcript
- home school prior academic history form, if applicable
- gifted evaluation, if applicable
- and IEP/504 plan (with evaluation report) if applicable.

An enrollment counselor will contact the family throughout the process via mail, webmail, email and/or by phone to discuss incomplete or missing information that may delay completion of the process. Families also have online access to their accounts and can view the progress they are making with the enrollment process (ie. Whether faxes were received, when they were received, and if any or all of their documents have been verified for eligibility).

During the eligibility verification process the enrollment staff will acknowledge the receipt of the enrollment form with an update to the family’s online account and along with the web access to view missing information enrollment staff will contact the family by mail, webmail, email and/or phone to let the parent know if there are any missing documents. When families need assistance they are directed to contact enrollment staff via a toll-free number or to send an internal webmail or to send requests via email. As soon as these documents are completed by the family and sent back, the student is ready for the next step. At this time, the family will receive a call from the enrollment counselor finally confirming the family’s intention to enroll into the program and confirm their address and grade placement are accurate. Neither materials nor curriculum will be shipped until the parent verifies shipping address and final intentions for the upcoming school year.

No lottery was necessary for the 2009-2010 school year and no students were placed on a waiting list.

In that CCA was a K-12, the entry requirements are the same for each grade. However, in order for students to enroll in kindergarten, they must be five years old by September 1 or not less than 4 by September 1 and complete a kindergarten readiness assessment.

	9/2/09	5/31/10
Enrollment		
Kindergarten	159	172

First	181	197
Second	182	208
Third	214	224
Fourth	199	205
Fifth	236	244
Sixth	269	287
Seventh	311	371
Eighth	335	371
Ninth	556	629
Tenth	424	457
Eleventh	358	374
Twelfth	226	219
Total	3826	3958

The majority of enrollment takes place from the middle of July through August, though the students continue to enroll during the entire school year. The actual number of students returning for the 2010-2011 school year is not yet available. CCA expects that at least 70% of the 2009-2010 students will return based on the fact that 80% of students enrolled at the end of 2009-2010 indicated a preliminary intent to return.

Reasons and numbers of withdrawals:

Life Change	199
Different/Better Schooling Option	374
Mismatch Academic	198
Mismatch Family Schedule	105
Regulation	244
Prior to Engagement	123
No Show	99
Deceased	2
Total	945

Due to CCA's virtual format, a higher number of students withdraw from the school than in a traditional bricks and mortar school. Reasons for leaving CCA are documented in the chart above. When any student leaves the school, the resident school district is informed immediately. CCA did not expel any students in 2009-2010. CCA expects to continue to have the enrollment increase. The areas of most growth are in the Bethlehem, Stroudsburg, Philadelphia, and Pittsburgh areas. The projected enrollment for CCA's K-12 program in 2010-2011 is 5,000 students. As CCA's enrollment grows, highly qualified teachers will be added to the staff.

There are currently no supporting documents selected for this section.

Transportation

CCA does not provide transportation.

Food Service Program

CCA does not have a Food Service Program.

Student Conduct

a) Appropriate conduct is expected of all students at the school. School students are guaranteed due process of law as required by the 14th Amendment to the Constitution. The student's code of conduct will be explained in the school's handbook and includes steps to be followed in the event of misbehavior. All of Chapter 12 regulations are followed in the discipline policy.

b) For 2009-2010, CCA suspended one student.

Student Conduct - Attachments

- CA School Handbook 2009-2010
- CCA School Handbook 2009-2010

Signature Page

Assurance for the Operation of Charter School Services and Programs

School Year: 2010

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

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

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

Board President

Date

Chief Executive Officer
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 Commonwealth Connections Academy 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: Dennis Tulli **Title:** CEO
Phone: 717-651-7200 **Fax:** 717-651-0670
E-mail: dtulli@connectionsacademy.com

Signature of the Chief Executive Officer and Date

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

Name: David Taylor **Title:** Board President
Phone: 717-651-7200 **Fax:** 717-651-0670
E-mail: dtaylor@connectionsacademy.com

Signature of the President of the Board of Trustees and Date

Identify the charter school's Special Education Contact Person.

Name: Jan Rutt **Title:** Director of Special Education
Phone: 717-651-7200 **Fax:** 717-651-0670
E-mail: jrutt@connectionsacademy.com

Signature of the Special Education Contact Person and Date

Signature Page - Attachment

- Signature page 2009 2010