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: Renaissance CS
Address: New Covenant Cmp/Burke Hall
7500 Germantown Ave
Philadelphia, PA 19119

CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

Summary Data Part I

Charter School Annual Report
Summary Data
2010 - 2011

Name of School: Renaissance CS

Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval: 1999

Length of Charter: 8 years **Opening Date:** September 1999

Grade Level: 6-8 **Hours of Operation:** 8 A.M. TO 3:45 P.M.

Percentage of Certified Staff: 80% beginning of year; 67% year-lomg calculation; 65% year-end percentage **Total Instructional Staff:** 17

Student/Teacher Ratio: 11:1 **Student Waiting List:** 3

Attendance Rate/Percentage: 90.93%

Summary Data Part II

Enrollment: 184 **Per Pupil Subsidy:** $8087.88 Regular / $17,658.17 SPED

Student Profile

American Indian/Alaskan Native:	0
Asian/Pacific Islander:	0
Black (Non-Hispanic):	96.2%
Hispanic:	2.2%
White (Non-Hispanic):	1.6%
Multicultural:	0

Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch: 100%

Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December: 25

Instructional Days and Hours

Number of:	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (F.Time)	Elem.	Middle.	Sec.	Total
Instructional Days	0	0	0	0	180	0	180
Instructional Hours	0	0	0	0	1227	0	1227

SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Educational Community

Renaissance Charter School is an independent, community-based public charter school. The mission of Renaissance Charter is to help students make dramatic gains in their achievement through a vigorous academic program with a specific focus in the Sciences, Technology and the Fine Arts. The underlying purposes are to prepare students for adult life by attending to their intellectual and development needs and to challenge them to achieve at their highest level.

Renaissance Charter School believes that each child can achieve at dramatic levels utilizing the central tenets of Constructivism as a framework for a standards-driven curriculum. Instruction is set to promote interactive learning among students.

Mission

Renaissance Charter School is an independent community-managed public school. Its mission is to help students make dramatic gains in their achievement through a rigorous academic program focused in the Sciences, Technology and Fine Arts. Therefore, at Renaissance Charter School we provide a comprehensive, cognitively based program that will prepare students to not only communicate effectively, but also to understand and see the world from global, international, national and local perspectives.

Vision

The vision of Renaissance Charter School is to improve the academic performance level of all students, prepare them for a successful transition into secondary and post-secondary education and cultivate a quest for lifelong learning and responsible citizenship. We work hard to ensure that we are producing students that will not only be productive citizens in their respective communities, but also productive and respectable individuals in the world at large.

Shared Values

Renaissance Charter School believes that each child can achieve at dramatic levels utilizing the central tenets of Constructivism as a framework for a standards-driven curriculum. Instruction is set to promote interactive learning among students. Renaissance Charter's uniqueness centers on its ability to provide small, intimate learning environments for its pupils. Class size is carefully monitored and kept to an approximate student-staff ratio of 20:1. Students also have educational experiences in the fine arts, thus exposing them to cultural events not usually associated with middle school students. There is also a strong focus on character building in addition to ensuring that students receive skills in conflict resolution.

Academic Standards

Presently our teachers are using the Philadelphia School District's Core Curriculum Content Standards as a means of instruction for our 6th, 7th & 8th grade population. This assures that teachers are instructing students with a curriculum that is aligned with the Pennsylvania State Standards. All teachers are required to to ensure that they have nothing but the highest of expectations for their students. Teachers are to recognize and encourage the potential of each student that occupies a seat in his/her classroom. All instructional staff are to demonstrate an awareness of students with special talents and interests. In addition, teachers are to develop short- and long-range goals consistent with curriculum objectives and appropriate for students of each grade level. Teachers are expected to utilize current ideas, concepts and resources to adapt, supplement and enrich the program. Lastly, teachers must choose and adapt teaching strategies, procedures, content and instructional material that are appropriate to the stated objective and students' abilities, interest and experiences.

Strengths and Challenges

Renaissance Charter School has a variety of strengths. One of the school's strengths centers on its ability to provide small, intimate learning environments for its pupils. Class size is carefully monitored and kept to an approximate student-staff ratio of 20:1. Another strength is that students also have educational experiences in the fine arts, such as dance, music, vocal music, musical instruments and art. Students perform for parents and community members during the school year and they are exposed to cultural events not usually associated with middle school students. There is also a strong focus on character building in addition to ensuring that students receive additional tutelage in conflict resolution.

An additional strength of the school is the administration and the Board's willingness to embrace reform. As part of the charter school reauthorization process in 2007-2008, the Board evaluated its program and made substantial changes in policy and management and in instructional leadership. From hiring a new CAO to lead the school through its next charter school term to hiring an education managment company to provide financial and compliance expertise, Renaissance has exhibited a forward-thinking mindset that will assist the school in improving its performance academically and operationally.

The areas needing improvement include student achievement in reading and math to ensure that the school can consistently make AYP. Therefore, there is a concerted effort to ensure that

teachers receive professional development and staff training by individuals who are extremely qualified and that innovative instructional strategies are employed to address student deficiencies. The increased and improved use of student achievement data, achieved through fully implementing Stanford 10 Achievement Test (SAT 10) in 2008-2009, will assist the school in developing strategies to improve student achievement in a quick and highly responsive manner. Additionally, the Board recognizes the need to improve compliance with regard to reporting and certification of staff. Finally, parents and the community at large have not been as active as the school would like them to be. As a result the Board has developed policies for parent/public engagement and parent communication. The school aggressively implemented these policies and develop innovative programming that encourages parent and community involvement in the school.

SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Strategic Planning Process

At Renaissance Charter School, part of the strategy to help students be successful is to involve all teachers and other educators in the lives of the students. We also intend on making sure that all of our students receive the support, nurturing and encouragement that that ultimately fosters excellence in both academic and non-academic student performance. In addition, students will be inspired to have an appreciation for the arts as a result of being a part of our arts program. We also will work very diligently in making sure that parents are full partners in the education process. Furthermore, teachers will receive extensive training opportunities to help educate and empower our students.

Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Charmain Eubanks-Thomas	RCS	Business Representative	RCS Board
Dontina Jackson, Consultant	Foundations, Inc.	Administrator	RCS Board
Gloria Thomas	RCS	Board Member	RCS Board

Goals, Strategies and Activities

Goal: MATHEMATICS

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

Strategy: Work with grade level teachers to improve basic skills for all students in Math.

Description: I. Provide teachers with professional development that will help students demonstrate an understanding of numbers, ways of representing numbers and number systems.

II. Provide Professional Development to enable teachers to identify appropriate strategies to differentiate instruction to meet the needs of all students.

III. Provide teachers with standards-based items that align to the Math Assessment Anchors.

IV. Use Classroom Observations in order to provide teachers with constructive feedback about the strategies implemented to meet the needs of the students.

Activity: Curriculum Guides and Related Materials

Description: Curriculum Guides and Related Materials

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Chief Academic Officer	Start: 1/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	$23,839.00

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Activity: Professional Development Activity

Description: Professional Development Activity

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Chief Academic Officer	Start: 1/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	$18,663.00

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Goal: READING

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

Strategy: Work with grade level teachers to improve comprehension and reading skills.

Description: I. Provide teachers with professional development that will address reading comprehension and writing skills.

II. Help teachers differentiate instruction by using activities that align to specific Assessment Anchors in reading.

III. Provide teachers with standards-based items that align to the reading Assessment Anchors.

IV. Focus on areas of instruction where many of are students were weak according to the Standardized Testing Results.

V. Offer afterschool tutoring provided by One-on-One.

VI. Implement an academic prep session four hours per week that addresses standards in reading and math.

VII. Provide opportunities for staff to engage in collaborative planning around the data analysis to fine tune instructional practice.

Activity: Curriculum Guides and Related Materials

Description: Curriculum Guides and Related Materials

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Chief Academic Officer	Start: 1/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	$23,039.00

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Activity: Professional Development Activity

Description: Professional Development Activity

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Chief Academic Officer	Start: 1/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	$18,663.00

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Statement of Quality Assurance

There is currently no data saved for this section.

Statement of Quality Assurance - Attachments

- Attachment 1: 2008-2009 RCS School Improvement Plan
- Attachment 1.1: RCS Approval Letter for School Improvement Plan 2008-2009

SECTION III. QUALITY OF SCHOOL DESIGN

Rigorous Instructional Program

The Pennsylvania Content Standards serve as the guiding force and directional beacon at Renaissance Charter School. All curricular materials, including textbooks, are selected and used as the basis for instruction. Instructional planning and delivery of instruction to students is focused with these standards in mind.

Specifically, Renaissance has adopted the School District of Philadelphia's Core Curriculum, which is explicitly aligned to the Chapter 4 content standards and requirements.

The curriculum at Renaissance Charter School is organized both horizontally and vertically. Students in each grade are instructed in each subject area based on the content standards of that grade. Each grade in turn builds upon the strengths and skills in the previous grade. This creates a spiraling effect where student strengths can broaden their horizons and at the same time instruction can address any student weaknesses.

Students at Renaissance Charter are required to do an in-depth study and analysis in all subject areas taught at Renaissance Charter. Children are required to complete research projects and reports appropriate to the subject. As well, teachers collaborate among each other to ensure that more than one subject and more than one medium of investigation and reporting is included.

Students who are performing significantly below standards in literacy and mathematics and who are at risk of failure are identified early in the school year and are provided tutoring. In addition, students receive one period of daily enrichment instruction in both math and reading as a preventive measure for low performing students and any possibly failing students.

The teaching methods at RCS model the central tenets of Constructivism. By implementing such a student-centered, hands-on approach, RCS students are actively engaged in the learning process. This pedagogy enhances student learning by building on the knowledge and skills that all students bring to the learning process, provides opportunities for students to be responsible for their learning and allows students to continue to build and practice skills necessary to achieve higher levels of learning.

Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachment

- Attachments 2 & 3: Missing Documents for 2008-2009

English Language Learners

The Renaissance Charter School provides for the education of students whose dominant language is not English in accordance with 22 Pa Code 4.26 and Pennsylvania Department of Education Basic Education Circular (BEC), July 1, 2001: Educating Students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) and English Language Learners.

To date, no ELL students attend RCS. However, we recognize that we need to have a comprehensive ELL Plan in place which could be quickly implemented upon enrollment of an ELL student. Renaissance's ELL plan (approved June 2008) is attached. This plan includes all elements of the BEC including statement of program goals, school enrollment procedures, definition of limited English proficiency, assessment procedures and policies, program entry and exit procedures, grading policies and a listing of resources including agencies and interpreters. It also includes our educational theory and approach, program design, staffing procedures, procedures for communication with parents and community involvement, guidance on special education and the ELL, method of evaluation of our ELL plan and reporting requirements.

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

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

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

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

English Language Learners - Attachment

- Attachment 4: RCS ELL Plan

Graduation Requirements

The Renaissance Charter School only serves grades 6-8 and therefore the graduation requirements detailed in Chapter 4 of the public school code are not applicable to our school. However, the RCS Board believes that 8th graders graduating from the Renaissance Charter School should be prepared to face the diverse and changing world beyond graduation. According to board policy, RCS graduates will be:

- Knowledgeable individuals who read with comprehension, write with skill and communicate effectively. They will know and apply the basic principles of mathematics, science, social studies, health and fitness and fine arts.
- Quality producers who successfully apply academic, intellectual, artistic and practical learning to create quality products and performances.
- Effective communicators who apply communication skills and processes effectively in a variety of ways and settings.
- Competent thinkers who are able to think analytically and creatively, solve problems and make decisions.
- Effective collaborators who can work successfully with diverse individuals and groups.
- Responsible citizens who are informed and apply knowledge to improve the quality of their lives and communities.
- Life-long, self-directed learners who apply learning confidently and successfully to new and different situations and tasks in preparation for a changing world and workplace.

These expectations will be achieved through a variety of experiences, both required and elective, prior to the student becoming eligible for graduation.

Special Education

Renaissance provides a first class special education program for students with special needs. In 2008-2009, RCS served 25 special education students, representing 13.6% of our student population.

RCS employs two main models for educating students with special needs: resource room and learning support. Students are placed in the Least Restrictive Environment based on their Individualized Education Program (IEP).

- **Resource Room:** The Resource Room program is designed to provide academic support to students who demonstrate special learning needs. Both push-in and pull-out services are provided. Push-in support occurs when the Special Education Teacher works in a regular education classroom, co-teaching with the regular education teacher. Assistance is provided to any child who may need help successfully meeting the goals of the lesson. Pull-out services are delivered to small groups in the Resource Room setting. Instruction is individualized to meet the needs of each student.
- **Learning Support Classes:** These classes are dedicated special education classes that are full-time "adapted" classes based on the "regular education" model. These are smaller classes (under 5 students typically) in which special education students are taught by a special education teacher for most of the day but join their peers for electives/specials, homeroom and lunch.

As part of Renaissance's reauthorization process, the school worked with a special education consultant during the 2007-2008 school year to review the current special education policies, update and revise them and provide guidance for the following year. The Board adopted these policies in June 2008, and these are attached to the report.

Special Education - Attachments

- Attachment 4: RCS ELL Plan
- Attachment 5: RCS SpEd Policy
- Attachment 6: RCS SpEd Confidentiality Policy
- Attachment 7: RCS SpEd Discipline Policy
- Attachment 8: RCS SpEd Behavior Support Policy
- Attachment 9: RCS Intensive Interagency Support Policy

Special Education Program Profile - Chart I

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Benjamin Slater	0.5	Learning Support	Renaissance CS	25	Teacher
Benjamin Slater	0.5	Resource Room	Renaissance CS	25	Teacher

Special Education Program Profile - Chart II

Organization	**FTE**	**Type of class or support**	**Location**	**# of Students**	**Other Information**
Therapy Source (Speech Therapist)	0.2	Speech Therapy	Renaissance CS	3	Consultant
Daniel Lee	0.2	Psychology	Renaissance CS	3	Consultant

Special Education Program Profile - Chart III

Title	Location	FTE
Paraprofessional	Renaissance CS	1.0
Paraprofessional	Renaissance CS	1.0

Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV

IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual	Title/Service	Amount of Time Per Week
Speech Therapist (Therapy Source)	Speech Therapy	2 hours a week

SECTION IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Student Assessment - Primary

Test/Classification	K	1	2	3	4	5
Grade levels do not apply.	No	No	No	No	No	No

Student Assessment - Secondary

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

Student Assessment

The vision of RCS is to improve the academic performance level of all students, prepare them for a successful transition into secondary and postsecondary education and cultivate a quest for lifelong learning and responsible citizenship. The evaluation of academic progress will consist of, but may not be limited to:

- Written work by students.
- Scientific experiments conducted by students.
- Works of art or musical, theatrical or dance performances by students related to specific academic standards.
- Examinations developed by teachers to assess specific academic standards.
- Evaluation of portfolios of student work related to achievement of academic standards.
- Diagnostic assessments.
- Standardized achievement tests.

While the school did not make AYP, it was successful in reducing the students performing below basic in both reading and math. With the exception of 8th grade math, in which there was a 10.9% reduction, the improvements were significant. Otherwise, the reductions ranged from 25.5% to 64.4%.

A primary goal of the 2008-2009 school year was to make better use of data to make instructional decisions and to providing ongoing monitoring of student achievement. The results of the 2008

PSSA test were reviewed to develop attainable, measurable annual goals for raising student achievement. These goals explicitly address deficiencies in student achievement. Additionally, in 2008-2009 RCS fully implemented afterschool academic prep tutoring provided by One-on-One.

Students received targeted instruction for the PSSA four hours per week. During the PSSA period, students engaged in grade-specific activities focused on reading, writing and mathematics. During the three weeks prior to the PSSA, students engaged in an intense instructional program to ensure all students were exposed to all concepts that could be presented on the test. An attachment is enclosed with the 2009 PSSA results currently available.

Also attached is a review of the cluster breakdown of the Stanford 10 Achievement Test, which provides information regarding student performance in more than 50 specific content (e.g. synonyms, multiple meaning words, number sense and operations, etc.) and process (e.g. interpretation, initial understanding, estimation, reasoning and problem solving, etc.) clusters in language arts and mathematics. The review shows the areas in which students had the greatest difficulty. This assessment information was shared with staff members and analyzed during professional development sessions. Trends in this data were used to inform the development of content area curriculum and to determine what changes (content, amount of time devoted to each cluster area, method of delivery, etc.) need to be made. These changes were reflected in teacher lesson plans and in the delivery of classroom instruction.

Additionally, students who are basic or below basic in reading, writing or mathematics received individual and small group instruction to provide them with support in the areas in which they are deficient. Other opportunities were provided for struggling students during the school week and all students had opportunities to improve their skills during afterschool tutoring. All teachers were expected to integrate PSSA style questions into classroom instruction.

Student Assessment - Attachments

- Attachment 10.1: RCS 2008-2009 SAT 10 Cluster Breakdown
- Attachment 10: RCS 2009 PSSA Results

Teacher Evaluation

a). In 2008-2009, all teachers were required to establish individual goals and an individual professional development plan for the school year, with the aim of achieving these goals. All teachers were observed a minimum of two times during the school year. Regular meetings occurred to monitor the teachers' progress towards accomplishing the goals outlined in the professional development plan. Teachers were involved in their mid-year and end-of-year evaluations by completing self-evaluations. Observations were given pre-conference and post-conference. Attached are a sample teacher evaluation form and a rubric of target behaviors for teachers.

b). The Chief Academic Officer (CAO), a Pennsylvania certified school principal with the administrative certificate required for conducting staff evaluations, conducted staff evaluations in the 2008-2009 school year.

c). Mid-way through the 2008-2009 school year, a new CAO who had a working relationship with Renaissance Charter School took over and remained through the rest of the school year. This interim CAO is an experienced school administrator, with 18 years as a principal, 3 years as an assistant principal and 10 years of teaching. The interim CAO has a doctorate degree in educational administration and for the last five years has been a consultant and, for two of those years, a mentor to principals.

Teacher Evaluation - Attachments

- Attachment 11: RCS Teacher Evaluation Form
- Attachment 12: RCS Target Behavior for Excellence in Teaching and Learning

SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

Leadership Changes

There were no leadership changes in the Board of Trustees in the 2008-2009 school year; the Board that governed the school had the same makeup as the 2007-2008 Board.

There was, however, a change in the school's administration/instructional leadership in 2008-2009. Mid-way through the year, Renaissance welcomed a new CAO who has 18 years of experience as a principal, three years as an assistant principal and 10 years of teaching. The CAO has a doctorate degree in educational adminstration and for the last five years has worked as a consultant and, during two of those years, as a mentor to principals.

Board of Trustees

Name of Trustee	Office (if any)
Geraldine Baldwin	Treasurer
Gerald Brady	Member
Lyneice Brown	Vice President
Gloria D. Thomas	President
John H. Thomas	Secretary
Margo Jones	Member
Geraldine Ward	Member

Professional Development (Governance)

During its charter term, RCS has received governance training from Foundations, Inc. As the school approached its reauthorization year, however, the Board reached out to charter school experts for Board development assistance. With assistance from consultants and legal counsel, the Board reviewed the legal responsibilities of the charter school Board and developed extensive policies for the operation of the Board and the school.

An external education management company — OmniVest Management, Inc. — provided a day-long Board training during the 2008-2009 school year. This training included topics specific to Pennsylvania charter schools (i.e. Ethics Act, Sunshine Act, etc.), as well as training on running an effective meeting (i.e. agenda as script, taking minutes) and the CEO vs. Board responsibilities. OmniVest also provided on-going Board support during the 2008-2009 school year, including attending monthly Board meetings.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School

Governance is achieved through the adoption of policies and procedures. The CAO manages the day-to-day operations in accordance with the policies and procedures promulgated by the Board of Trustees.

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

In 2007-2008, the Board adopted a series of Board policy to guide the operation of the Board and the school in a more consistent manner. Please see the attached Board Meeting Schedule for FY 2009.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School - Attachment

- Attachment 13: RCS Board Meeting Schedule FY 2009

Community and Parent Engagement

Renaissance Charter School hosts stakeholders' meetings for parents, students, teachers and staff throughout the school year.

Recognizing that parents are joint partners with the school in the education of our students, the Board adopted policies in 2007-2008 for communication with parents and for parent/public engagement. The Board directed that the following activities be implemented to encourage parent-school cooperation.

- Parent-teacher conferences to permit two-way communication between home and school.
- Village Meetings to provide parents the opportunity to see the school facilities, meet the faculty and witness the program on a first-hand basis.
- Meetings of parents and staff members to explain and discuss matters of general interest with regard to child-school, child-home or child-home-school relationships.
- Special events of a cultural, ethnic or topical nature which are initiated by parent groups, involve the cooperative effort of students and parents and are of general interest to the school or community.

SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Major fund-raising activities

Fundraisers were primarily of a small, student-centered nature including pretzel and snack sales, flea market, book fairs, etc. The profits from these sales are used largely to offset the costs of student activities.

Fiscal Solvency Policies

The school's policy to maintain fiscal solvency is to have a fund balance set aside at the beginning of each fiscal year. A healthy fund balance represents things such as cashflow, as a cushion against unanticipated expenditures, enrollment declines, funding deficiencies and aid prorations at the state level and similar unforeseen problems. Additionally, the school budgets a surplus each year to allow for unforeseen circumstances. In 2008-2009, the budgeted surplus was equal to 10% of the revenue, which would allow the school to maintain fiscally solvent even if the student enrollment dipped 40% below projected enrollment.

The school utilized the services of a business consultant. Beginning in 2008-2009, an education management company — OmniVest Management, LLC — provided back-office support and ongoing financial planning services. OmniVest Management prepared monthly financial packets which were shared with the school administration and presented to the full Board of Trustees at the monthly public Board meetings. These packets tracked actual revenues and expenditures versus the budget to ensure that any abnormalities were recognized and addressed promptly.

Accounting System

Renaissance Charter School utilizes the Manual of Accounting and Related Financial Procedures for Pennsylvania School Systems.

Beginning with 2008-2009, Renaissance has contracted with OmniVest Management, LLC to provide its back office and fiscal management services. OmniVest ensures that the general ledger structure and account classifications are in accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Education guidelines. Renaissance also utilizes OmniVest Management, LLC's internal controls and procedures, which include annual and monthly budgeting, cash management, general ledger control, monthly financial reporting and account reconciliation. The accounting software system used is QuickBooks Premier Accountant Edition 2007. This software is customized with the Pennsylvania State Chart of Accounts for Pennsylvania Public Schools. The school is committed to being 100 percent compliant with the Pennsylvania State Chart of Accounts for PA Public Schools, and all of the school's financial and budgetary reporting is prepared in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and the applicable standards set by the Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB).

Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances

Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances - Attachment

- Attachment 14: RCS Preliminary Revenue and Expenditures 2008-2009

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

The school's Board of Trustees has engaged Certified Public Accountant Arvelle C. Jones (PO Box 4593, Philadelphia, PA 19131) to conduct our audit for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2009. The audit report for fiscal year ended June 30, 2009 is expected to be completed by September 30, 2009. Renaissance will provide PDE and the School District of Philadelphia

with a copy of this audit report immediately upon its completion. A copy of Renaissance's engagement letter with Arvelle C. Jones is attached to this report.

To date, the most recent audit available is the audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2008. This audit was completed and a copy of this document is attached to this report. The “Management’s Discussion and Analysis” can be found on pages 2-3 of this document. A summary of audit results includes the following:

1. The auditor’s reports expressed an unqualified opinion on the financial statements,

2. There were no material weaknesses identified in the audit of the financial statements,

3. There were no instances of noncompliance material to the financial statements,

4. There were no material weaknesses identified during the audit of major federal award programs,

5. The auditor’s report on compliance with major federal award programs expressed an unqualified opinion,

6. There were no audit findings relative to the major federal award programs,

7. The School recorded an Ending Fund Balance of $1,074,600 for the FY 2008,

8. The School recorded Cash on Hand of $1,261,107 for FY 2008,

9. The School recorded an operating Surplus of $18,721 for FY 2008.

The School is fiscally sound, materially compliant with federal and state reporting requirements and carries working capital sufficient to effectively operate the School.

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

- Attachment 15: RCS 2008-2009 Audit Engagement Letter
- Attachment 16: RCS Audit Report FY 2008

Citations and follow-up actions for any State Audit Report

Renaissance did not undergo a state audit conducted by the Auditor General for 2007-2008, or, to date, for 2008-2009. Renaissance understands that the school's Financial Statements and Supplementary Information for the year ended June 30 must be submitted to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania’s Office of Budget, Bureau of Audits each year. We understand that the Auditor General has the right to review expenditures and to audit the expenditures made from state appropriated moneys.

SECTION VII. FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

No signficant capital expenditures were made in 2008-2009.

Future Facility Plans and Other Capital Needs

Renaissance is not planning any expansion or capital expenditures at this time.

SECTION VIII. HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Safety

RCS complies with 24 P.S. §15-1517 with regard to holding fire drill not less than once a month. The facility is inspected by the City of Philadelphia and a report is forwarded to the school and its landlord. Fire drills are conducted monthly, and a record maintained in the office. The local fire department monitors fire drills no less than one time per year.

Health & Wellness

In 2008-2009, Renaissance Charter School contracted with the Mid Atlantic Consortium of Charter Schools (MACCS) for its nursing services, which include one school nursing paraprofessional (an LPN) who provided the day-to-day nursing services (25 hours a week) and one overseeing certified school nurse who is at the school no less than one day a week. The certified school nurse:

- Provides administrative and clinical oversight of school nursing activities.
- Ensures that all screenings are performed in accordance with state mandates.
- Supplements and reinforces health education curriculum.
- Oversees training of nursing staff.
- Assists in interpreting health needs.
- Provides information related to health issues.
- Assists in budget preparation.
- Prepares and directs staff development presentations in the area of healthcare.

A school physician is also employed as a consultant to provide supplementary services as needed.

Upon admission to the school, each student is required to submit a physical examination, proof of appropriate immunizations and dental, audio and visual screenings. Each student is given an individual file which contains a physical form, copy of immunization records, screening results, pupil medical history, emergency control form, any professional observations, progress notes, problem list with follow up copy of any nursing care visits, medical administrative release forms and doctors' prescriptions. All student health information is kept in a secure location, available to the nursing staff. Records are reviewed every month by MACCS' certified school nurse to maintain accuracy. The nursing staff and health services agency (MACCS) comply with all federal, state and local law, rules and regulations regarding the confidentiality of medical records created by it or its employees or contractors.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health's "Request for Reimbursement and Report of School Health Services" for 2008-2009 must be submitted by RCS to the Division of School Health on September 30, 2009. At the time of this report's submission, RCS had not yet submitted the 2008-2009 reimbursement form, but a copy of this form will be forwarded to our charter authorizer upon its submission.

Finally, RCS is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children's health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. As such, Renaissance has developed a school Wellness Policy, which is attached.

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

- Attachment 17: RCS Wellness Policy

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs

For the 2008-2009 school year, Renaissance procured insurance coverage through the insurance brokerage firm, Total Risk Management, Inc., as follows:

Type of Insurance Coverage	Limit
Educator's legal liability (including directors & officers liability)	$1,000,000
Commercial General Liability • Products-completed operations aggregate • Per Occurance • Personal & advertising injury • Medical expense (any one person)	$4,000,000 • $4,000,000 • $2,000,000 • $2,000,000 • $10,000
Automobile Liability	$1,000,000
Excess Liability/Umbrella	$1,000,000
Workers Compensation & Employers' Liability	$100,000

A copy of our 2008-2009 ACORD Certificate of Liability Insurance is attached to this report.

Additionally, RCS provides its full-time employees with personal health coverage by Keystone Health Plan East (an HMO) and Independence Blue Cross (a PPO), both of which include standard prescription drug and vision coverage. Dental coverage is provided by Denex Dental (a PPO). RCS complies with 24 P.S. 17-1724A (d) in that every employee of the school is provided with the same level of health care benefits as the employee would receive if he or she were an employee of the School District of Philadelphia.

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs - Attachment

- Attachment 18: RCS ACORD Certificate - Insurance 2008-2009

SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff

Renaissance employed 22 professional staff members in 2008-2009 including one Chief Academic Officer (1), one Curriculum Coordinator (1), one Counselor (1), one Dean of Students (1), one Nurse (1), and 17 teachers (including one special education teacher/coordinator).

Of the 30 staff members employed at the beginning of the school year, 13 (43.33%) were returning employees from 2007-2008. Of the 30 staff members employed at the beginning of the school year, 23 (76.67%) were employed throughout the entire school year. Of the 30 staff employed at the end of the 2008-2009 school year, 0 (0%) are scheduled to return for the 2009-2010 school year. The higher turnover between 2008-2009 and next year is due to the school closing.

A copy of RCS' PDE-414 for 2008-2009 is attached to this report.

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff - Attachment

- Attachment 19: RCS PDE 414 2008-2009

Student Enrollment

RCS did not have to hold a lottery for the 2008-2009 school year, because the number of applicants did not exceed the number of available slots in the school.

RCS follows the Board approved Admissions & Enrollment Policy, stated below.

ADMISSIONS & ENROLLMENT POLICY

Renaissance Charter School (RCS) is open to all Pennsylvania resident children, grades 6-8, with first preference given to students who reside in the School District of Philadelphia. If more students apply to the charter school than the number of attendance slots available, then students will be selected during the lottery from a pool of qualified applicants meeting the established eligibility criteria and submitting an application by our deadline. However, preference will be given in enrollment to a child of a parent who has actively participated in the development of the charter school and to siblings of students presently enrolled in the charter school.

Application Process

An application form that contains basic student data (name, parent and/or guardian, contact information, current school attending if any, etc.) shall be made available at the school office.

Re-enrollment Process

All students currently enrolled in the charter school will be eligible for re-enrollment. Re-enrollment applications will be sent home to each family, indicating their desire to re-enroll their child (ren) in the school. Currently enrolled students expressing a desire to return are enrolled for the following school year upon timely receipt of the Re-enrollment Form. Vacancies in each class are then determined, and children of the founding coalition and siblings of current students who qualify for enrollment are exempt from the lottery but must return an application by the due date which shall be communicated to parents at the beginning of each school year. If there are more eligible siblings than openings for a given grade level, these students will enter a separate lottery,

held before the primary lottery, to assign the available positions. The siblings who do not gain entry will be placed at the top of the waiting list in the order produced by the sibling lottery.

New Enrollments

All completed new student applications received by March 31 will be processed through a lottery system. The Administration will hold the lottery by April 30. Applications received from families within the School District of Philadelphia will be in a lottery separate from those outside. If there are class openings that cannot be filled with the applications received from in-district families, then those openings will be filled with out-of-district applications in order of their lottery number. If a student and his/her family move out of district after being accepted for enrollment, the enrollment status for that student does not change.

If the number of completed applications exceeds the slots available in each grade, a lottery will be conducted to determine who will be admitted to the school and, if they are not admitted, what spot they will occupy on the waiting list. Anyone who applies after the lottery has been conducted will be added at the end of the waiting list on a first-come, first-served basis.

Non-discrimination Policy

In accordance with §17-1723-A of the Charter School Law, RCS will not discriminate in its admissions policies or practices on the basis of intellectual ability, athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a person with a disability, proficiency in the English language, or any other basis that would be illegal if used by a school district. Also, the school will not discriminate in its admissions policies on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, ethnic origin, religious beliefs, or political affiliation.

ENROLLMENT HISTORY

Student Enrollment Schedule			
	Enrollment		
	Sep-08	Jun-09	Change
6th grade	29	29	0
7th grade	60	56	4
8th grade	95	83	12
Total	184	168	16
2008-2009 waiting list consisted of 3 students			

There are currently no supporting documents selected for this section.

Transportation

Transportation at Renaissance is handled in several ways based upon student grade levels, as follows:

- School District of Philadelphia resident students in grades 6-8 who live 1.5 miles or more from the school are provided free yellow bus or SEPTA transpasses/tokens.
- School District of Philadelphia resident students in grades 6-8 who must use a walking route that is deemed dangerous/hazardous by SEPTA are provided free yellow bus or SEPTA transpasses/tokens.
- Students who do not fit any of the above categories may purchase tokens from the school at a reduced rate.

Some parents elect to drop off and pick up their children.

Of the 25 students with disabilities served at Renaissance in 2008-2009, none required transportation as a related service in their IEPs. Renaissance understands that any student who receives special education services is entitled to transportation to and from school and to school related activities if his/her IEP Team (which includes the parents) determines that a specialized transportation is necessary as part of the child's free and appropriate public education (FAPE). If an IEP lists a specific type of transportation as a "related service" in a student's IEP, Renaissance will provide this service at the school's expense.

Food Service Program

Renaissance Charter School children bring lunch from home; thus, the school does not participate in the Free and Reduced Lunch Program.

Student Conduct

Renaissance Charter School expects students to:

- Attend school regularly.
- Be on time.
- Come to school prepared to eagerly share learning experiences and achieve higher levels of learning.
- Have respect for themselves and others.
- Respect the property of the school and the personal property of others.
- Know and at all times conduct themselves in accordance with the rights and responsibilities contained in the Renaissance Charter School Student Partnership Agreement.

A copy of the school's discipline policy is attached.

Renaissance Charter's disciplinary code complies with all Chapter 12 and 13 Regulations as defined by the Public School Code, specifically with regard to due process. Specifically, in the event that a student's disciplinary infraction warrants a suspension of 4 to 10 days special attention is given to ensuring due process for special education and regular education students. Our due process procedures follow below:

Due Process for Informal Suspension Hearings

In suspensions of 4 to 10 days at Renaissance, parents and students have the right to an informal hearing. The informal hearing is meant to encourage the student's parents/guardians to meet with the CAO or his designee to discuss ways by which future offenses can be avoided.

The steps below are followed to ensure due process:

- The student and the parent/guardian are notified in writing of the reasons for the suspension.
- Parents are provided with sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing.
- Students have the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing and to speak and produce witnesses on his/her own behalf.
- The informal hearing is held within the first 5 days of the suspension.

Due Process Expulsion Procedures

A Board decision is required to expel a student. Expulsion is exclusion from school for more than 10 days. All expulsions require a prior formal hearing. During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the Board of Trustees in an expulsion case, the student, unless on suspension, shall be placed in his normal class except, if it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals or welfare of others and if it not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than 10 school days, if the formal hearing is not unreasonably delayed.

The steps below are followed to ensure due process:

- Notification of the charges will be sent to the student's parents/guardian by certified mail.
- Parents will be provided with sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing.
- The hearing will be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
- The student will have the right to be represented by counsel.
- The student will have the right to be notified of the names of the witnesses against the student, and to access copies of the statements and affidavits, if any, of those witnesses.
- The student will have the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
- The student will have the right to testify and present witnesses on his own behalf.
- A record will be kept of the hearing, either by stenographer or by tape recorder.
- The proceeding will be held with all reasonable speed.
- In the event the student is dissatisfied with the results of the hearing, an appeal may be filed in accordance with the Local Agency Law to the Court of Common Pleas within thirty (30) days of receipt of the Adjudication. If it is alleged that a constitutional issue is involved, the student may be able to file a claim for relief in the Federal District Court. The student and their parents/guardian will be apprised of these rights.

Description of the Due Process Hearing

At the beginning of the hearing, a duly authorized committee of the Board, or a duly qualified hearing examiner, who need not be a member of the Board, but whose adjudication must be approved by the Board (herein called Hearing Officer) shall inform the student and the student's representative(s) that:

The School's and the student's representatives shall have the right to examine and cross-examine witnesses; the student has the privilege against self-incrimination, but if the student does testify, he/she shall be subject to cross examination; the charter school has the burden of proving the charges by a preponderance of credible evidence; a transcript of the proceedings shall be maintained and made available to the student's representative upon request and the hearing shall be private or open to the public, as determined by the student's representative.

The person conducting the hearing shall not have intimate knowledge of the details of the charges to assure an impartial, unbiased hearing of the case.

The Hearing Officer shall inform the parties that:

- The case will proceed by having the school present its evidence through witnesses and other evidence first;
- The school's witnesses shall be subject to cross-examination by the student's representative and
- The student will then have the opportunity to present witnesses on his/her behalf, subject to cross-examination by the school's representative.

Following the conclusion of the testimony and the introduction of other evidence matters, the parties shall be afforded the opportunity to present oral arguments to the Hearing Officer indicating the reasons why the charges should be sustained or dismissed. The Hearing Officer shall then reach findings of fact upon the charges.

In the event that one or more of the charges is sustained, the Hearing Officer shall then entertain statements from the parties regarding the appropriate penalty outcome. In the event that the parent and/or the student, in an appropriate case, have been served with a copy of the student's past disciplinary anecdotal record in a timely fashion, for consideration at the hearing, such record may be considered by the Hearing Officer in determining an appropriate penalty. The incidents contained within the past anecdotal record shall be subject to proof to the extent that they are denied by the student, as expressed by the student's representative.

The Hearing Officer, upon the conclusion of the portion of the proceeding dealing with penalty determinations, shall make findings of fact and penalty recommendations, if any, to the person or body which designated him/her immediately upon the conclusion of the long-term suspension hearing.

The Board shall make its own findings of fact and penalty decision, by adopting those of the designated Hearing Officer, where applicable, in whole or in part, or by reaching independent findings of fact and penalty determinations. This process shall be concluded at an open public board meeting, reasonable notice of which shall be provided to the parent prior to the meeting.

The Board's decision (Adjudication) will be communicated to the parent within five days of the Board meeting.

DISCIPLINE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION STUDENTS

All students are expected to abide by Renaissance's expectations for student behavior. And, in accordance with Pennsylvania law, all students at Renaissance (including special education students) are protected by due process procedures regarding disciplinary exclusions. However, Renaissance first determines, when considering a disciplinary exclusion of any student, whether the student is an eligible student under 22 Pa. Code Section 14.1. If the student is an eligible student, then Renaissance determines whether the disciplinary exclusion being contemplated is a change in educational placement. If we determine that the disciplinary exclusion being contemplated does constitute a change in educational placement, Renaissance follows the requirements of 22 Pa. Code Chapters 14 and 342 and IDEA 2004, including requirements for manifestation determinations, functional behavior assessments, and positive behavior support plans. A copy of Renaissance's Special Education Discipline Policy, which was adopted by the Board in June 2008, is attached to this report.

2008-2009 STUDENT DISCIPLINE DATA

During the 2008-2009 school year 91 students were suspended, some more than once. No students were expelled from Renaissance in 2008-2009.

Student Conduct - Attachments

- Attachment 20: RCS Discipline Policies 2008-2009
- Attachment 21: RCS SpEd Discipline Policy 2008-2009

Signature Page

Assurance for the Operation of Charter School Services and Programs

School Year: 2011

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

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

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

_____ _____

Board President **Date**

_____ _____

Chief Executive Officer **Date**

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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 Renaissance 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.

There is currently no contact information saved.

Signature Page - Attachment

- Attachment 22: RCS Signature Page 2008-2009