
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: Eastern University Academy Charter School
Address: 3300 Henry Ave. Ste 2
3 Fall Center
Philadelphia, PA 19129-1121

CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

Summary Data Part I

Charter School Annual Report Summary Data 2009 - 2010

Name of School: Eastern University Academy Charter School

Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval: May 21, 2009

Length of Charter: 3 years **Opening Date:** September 6, 2009

Grade Level: 7 & 9 **Hours of Operation:** 8:00am-4:00pm

Percentage of Certified Staff: 80% **Total Instructional Staff:** 9

Student/Teacher Ratio: 20:1 **Student Waiting List:** 135

Attendance Rate/Percentage: 93%

Second Site Address, Phone Number and Site Director:

This is not applicable

Summary Data Part II

Enrollment: 117 Per Pupil Subsidy: \$8,183.58; 17,788.75 (special education)

Student Profile

American Indian/Alaskan Native:	0
Asian/Pacific Islander:	2
Black (Non-Hispanic):	95
Hispanic:	2
White (Non-Hispanic):	0
Multicultural:	1

Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch:
76

Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December: 8

Instructional Days and Hours

Number of:	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (F.Time)	Elem.	Middle.	Sec.	Total
Instructional Days	0	0	0	0	186	186	372
Instructional Hours	0	0	0	0	7.15	7.15	14.3

SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Educational Community

The educational community of Eastern University Academy Charter School is primarily an urban community. The majority of the students live throughout the city of Philadelphia. The 2009-10 year represented the first year of operation and the school served roughly 117-120 students.

Presently the school has 7th and 9th grade students. Each year the school will add a grade until it reaches its capacity of 357 students in the 7th-12th grade. The distinguishing quality of the school is that it is an early college; that is, students will be offered an array of post-secondary opportunities from Eastern University prior to graduating from the school. Equally important, students have an opportunity to explore their life's passion through internships and service learning opportunities. This provides students with an opportunity to engage the real-world, interact with mentors, and align work with real-world expectations.

Mission

The mission of Eastern University Academy Charter School is to provide a wholistic, college-integrated learning community dedicated to the education of each student in the context of his/her unique interests. The school will provide students with an environment of excitement and early expectation through an integrative discovery-based learning experience that will develop logical reasoning, critical thinking, and purpose driven global citizens. The school will graduate self-directed, self-aware learners many of whom will have successfully mastered college level work.

Vision

Eastern University Academy Charter School is a model of true integration of an Early College program where students prepare for and earn college credit prior to graduation, and a Big Picture School, where students spend a large amount of time pursuing their individual interests through individual work projects, small group projects, service learning projects, and structured internships. Although all Big Picture schools encourage their students to prepare for and attend college, none have yet been developed that provide an early college environment where students can earn up to 60 college credits before graduation. And, although some Early Colleges have experimented with project based learning, none have yet fully integrated internships and interest-driven, project based learning into their rigorous college preparation programs. The expertise of Eastern University and our extraordinary partners makes this unique education program possible for students in Philadelphia. This school serves as a model for other Big Picture and Early College programs around the country. The key to making this model work is the integration of key elements of the Big Picture school model, true performance-based progression and high school-college curriculum alignment based on PA and national college preparation standards, a small school with small seminar style classes, and preparation for the high school in an academically rigorous middle school program.

Shared Values

- 1.) Every student pursues his/her interests, passion and purpose
- 2.) Every student develops a supportive, caring, loving, and nurturing relationship with adults
- 3.) Every student learns "how to learn" and think critically (college going culture & post-secondary opportunities)
- 4.) Every student engages in real world learning (internships, field experiences, community service, local, national, and global experiences)
- 5.) Every students' parent/mentor/guardian is an integral part of the school community (family engagement)
- 6.) Every student engages in project based learning through an interdisciplinary approach (advisory-wide projects and individual projects)
- 7.) Every student understands and participates in the restorative process

Academic Standards

The course of study at Eastern University Academy Charter School focuses on the passion and interests of each student and advocates a decentralized delivery method. Eastern University Academy's (The Academy) curriculum is firmly rooted in the belief that students are capable of completing academically rigorous courses if asked to do so within an infrastructure that supports their passions. To create this infrastructure, the Academy draws upon the philosophy of The Big Picture Company as well as the philosophy of the Early College High School Initiative. In addition, curriculum development is informed by the results from [Understanding University Success: A Report from Standards for Success](#), a study conducted by David Conley, Ph.D., on behalf of the Association of American Universities and The Pew Charitable Trusts. Conley's work identifies the skills necessary for succeeding in entry-level college courses and these skills are intentionally built into both the Academy's course of study and delivery methodology.

Strengths and Challenges

Interest-Based Learning: One of our primary strengths is that we provide students with a host of opportunities to explore their own interests and passions. We have students who have interned at law firms, art studios, doctor's offices, schools, auto body shops, cancer research centers, etc. The exciting aspect is that this is happening for 7th and 9th grade students. We are aggressively reshaping student perspectives of learning. Students have exhibited a great degree of responsibility, maturity, and grace while working with their site mentors. We believe that once students are given an opportunity to explore their passions they will ultimately find meaning and purpose in life.

Small Learning Community: The anonymity of a larger school is removed at the Academy. We are proud that our entire staff is familiar with all of the students at our school and that students like that they are known very well by at least one adult in the building. One of the key elements is that we see students developing socially, emotionally and academically in an environment that is adult-rich. Furthermore, we are able to provide students with the one-on-one attention that they need to be successful in life.

Real World Learning Opportunities: From our summer orientation, we have been able to provide students with a number of real world learning opportunities. For instance, during the two week orientation, we took students to the African American Art Museum, Eastern University's main campus, on a service learning project in East Falls, and the Borders bookstore in Wynnewood, PA. While some educators believe that they will not "take students out" until they learn how to behave, our contention is that students will learn how to behave when they are taken out. We have done that and we have found that students have surprised us and themselves.

College-Going Culture: As an early college, it is our expectation that students will be immersed in a college-going atmosphere; that is, they will learn the expectations of college — reading college style syllabi, exposure to college professors, university resources, and university expectations. University professors will also have an opportunity to interact with our staff during professional development so that we are making sure that the middle and high school expectations are aligned with college level expectations. Finally, our most important objective is to enable students to take college courses for credit — free of charge.

Challenges:

Restorative Practices: One of the fundamental aspects of our model is that students can be self-directed learners; that is, they can be at the center of and direct their own learning. We discovered that students coming from traditional schools in which the teacher is the dictator and there is an endless list of rules, students will struggle when they come into a free, open environment like our school. The tendency on the part of students is to think that there are no rules. We struggled in this area for the majority of the year. Restorative practices focuses on harms done to the relationship versus punishing a student for misdeeds, and we realized that we needed a lot more training as to how to work out this philosophy out in our school. We needed more clarity as to how to set up clear respect agreements, how to engage the students and parents (restorative circles), and how to administer consequences in a restorative way. One staff member stated, "It seems as if we just have conversations and dialogue and nothing happens." My response was that this is a major part of the process.

The interesting dynamic is that 90 percent of our struggles have been with the middle school students. Hence, we realized that the school needed more support to help the staff and students make the transition. As a result, we hired a Director of School Climate & Family Partnerships. This person's sole responsibility is to serve as the point person to ensure that families, students and staff are engaged in the restorative process. The Director of School Climate also works with university leaders who can offer research-based advice and support around restorative practices.

Supporting Underperforming Students

We are fully aware that a number of our students are not up to grade level in terms of their literacy and numeracy skills. Local and standardized assessments reveal that a significant number of our students are low-performing. We also found that a number of students struggled to complete assignments due to low literacy and numeracy skills.

Project Based Learning

The design of our school is document heavy (i.e., Learning Plans, Narrative Assessments, Project Proposals, etc.). We spent a significant amount of time reviewing student learning plans, narratives,

narrative assessments, journal logs, home visit, internship and service learning protocols. In addition, we attempted to do an integrated curriculum design in which we work with students to identify a theme (i.e., Race, Racism, and Violence) and explore this theme through the disciplines Social Studies, Math, English, and Science. The majority of the staff was comfortable with teaching their content area, yet they struggled when it came to producing an integrated curriculum project. We needed to spend more focused time on project development. From the beginning of the school year the staff or students did not have a clear vision of successful project work. Meanwhile this process was further complicated because some of the novice teachers were still struggling with classroom management and restorative practices. Finally, some of the staff (particularly the 9th grader staff) was exhausted because they were expected to help students produce an integrated curriculum theme project and an internship projects.

Additional Support Staff

Throughout the year it was evident that we did not have enough adults in the building. Our staff is adamant about not having a school in which students feel “policed” and hurried to get where they need to be. However, it is clear that a number of our students needed help with redirection and getting where they needed to be on time. For many students the community was too open and unstructured. As a school we need to address these blind areas — welcoming visitors, hallway monitoring, bathroom monitoring, etc. For the last trimester of the school year, we added a Director of School Climate & Family Partnerships, and he helped greatly with building transitions and addressing restorative practices, but we discovered that the Director needed more support from families & volunteers to cultivate and strengthen the climate that we seek at the school.

SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Strategic Planning Process

The Board and the CEO/Principal are integrally involved in the strategic planning process. All members of the Board began the initial process of developing essential benchmarks of the vision during the board orientation in June of 2009. As an outgrowth of that process, the Board developed "Work Groups" which are responsible for key aspects of the school: Development, Academic Committee, etc. Since that time the CEO has met with the Board Chair, the Academic & Program Committee, staff and parents in order to fulfill the school's mission.

Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Barlow, Omar	EUACS	Administrator	Board Members
Howie, Kevin	EUACS	Secondary School Teacher	CEO
Isard, Adam	EUACS	Secondary School Teacher	CEO/Principal
Lee, Christine	EUACS	Middle School Teacher	CEO/Principal
Matthews, Alonzo	EUACS	Special Education Teacher	CEO/Principal
Mitchell, Edgar	Director of Program Design & Assessment	Administrator	CEO & Principal
Pollak, Deborah	EUACS	Regular Education Teacher	CEO/Principal

Senatus, Angikindslovs	Director of School Climate & Restorative Practices	Administrator	CEO & Principal
Turner, Yvonne	Chief Operating Officer	Administrator	CEO & Principal
Winters, John	EUACS	Secondary School Teacher	CEO/Principal

Goals, Strategies and Activities

Goal: Goal #1: To create a culture of shared leadership among staff, students, families, and key stakeholders

Description: Goal #1:

Description: It is essential for Eastern University Academy Charter School to practice shared leadership. In response the school leader (principal) will work on creating group buy-in and consensus around key decisions at the school. In addition, the school leader will delegate responsibilities to students, parents, and staff.

Strategy: Divide staff into professional work groups around key areas of interest and need

Description: Develop grade level, advisory, restorative practice, literacy, and numeracy teams

Activity: Activity

Description: Moving the agenda forward with the school staff

Person Responsible: Principal

Status: Currently working with school coaches to develop the agenda for the staff

Meeting with returning staff at least three times before the beginning of the school year to solicit buy-in

Person Responsible: Principal and Staff Members

Status: Currently working with school coaches

Developing a Professional Development Plan and Agenda which allows our school to address these critical components on a weekly basis

Person Responsible: Principal, School Coaches, School Staff — will break down into teams

Status: Currently working with school coaches

Gathering resources from Big Picture network

Person Responsible: Principal and School Coaches

Status: Currently gathering information from school coaches, principals to

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Barlow, Omar	Start: 9/9/2009 Finish: 6/23/2010	-

Professional Development Activity Information

Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
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0.00	0	0
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Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
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Not approved

Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish
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Follow-up Activities	Evaluation Methods
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Status: Not Started — Overdue

Activity: Delegate the responsibility to a staff member to start a student leadership team

Description: Staff member will oversee a student leadership team

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/7/2010 Finish: Ongoing	-
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Status: Not Started — Overdue

Activity: Development of Professional Development and Meeting Format

Description: Activities:

Development of Professional Development/Staff Meeting Format

Person Responsible: Principal (Get Feedback from Staff)

Status: worked with Woodrow Wilson Foundation school coach to develop this format (July 15-16, 2010).

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Barlow, Omar	Start: 9/9/2009 Finish: 8/2/2011	-

Professional Development Activity Information

Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
0.00	0	0
Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
		Not approved
Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish
Follow-up Activities	Evaluation Methods	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Goal: Goal #3: To increase student literacy and numeracy skills

Description: Description: The majority of our students have come to our school with cumulative deficits in literacy and numeracy. Our 7th grade students took the PSSAs (2010) and we would like to work aggressively to address this challenge. Our 9th grade students were administered the 4Sights and Acuity Predictive Assessment. Our school is still waiting for the scores from the Acuity Predictive Assessment (May 2010). However, the 4Sights exam revealed that the majority of our students are struggling at Basic to Below Basic levels in Reading and Math

Strategy: Hire Director of Program Design and Assessment

Description: Hire Director of Program Design & Assessment
Create a school-wide plan to address low-performing students

Activity: Activity

Description: Hire Director of Program Design & Assessment
This person will have had experience with school assessment instruments and improving student performance. In addition, this person will assist the school in measuring its key data points (social and emotional growth, internship experiences, portfolio assessments, family engagement, etc.). Finally, this person will work with the teachers to ensure that the instruction is aligned with state standards, student progress is effectively monitored, and that the instruction is differentiated.
Person Responsible: Principal & designated staff members
Status: this staff person will be hired by September 2010

Create a school-wide plan to address low-performing students
This plan will be developed in conjunction with the school staff and Academic Program Committee

Person Responsible: Principal, Chair of Academic Program Committee, and school staff — teachers and director of program design and assessment.
Status: Draft of plan will be developed by September 2010

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 4/23/2010 Finish: Ongoing	\$50,000.00
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Status: Not Started — Overdue

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:

This section is not applicable.

There are currently no supporting documents selected for this section.

SECTION III. QUALITY OF SCHOOL DESIGN

Rigorous Instructional Program

Eastern University has created an Early College charter school that is designed to meet the goals of the School District of Philadelphia as expressed in their Declaration of Education by improving high school graduation rates, helping more high school students attain academic proficiency, enrolling higher numbers of students in post-secondary institutions, boosting SAT scores, increasing access of all students to high quality educational options, and reducing disparities in educational achievement between minority and majority groups. In addition, the EUACS curriculum design empowers students to be globally competent, motivated to succeed through clarification of life purpose and unique talents, and who take responsibility for their learning. Through the school's restorative approach to discipline, students will also take greater responsibility for their own behavior and that of their student colleagues. In keeping with the values of Eastern University, students will cultivate a concern for social justice and community economic development. An arts-integrated pedagogy will ensure the school's response to a variety of learning styles as well as foster development of students' emotional development.

In partnership with The Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO), the Big Picture Company, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, and the Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation, and Eastern University, the Eastern University Academy Charter School (EUACS) has created a first of its kind Early College high school program that utilizes the Big Picture model of individualized learning in small classes and a small school to fully prepare students for success in college and in their careers. EUACS is a model of true integration of an Early College program where students prepare for and earn college credit prior to graduation, and a Big Picture School, where student learning is centered around individual interests and where students spend time pursuing their individual interests through individual work projects, small group projects, community immersion learning projects, and structured internships. Although all Big Picture schools encourage their students to prepare for and attend college, none have yet been developed that provide an early college environment where students can earn up to 60 credits before graduation. And, although some Early Colleges have experimented with project based learning, none have yet fully integrated internships and interest-driven, project-based learning into their rigorous college preparation programs.

Students in the middle school- grades 7 through 8, will utilize components of the Big Picture school to prepare them for a full Big Picture individualized education and internship program during the high school years. Beginning in 9th grade, students spend three days per week in the school, and two days per week out of the school learning through internships (LTIs) aligned with their individual interests and passions. The school will combine the personalized, student-interest-driven approach of a Big Picture school with a mastery learning system of performance-based progression to allow students to progress rapidly in their learning of content and skills to reach college level instruction before they graduate from college. The seminar structure and alignment of the seminars with college course content and assessment provides students with the opportunity of earning up to 60 college credits during their high school years. All content learning will be integrated with and related to the student's LTI projects.

Unique characteristics of this school include:

- The option of graduating in four years with a high school diploma and up to two years of transferable college credit,
- Exposure to a college-oriented culture during all four high school years,
- Collaboration between university faculty and high school teachers around core competencies and student learning outcomes,
- A small, nurturing community that eliminates feelings of anonymity and isolation, where all stakeholders have a sense of ownership,
- Small class size of 17 students or less makes personalized learning possible, insures competency, continuity and coordination of the teaching team,
- Mastery of academic content standards in a set of real-world contexts through interdisciplinary projects centered around students' interests,
- An Advisor who stays with the student for all four grades and provides every student with a personal relationship to the school community, ensuring attention to each child's individual needs,
- An existing program with a track record of success in educating diverse students and preparing them for college and for success in the workplace,
- Extended school day and year-round schooling,
- Interest-based internship model,
- Learning that takes place in both professional and scholarly cultures,
- Rigorous Early College 9-12 curriculum,
- Opportunity for international learning experiences,
- Innovative student assessment through juried exhibitions,
- Ongoing program review, research and evaluation,
- Arts-integrated pedagogy that responds to a variety of learning styles,
- A philosophy of education that emphasizes Eastern's values for discerning life purpose, pursuing reason and commitment to social justice,
- Holistic student development, including global competence, spiritual and character development,
- A focus on community and economic development across the curriculum,
- Continuous professional development for staff, teachers and parents,
- A "restorative justice" approach to discipline and behavior.

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

The EUACS Curriculum Scope and Sequence was created to help all of our students to meet the Pennsylvania Academic Standards and requirements for graduation in a performance-based progression toward college level study by senior year. Students study in seminars based on their level of competency, skills and knowledge in a given academic area. EUACS advisors, teachers, students and Eastern University faculty and graduate students will use a combination of curriculum materials to support student learning centered around their individual interests, internships and projects. As it progresses, the program will be continually modified in light of experience and on-going research regarding what is and what is not working to help students to become expert learners.

The traditional subject areas of English, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies (history, economics, geography, and civics), technology, world languages, and the arts will all be addressed in student individualized Learning Plans, and will be incorporated into each student's Exhibitions. Students will study these subjects individually and together with other students in seminars that will cover particular disciplinary and interdisciplinary content. A particular strength of this model is that students will be able to progress

through the particular areas of the curriculum at their own pace, studying at higher levels as soon as they are able to demonstrate competency, and perhaps reaching college level work early in their high school careers. Students may go farther in depth than the topics specified in the school's curriculum, but they will be required to demonstrate mastery of a particular subject level prior to moving to the next level in that subject (e.g., demonstrated mastery of 80% of the content and skills identified in Science level 6 prior to moving to level 7). The curriculum will also include specific lessons on developing individual work habits and social skills that support success, and will provide ample practice time for developing these skills in a variety of contexts with a variety of people.

Communication (English/Language Arts)

Reading, Writing, Speaking, and Listening- Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are integral to academic success and central to students' work at EUACS and in their internships. Language arts skills are taught across the curriculum at EUACS, with students constantly writing discursively, speaking in public forums, and reading silently, aloud and dramatically. Reading comprehension skills are critical to life-long learning. Students use authentic literature to study history, science, mathematics, the arts, and other content areas. Students also read to satisfy particular interests and for entertainment.

Similarly, students use writing to express and clarify their knowledge and ideas and to inform or entertain others. Students will be able to:

1. Read fiction and nonfiction material with comprehension.
2. Use different strategies for different reading purposes.
3. Identify fact versus fiction, prejudice and bias.
4. Understand and use writing as a recursive process.

All Advisors assist their students in learning to be effective readers, writers, speakers, and listeners through a variety of activities inside and outside of school.

All EUACS students will:

- Learn to read independently to recognize and manage the purposes for reading; develop word recognition skills; develop vocabulary; improve comprehension and interpretation; and develop fluency.
- Read critically in all content areas and grasp details; make inferences; discern fact from opinion; make comparisons; analyze and evaluate.
- Develop skill in the narrative, informative, discursive, dramatic and persuasive types of writing. Advisors and instructors will work to improve the quality of student writing with respect to focus, content, organization, style, and conventions.
- Develop sophistication in speaking and listening. Advisors will coach students to make progress in their listening and speaking skills, discussion, and presentation performances.
- Learn the characteristics and function of the English language, word origins, variations, and application.
- Develop competency in research, and in location and organization of information.
- Read, analyze, and interpret literature devices in poetry and drama.

Creative Expression and the Arts

Students will engage the arts to communicate creatively and effectively, to create self-awareness and develop aesthetic competence. Through their projects and internships, students will learn to express themselves through fine art, music, dance or drama, and to express themselves through visual media. Students will integrate the arts into their projects in the following ways:

- As a medium for application of problem solving skills.
- Practice in the comprehension of basic symbol systems and abstract concepts.
- Application of technical skills in practical production and performance.
- Comprehension and application of the creative process.
- Development and practice of creative thinking skills.
- Development of verbal and nonverbal communication skills.

- Use of computers and other technologies to express themselves
- Complement their work with aesthetic elements.

Quantitative Reasoning (Mathematics)

Quantitative reasoning is essential for survival and success in an increasingly data-rich world. EUACS students will master Quantitative Reasoning through their learning projects and LTIs, learning mathematical content and skills that they will apply to enhance their projects, LTI performances and Exhibitions. Students will be able to communicate mathematically and will come to view math topics as interesting and enjoyable to study. Students will use mathematics as a tool to help organize and understand information and to solve problems related to their interests. Because capacity to deal with all things mathematical is changing rapidly, students must be able to bring the most up-to-date technology to bear on their learning of mathematical concepts and skills, including:

- Numbers, Number Systems, and Number Relationships — Instruction will be given to students focusing on types of number (e.g., Whole, Prime, irrational, complex) and equivalent forms (e.g., fractions, decimals, and percents).
- Computation and Estimation - Instruction will lead to students' abilities to handle basic functions with competence and make judgments about the reasonableness of their answers. Use of calculators will also be taught.
- Measurement and Estimation - Students will be able to use various types and units of measurements, do computations, and compare measurements.
- Mathematical Reasoning and Connections - Students will use inductive and deductive reasoning and validate their arguments (e.g., if-then statements and proofs).
- Mathematical Problem Solving and Communication - Students will develop effective problem solving strategies, represent problems in various ways, and interpret results.
- Statistics and Data Analysis - Students will collect, report and analyze data (e.g., charts and graphs, ANOVA, correlation, SPSS).
- Probability and Predictions - Students will acquire the ability to establish validity of data and calculate probability to make predictions.
- Algebra and Functions - Students will solve equations and analyze patterns and functions.
- Geometry - Students will be able to identify shapes and their properties and use geometric principles to solve problems.
- Trigonometry - Students will be able to compute the sides of angles and use graphic calculators.
- Concepts of Calculus - Students will compare quantities and values and graph rates of change.

Empirical Reasoning (Science)

EUACS emphasizes the use of observations, hypothesis formulation and testing and facts to explore and justify the ideas underlying their projects. The central components of Empirical Reasoning are developing strategies to test ideas, conducting research, and using logic. Although Empirical Reasoning spans many areas of a traditional curriculum and academic disciplines, it is most closely related to the fields and processes of science. Through concentrating on empiricism, students are likely to pursue studies in the following major areas of science, including:

- Unifying Themes of Science
- Inquiry and Design
- Biological Sciences
- Physical Science, Chemistry and Physics
- Earth Sciences
- Astronomy
- Technology

Unifying Themes of Science

The unifying themes of science provide big ideas that underlie all scientific knowledge. There are only a few fundamental concepts and processes that form the framework upon which modern science and technology are organized - motion and forces, energy, structure of matter, change over time and machines. Using these

themes, EUACS Advisors will help students to explore the concepts of the disciplines taught and emphasized, and the cultures that have supported the development of those concepts.

Inquiry and Design

Inquiry and research methods are at the heart of the students' learning at their LTIs, projects and exhibitions. Students will learn about the nature of science and technology by applying knowledge to solving particular problems of meaning to them and their LTIs. Students will practice and refine the skills of observing and classifying, inferring, predicting, measuring, computing, estimating, communicating, using space/time relationships, defining operations, raising questions, formulating hypotheses, testing and experimenting. Where possible and relevant, students will design controlled experiments, recognize and manipulate variables, interpret data, formulate and design models, and use their skills and knowledge to attempt to solve real-world problems. Students will explore the following concepts and skills as they pursue their projects:

- Nature of Science — the ways scientists search for answers and explanations of their observations about the natural world, including: the processes of observing, classifying, predicting, measuring, hypothesizing, experimenting, and interpreting data.
- Knowledge — the facts, principles, theories, and laws that are verifiable through scientific inquiry by the world community of scientists; including physics, chemistry, earth science, astronomy and biological sciences.
- Inquiry — the intellectual process of logic that includes verification of answers to questions about and explanations for natural objects, events, and phenomena.
- Process Skills — recognizing how knowledge is acquired and applied in science by observing, classifying, inferring, predicting, measuring, computing, estimating, communicating, using space/time relationships, defining operationally, formulating hypotheses, testing and experimenting, designing controlled experiments, recognizing and manipulating variables, interpreting data, formulating models, designing models, and producing solutions.
- Problem Solving — applying concepts to problems of human adaptation to the environment that often leads to recognition of new problems, including using operational definitions, recognizing variables, formulating models and asking questions.
- Scientific Thinking — developing the disposition to suspend judgment, resisting the urge to make decisions and take action before results, explanations, or answers have been tested and verified with information.

Inquiry & Design through Project Based Learning

In order to prepare students to participate in their LTIs, middle school students work individually and in small groups one day per week on community immersion learning projects. As students become more competent, or demonstrate a genuine desire and competency to engage in service learning on an individual basis, they may pursue independent projects. This method of instruction is often called Project Based Learning (PBL). The Buck Institute defines project Based Learning (PBL) for Education as a “systematic teaching method that engages students in learning knowledge and skills through an extended inquiry process structured around complex, authentic questions, and carefully designed products and tasks.” PBL encompasses a spectrum ranging from brief projects of one or two weeks based on a single subject in one-classroom to yearlong, interdisciplinary projects that involve community participation and adults outside of the school.

PBL represents an improvement over the traditional education model (i.e. direct instruction classrooms that rely on textbook and teacher presentations, oral recitation, and multiple choice testing). PBL projects are carefully planned between advisor, teachers and students, and:

- *Focused on questions or problems that “drive” students to encounter (and struggle with) the central concepts and principles of a discipline* — Each project is centered on a student-selected “driving question” that is anchored in a real-world problem and ideally uses multiple content areas. The project work is central rather than peripheral to the curriculum.
- *Involve students in a constructive investigation* — An investigation is a goal-directed process that involves inquiry, knowledge building, and resolution. Investigations may be design, decision-making, problem-finding, problem-solving, discovery, or model-building processes. But, in order to be considered as a PBL project, the central activities must involve the development of new

understandings and new skills on the part of students. In other words the projects provide opportunities for students to make active investigations that enable them to learn concepts, apply information, and represent their knowledge in a variety of ways.

- *Student driven to some significant degree* — PBL recognizes students' inherent drive to learn, their capability to do important work, and their need to be taken seriously by putting them at the center of the learning process. Therefore, PBL projects incorporate a good deal more student autonomy, choice, unsupervised work time, and responsibility than traditional instruction and traditional projects.
- *Realistic, Not School-Like* — PBL projects give students a feeling of authenticity in that the projects incorporate real-life challenges where the focus is on authentic (not-simulated) problems or questions and where solutions have the potential to be implemented^[1].

The use of independent projects at EUACS, will require the use of essential tools and skills, including: technology for learning, self-management, and project management; multiple products that permit frequent feedback and consistent opportunities for students to learn from experience; performance-based assessments that communicate high expectations, present rigorous challenges, and require a range of skills and knowledge; and collaboration in some form, either through small groups, student-led presentations, or whole-class evaluations of project results. The table below illustrates the significant differences between PBL and traditional instruction that will be seen EUACS students' projects:

Social Reasoning (Social Studies and History)

EUACS is based on the notion that people are social beings, highly attuned and interested in the ways in which human behaviors and societies have developed, and in exploring human potential. The purpose of learning to reason socially is to be able to examine issues from multiple perspectives, to understand how other people think and live, and to be able to decide matters of importance when faced with problems in life. Our students will learn to reason about how social situations shaped and guided mankind. Advisors and Mentors will continually emphasize the importance of examining history, economics, geography and civics by helping students think about their own history, budget their own time and resources, create their own boundaries, and engage in the politics of community organizations and school.

The Social Reasoning components are:

- History/Past Experience-- Identify relevant historical and personal information; Interpret this information as it relates to a problem or situation,
- Understanding Diverse Perspectives—Empathize with people different from oneself; Analyze problems from various historical, cultural and personal perspectives,
- Citizenship—Participate in city, school, and Advisory communities; Perform service for these communities; Reflect on the consequences of one's work; Avoid behavior that harms or weakens these communities,
- Cooperation—Work with others effectively to accomplish group goals; Use strengths to help others accomplish their goals,
- Conflict Resolution—Use conflict resolution and mediation skills to help resolve real personal, interpersonal, and group problems.

Our social studies and history curriculum is designed to engage the student, while providing progressive information building skills. The curriculum helps students arrive at an intelligent and meaningful understanding of events that impact the contemporary world. The curriculum also supports an understanding of ourselves as a people, and how we have developed our institutions and cultures. Teachers make history, economics, geography and civics come alive by connecting them to students' daily experiences as they create their own history, budget their own time and resources, create their own boundaries, and engage in the politics of community organizations and school.

The historic and social context of human events is presented in a manner that directly explains the complex social, political and economic influences governing human behavior. The history and social studies curriculum helps students perceive the complex patterns in the behavior of people and societies that affect their changing world. The social studies and history curriculum is designed to help students appreciate the

trends that have shaped the influence of diverse cultural and political systems in the contemporary world. Upon completion of the social studies curriculum, our students will be able to explain the significance of the various forces contributing to the emergence of various economic systems, the democratic process, and the prospective strengths and merits of the American position in the contemporary world.

LEARNING THROUGH EVERYTHING

EUACS has modeled much of its educational design on the Big Picture Company's Met School, an acclaimed and unconventional high school in Providence, Rhode Island. Like The Met, the EUACS will incorporate cognitive scientist Howard Gardner's research on multiple intelligences into the core approach to teaching and learning at our school. Gardner's theory states that humans have many "intelligences" — ways of learning about and interacting with the world. Gardner has identified eight intelligences: linguistic, logical-quantitative, spatial, musical, bodily, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalistic. Traditional schools primarily emphasize just two of these intelligences — linguistic and logical-quantitative. That narrow focus is a disservice to two types of students: (1) those students whose strengths lie elsewhere, and (2) those whose strong linguistic and logical abilities mask significant deficits in other areas. This school, therefore, will provide students with a mix of teaching experiences including the more traditional lecture or small-group discussion, community immersion learning and "city as text", arts-integrated pedagogy, internships, and dual-credit opportunities through articulation agreements with local colleges. This mix is designed to tap into all eight intelligences and take advantage of their synergy. The end result is a school in which students are, like those at The Met School, "learning through everything." And, as mentioned previously, the mix of instructional techniques will be uniquely tailored to each student's needs and interests in individualized Learning Plans for each child, managed by the Advisory structure.

Specifically, the EUACS uses the following teaching methods that follow the Big Picture Company's model as well as best practices:

1. Advisory Structure
2. Learning Through Internships (LTI)
3. Service Learning
4. Journal Writing
5. Independent Projects
6. Senior Projects
7. College Classes
8. Public Speaking
9. Morning Meeting
10. Test Preparation
11. Small Group Projects
12. Journal Exhibitions and Presentations
13. Artistic Performance

Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachments

- Charter Academic Plan for 7-12
- Curriculum Alignment with College Competencies

English Language Learners

ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

Recruiting English Language Learners- ELL

As a school that reflects and embraces the diversity of our community, we are particularly interested in recruiting students from diverse language and cultural backgrounds. As an Early College serving Junior High and High School students in Philadelphia, an area that has a considerable number of non-native English speakers, we expect that a portion of our students will be English Language Learners. We will reach out to parents of students with limited English abilities (English Language Learners) by speaking and making presentations at local community job and education fairs and through local religious organizations (including synagogues and churches), and by publicizing and holding open houses in a variety of locations in proximity to immigrant communities. We will make clear in our communications that as a charter school, we are open and obligated to serving all students, including students with limited English skills, and that we will work with the family to provide their children the skills they need to transition into the full English language program as quickly as possible.

Serving English Language Learners (ELL)

Because the school will have an emphasis on learning through projects and hands-on collaborative work, we anticipate that the school will be attractive to “English Language Learners”, who have been shown to benefit academically from those models. An English Language Learner has been defined as a student who is “in the process of acquiring English and whose native language is not English, or who comes from a background where a language other than English is spoken (O Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996; p. 238). In order to best serve the English Language Learner population, EUACS has developed a comprehensive plan for identifying these students, assessing their educational needs, providing special services to improve their English capabilities, and evaluating their progress in English and other academic areas. The school will comply with all statutes and regulations regarding the education of NEP/LEP students as defined by the U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights (OCR). There are five main steps in the school’s language support program: identification, assessment, services, transition/exiting, and monitoring. For more information, please see our charter application with is posted on the following webpage:

http://eastern.edu/academic/ccgps/ssc/highschool/academy/pdf/Application_SchoolDesign.pdf

Although the goal of the school will be full inclusion of ELL students as quickly as possible in regular classrooms, we recognize that some students will need extra support and special instruction in order to make the transition. In those cases, English as a Second Language (ESL) courses will be taught concurrently with the academic program, including pull-out programs on an as needed basis (as indicated by their performance on the above-mentioned assessments). EUACS will ensure that ELL students develop essential language skills through Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) instruction in all content areas. The ESOL program will operate as a component of the language arts curriculum, with students receiving

classroom instruction as part of the language arts classes. If it becomes necessary, students will be provided with separate classes and/or tutorials in ESOL instruction through after school and pull-out sessions conducted by ESOL certified teachers. As required by the state of Pennsylvania, the ESOL program will include the following:

- Standards-based English as a second language instruction at the appropriate proficiency level.
- Content-area instruction aligned with the corresponding standards and adapted to meet the needs of the students.
- Assessment processes that reflect the academic standards and instruction.

We will employ content-based ESOL instruction and sheltered content instruction for all of our ELL students who need them as they prepare to make the move to full inclusion. All teachers of ELL students will be expected to ensure student comprehension and participation and to improve the students' language proficiency.

The ESOL teacher(s) at EUACS will be expected to teach language and to incorporate basic concepts, skills, and knowledge of content areas into their ESOL instruction. The emphasis of the school on the use of projects in all content areas will contribute to the success of ELL students by making it easier for them to participate in classroom learning with their fellow students as quickly as possible. For example, students will be able to demonstrate their knowledge and skills through the creation of images and three dimensional objects even though they may not yet be able to fully articulate their understanding in English.

Parents may request a review at any time if they believe their child no longer needs to be considered an ELL student. Otherwise, the school will review and evaluate each ELL student's case on an annual basis for possible revisions in their status.

Students who pass an English proficiency examination appropriate to their grade level will be included in regular classroom activities, with ongoing support from an ELL teacher. ELL students will not be assigned to separate classes for students with disabilities unless they qualify under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act* (see qualifications in the preceding discussion).

The staff will be responsible for identifying any needs for second-language materials or additional personnel for their ELL students. Recommendations for purchases or additional personnel will be presented to the Board of Trustees, who will be responsible for authorizing those purchases.

Notifications about all school activities, student codes and policies, and ways of becoming involved will be translated into limited English students' home language (provided a translator for that particular language can be found) and

delivered to their parents, in print or through verbal communication. These materials, as well as an initial home language survey, are available from PATTAN. ELL students will be encouraged to participate in all activities available to English speaking students, and accommodations will be made for them to do so.

If a number of ESL students do enroll in the school, the school will employ an accordant number of ESL teachers in its first year of operation. These teachers will be responsible for teaching any necessary pull-out programs, as well as for identifying needs and coordinating and providing ESL training for all teachers with ELL students in their classrooms.

All ELL students will be assessed using the same standardized tests given to their fellow non-ELL students. Accommodations will be made for these students that will provide them with a translator and/or a dictionary that will translate unfamiliar words into the student’s native language, but will not define them. When new accommodations are developed for these tests (currently the PSSA and the Terra Nova), they will be provided to the students so that we may accurately evaluate their academic knowledge and skills (Abedi, J., Summer, 2001. *Assessment and accommodations for English language learners: Issues, concerns, and recommendations*. Los Angeles, CA: National Center for Research on Evaluation, Standards, and Student Testing).

There are currently no supporting documents selected for this section.

Graduation Requirements

Graduation Requirements

Subject	Academy Graduation Requirements	PA Graduation Requirements
Reading and Language Arts	4 credits	4 credits
Mathematics	3 credits	3 credits
Science	3 credits	3 credits
Arts and Humanities	2 credits	2 credits
Social Studies	3 credits	3 credits
World Languages	2 credits	2 credits
Health and P.E.	2 credits	1.5 credits
Electives	5 credits*	5 credits*
College Course (3hrs.)	1 credit	—
	<hr/> 25 credits	<hr/> 23.5 credits

* One of the required electives must be one of the following: mathematics, science, international baccalaureate, or advanced placement course.

Eastern University Academy
High School Course Offerings

Course Name	Grade	Credit
English 1	9	1
English 2	10	1
English 3	11	1
English 4	12	1
Algebra	9	1
Geometry	10	1
Algebra II	11	1
Physical Science	9	1
Biology	10	1
Chemistry	11	1
Arts and Humanities I	[not grade specific]	1
Arts and Humanities II	[not grade specific]	1
World History	9	1
United States History	10	1
Social Science	11	1
Spanish I	[not grade specific]	1
Spanish II	[not grade specific]	1
Life Fitness I	[not grade specific]	1
Life Fitness II	[not grade specific]	1

Special Education

Eastern University Academy Charter school was designed to provide an individualized, academically rich and supportive environment for ALL its students, including students with special needs. Our

special education policies were designed and implemented in accordance with all relevant federal and state statutes and regulations including: the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 2004 – PL 108-446), No Child Left Behind, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (504), the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA); and Pennsylvania Department of Education regulations on Charter School Services and Programs for Children with Disabilities (Chapter 711).

The following six concepts serve as the foundation for the EUACS special education policy:

1. **Zero Reject:** As an LEA, EUACS will provide all students an equal education opportunity, and will not deny any students an education on the basis of a disability.

2. **Individualized Education Program (IEP):** In accordance with IDEA, all EUACS students identified as having a disability and in need of special education services will be provided a written IEP. The IEP will include current educational level, annual goals, specific educational objectives, special education and related services to be provided, dates for initiation of service, anticipated duration of service, and evaluation criteria.

3. **Free Appropriate Public Education (FAPE):** All eligible EUACS students will be provided appropriate special education (determined on a case-by-case basis) and related services at the expense of the charter school in conformity with each students IEP.

4. **Least Restrictive Environment (LRE):** EUACS will ensure that students with disabilities educated to the maximum extent appropriate with their non-disabled peers. The educational philosophy of EUACS is to bring all students into one community of learners, and our preference is to educate students, whenever appropriate, with the appropriate supplementary aids and services necessary for them to participate in the regular classroom experience with their peers.

5. **Due Process and Parental Involvement:** EUACS understands that parents must be notified of the intent to evaluate their child for services, and their consent to an initial evaluation before the process begins. Parents will also be involved in the IEP process and will be required to provide consent to the initial placement and provision of services.

6. **Non-Discriminatory Evaluation:** EUACS will use a variety of assessment tools and strategies, including information provided by the parents, to gather relevant functional, developmental, and academic information about each special education student. These assessments will not be discriminatory on a racial or cultural basis, and all tests and evaluation materials will be:

- Provided and administered in the child's native language or other mode of communication.
- Validated for the specific purpose for which they are used.
- Administered by trained personnel.
- Tailored to assess specific areas of educational need and not merely those designed to provide a single general intelligence quotient.
- Reflective of the child's aptitude or achievement and not reflective of the child's impaired sensory, manual, or speaking skills.

Specifically, EUACS' special education process has six steps:

1. Child Find
2. Pre-referral
3. Referral
4. Evaluation
5. Individualized Education Program (IEP)
6. Implementation