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# Pennsylvania Department of Education

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

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

**Entity:** Russell Byers CS  
**Address:** 1911 Arch St  
Philadelphia, PA 19103  
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**Contact Name:** Debbie Sperbeck

# CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

## Summary Data Part I

### Charter School Annual Report Summary Data 2009 - 2010

**Name of School:** Russell Byers CS

**Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval:** February 21, 2001

**Length of Charter:** Five Years    **Opening Date:** 9/17/2001

**Grade Level:** 4K - 6th Grade    **Hours of Operation:** 8:00 AM - 3:30 PM

**Percentage of Certified Staff:** 100%    **Total Instructional Staff:** 24

**Student/Teacher Ratio:** 16 to 1    **Student Waiting List:** 863

**Attendance Rate/Percentage:** 96.37%

## Summary Data Part II

**Enrollment:** 418 **Per Pupil Subsidy:** \$8,183 for regular ed, \$17,788 for special ed

### Student Profile

<b>American Indian/Alaskan Native:</b>	0
<b>Asian/Pacific Islander:</b>	10
<b>Black (Non-Hispanic):</b>	343
<b>Hispanic:</b>	16
<b>White (Non-Hispanic):</b>	48
<b>Multicultural:</b>	1

**Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch:**  
56.1%

**Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December:** 53

### Instructional Days and Hours

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>K (AM)</b>	<b>K (PM)</b>	<b>K (F.Time)</b>	<b>Elem.</b>	<b>Middle.</b>	<b>Sec.</b>	<b>Total</b>
Instructional Days	0	0	180	180	0	0	180
Instructional Hours	0	0	6.30	6.30	0	0	6.30

## SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Educational Community

The Russell Byers Charter School was founded in 2001 in memory of the prominent *Philadelphia Daily News* columnist Russell Byers, who was murdered in December of 1999. Russell truly believed that every child deserves a first class public education. The school is located in Philadelphia at 1911 Arch Street and serves 400 students in grades 4K through 6. Our students come to us from 37 different neighborhoods in Philadelphia and reflect a diverse racial and economic background. Approximately 11% of our student body receives Special Education services. Eighty-four percent of the students are African American, 10% are Caucasian, 4% are Latino, and 2% are Asian. Approximately 53% of the students qualify for free or reduced lunch.

Russell Byers Charter School offers a full-day kindergarten for four and five year-old students, one of the few kindergarten programs of this kind in Pennsylvania. The School is located in Center City, within walking distance of many of the city's cultural treasures, including the Academy of Natural Sciences, the Franklin Institute, and the Free Library and makes regular use of these facilities, as well as the entire city, in our studies. The Pennsylvania Academic Standards serve as the framework for our curriculum planning in reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. Music, Art, Spanish, and Physical Education are integrated into the curriculum as well. There are computers in every classroom and a computer lab with Internet access for our students.

### Mission

The mission of the Russell Byers Charter School provides students *roots*, a safe stimulating environment with a rigorous academic education grounded in Expeditionary Learning. Our students take responsibility for their learning to become powerful communicators, creative problem solvers and compassionate, engaged citizens. Russell Byers Charter School students develop *wings* to succeed in selective schools and embrace a love for learning.

## **Vision**

A unique feature of our school design is the use of the Expeditionary Learning Schools (ELS) model to create the Russell Byers Charter School. ELS is an innovative model based on the guiding principles of the famed outdoor educational program, Outward Bound. Russell Byers Charter School is one of 115 urban and rural schools, in the country, that are built around the five Core Practices and ten Design Principles that guide the teaching and learning in an Expeditionary Learning (ELS) school. The five Core Practices are: learning expeditions are the structure of the content curriculum; active pedagogy teaching practices; a strong, safe and inclusive school culture and character education; shared leadership and a commitment to continual school improvement; and structures to build community.

Each of these five Core Practices has a series of benchmarks that describe how fully implemented ELS schools work for students, teachers, families, school leaders, and other partners. The entire school program is evaluated each year by ELS personnel based upon these benchmarks. The results of this evaluation are used to inform professional development activities and the School Plan for the following school year.

The ten Design Principles are: The Primacy of Self-Discovery; The Having of Wonderful Ideas; The Responsibility for Learning; Empathy and Caring; Success and Failure;

Collaboration and Competition; Diversity and Inclusion; The Natural World; Solitude and Reflection; and Service and Compassion.

These Design Principles encapsulate the philosophy of education and the deep values of ELS schools. They keep the school focused on what is important and provide guidance for school personnel in their daily actions and decisions.

ELS emphasizes high achievement through inquiry based, hands-on learning, character growth, and teamwork. Students learn by doing through their participation in two, 12-week “expeditions” that combine fieldwork, research, reading, writing, mathematics, science, art, and community service around a single, compelling topic. Through community service, students learn about compassion for others, good citizenship, and how they can improve their world. With ELS, students pursue in-depth studies through a variety of experiences both inside and outside the classroom, including frequent visits to the city’s museums, theatres, libraries, parks and outdoor nature facilities. The students work in teams to research their topic, interview experts, record findings and document observations using scientific drawings. Student work and learning are displayed by means of Documentation Panels, which depict the artifacts from learning experiences and drafts from process work. The Expedition culminates in a school-wide Celebration of Learning where students share their knowledge with the school community through various mediums. Final products have included museum exhibits, brochures, books, presentations, service projects, debates, public service announcements and plays.

## **Shared Values**

We believe in a school that is safe, warm, and welcoming; a school that values curiosity and critical thinking; a school that challenges students to meet demanding academic standards but

shows respect for diverse learning styles. By imparting these values, we foster a love of learning and give each child the knowledge, skills, and confidence needed for success. We are committed to:

Small class size to give our students invaluable individual attention

- A rigorous curriculum with a moral compass to guide students toward compassion, integrity, and good citizenship
- Explicit teaching to give students the necessary metacognitive skills that will provide life long thinking and problem solving strategies and allow students to take responsibility for their learning
- A diverse school community to promote an acceptance of others and a richness of ideas
- Extensive, meaningful professional development to keep our teachers inspired and passionate about their important work and current in their disciplines
- Families as partners to share in the responsibility of their children's education
- The city as a classroom to widen the student's world
- High expectations to ensure that students reach for their full potential, develop confidence through their efforts, and take responsibility for their learning
- Accountability to our students, parents, teachers, and the community

## **Academic Standards**

During the months of June and July, 2007 the curriculum committee worked to create Curriculum Maps in Social Studies and Science.

During the month of July, 2008 the curriculum committee has worked to create Curriculum Maps in Writing and Mathematics. All Academic Standards in 4.12 of 22 Pa. Code have been addressed and incorporated into the maps. Content topics have been identified based on the content areas listed in the PA Academic Standards. We align all core disciplines with state standards.

During the month of July 2009, the curriculum committee worked to create a Curriculum Map for Reading. The maps are aligned with Pennsylvania State Standards, the Philadelphia Core Curriculum and research based reading building blocks. The maps ensure coherence across all grade levels and developmentally appropriate expectations at all grade levels.

A School Leadership Committee composed of administration, teachers and Board members has been created to assist with the implementation of best practices and the assessment of academic data, including standardized and school based testing. We support students who are having difficulty with skill development by offering added small group instruction, tutoring sessions before and after school, Saturday School and Summer School.

## **Strengths and Challenges**

Our standardized tests data demonstrate that those students who have been exposed to the school's Expeditionary Learning School (ELS) educational program have outperformed the Philadelphia School District counterparts, and particularly those who started in the 4K program, have shown substantial improvement in literacy and in mathematics. Our fall 2006 Terra Nova scores in Reading and Language for first grade students, who had the benefit of our two-year kindergarten program, were well above School District norms.

Based on the fall 2006 Terra Nova test results, mathematics scores showed improvement. Our math thresholds for all students reached 51%. Reading results were consistent with those seen

in mathematics, also reaching 51%. We plan to focus future energies on the continued improvement of mathematics and literacy instruction and to provide teachers with expanded professional development opportunities in these areas.

Based on the spring 2008 Terra Nova test results, 81% of the first grade students were classified at the advanced or proficient level in reading. 80% of second grade students were also classified at the advanced or proficient level in reading. In Mathematics, 80% of our second grade students were classified at the advanced or proficient level. Only 1 student was classified at the Below Basic level in mathematics.

Our mathematics scores have improved consistently as a result of our focus on improving computational and problem solving skills and teaching conceptually. The school will continue to stress basic computation and problem-solving skills as well as provide consistent staff professional development in best practices for mathematics instruction. The school has continued to align mathematics instruction closely with PA State Standards.

The school has also taking steps to improve the quality of science instruction. Materials were purchased for the 2006-2007 school year and we hired a science coordinator to help develop a science curriculum that is aligned with state standards and optimizes our use of the science materials.

Since hiring a science coordinator we have aligned the science curriculum with state standards, created a school-wide science curriculum map and developed expeditions at every grade level that are science related. These measures have helped to increase fourth grade test results on the annual statewide PSSA Science Assessments with 83% of the fourth grade students performing at the proficient or advanced levels in 2010.

#### ANNUAL MEASURABLE GOALS 2006-2007

Annual Measurable Goal	Strategies/ Interventions	Performance Indicators	Results/Progress
45% proficient or above in math on PSSA (AYP goal)	Small group instruction for students weak in math, teaching assistants work 1 on 1 with students, pull-out instruction for additional support, use of <a href="http://www.studyisland.com">www.studyisland.com</a> .	Periodic assessment to determine areas of strength and weakness	PSSA test results: 50.8% overall and 51.5% for relevant subgroup — AYP target met
54% proficient or above in reading on PSSA (AYP goal)	Small group instruction for students weak in reading, teaching assistants work 1	Periodic assessment to determine areas of strength and	PSSA test results: 49.7% overall, 50.9% for relevant subgroup

	on 1 with students, pull-out instruction for additional support, Literacy Specialist works with teachers to plan improvement strategies, use of <a href="http://www.studyisland.com">www.studyisland.com</a> , and Wilson Reading tutoring	weakness	— AYP target met because of the use of a confidence interval
95% participation rate in PSSA assessment (AYP goal)	Memos sent home to parents prior to testing, make-up schedule for absent students	Attendance and participation rates	Over the past two years, the participation rate was 100% overall and 100% for relevant subgroup
Improvement in attendance in grades K-6, up to 95% (AYP goal)	Daily monitoring, parental contact, attendance policy, Board action for those who exceed attendance policy limits	School attendance records	Attendance for the 2006-07 school year was 96.21%
70% of students will score at or above grade level on the Internal Reading Assessment	Small group instruction for students weak in reading, teaching assistants work 1 on 1 with students, pull-out instruction for additional support, Literacy Specialist works with teachers to plan improvement strategies	Periodic assessment to determine areas of strength and weakness	Overall (5K — grade 6), 71% of students were at or above grade level on the Internal Reading Assessment
45% of third grade students will score at the Mastery level or above on the Terra Nova test	Small group instruction, 1on 1 teaching, pull-out instruction, Literacy Specialist works with teachers to plan improvement strategies	Periodic assessment to determine areas of strength and weakness	As of October, 2006, 52% of third grade students scored at proficiency on the Spring 2005 Terra Nova test
On a parent survey, 90% of parents will rate RBCS as meeting or exceeding expectations	Day-to-day efforts of staff, quick response to parental concerns, involve parents in the life of the school, scheduling of events that draw parents into the school	Tabulation of survey results	This goal was not measured
65% of parents will achieve 30 hours of volunteer service	Enlist the assistance of the HSA, provide and publicize volunteer opportunities, periodic reminders to parents in Weekly Family Bulletin	Tabulation of Volunteer Service Records	30% of parents achieved 30 hours of volunteer service
RBCS will receive a “3” rating (1-5 scale) in each of the 20 evaluated ELOB categories	Ongoing in-service planned by the ELS School Designer and the staff	Ratings by ELS School Designer, teacher and administrative feedback on	School received ratings of 2 or 3 in a each of the evaluated categories

		Implementa-tion Review document	
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**ANNUAL MEASURABLE GOALS 2007-2008**

<b>Annual Measurable Goal</b>	<b>Strategies/ Interventions</b>	<b>Performance Indicators</b>	<b>Results/Progress</b>
56% proficient or above in math on PSSA (AYP goal)	Small group instruction for students weak in math, teaching assistants work 1 on 1 with students, pull-out instruction for additional support, use of <a href="http://www.studyisland.com">www.studyisland.com</a> .	Periodic assessment to determine areas of strength and weakness  Local assessment:GMade	PSSA test results: 53.5% overall — AYP target met
63% proficient or above in reading on PSSA (AYP goal)	Small group instruction for students weak in reading, teaching assistants work 1 on 1 with students, pull-out instruction for additional support, Literacy Specialist works with teachers to plan improvement strategies, use of <a href="http://www.studyisland.com">www.studyisland.com</a> , and Wilson Reading tutoring	Periodic assessment to determine areas of strength and weakness  Local assessment:GRade	PSSA test results: 52.6% — AYP target met
95% participation rate in PSSA assessment (AYP goal)	Memos sent home to parents prior to testing, make-up schedule for absent students	Attendance and participation rates	Over the past two years, the participation rate was 100% overall and 100% for relevant subgroup
Improvement in attendance in grades K-6, up to 95% (AYP goal)	Daily monitoring, parental contact, attendance policy, Board action for those who exceed attendance policy limits	School attendance records	Attendance for the 2006-07 school year was 96.21%  Attendance for 2007-08 school year was 96.21%
70% of students will score at or above grade level on the Internal Reading Assessment	Small group instruction for students weak in reading, teaching assistants work 1 on 1 with students, pull-out instruction for additional support, Literacy Specialist works with teachers to plan	Periodic assessment to determine areas of strength and weakness	Overall (5K — grade 6), 71% of students were at or above grade level on the Internal Reading Assessment

	improvement strategies		
45% of second grade students will score at the Mastery level or above on the Terra Nova test	Small group instruction, 1on 1 teaching, pull-out instruction, Literacy Specialist works with teachers to plan improvement strategies	Periodic assessment to determine areas of strength and weakness	As of May 2008, 52% of second grade students scored at proficiency on the Spring 2008 Terra Nova test
On a parent survey, 90% of parents will rate RBCS as meeting or exceeding expectations	Day-to-day efforts of staff, quick response to parental concerns, involve parents in the life of the school, scheduling of events that draw parents into the school	Tabulation of survey results	This goal was not measured
65% of parents will achieve 30 hours of volunteer service	Enlist the assistance of the HSA, provide and publicize volunteer opportunities, periodic reminders to parents in Weekly Family Bulletin	Tabulation of Volunteer Service Records	50% of parents achieved 30 hours of volunteer service
RBCS will receive a "3" rating (1-5 scale) in each of the 20 evaluated ELOB categories	Ongoing in-service planned by the ELS School Designer and the staff	Ratings by ELS School Designer, teacher and administrative feedback on Implementation Review document	School received ratings of 2 or 3 in a each of the evaluated categories

## SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

### Strategic Planning Process

The School has begun a Strategic Planning Process, with the help of a facilitator engaged by the Board of Trustees, to guide the administrative team and staff through the process. A Strategic Planning Committee of thirteen faculty, staff, administrators and board members were convened to undertake the process and create the first draft of the Strategic Plan. Included in the plan are the following areas:

Improve curriculum alignment and create Curriculum Maps that include Pennsylvania State Standards

- Provide accelerated learning opportunities for students
- Create more academic learning time during school year
- Align school schedules to meet the needs of all students
- Improve services provided for Special Education students
- Provide professional development to improve teacher performance
- Create a community of learners in a supportive environment
- Strategic and consistent implementation of Expeditionary Learning

The first draft of the Strategic Plan will be completed by August 10, 2007 and will be submitted to the Board of Trustees for approval in late August, 2007.

The second draft of the Strategic Plan was submitted to the Board of Trustees in April, 2008 for approval.

The Russell Byers Charter School Strategic Plan 2007-2012 was formally adopted by the Board on February 19, 2009. The Plan will be our guide for priority setting, decision making and progress monitoring. It is also the primary tool to communicate to the Russell Byers Charter School Community: 1. What is important to the School; 2. Where the School is going; 3. How we are going to get there; and 4. What is expected from each member of our Community.

## Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Elvira Zuazo-Legido	RBCS	Ed Specialist - School Psychologist	Administration
Gerald L. Santilli	Santilli and Thomson	Business Representative	Administration
Holly Chapman	RBCS	Elementary School Teacher	Administration
Krista Yutzy-Burkey	RBCS	Elementary School Teacher	Administration
Laurada Byers	Byerschool Foundation	Board Member	Administration
Rebecca Levenberg	RBCS	Special Education Representative	Administration
Sarah Wing	RBCS	Elementary School Teacher	Administration
Shelly Simms Reed	FIS Group	Board Member	Administration
Steve Prichard	RBCS	Board Member	Administration

## Goals, Strategies and Activities

**Goal:** At least 63% of all students in grades three through sixth will be proficient or advanced in Reading, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA.

**Description:** 63% of all students will reach or exceed the grade level target on the Developmental Reading Assessment by June, 2010.

### **Strategy: Workshop Model**

**Description:** All teachers will be trained in workshop model to develop metacognitive strategies.

### **Activity: Comprehension and decoding skills will be taught through workshop model**

**Description:** Teachers will model, teach and support comprehension strategies using the Reading Workshop model. Decoding skills and fluency will be integrated into the workshop model and reinforced during guided reading. Schedule was adjusted to increase time devoted to phonics instruction and intervention strategies.

### **Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources**

Anna Hadgis	Start: 1/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

**Status:** In Progress — Upcoming

<b>Date</b>	<b>Comment</b>
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9/27/2009	Professional development during the 2009-2010 year will continue to focus on improving instruction so students attain grade level expectations in reading and 63% of students in grades three through sixth achieve the proficient or advanced level on the PSSA.
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## **Goal: Create and support a community of learners**

**Description:** We will create and support a community of learners who will be thoroughly informed about Expeditionary Learning and areas of interest pertaining to school life.

We will provide students and staff the necessary skills to become powerful communicators in the 21st century.

### **Strategy: Survey families to discern familiarity with Expeditionary Learning and areas of interest or concern with regard to school life**

**Description:** Surveyed families and students to discern familiarity with Expeditionary Learning and offered workshops to ascertain areas of interest or concern with regard to school life.

### **Activity: Parental involvement**

**Description:** Offer workshops on Expeditionary Learning

### **Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources**

Anna Hadgis	Start: 1/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

**Status:** In Progress — Upcoming

<b>Date</b>	<b>Comment</b>
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9/27/2009	Schedule for workshops included here: Parent Workshop Offerings 2009-2010 Academic Year Primary Focus: Supporting Students to Become Stronger Readers All workshops are scheduled for 1 hour. Please RSVP to Elvira Zuazo-Legido at <a href="mailto:ezuazo@byerschool.org">ezuazo@byerschool.org</a> or 215.972.1700 ext. 301 FREE PARKING is available to the first 5 people to RSVP. Child care will be provided. September October Understanding the DRA and other RBCS Reading Assessments Wed., Sept. 23 at 5:30 p.m. Thurs., Sept. 24 at 12:00 p.m. Matching Books to Readers: Finding the Right Books for Your
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Child Wed., Oct. 28 at 5:30 p.m. Thurs., Oct. 29 at 12:00 p.m. November January Homework Help: Tips and Strategies for Extending Learning at Home Wed., Nov.18 at 5:30 p.m. Thurs., Nov. 19 at 12:00 p.m. Using Purposeful Questioning to Develop Comprehension Wed., Jan. 27 at 5:30 p.m. Thurs., Jan. 28 at 12:00 p.m. February March Preparing for Success: Getting Ready for the PSSA/TERRA NOVA Wed., Feb. 10 at 5:30 p.m. Thurs., Feb. 11 at 12:00 p.m. Understanding Phonics and Phonemic Awareness Wed., Mar. 24 at 5:30 p.m. Thurs., Mar. 25 at 12:00 p.m. April May Understanding Fluency and Vocabulary Development Wed., Apr. 28 at 5:30 p.m. Thurs., Apr. 29 at 12:00 p.m. Fun and Effective Math Games for the Family Wed., May 26 at 5:30 p.m. Thurs., Mar. 27 at 12:00 p.m.

## **Goal: Create more academic learning time throughout the year**

**Description:** A thirty minute block of time is devoted daily to phonics instruction from 8:30am to 9am daily.

### **Strategy: Investigate opportunities to decrease breaks and increase total number of school days**

**Description:** A task force comprised of Board members, faculty and administrators has been created to research how to increase the number of school days and minutes spent in academic pursuits, and decrease breaks. During the 2009-2010 school year, a 30 minute block from 8:30 to 9am was dedicated to phonics instruction based on the findings of the task force regarding more time on task to improve literacy skills.

### **Activity: Extended school year**

**Description:** Focus group will research extended school year options

#### **Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources**

Anna Hadgis	Start: 1/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

**Status:** Complete

#### **Date Comment**

9/27/2009	We have added a summer program that includes skill development in the morning from 9am to 12pm and media literacy activities and skill development in the afternoons from 1pm to 4pm.
9/27/2009	Committee completed their study and we have added a month long summer school program.

## **Goal: Ensure strategic and consistent implementation of Expeditionary Learning**

**Description:** An Instructional Guide works with faculty and staff to ensure the proper implementation of Expeditionary Learning School Model. Professional development is ongoing to review and improve all protocols and best practices are consistently taught and implemented.

### **Strategy: Professional Development**

**Description:** On-site and off-site programs are consistently offered staff and coordinated by administration and instructional guide in collaboration with school designer. Professional opportunities are listed on the Expeditionary Learning Schools web site and consistently accessed by faculty and staff.

### **Activity: Coordinate with school designer**

**Description:** Incorporate implementation in workplan

#### **Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources**

Anna Hadgis	Start: 1/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$43,000.00
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**Status:** Complete

#### **Date Comment**

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9/27/2009	Workplan was discussed with the school designer and the results of the implementation review are being addressed.
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## **Goal: Improve curriculum alignment**

**Description:** Improve curriculum alignment and create Curriculum maps that include and exceed PA State Standards. Reading Maps were created in 2009 to address the five components of reading including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension and vocabulary. Science, Social Studies and Writing maps were created in 2007 and 2008.

### **Strategy: Form Curriculum Development Team**

**Description:** Formed Curriculum Development Team of 11 faculty members and administrators to work on Curriculum Maps during 2007 summer months. Curriculum mapping continued over the course of the year and the committee is working in July, 2008 on completing the Writing and Mathematics school wide and grade level maps.

During the summer of 2009, the committee created the Reading Map using PA State Standards and the Five Components of Reading.

**Activity: Create curriculum maps**

**Description:** Curriculum committee will formulate school wide maps: during the month of July 2009 we will create Reading Maps after researching the five components of literacy and the state standards for literacy.

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Anna Hadgis	Start: 7/13/2009 Finish: 7/23/2009	\$8,000.00

**Professional Development Activity Information**

Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
3.00	24	18
Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
Russell Byers Charter School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Entity</li> </ul>	Approved

Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish
Participants will take State Standards and the Core Curriculum and create a Reading Curriculum Map that will ensure coherence across grades 4K to 6th.	All content is based on the reading blocks: phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension.	<p><i>For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhances the educator's <u>content knowledge</u> in the area of the educator's certification or assignment.</li> <li>Increases the educator's <u>teaching skills</u> based on research on effective practice, with attention given to interventions for struggling students.</li> <li>Provides educators with a variety of classroom-based <u>assessment skills</u> and the skills needed to <u>analyze and use data</u> in instructional decision-making.</li> <li>Empowers educators to work effectively with <u>parents and community partners</u>.</li> </ul>

*For school and district administrators, and other educators seeking leadership*

roles:

- Provides the knowledge and skills to think and plan strategically, ensuring that assessments, curriculum, instruction, staff professional education, teaching materials and interventions for struggling students are aligned to each other as well as to Pennsylvania's academic standards.
- Provides leaders with the ability to access and use appropriate data to inform decision-making.
- Empowers leaders to create a culture of teaching and learning, with an emphasis on learning.
- Instructs the leader in managing resources for effective results.

#### **Educator Groups Which Will Participate in this Activity**

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##### **Grade Level**

- Early childhood (preK-grade 3)
- Middle (grades 6-8)
- Elementary (grades 2-5)

##### **Subject Area**

- Pre-Kindergarten Early Learning Standards
- Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening
- Science and Technology
- Kindergarten Early Learning Standards

#### **Follow-up Activities**

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

#### **Evaluation Methods**

- Classroom observation focusing on factors such as planning and preparation, knowledge of content, pedagogy and standards, classroom environment, instructional delivery and professionalism.
- Student PSSA data
- Standardized student assessment data other than the PSSA
- Classroom student assessment data
- Review of participant lesson plans
- Review of written reports summarizing instructional activity

- Peer-to-peer lesson discussions
- Lesson modeling with mentoring

**Status:** Complete

<b>Date</b>	<b>Comment</b>
9/27/2009	The curriculum map for Reading and our philosophy of literacy were completed and approved in August, 2009. We will upgrade and improve the maps at the end of the 2009-2010 school year.

### **Activity: Meeting Schedule for Curriculum Mapping**

**Description:** Meetings scheduled for June 25-29; July 30, 31; and August 6, 7, 9, 2007 to development curriculum maps.  
 Meetings scheduled for July 8, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17, 21, 22, 23, 2008 to continue development of curriculum maps.  
 Curriculum mapping took place this summer on July 13, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 22 and 23. The curriculum committee completed the Reading Map, which is aligned with PA State Standards.

#### **Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources**

Anna Hadgis	Start: 7/13/2009 Finish: 7/23/2009	\$40,000.00
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**Status:** Complete

<b>Date</b>	<b>Comment</b>
9/27/2009	Curriculum maps for science, social studies, writing and literacy have been completed as of August 2009.

## **Goal: Improve services provided for Special Education students**

**Description:** Services provided for Special Education students have been improved by increasing the number of staff and providing resource room services to meet the needs of all of our students.

### **Strategy: Align school schedules to meet the needs of all students**

**Description:** The daily schedule was improved to meet the needs of all students. The improved schedule allowed Special Education teachers to be able to work with special education students

in the classroom and in the resource room as needed. The Special Education teachers worked closely with the homeroom teachers to better support the needs of students.

### **Activity: Literacy Block**

**Description:** Coordinate with support staff

#### **Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources**

Anna Hadgis	Start: 1/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

**Status:** Complete

#### **Date      Comment**

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9/27/2009	We have created a daily schedule to include support staff in every classroom during the literacy block and during the extra 30 minute block devoted to remediation and RTI.
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## **Goal: Provide accelerated learning opportunities**

**Description:** We will provide accelerated learning opportunities for students by providing after school, Saturday and summer programs.

### **Strategy: Provide tutoring and extended opportunities outside of the normal school day**

**Description:** Tutoring occurs after school from 3:30 to 4:30 on Monday, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Students attend tutoring sessions in summer school during the month of July and on Saturdays during the months of February and March.

### **Activity: Extended Day**

**Description:** Focus groups will research various extended day options

#### **Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources**

Anna Hadgis	Start: 1/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

**Status:** Complete

#### **Date      Comment**

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9/27/2009	We have added 30 minutes of instruction to the school day.
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## **Goal: Provide professional development to improve teacher performance**

**Description:** We will provide on-going professional development to improve teacher performance and effective practice. Professional development will include full and half days on site and opportunities to attend workshops and/or conferences off-site. A full-time instructional guide will help to coordinate and facilitate all professional development opportunities. The Professional Development Calendar for the year has been created and attached.

### **Strategy: Plan PD in conjunction with instructional goals and expectations for teacher evaluation process**

**Description:** On-site and off-site opportunities will be provided to help teachers improve performance.

#### **Activity: Workplan**

**Description:** Workplan created with Expeditionary Learning School Designer. The success of the workplan is assessed using the Implementation Review, which we have attached to this document.

#### **Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources**

Anna Hadgis	Start: 1/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	\$20,000.00
-------------	------------------------------------	-------------

**Status:** In Progress — Upcoming

#### **Date      Comment**

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9/27/2009	Workplan was created and approved in August 2009 and is being implemented throughout the year.
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### **Statement of Quality Assurance**

Charter school has met AYP.

### **Statement of Quality Assurance - Attachment**

- Statement of Quality Assurance

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

## **Rigorous Instructional Program**

The curriculum model around which the Russell Byers Charter School is designed is Expeditionary Learning Schools (ELS), which is a nationally-recognized school reform model to strengthen school communities and programs. ELS schools focus on creating school partnerships with parents, significant teacher involvement in school governance, and the development of challenging expeditions that integrate all areas of the curriculum across all grade levels. In addition, RBCS uses Harcourt Trophies in all grades 4K through 6 to guide literacy instruction while implementing Reading Workshop/Writing Workshop. We use the Harcourt-Brace Math series to address the computation and problem solving mathematical needs of our students. The literacy and mathematics programs were chosen because of their close alignment with state and local standards, as well as their richness of content, high expectations, developmentally-appropriate practices and assessments.

PA Standards are at the core of all aspects of curriculum planning and instruction. Teachers begin with the standards when outlining the expectations for what students at their grade level will master during Learning Expeditions. Using the State Standards as a guide, grade level teams of teachers thoughtfully and consistently plan Learning Expeditions that address each standard. Teachers develop learning targets that translate the standards addressed through the expedition into student-friendly language, and revisit the learning targets during reflection, critique and assessment. All learning experiences, fieldwork and expert encounters are chosen and structured to address the short and long-term learning targets as dictated by the PA Standards.

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

RBCS is an ELOB school so extensive emphasis is placed on collaboration and cooperation. Students are organized into “crews” (small groups) that bring together students with varying skills and abilities so that each can contribute, develop skills and learn. The model we use is that each of us has something to offer, each of us has a job to do, and we all have a responsibility to make sure everyone succeeds. Teachers assess students and create groups according to need and developmental stages. We use whole and small group instruction in reading and mathematics, as well as daily math and literacy centers so students can practice essential skills. Depending on the teacher’s instructional purpose, sometimes these small groups are heterogeneous and sometimes they are homogeneous. At other times, whole class instruction and/or individual instruction is used. We also use a variety of materials and resources across the curriculum. We strive to ensure that every grade-level team has a teaching assistant. One of their major responsibilities is to know our students well and differentiate instruction so that attention may be given to meeting the developmental and academic needs of each student. Special education teachers work with some students in the regular classroom and help teachers to broaden their skills to be more inclusive of all the diverse learners in the classroom. They also work with “pull-out” students in a resource room to provide individualized instruction in order to meet IEP goals. When a child is found to be significantly behind, cross-grade teaching (going to another classroom for instruction in that one area) may be provided or limited pull-out instruction by a special education teacher may be provided.

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

ELS is an inquiry-based curriculum model. Each Expedition is an inquiry based study, designed by teachers, incorporating significant use of small-group and independent research, fieldwork, expert presentations, student-generated service projects and presentations of final products. Expeditions provide students with cross-curricular connections while focusing in-depth on a larger single compelling topic. The goal is to plan expeditions that are rich enough to engage each student and that are focused enough so that the learning can be in-depth.

RBCS has a constructivist philosophy about learning. Our belief is that children are constantly creating knowledge based upon their observations and experiences. Therefore, from the beginning of their school experience, students are making things, reading books, writing for a real purpose, and given numerous opportunities to exercise choice within an expedition based upon the questions and schema they bring to that topic.

**What strategies does the school use to accelerate academic skill development, content knowledge and learning strategies of students who enroll performing significantly below standards in literacy and mathematics skills?**

Students who are performing below standards in literacy and mathematics are supported with additional tutoring during and after school. A tutor trained in Wilson Reading, engaged students in small group instruction, twice a week for one hour, from March through June, 2007. In addition, all students who need additional support and scaffolding, participated in the Russell Byers Saturday School Program during the months of February through April in 2007, 2008, and 2009. Students who were identified at the end of the academic year as needing support and extensions of learning during the summer months, have participated in the Russell Byers Charter Summer Program during the month of July. The Summer Program runs Monday to Friday, from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM and during the 2010 summer session, bus transportation will be included. In 2009, an afternoon component was added to our Summer Program to include media literacy. Powerful Voices has expanded the 2010 program to include morning and afternoon components, which will enhance students abilities to read and write using technology.

We have a CSAP (Comprehensive Student Assistance Process) to identify students who need additional support. This approach provides an on-going team of support staff who work together with classroom teachers and parents to design strategies to assist students in their academic endeavors. The process provides an opportunity for teachers to discuss needs of specific students who may be exhibiting learning and/or behavioral difficulties that may be impeding their progress in the general education program. CSAP also affords teachers the opportunity to collaborate with other professionals to identify and verify specific learning and behavioral concerns about students. The process focuses on the development of interventions that can be realistically and successfully implemented in the regular education classroom to address and correct academic or behavioral difficulties prior to or in lieu of a student's identification as a student with special needs. Interventions that are developed as part of the CSAP process may be sufficient to support the student successfully in the regular education classroom, or the team may recommend the completion of a multidisciplinary evaluation if the team determines that all regular education resources have been exhausted and found to be unsuccessful. The process includes bringing parents in to learn about what might be interfering with their child's learning and brainstorming ways the school and the home can support the child.

The school's educational design is centered on cooperatively implemented learning expeditions, so RBCS has adopted an inclusion model of special education. As much as possible, students with special needs are included with their peers in the regular classroom setting with the support of itinerant and pull-out services. A staff of three special education teachers provides student services and staff support in working with special needs students.

The school utilizes a number of strategies to accelerate academic skill development and content knowledge. Such strategies include differentiated instruction as well as reading, language arts, and mathematics pull-out support in small groups. In addition, we provide after school or Saturday tutoring and/or mentoring services for students needing additional support. Literacy skills are assessed three times a year and the results of these assessments are used to group students homogeneously and heterogeneously for instruction. In mathematics, students are likewise grouped homogeneously and heterogeneously for instruction and a spiraling curriculum is utilized to reinforce subject matter skills and content knowledge.

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

Following are some of the strategies utilized by the teachers at RBCS to actively engage students in the learning process:

Small group, whole group, and individualized instruction

- Authentic learning experiences
- Student choice
- Inquiry-based learning
- Cooperative/collaborative activities
- Kinesthetic hands-on experiences/use of manipulatives
- Whole group meetings
- Active learning protocols such as jigsaw, gallery walks, tea parties and conversation cafe
- Guiding questions for inquiry studies
- Choice time to explore new experiences and different activities
- Peer interaction
- Games, books, songs, chants, and movement to reinforce skills
- Community building through morning meetings and shared school-wide rituals
- Fieldwork in the community
- Shared and guided reading
- Workshop Model
- Reader's Theater
- Literature Circles
- Discussion and debriefing activities
- Peer Critique and Feedback
- Self Critique and Reflection
- Rubrics and Learning Targets
- Instruction that builds on prior knowledge

## **Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachment**

- Rigorous Instructional Program

## **English Language Learners**

Russell Byers Charter School has identified four English Language Learners (ELL). A designated ELL consults with the child's regular classroom teacher and with the child's family in order to determine the appropriate course of instructional support. These students are being serviced twice a week for an hour each day.

Children for whom English is a second language and who are exhibiting difficulties in both their native language and English may be eligible for special education support. Determining if there is a delay in the native language may require the services of a translator and/or interpreter. An interpreter or translator may also be needed for family conferences, and all legal documents may need to be provided to the family in the family's native language.

## English Language Learners - Attachment

- English Language Learners

## Graduation Requirements

Russell Byers Charter School is a 4K — 6 school. This section of the Annual Report does not apply.

## Special Education

At present, there are 53 students with IEPs. There are three full-time special education teachers, one full-time special education teaching intern, one part-time teaching assistant and one full-time education coordinator/teacher, on staff. The range of services provided to students with special needs includes special instruction in reading, writing, and math, support in content areas, counseling and behavioral support provided by a part-time psychologist, and speech therapy and occupational therapy provided by outside contractors. The special education coordinator attends all IEP meetings and serves as an ongoing resource to classroom teachers to plan and implement appropriate instruction for each student and to identify strategies to use to accomplish IEP goals. IEPs are developed in accordance with IDEA requirements. IEP teams for each student include at least one parent/guardian, the student (if developmentally appropriate), the regular and special education teachers, the special education coordinator, and the principal or assistant principal as appropriate. Other specialists, including the speech therapist, occupational therapist, and psychologist, serve on the team when appropriate. The special education teachers and special education coordinator are responsible for writing and monitoring the implementation of IEPs, in cooperation with other team members. The special education coordinator monitors all IEPs, Evaluation Reports, and NOREPs for compliance with state and federal guidelines. The school contracts with outside agencies, approved private schools (APS), and alternative special education settings (ASES) for those services needed by the students that cannot be provided by the school. For students in need of early intervention services within the regular education program, a team including the classroom teacher(s), school psychologist, special education coordinator, assistant principal, and parent, work together to identify students' needs, and plan and monitor appropriate instructional interventions.

A new set of special education policies were adopted in August 2009 and are attached.

## Special Education - Attachment

- Special Education

## Special Education Program Profile - Chart I

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Rebecca	1.00	Learning	RBCS	9	Includes itinerant learning and

Levenberg	Support/504				behavior support, students who receive services at APS or ASES.
Rebecca Chase	1.00 Learning Support/Behavior	RBCS	10		Includes both itinerant and resource support.
Geno Aloï	1.00 Learning Support	RBCS	16		Includes both itinerant and resource support.
Mary Sacchetti	1.00 Learning Support	RBCS	12		Includes both itinerant and resource support.
Lindsey Hofflich	1.00 Learning Support/Behavior	RBCS	5		Includes both itinerant and resource support.

## Special Education Program Profile - Chart II

Organization	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Martin Luther School	1.00	Full-time emotional support	Martin Luther School	1	Operates as APS
Academy in Manyunk	1.00	Full-time learning support	Academy in Manayunk	1	Operates as ASES

## Special Education Program Profile - Chart III

Title	Location	FTE
Paraprofessional	RBCS	1.0
Psychologist	RBCS	.80

## Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV

IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual	Title/Service	Amount of Time Per Week
C. Sherretta -- Therapy Solutions	Speech/Language Therapist	16 hours/week
G. Yoo -- Therapy Solutions	Occupational Therapist	10 hours/week
J. Rottinger -- Therapy Solutions	Speech/Language Therapist	4 hours/week
S. Brown -- Delta T	Behavior Support Assistant	35 hours/week
J. Intrabartola -- Delta T	Behavior Support Assistant	35 hours/week
M. Martin -- RBCS	Behavior Support Assistant	35 hours/week

## SECTION IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

### Student Assessment - Primary

Test/Classification	K	1	2	3	4	5
PSSA	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
PSSA	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
PSSA	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
GMade/GRade	No	No	No	No	No	No
TerraNova	No	No	No	No	No	No

## Student Assessment - Secondary

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

## Student Assessment

Our spring 2007 PSSA scores for Reading and Mathematics improved sufficiently to allow us to make AYP in both areas.

The spring 2007 PSSA test results in mathematics showed improvement from our baseline year in 2005 from 51.4 to a 2007 PPI of 78.1, exceeding our 2007 target of 62.2%. Reading results were consistent with those seen in mathematics. We improved on our baseline score of 60.0 to a 2007 PPI of 76.7, exceeding the 2007 target of 68.8. Our mathematics scores met AYP requirements with 50.8% of all students at the proficient or advanced level. Our Reading scores met AYP through the use of a confidence interval with 49.7% of all of our students scoring at the proficient or advance level.

We are pleased that our reading scores did improve as a result of purchasing the Harcourt Trophies program and through our focus on improving comprehension and decoding skills. The school will continue stressing phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, comprehension and vocabulary as well as provide consistent staff development in best practices for literacy instruction.

The spring 2008 PSSA test results in mathematics showed improvement from our baseline year in 2005 from 51.4 to a 2008 PPI score of 80.1, exceeding our target of 62.2%. Reading results were consistent with those shown in mathematics. We improved on our baseline score of 60.0 to a 2008 PPI of 79.2, exceeding the 2008 target of 73.2. Russell Byers Charter School made AYP in 2008.

Local normative assessments, GMADE and GRADE were given twice a year to inform instruction and practice. Progress monitoring is enhanced by using these local assessments and interventions are consistently employed to support students in reading and mathematics. Staff and administrators use all testing data to scaffold academic support for all students. Earobics and Wilson Reading, in addition to one-on-one tutoring, are available as interventions. Support staff are available to consistently work with students who are in need of academic support.

Our spring 2009 PSSA scores demonstrated continued improvement in mathematics with 59.3% of our students scoring at the proficient or advanced levels. In reading, 51.8% of our students ranked at the proficient or advanced levels and the school made AYP for the fourth consecutive year.

Our spring 2010 PSSA scores demonstrated improvement in mathematics with 69.3% of our students at the proficient or advanced levels. In reading, 54.3% of our students ranked at the proficient or advanced levels.

## **Student Assessment - Attachment**

- Student Assessment

## **Teacher Evaluation**

### **a. Main features of the teacher evaluation plan**

The principal conducts both formal and informal classroom observations. Each formal observation is followed by a conference during which the lesson is discussed, feedback is provided, and suggestions for improvement, where appropriate, are made. (First year teachers are observed more frequently than experienced teachers.) A written observation report, including commendations and recommendations, is provided after each formal observation. Feedback from informal observations is usually provided through a written note from the principal or through informal conversation with the teacher. Teachers are formally observed and evaluated at least two times a year. A goal setting meeting is scheduled in September with follow up in January. Coaching and mentoring is provided that is consistent with professional goal setting and best practices.

### **b. Individuals responsible for staff evaluation**

The Principal and Vice Principal are responsible for teacher evaluation. Our Special Education Coordinator is responsible for evaluating all the special education teachers, along with the Principal and Vice Principal. The Principal and Vice Principal consult the Special Education Coordinator about all laws, rules and regulations regarding IEP goals and reports. The Principal is in direct contact with the school's lawyers regarding any changes and updates to the laws with regard to special education and laws affecting school children and their families.

## **Teacher Evaluation - Attachments**

- Teacher Evaluation
- Teacher Evaluation
- Teacher Evaluation
- Teacher Evaluation

## **SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS**

### **Leadership Changes**

A new CEO/principal was appointed on July 1, 2006.

At the end of the 2006-07 school year, one board member resigned and one board member was appointed.

At the end of 2007-08 school year, one board member resigned and three are proposed to be elected in August 2008.

At the end of 2008-09 school year, the CEO/Principal resigned and at this time we have an interim CEO and interim Principal. Three Board members resigned and six new were elected. The CEO/Principal resigned for family reasons and administrators on site were put in vacant positions until the search committee secures a permanent replacement. Members of the Search Committee have been identified and the search process has begun. Wichenden Associates have been hired to assist the School with a search for a Principal/Executive Director.

A new CEO/Principal has been hired and began on July 1, 2010. The interim Principal and Assistant Principal resigned as as June 30, 2010. Search has begun for a Dean of Students and Dean of Curriculum and Instruction.

## Board of Trustees

Name of Trustee	Office (if any)
Shelly Simms Reed	
Barbara Bravo	
Stephen Prichard	
Kym Shegog-Ramsey	
Laurada Byers	
Dr. Alison Byers, ex officio	
Jack Adler, ex officio	
W. Russell G. Byers, Jr., ex officio	
Robert Kathol	
Beth Morris	
Linda Gamble	
Devra Jamison	
Frank Mechura	
Nancy Petersmeyer	
Edward Walters	
Allan Williams	
Edward Covington	
Meleah Scott	
Diana Gormley	

## Professional Development (Governance)

During the 2006-07 academic year, the Board hired a strategic planning consultant to look at the school and to look at the operations of the board. The Board will be expanded to 15 people. We will be introducing new committees during the 2007-08 academic year. New board members have been interviewed according to the Public Officials Act. Trustees will sign a Conduct of Behavior Policy and will undergo training. All board members will be required to attend at least two school functions each year.

During the 2007-08 academic year, a broad-staffed committee worked with the Leadership Team to develop a strategic plan. The plan will enforce the policies and procedures for the next 5 years. We also increased the board to 15 and have adopted the following committees: audit, governance, technology, education and fundraising. We are having board training to review

board governance. The training will be delivered by Karen DelGuercio. We have also developed and approved a conflict of interest policy. All board members will be required to attend at least two school functions each year.

During the 2008-09 academic year, the Strategic Plan was finalized. The Board of Trustees adopted the 2007-2012 Strategic Plan on February 19, 2009. Training of the Board was delivered by Karen DelGuercio, Founder and Board Chair of Mast Charter School and Akosua Watts. The Policies and Procedures Manual was updated as were both the Parent/Student and Personnel Handbooks.

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

The bylaws make provision for a seven-member Board of Trustees which may be expanded to include 15 members. The Board includes educators, business persons, social service providers, and parents. The principal serves in an advisory capacity and submits regular reports to the Board. With the exception of the parent representative, who serves a one-year term, Board members serve three-year renewable terms. In addition, a faculty representative, elected by the faculty, has been added to the Board to serve a one-year term in an *ex-officio*, non-voting capacity.

The Board sets policy for the school and works with the principal, who is responsible for the day-to-day operation of the school, to develop and use analytical tools that help to regularly measure the academic and non-academic performance of the school. At each Board meeting the principal presents a statistical snapshot of the school, reporting on student progress and school programs.

The Board meets at least eight times each year to address both long-term and immediate issues affecting the school. Board meetings are advertised in accordance with the law and all stakeholders are encouraged to attend Board meetings. Board meetings are tape-recorded and minutes of previous meetings are reviewed and approved at each meeting.

The principal and the Board Chairperson meet each week to discuss matters of importance to the operation of the school. The Board Chairperson and the principal attend Home and School Association meetings at which time they share information about Board and school issues. At these meetings, parents are encouraged to share their thoughts and concerns about the school and the decisions of the Board.

The principal and/or assigned school representatives attend all called meetings of the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) for charter schools. We have been in contact with various offices of the SDP to assist us in providing answers and suggestions in addressing various issues that arise during the course of the year. All required reports have been submitted.

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

- Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School

## **Community and Parent Engagement**

Parents are encouraged to participate in all aspects of school life, including governance. A parent serves a one-year term as a voting member of the Board of Trustees.

The Home and School Association is involved in soliciting parent input on major decisions, which is then carefully considered by the Board in its decision-making process. This year the HSA held a number of fundraising activities raising over \$6,000, funds that will be used for upgrading the playground area. Fundraising efforts from previous years resulted in the purchase of a portable stage and digital cameras, as well as donations to the 6th grade graduating classes.

Parents and community members are encouraged to attend Board meetings and to submit items for the agenda. They have the opportunity to address the Board during the public comment section of each public meeting. Parents and community members are also included on various school committees, including the Strategic Planning Committee, which was created to develop a long-range plan for the school. Focus groups comprised of staff, administrators, board members and parents will research key elements included in the strategic beginning in fall 2008.

Each family is requested to donate 30 hours of volunteer service to the school. This opportunity may be met in a wide variety of ways including preparing classroom materials at home, accompanying a class on ELOB fieldwork, serving on school committees, contacting community resources, and working with the Home and School Association. Parent volunteers sometimes assist teachers on field trips. Currently, several community members visit classrooms on a weekly basis to share their expertise with students and teachers. Each class also has parent representatives that assist the classroom teacher with the coordination and organization of the class and grade-level events. Parents serving as class representatives have automatic membership in the Home and School Association and are given full credit for 30 hours of volunteer service.

Workshops for parents are held on a monthly basis. Different staff members and support staff are facilitators and presenters as well as experts from universities in our area. Topics range from how to support your child with math homework to parenting in the digital age and other timely issues. Our child psychologist helps to organize speakers and disseminate literature prior to the workshops.

Parents were instrumental in establishing and leading a parent resource network through the Center City Parenting Center. The network trains parents to provide parenting workshops on a range of topics, including nutrition, homework help, and other topics designed to improve the quality of life of families. Parents who have attended this training have served as guides when community members and prospective families visit the school.

Various activities are held throughout the school year to showcase the work of students. Parents and community members are invited to attend these displays, performances, and demonstrations. This past year a survey was conducted to measure parent satisfaction. Data from this survey will be compiled and analyzed and used to set goals for improving the school.

Twice a year, there are school-wide Celebrations of Learning that include both evening programs and programs during the school day. Parents and community members are invited into the school to enjoy student performances, displays of student work, student presentations of the work on their expeditions, and other demonstrations of student learning. The Celebration of Learning includes the entire school community — students, teachers, parents, and Board members.

There is a very active Big Brothers/Big Sisters program at RBCS. More than 75 community members volunteer their time to meet with students at the school. These Big Brothers/Big Sisters help students with their school work, play games such as chess and scrabble, or just talk with their young charges. We are working continuously to increase the number of community volunteers involved in this highly successful program. We have several partnerships with universities, museums and cultural organizations such as, Rock School of Ballet, Enchantment

Theater and the Main Line Mandarin Cultural Center. These partnerships allow us to offer cultural opportunities.

## **SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **Major fund-raising activities**

The school conducts fundraising through the Byerschool Foundation. Similar fundraising is planned for the current school year.

### **Fiscal Solvency Policies**

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

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

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

### **Accounting System**

The accounting system is Quickbooks and is loaded with the State Chart of Accounts. Transactions are posted by the Controller's office staffed by experienced school business administrators. A trial balance, statement of revenue and expenditures and a statement of disbursements are prepared monthly. Reports are generated in compliance with State requirements

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

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

- Preliminary Statement of Revenue, Expenditures & Fund Balances
- Preliminary Statement of Revenue, Expenditures & Fund Balances

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

The school's auditing firm is Larson Allen. The last audit is dated April 16, 2009 for fiscal year 2007-2008 and has a clean unqualified opinion and no negative management comments. It is impossible to submit an audit for 2008-2009 by August 1, 2009.

The school's auditing firm is Zelenkofske Axelrod LLC. The last audit is dated December 7, 2009 and has a clean unqualified opinion and no negative management comments.

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

- RBCS Audited Financial Statements 2008-09

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

The school has not been audited by the State Comptrollers Office.

## **SECTION VII. FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

Russell Byers Charter School leases a facility at 1911 Arch St. All furniture and equipment was purchased after obtaining quotations from various vendors. The school purchased furniture cost \$1,600.

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

The school has no future capital plans.

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

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

RBCS has complied with all health and safety requirements. The City of Philadelphia Department of Licenses and Inspection has issued a Certificate of Occupancy for the school building. Fire drills and other safety drills are conducted throughout the year. Staff training regarding how to respond to emergency situations is a part of the school's comprehensive Emergency Management Plan which addresses various types of emergencies including inclement weather, community emergencies (e.g., gas leak, chemical spill, etc.), national/state emergency (e.g., September 11<sup>th</sup>), bomb threat, fire/explosion, and an intruder in the building. This plan was developed to familiarize staff and students with different situations that may occur and to provide guidelines for responding to a crisis situation. Such preparation and practice can minimize

problems arising during a crisis. The major objectives of the plan are to save lives, give aid to victims, and protect property. As part of the Emergency Management Plan, building evacuation routes were modified, resulting in a quicker and more effective evacuation of the school during fire drills.

All exterior doors are kept locked during the school day and visitors are received through the front door only. A buzzer system for the front door enables the receptionist, who has a clear and unobstructed view of the entrance-way, to easily control entry to the building. Walkie-talkies are used for communication purposes as necessary. In March, a full time security officer was hired to patrol the building and offer increased surveillance. Our school also has a number of video cameras that record images from various locations within the building.

RBCS has a full-time school nurse. Student health records are reviewed and every effort is made to keep them up-to-date. Written guidelines for administering medication to students are published in the Student/Parent Handbook. Emergency contact information is maintained for all students.

For the 2007-08 academic year, RBCS used Bayada Nursing for school nurse services. We had two registered nurses working two and three days per week, respectively.

For the 2008-09 academic year, RBCS used Bayada Nursing for school nurse services. We had one registered nurse working five days per week, with a certified school nurse making visits for compliance with all health reporting to the state.

For the 2009-10 academic year, RBCS has continued to use Bayada Nursing for school nurse services. We had one registered nurse working five days per week, with a certified school nurse making visits for compliance with all health reporting to the state.

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

- Compliance With Health and Safety Requirements and Maintenance of Health and Immunization Records for Students
- Compliance with Health & Safety Requirements and Maintenance of Health and Immunization Records for Students

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

For medical insurance the school offers the following plans in accordance with Act 22 to employees:

- Personal Choice,
- Keystone Health Plan,
- United Concordia Dental Plan
- Wage Continuation
- Life Insurance

Please see attached certificate for other liability insurances:

- Worker's Compensation

- General Liability
- Corporate Officers Error and Omissions
- Contents Insurance

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

- Insurance Certificate 2009

## **SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS**

### **Quality of Teaching and Other Staff**

For the 2006-2007 school year, there were a total of 39 professional employees (as defined by the Pennsylvania Department of Education). Of that number, 34 employees were in certified positions and 5 in non-certified positions. Thirteen of all professional employees were new staff members, five of whom worked as early childhood or elementary teachers. Twenty-six staff members returned from the 2004-2005 school year. The certified positions include 26 teachers, a part-time Literacy Specialist, a school nurse, a part-time psychologist, two part-time therapists, and the school principal. Non-certified positions include 14 teaching assistants, the assistant to the principal, a registrar, and one full and one part-time administrative assistant.

Staff retention has been high. During the 2001-02 school year, the only member of the professional staff who began the school year but did not complete it was the assistant principal, who resigned in March, 2002.

In September, 2002, two staff members did not return: one teacher changed professions and the special education coordinator relocated. During the 2002-03 school year, one teacher did not complete the year due to relocation.

In September, 2003, three staff members did not return: one teacher went on maternity leave, another teacher left due to family reasons, and one teacher's contract was not renewed.

In September, 2004, five staff members did not return: Two teachers relocated, two part-time nurses did not return because the school nurse became a full-time position and neither of them wanted to work full-time, and one part-time special education teacher returned to graduate school.

At the end of the 2004-05 school year, three teachers chose not to return to RBCS. One individual moved from the area and two accepted teaching positions elsewhere. The School Registrar also resigned. Two part-time positions were eliminated due to budgetary reasons.

At the end of the 2005-06 school year, seven teachers chose not to return to RBCS. Two individuals moved from the area, two accepted teaching positions elsewhere and two retired. Six positions were not renewed, of which three were for certification issues and one was eliminated due to budgetary reasons.

At the end of the 2006-07 school year, two teachers and the school nurse chose not to return to RBCS.

At the end of the 2007-08 school year, four positions were not renewed, and one teacher chose not to return to RBCS.

At the end of the 2008-09 school year, two teachers chose not to return to RBCS.

At the end of the 2009-10 school year, a new CEO/Principal was appointed. The Interim Principal and Assistant Principal chose not to return to RBCS. Two teachers chose not to return, one relocated and one chose to leave the teaching profession.

## Quality of Teaching and Other Staff - Attachments

- Quality of Teaching and Other Staff
- Quality of Teaching and Other Staff

## Student Enrollment

### ENROLLMENT HISTORY 2009-10

Grade	Number of Students Initially Enrolled	Number of Students Dropped	Number of Students Added	Number of Students Who Completed 2008-09 Who Are Enrolled to Return in August
4K	42	0	0	42
5K	46	2	2	46
1	47	0	0	47
2	48	0	0	48
3	48	0	0	48
4	48	0	0	48
5	69	0	0	69
6	71	0	0	graduated

Of the 418 students who completed the 2000-10 school year, 393 are currently enrolled to return in August and 71 graduated in June. Our retention rate for this school year is 94%.

Twenty-five students will not be returning in August. Of that number, 18 were accepted in private or parochial schools, 5 moved outside of Philadelphia County, and 2 went to neighborhood schools.

## b. Enrollment trends including student turnover and retention data

Year	Actual Enrollment Sept./June	Wait List	Students Retained	Withdrawals
2001-02	146/138	256	0	16
2002-03	218/200	425	5	20
2003-04	298/279	550	5	22
2004-05	341/330	530	0	45
2005-06	403/400	355	1	36
2006-07	399/396	334	2	19
2007-08	411/409	422	2	
2008-09				21
k	412/410	900	5	
2009	418/418	863	5	15
				29

The school's first facility at 2100 Spring Garden Street was too small to accommodate our opening projection of 200 students in grades 4K-3. We therefore opened with 146 students in grades 4K-2. In 2002-03, as the school expanded to include grades 4K-3, we remained under-enrolled by approximately the number of students in one grade. In 2003, after moving into our current building at 1911 Arch Street, a strategic decision was made to double the kindergarten enrollment rather than add a grade of new students at the top of the grade configuration. Because of the uniqueness of the ELOB design, we felt that our students would have a better chance of success if they were introduced to the model as early in their schooling as possible. We began the 2003-04 school year over-enrolled (298 students), but ended the year with 279 students, one under our original projection of 280 students.

From the beginning, RBCS has received applications far in excess of the number of spaces to be filled. In the first two years, the ratio of applicants to available spaces was approximately 4:1; in the past two years, the ratio has been approximately 7:1.

Most student withdrawals happen for one of three reasons. One is that families move out of the city or further away from the school. The second is that parents conclude, often after consultation with school officials, that their child is not yet developmentally prepared to attend five year-old kindergarten (5K), the grade level at which most withdrawals occur. Finally, some families withdraw their child because he or she is facing expulsion proceedings.

The school does not believe that retention is the best policy for encouraging the success of its students. We believe that early intervention — as early as 4K — is the key to ensuring that students achieve success and perform on grade level. The Board passed a policy stating that if, after a careful assessment of a 4K student who is struggling in the first few weeks of school, the student is not emotionally or academically ready for school, we will intervene. In consultation with the student's parents, he/she will be asked to leave RBCS for one year. However, we will hold that student's spot and he/she may return to the school the following year in 5K — better prepared to succeed from the beginning.

Five students were asked to repeat a grade in each of the last two years — 2002-03 and 2003-04. Students in grades 4K — 2 who have demonstrated high levels of immaturity and/or

consistently poor academic performance occasionally profit from another year in the same grade level. Students who perform particularly poorly on Terra Nova and/or PSSA tests are occasionally required to repeat 3<sup>rd</sup> grade as well, after attending a summer school program. Decisions regarding retention are made only after a series of meetings with the child's parents and after intervention strategies have been exhausted. There were no students retained at the end of the 2004-05; one student retained at the end of the 2005-06 and one student retained in the 2006-07 school year.

For the 2007-08 school year, two students were retained.

For the 2008-09 school year, four students were retained.

For the 2009-10 school year, two students were retained.

## **Student Enrollment - Attachment**

- Student Enrollment

## **Transportation**

Students in grades 1-6 ride the school bus provided by the School District of Philadelphia. Students in 4K and 5K arrive by public transportation, with their parents, or are dropped off by car pool. The school bus transportation service provided to RBCS is quite adequate and is operating with few problems.

We do not provide any transportation for special education students, as it is not needed or has it been requested.

## **Food Service Program**

RBCS applies for free and reduced price meals and participates in the Nutritional Development Services program managed by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. All students receive a free breakfast. There is no lunch program. Students bring their own lunch.

## **Student Conduct**

### **a. Expectations for student behavior and discipline.**

The school's Peace Program is designed to promote a safe and peaceful environment so that students can thrive and learn. It is based on a proactive and consistent approach toward student conduct in order to promote a respectful and healthy learning environment that engages all partners (parents, staff, community, and Board of Trustees) in a collaborative effort. While conflicts in the classroom and on the playground will always arise, resolving them peacefully is the school's highest priority. Violence in any form is not tolerated in the school community, and students are carefully educated about how to use nonviolent means to express their concerns, get appropriate help, and resolve disputes.

The entire staff works toward the common goal of instilling in students self-discipline and a respect for the rights of others. The school also depends on family support in promoting and maintaining the Peace Program, which is described in the Parent/Student Handbook that is given to every parent and student. It includes the following elements:

## The Program's Philosophy

- Student Expectations
- School Disciplinary Guidelines
- Discipline Guidelines for Student Misconduct
- Sexual Harassment Policy
- Expulsion Guidelines
- Attendance and Punctuality Policy
- School Uniform Policy

- **The Peace Policy**

**Our Philosophy:** A school must be a safe and peaceful environment so that students can thrive and learn. While conflicts in the classroom and on the playground may arise, resolving these peacefully is our highest priority. Violence in any form is not tolerated within the Russell Byers School Community, and students are carefully educated about how to use nonviolent means to express their concerns, get appropriate help and resolve disputes. The school depends upon family support in promoting and maintaining our Peace Program. The use of verbal or physical violence may result in suspension, and students who demonstrate they cannot comply with our Peace Program will be disciplined in accordance with the Disciplinary Guidelines.

**Code of Conduct:** We want our students to excel in the learning process by feeling safe in the school environment. However, when student misconduct gets in the way, it takes up valuable learning time and decreases educational opportunities in the classroom. The Code of Conduct will be in effect for the entire school to ensure a fair and consistent way of addressing student behavior. Teachers will reinforce these behaviors by explicitly teaching them in the classroom. The Code of Conduct learning targets for students are below:

- I am respectful to all adults and students.  
This means I communicate with others by using positive body language and facial expressions, and an appropriate tone of voice.
- I behave in a peaceful manner.  
This means that I keep my body in my own space and I do not use mean or threatening words or gestures.
- I take responsibility for my own learning.  
This means I am on time and well prepared for school each day.  
This also means that I make choices that help me learn including carefully completing all classroom and homework assignments on time.
- I make choices that help my crew and the school community.  
This means that I follow all directions and procedures to make learning fun and safe.
- I am careful to "leave no trace" or "make it better."  
This means that I help take care of our school building, my classroom, school property and materials so that everything is clean and well maintained.

**School Disciplinary Approach:** The behavioral code of conduct, as set forth above in this document, is designed to provide students with specific, clear, and consistent expectations regarding the behaviors that they are expected to engage in during all school sponsored activities and events. Our goal is to create a team effort between the home and school to ensure each child's success, thus we depend upon parents and guardians to let us know whenever there is a social, emotional, or academic concern that may impact the child's behavior at school. We strive for a proactive and consistent approach towards student conduct in order to promote a respectful and healthy learning environment that engages all partners (*parents, staff, community, school board*) in a collaborative effort.

- Teachers maintain professionalism when addressing student behavior by communicating expectations and consequences clearly and respectfully.
- All discipline referrals must be fully documented by the referring teacher prior to the student being sent to Administration. The one exception is when a student is being physically aggressive or out of control and **must be** immediately separated from his/her peers.
- Parents have the right to schedule a meeting with administration with any concerns.

## **Discipline Guidelines for Student Misconduct**

The Russell Byers Charter School has the expectation that all students will act respectfully towards all teachers, assistants, staff, visitors and all other students, in accordance with our Peace Policy. The Discipline Guidelines, as detailed in this section, apply to school grounds, buildings, and premises during the following times: before, during, and after school hours; anytime school buildings or grounds are used by a school group; on or off school grounds at any school function or event; when traveling to and from school, or school function or event; at bus stops; or at any time or place which may affect an educational function or be associated with the school.

Our Discipline Guidelines are intended to assist students in making appropriate choices that support their learning. Disciplinary measures will be handled by the classroom/special teachers in accordance with the Discipline Guidelines. Parents/guardians will be notified by the teacher and when deemed necessary the situation will be referred to administration in accordance with the Discipline Guidelines.

All students need to be aware of the following rules and discipline procedures.

### **Behaviors Warranting Disciplinary Action**

Students who commit any of the following offenses shall be subject to appropriate disciplinary action, including suspension and expulsion, as set forth in Chapter 12 of Title 22 of the Pennsylvania Code. Offenses are leveled for suggested

disciplinary consequences. Any offense can receive the suggested consequence, a lesser, or a more severe consequence depending on the severity of the offense, repetition of offense or effect on others. This list is not exhaustive of behaviors that may result in disciplinary action.

### **Level 1 — Disruptive Behavior**

Classroom/ or supervising teacher should determine in-class consequences. These consequences may include but are not limited to restitution (logical consequence), loss of privilege, student/teacher conference, “talk it out” process, note or phone call to parent/guardian, or other consequences as determined by the teacher. Level 1 behaviors include but are not limited to the following:

1. Talking, yelling, gesturing inappropriately or throwing a tantrum
2. Rough play or activity
3. Not following directions in the classroom or other locations of the school
4. Teasing or name calling
5. Bringing school property home without teacher permission
6. Incomplete homework or classroom assignments (consistently)
7. Uniform violation
8. Damage or loss textbooks, library books, or learning tools;
9. Disrespect toward adults and/or peers;
10. Disruption of class, study or instruction;
11. Horseplay;
12. Inappropriate language or gesture;
13. Leaving class without teacher’s permission;
14. Failure to follow established school rules and/or classroom rules
15. Possession or use of cell phones, iPod, MP3 players, or any electronic or digital device, not including a calculator or digital watch, during school hours or programs

### **Level 2 — Disruptive or Disorderly Behavior**

Classroom/ or supervising teacher may determine consequences and/or seek support from the School Psychologist, Assistant Principal, Principal or Special Education Coordinator (for students who have a 504 Plan and/or an IEP) as needed. Level 2 behaviors include but are not limited to the following:

1. Repeated Level 1 Offenses;
2. Bullying; Cyber-bullying when action is initiated in the school building;
3. Cheating and/or plagiarism;
4. Aggressive behaviors, including but not limited to hitting, pushing, and shoving;
5. Disobedience to teacher or other staff member;
6. Dishonesty/Lying/falsehood: including presentation of forged notes or passes or refusal to identify yourself properly;
7. Misuse of school property or property of others including computers, networks, web pages;

8. Violations of school's technology/acceptable use policy;
9. Use of Obscene/Profane language or gestures;
10. Creation or Possession of Obscene writing, pictures or articles;
11. Theft of school or other peoples' property.

**Level 3 — Safety Issues / Aggressive / Threatening Behavior**

Classroom/ or supervising teacher should refer the student to Administration to determine consequences. These consequences may include referral to outside evaluations and/or support, suspension from the school bus (for bus infraction), in or out of school suspension (for up to 10 days), which requires both parent and student to attend a reinstatement meeting. Level 3 behaviors include but are not limited to the following:

9. Repeated Level 2 Offenses;
  10. Bus Infraction;
  11. Fighting;
  12. Unauthorized entry into restricted areas;
  13. Creation or possession of violent writing, pictures or articles;
  14. Threats of violence (verbal or physical);
  15. Gang activity;
  16. Hazing;
  17. Student actions that present a danger to the safety and well-being of themselves or others.

**Level 4 — Egregious Behaviors and/or Criminal Acts**

Principal may recommend in school or out of school suspensions up to 10 school days or removal from the school bus (for repeated bus infraction). If deemed necessary, he/she may recommend expulsion to the Board of Trustees and/or police involvement for the following offenses:

18. Repeated Level 3 Offense;
  19. Setting false fire alarms or reporting false emergencies;
  20. Possession/ Use of prescription or over the counter drugs without permission;
  21. Threats of death or serious bodily injury— either written, electronic or verbal;
  22. Vandalism or defacing or destruction of school property or property of another (includes writing on walls, etc.);
  23. Leaving school grounds without proper authorization;
  24. Harassment of any kind — verbal, written or gestures;
  25. Tobacco products, possession or use of;
  26. Possession or use of lighters, matches, or laser pointers;
  27. Arson or attempted arson;
  28. Assault and/or battery of an employee or student;
  29. Other criminal acts in violation of local, state, or federal laws;
  30. Possession, use, distribution, solicitation or sale of a firearm or dangerous weapon Possession, use, manufacturing, growing, distribution, and/or sale of illegal drugs and/or drug paraphernalia;
  31. Possession, use, manufacturing, making, distribution, and/or sale of alcohol;
  32. Extortion, attempted extortion, robbery, burglary and/or larceny;
  33. Possession, distribution, use or lighting of fireworks, stink bombs, or other explosives;
  34. Sexual Harassment — see specific policy (on file at the school).

# **Detention/Suspension/Expulsion**

## **Detentions**

Detentions are may be determined by the Principal, Assistant Principal or a Teacher and will be either After School or during the student's scheduled recess time. It is the responsibility of the school staff to give parents a minimum of 24 hours notice when assigning a detention. It is the responsibility of the parent to provide transportation to and from an assigned detention. Failure of a student to report to a detention may result in additional detentions and/or escalation of the consequence to be determined by the Principal.

## **In-school suspension**

- A student may not receive an in-school suspension unless the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and has been given an opportunity to respond before the suspension becomes effective.
- Communication to the parents or guardian shall follow the suspension action taken by the school.
- The school will make provisions for the student's education during the period of the in-school suspension.
- When the in-school suspension exceeds 10 consecutive school days, an informal hearing with the principal or head of school shall be offered to the student and the student's parent or guardian prior to the 11th school day in accordance with the procedures in the Pennsylvania School Code.

## **Out of School Suspension and Expulsion**

Exclusion from school may take the form of suspension or expulsion. Suspension is exclusion from school for a period of from 1 to 10 consecutive school days. Expulsion is exclusion from school by the governing board for a period exceeding 10 school days and may be permanent expulsion from the school rolls.

## **Suspension Procedures**

- Suspensions may be given by the Principal or designee.
- A student may not be suspended until the student has been informed of the reasons for the suspension and given an opportunity to respond. Prior notice of the intended suspension need not be given when it is clear that the health, safety or welfare of the school community is threatened.
- The parents or guardians shall be notified immediately in writing when the student is suspended.

- When the suspension exceeds 3 school days, the student and parent shall be given the opportunity for an informal hearing consistent with the requirements of the Pennsylvania School Code.
- Suspensions may not be made to run consecutively beyond the 10 school day period.
- Students shall have the responsibility to make up tests and work missed while being disciplined by suspension and shall be permitted to complete these assignments within guidelines established by the governing board.

### **Expulsion Procedures**

- Expulsions require a prior formal hearing pursuant to the Pennsylvania School Code.
- During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the board in an expulsion case, the student shall be placed in his normal class unless there is a safety risk.
- 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 or welfare of others and it is 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. A student may not be excluded from school for longer than 15 school days without a formal hearing unless mutually agreed upon by both parties. Any student so excluded shall be provided with alternative education, which may include home study.
- The initial responsibility for providing the required education rests with the student's parents or guardian, through placement in another school, tutorial or correspondence study, or another educational program approved by the district's superintendent.
- Within 30 days of action by the Board, the parents or guardians shall submit to the school written evidence that the required education is being provided as described in paragraph (1) or that they are unable to do so. If the parents or guardians are unable to provide the required education, the school shall, within 10 days of receipt of the notification, make provision for the student's education. A student with a disability shall be provided educational services as required by the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act.
- If the approved educational program is not complied with, the school may take action in accordance with 42 Pa.C.S. Chapter 63 (relating to the Juvenile Act) to ensure that the child will receive a proper education. See § 12.1(b) (relating to free education and attendance).

### **Expulsion Hearing Guidelines**

Education is a statutory right, and students shall be afforded due process if they are to be excluded from school. All hearings will take place before a qualified

hearing examiner or authorized committee of the Board who will consider the evidence presented by Administration and the student in connection with a formal hearing and will make a recommendation to the Board of Trustees.

In a case involving a possible expulsion, the student is entitled to a formal hearing.

*Formal Hearings.* A formal hearing is required in all expulsion actions.

- This hearing may be held before the board or an authorized committee of the board, or a qualified hearing examiner appointed by the board.
- When a committee of the board or a hearing examiner conducts the hearing, a formal Board resolution must be presented and a majority vote of the entire board is required to expel a student.
- The following due process requirements shall be observed with regard to the formal hearing:
  - (1) Notification of the charges shall be sent to the student's parents or guardians by certified mail.
  - (2) At least 3 days' notice of the time and place of the hearing shall be given. A copy of the expulsion policy, notice that legal counsel may represent the student and hearing procedures shall be included with the hearing notice. A student may request the rescheduling of the hearing when the student demonstrates good cause for an extension.
  - (3) The hearing shall be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
  - (4) The student may be represented by counsel, at the expense of the parents or guardians, and may have a parent or guardian attend the hearing.
  - (5) The student has the right to be presented with the names of witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits of those witnesses.
  - (6) The student has the right to request that the witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
  - (7) The student has the right to testify and present witnesses on his own behalf.
  - (8) A written or audio record shall be kept of the hearing. The student is entitled, at the student's expense, to a copy. A copy shall be provided at no cost to a student who is indigent.
  - (9) The proceeding shall be held within 15 school days of the notification of charges, unless mutually agreed to by both parties. A hearing may be delayed for any of the following reasons, in which case the hearing shall be held as soon as reasonably possible:

- a. Laboratory reports are needed from law enforcement agencies.
- b. Evaluations or other court or administrative proceedings are pending due to a student invoking his rights under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act 2004 (20 U.S.C.A. §§ 1400—1482).
- c. In cases in juvenile or criminal court involving sexual assault or serious bodily injury, delay is necessary due to the condition or best interests of the victim.
- d. Notice of a right to appeal the results of the hearing shall be provided to the student with the expulsion decision.

*Informal hearings.* The purpose of the informal hearing is to enable the student to meet with the appropriate school official to explain the circumstances surrounding the event for which the student is being suspended or to show why the student should not be suspended.

- The informal hearing is held to bring forth all relevant information regarding the event for which the student may be suspended and for students, their parents or guardians and school officials to discuss ways by which future offenses might be avoided.
- The following due process requirements shall be observed in regard to the informal hearing:
  - (1) Notification of the reasons for the suspension shall be given in writing to the parents or guardians and to the student.
  - (2) Sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing shall be given.
  - (3) A student has the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing.
  - (4) A student has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his own behalf.
  - (5) The school shall offer to hold the informal hearing within the first 5 days of the suspension.

**b. Number of suspensions and expulsions by student.**

52 students were involved in 69 suspension incidents for 2007-08

41 students were involved in 58 suspension incidents for 2008-09.

46 students were involved in 66 suspension incidents for 2009-10.

There were no expulsions for the school year 2009-2010.

## **Student Conduct - Attachments**

- Student Conduct
- Student Conduct

## **Signature Page**

## Assurance for the Operation of Charter School Services and Programs

School Year: 2010

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

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

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

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

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Chief Executive Officer  
2009 - 2010 Annual Report for Pennsylvania Charter Schools

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Verify that all DATA reports to PDE are complete

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

## **Assurance for Compliance with the Public Official & Employee Ethics Act**

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

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

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

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

**Name:** William D. Smith   **Title:** CEO/Principal  
**Phone:** 215-972-1700   **Fax:** 215-972-1701  
**E-mail:** dsmith@byersschool.org

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*Signature of the Chief Executive Officer and Date*

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

**Name:** Laurada Byers   **Title:** Chair  
**Phone:** 215-772-1777   **Fax:** 215-772-3045  
**E-mail:** lbyers@byersschool.org

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

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

**Name:** Rebecca Levenberg   **Title:** Special Education Coordinator  
**Phone:** 215-972-1700   **Fax:** 215-972-1701  
**E-mail:** rlevenberg@byersschool.org

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*Signature of the Special Education Contact Person and Date*

### **Signature Page - Attachment**

- Signature Page