Pennsylvania Department of Education

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

Charter Annual Report

Monday, February 14, 2011
(Last Accepted: Monday, February 14, 2011)

Entity: Sankofa Academy CS
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CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

Summary Data Part I

Charter School Annual Report
Summary Data
2010 - 2011

Name of School: Sankofa Academy CS

Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval: March 3, 2005

Length of Charter: 5 Years (2005-2010) **Opening Date:** September 6, 2005

Grade Level: 5th - 11th (2009-2010) **Hours of Operation:** 7:30am - 4:00pm (9 - 1 on Sat)

Percentage of Certified Staff: 80% **Total Instructional Staff:** 5

Student/Teacher Ratio: 8 to 1 **Student Waiting List:** N/A

Attendance Rate/Percentage: 94%

Summary Data Part II

Enrollment: 50 **Per Pupil Subsidy:** $10,264

Student Profile

American Indian/Alaskan Native:	0
Asian/Pacific Islander:	0
Black (Non-Hispanic):	38
Hispanic:	1
White (Non-Hispanic):	0
Multicultural:	1

Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch: 82

Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December: 12

Instructional Days and Hours

Number of:	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (F.Time)	Elem.	Middle.	Sec.	Total
Instructional Days	0	0	0	182	182	182	182
Instructional Hours	0	0	0	1153	1153	1153	1153

SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Educational Community

Located in the Borough of West Chester, Pennsylvania, Sankofa Academy Charter School is a tuition free, community-based, public school, founded in March 2005. Learning is delivered through a culturally relevant model where students are placed at the heart of the learning process and are nurtured by the entire community. The school's general hours of operation are from 7:30 am to 4:00 pm Monday through Friday, and from 9 am to 1 pm on selected Saturdays.

During the 2008-2009 school year, Sankofa Academy Charter School served a total of forty unduplicated students in grades 6 through 10 who were from diverse communities or neighborhoods located in Coatesville, Downingtown, Lansdowne, Phoenixville, and West Chester. The student population was comprised of 45% girls and 55% boys. 80% of students were from low-income families. 30% of students had an Individual Education Plan, 3% had a section 504 plan, and 0% were Limited English Proficient.

Several aspects of Sankofa Academy Charter School make our school both unique and innovative. These aspects include:

* Students are in school longer than most public schools through extended week day and Saturday sessions
* Students complete between 2-3 hours of homework each night
* Students, parents, and teachers sign a “Commitment to Excellence” form that confirms their commitment to the school and to each other towards achieving success

* A rigorous instructional program that is balanced with extracurricular activities like art, chess, dance, drama, music, poetry, and club sports
* The school year culminates with high-quality experiential lessons to local and regional college campuses, historical sites, museums, and parks

All aspects of the school are guided by culturally relevant themes and pedagogy that uses the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more relevant and effective. The curriculum is culturally validating and affirming and Sankofa Academy Charter School teaches to and through students' strengths using culturally-relevant principles. These principles emphasize student achievement, responsibility, and positive character development, while also fostering a cohesive, healthy, and safe school environment for all of its stakeholders.

Mission

The mission of Sankofa Academy Charter School is to develop in each student a love of learning by providing a holistic education that includes critical and creative thinking, artistic expression and positive character development, combined with a rigorous language arts, math, science, and technology curriculum.

Vision

Sankofa Academy Charter School's core vision is that all students will learn, become empowered to take charge of their own education, and develop as world-class scholars in an environment of artistry and cultural reflection. Towards this end, students are provided with a solid academic foundation of knowledge and skills, based on a performance-based approach, to ensure that each student is consistently prepared for academic advancement in all core subject areas. By the time they leave school, it is expected that students will gain self assurance, develop abstract reasoning and critical thinking skills, expand their world view, and become life-long learners.

Shared Values

Our school's shared values are embedded within an educational philosophy and practice of teaching every student to perform to the best of her/his abilities and to achieve academic excellence in a global context. We believe that academic excellence is enhanced by a strong school community that involves parental involvement and school-community partnerships. As such, we encourage all parents/guardians to become an active part of the school, and seek to establish collaborations with various community-based service agencies and other local educational entities. Through a strong school community, Sankofa Academy Charter School is able to stress the social values of citizenship, respect, and responsibility. Moreover, every individual and/or group involved in the school community is charged with the task of becoming good stewards committed to the development and nurturance of accomplished, competent, and proud students who bear themselves with dignity and integrity.

Academic Standards

Sankofa Academy Charter School's central focus in curricular development is aligning and integrating state content standards, state curriculum frameworks, the school's desired exit outcomes, multiple measures of assessment, and relevant classroom instructional methods and materials. Sankofa Academy Charter School organizes the design, implementation, and standards of its educational program around the following curricular and instructional dimensions applied to each of its core academic content areas:

Instructional Objectives. Define what is taught and learned (i.e., identify the state content standards for each area of the curriculum as identified by subject).

Instructional Design. Strategically select and sequence information to be taught, including what to teach, when to introduce skills and concepts, how to select examples, how to integrate standards, and how to teach for transference and generalization.

Instructional Delivery. Establish procedures and strategies for teachers to develop students' skills and knowledge, including what teachers and students do (e.g., modeling, pacing, reinforcement, questioning, corrections, feedback) and the structure of delivery (e.g., teacher demonstration or modeling, guided practice, peer-mediated instruction, and independent practice and application).

Differentiation. Establish procedures and strategies for students with special academic, emotional, or physical needs, for students who are advanced learners, and for students who are English language learners, including decisions about modification of materials and the pacing of content and objectives.

Assessment. Three critical purposes should be addressed: entry level assessment for instructional planning (i.e., how to determine skill levels through meaningful indicators of proficiency prior to instruction); monitoring student progress toward the instructional objective (i.e., how to determine student progress on skills and concepts during instruction); and post-test assessment toward learning standards (i.e., how to determine the teaching effectiveness and student proficiency after instruction).

Instructional Materials. Establish criteria for selecting instructional materials that: have an appropriate sequencing of content, skills, and strategies; provide an adequate number and range of examples; address prerequisites for learning through a sufficient review of previously taught content, skills, and strategies; and include assessment tasks that parallel the content to be mastered.

The primary resources for determining the detailed content and scheduling of Sankofa Academy Charter School's curriculum for core disciplines are the state curriculum frameworks and academic content standards that are outlined in section 4.12 of 22 Pennsylvania Code (http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter4/s4.83.html). Sankofa Academy Charter School uses these frameworks and standards as the baseline control for assessing the school's curriculum. The school will incorporate revised versions of the state curriculum frameworks and state content standards as they become available. The state curriculum framework and academic standards will guide the school's curriculum in the primary areas of: English/Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Science, Technology/Computer Science, and Cultural Arts.

Strengths and Challenges

Sankofa Academy Charter School promotes the philosophy that successful teaching and learning is a product of the fluid interaction between curriculum, assessment, and instruction. This interactive process is informed by research-based strategies that classify as "best practices," and are guided by both internal and external assessment data. The strengths of the school's educational program are inherent in its integrated curriculum, small classroom settings, culturally-relevant pedagogy, and its approach to curriculum design, which is an iterative process. At the beginning of the school year, teachers collaborate to create curriculum maps for each of their courses. The curriculum maps emphasize the learning activities, assessments, and skills that best allow students to learn subject content at an individualized pace.

As a result of an evaluation of last year's standardized assessments, this past year Sankofa Academy Charter School developed and implemented an in-school tutoring program for all students-- with a particular emphasis for those students who transferred to the school within the past year, as a result of their being at-risk of failure or not making reasonable progress in their former school. This past year, we also developed and implemented an in-school mentoring program in conjunction with Big Brothers/Sisters of Southeastern Pennsylvania. With the addition of the aforementioned academic support programs, coupled with increased professional development for staff, and a more refined progress monitoring system this past year, Sankofa Academy Charter School also witnessed a significant improvement in student grades and standardized test scores.

SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Strategic Planning Process

Sankofa Academy Charter School's Strategic Planning Committee is commissioned by, and responsible to, the Board of Trustees. The Committee assumes the responsibility for providing leadership to the Board in the area of strategic planning and in helping the Board to assure that the charter school's strategic plan remains current, and that satisfactory progress is being made to successfully implement the plan. The main steps of the strategic planning process can be summarized as follows:

1. Gather and analyze information. Include the strengths and weaknesses of the charter school; the needs and service expectations of parents, students and other constituent groups; external changes and trends that will have an impact on the charter school in the future.
2. Determining the most critical strategic issues. Identify the choices and challenges facing the charter school over the next three to five years.
3. Develop a shared vision for the charter school’s future. The strategic vision statement provides direction and inspiration for organizational goal setting and answers the question: "If we could have the charter school of our dreams and have the impact we most desire, what would we want the school to look like in the Year X?”
4. Affirm the school’s mission or fundamental purpose. Determine the answers to the questions: "Why do we exist?" and “What are our core values and educational philosophy?”
5. Develop annual goals . Determine the major results to be achieved over the next three to five years. Focus goals on outcomes or results that are qualitative and quantitative in nature.
6. Develop strategies. Determine the methods and approaches to achieve goals and resolve critical issues.
7. Form objectives. Describe the projects carried out on an annual basis to implement selected strategies and thereby achieve goals. Objectives are specific, concrete, measurable statements of what will be done generally within a one-year time frame.

Appointments to and the composition of Sankofa Academy Charter School's Strategic Planning Committee are as follows:

1. Appointments of the chair and members of the Strategic Planning Committee will be made annually by the Board of Trustees Chairperson with the advice and consent of the Board of Trustees in accordance with the bylaws.
2. The chair of the Committee will be a member of the Board of Trustees.
3. Members of the Committee will be members of the Board of Trustees, subject to the conditions stated in the bylaws. Additional committee members may be appointed and need not be members of the Board of Trustees subject to the conditions stated in the bylaws.

The responsibilities of the Strategic Planning Committee include, but may not be limited to, the following:

1. Develop a timeline for the strategic planning process in collaboration with the charter school Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
2. Oversee the strategic planning process in collaboration with the CEO.
3. Provide a written final strategic plan to the Board of Trustees for approval.
4. Develop and submit to the Board of Trustees procedures for connecting the strategic plan to the annual work plans of Board committees.
5. Keep the Board of Trustees informed of organizational and environmental changes and trends that will have an impact on the charter school and the families and community served.
6. Annually submit objectives as part of the planning and budgeting process.
7. Annually evaluate its work as a committee and the objectives it has committed itself to and report on same to the Board of Trustees.
8. Report to the Board of Trustees on a regular basis in a manner determined by the Board.

Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Boykin, Darlene	Educator	Regular Education Teacher	Administration
Dr. LaMont McKim	Co-founder & Chief Executive Officer	Administrator	Board of Trustees
Frederick Franklin	Board Chair/Retired Business Owner	Business Representative	Board of Trustees
Lois Moses	Co-founder/Psychologist & Legal Fiduciary	Ed Specialist - School Counselor	Administration
Najwa Ross	Public Relations Director	Business Representative	Board
Roache, Karen	Educator	Regular Education Teacher	Administration
Robert Woolbright	Charter School Site Administrator	Administrator	Administration
Sheila Sawyer	Educator & Advisory Board Member	Community Representative	Board of Trustees
Tamika Knox	Educator/Special Education Coordinator	Special Education Representative	Administration

Goals, Strategies and Activities

Goal: MATHEMATICS

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

Strategy: Individualized Learning Program

Description: Provide an individualized learning program for each student by recognizing and meeting individual needs for learning pace, learning styles, and individual interests

Activity: Pace, Style & Interests

Description: Teachers will provide an individualized math program for each student by using baseline data to recognize and meet individual needs for learning pace, learning styles, and individual interests

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
LaMont McKim	Start: 1/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	$3,500.00

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Date	Comment
8/3/2009	Using AIMS-web system: establish baseline data and progress monitor throughout the year

Strategy: Mentoring

Description: Provide an individualized mentoring program for each student

Activity: Mentoring Program

Description: Incorporate local college students and adult volunteers to assist in implementing mentoring program

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
LaMont McKim	Start: 1/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	-

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Date	Comment
8/3/2009	Began September 2008; ongoing for 2009-2010

Goal: READING

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

Strategy: Inividualized Learning Program

Description: Provide an individualized learning program for each student by recognizing and meeting individual needs for learning pace, learning styles, and individual interests

Activity: Pace, Style & Interests

Description: Teachers will provide an individualized reading program by using baseline data to recognize and meet individual needs for learning pace, learning styles, and individual interests

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
LaMont McKim	Start: 1/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	$5,000.00

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Date	Comment
8/3/2009	Using AIMS-web system: establish baseline data and progress monitor throughout the year

Strategy: Tutoring

Description: Provide individualized tutoring for students

Activity: Tutoring Program

Description: Incorporate local college students and adult volunteers to implement tutoring program

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
LaMont McKim	Start: 1/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	$500.00

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Date	Comment
8/3/2009	Began September 2008; ongoing for 2009-2010

Goal: STUDENT ATTENDANCE (any school that does not graduate seniors)

Description: Student attendance will meet a 90% threshold and/or show growth.

Strategy: Parental Notification

Description:

Activity: Verbal

Description: Parents given verbal notice after student misses three days of school in any given marking period and/or accumulates a total of ten absences throughout the school year

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
LaMont McKim	Start: 1/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	-

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Date	Comment
8/3/2009	Ongoing

Activity: Written

Description: Parents given written notice after student misses five days of school in any given marking period and/or accumulates a total of ten absences throughout the school year

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
LaMont McKim	Start: 1/1/2009 Finish: Ongoing	-

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Date	Comment
8/3/2009	Ongoing
8/3/2009	Ongoing

Goal: STUDENT PARTICIPATION IN STATE ASSESSMENTS

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

Strategy: Test Administration

Description: Administer test first available test day

Activity: Administration Procedures

Description: Administer tests the very first available testing date to ensure students who are absent have an opportunity to complete the test prior to the testing cut off date

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
LaMont McKim	Start: 9/17/2008 Finish: Ongoing	$1,200.00

Status: Complete

Date	Comment
8/3/2009	Completed in mid September 2008; re-plan for 2009-2010

Statement of Quality Assurance

Charter school has met AYP.

Statement of Quality Assurance - Attachments

- Statement of Quality Assurance
- CCIU Panel Review_Confirmation_Oct 08

SECTION III. QUALITY OF SCHOOL DESIGN

Rigorous Instructional Program

Sankofa Academy Charter School uses a common curriculum (for each grade level/course) and a common set of assessments that are aligned with the curriculum. The curriculum mirrors that of the local school districts and is aligned with state content standards. The primary assessment tools are of three types: standardized tests, curriculum-specific tests, and ongoing performance assessments that are used to continuously monitor progress of each student's learning. Sankofa Academy Charter School places a heavy emphasis on teacher learning as well as student learning.

Teacher learning, like that of students, primarily takes place at the school, in the context of the specific standards, curriculum, and assessments being used. The school week is organized to give teachers regular, ongoing opportunities to collaborate in the improvement of teaching and learning at the school. Recent research supports this kind of teacher learning as the most effective way to attain long-term gains in student achievement. Student achievement is further supported by Sankofa Academy Charter School's educational framework, philosophy, and methodology that incorporate an integrated school curriculum that is based primarily on that offered by the local school district, and is infused with and supplemented by the following principles and practices:

* personalized learning environments
* diversity of learning styles
* self-actualizing students
* culturally-relevant themes

* social awareness
* recognition for educators
* parental involvement
* mutual accountability

Sankofa Academy Charter School's central focus in curricular development is aligning and integrating state content standards, state curriculum frameworks, the school's desired exit outcomes, multiple measures of assessment, and relevant classroom instructional methods and materials. Sankofa Academy Charter School organizes the design and implementation of its educational program around the following curricular and instructional dimensions applied to each of its core academic content areas:

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Differentiation. Establish procedures and strategies for students with special academic, emotional, or physical needs, for students who are advanced learners, and for students who are English language learners, including decisions about modification of materials and the pacing of content and objectives.

Assessment. Three critical purposes should be addressed: entry level assessment for instructional planning (i.e., how to determine skill levels through meaningful indicators of proficiency prior to instruction); monitoring student progress toward the instructional objective (i.e., how to determine student progress on skills and concepts during instruction); and post-test assessment toward learning standards (i.e., how to determine the teaching effectiveness and student proficiency after instruction).

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The primary resources for determining the detailed content and scheduling of Sankofa Academy Charter School's curriculum for core disciplines are the state curriculum frameworks and academic content standards that are outlined in Chapter 4 of the Pennsylvania Code (http://www.pacode.com/secure/data/022/chapter4/s4.83.html). Sankofa Academy Charter School uses these frameworks and standards as the baseline control for assessing the school's curriculum. The school will incorporate revised versions of the state curriculum frameworks and state content standards as they become available. The sections below outline some of the fundamental principles that guide the school's curriculum:

Language Arts. With regard to the basic tenets for teaching language arts, Sankofa Academy Charter School will make language arts exciting, relevant, and fun. As such, the curriculum for each grade includes the study of a wide range of literature. Novels, stories, poetry, and drama

are studied as well as nonfiction material that includes speeches, autobiographies, biographies, and editorials. Integrating reading, speaking, listening, and writing skills, Sankofa Academy Charter School's classes encourage critical thinking and effective communication. Students also study grammar, spelling, and vocabulary in a sequential scope and sequence. The skills and competencies for each grade are determined by the state standards for reading, writing, speaking, and listening.

Mathematics. With regard to the basic tenets for teaching mathematics, Sankofa Academy Charter School will make learning mathematics exciting, relevant, and fun. As such, the curriculum for each grade incorporates the Saxon Math program which is based on two important concepts: incremental development of skills and continual practice. Concepts are presented in a small, readily understood pieces that are developed over time. Students practice and review fundamental skills and concepts on a daily and throughout the year. Continual practice provides the time and experiences necessary for concepts to become part of students' long-term learning. The Saxon approach is often summarized by the phrase: "Time After Time; Step By Step; Over and Over; Year By Year." The content ranges from basic to intermediate to advanced math, which includes algebra, geometry, calculus, and statistics. The skills and competencies for each grade are determined by the state standards for mathematics.

Science. With regard to the basic tenets for teaching science, Sankofa Academy Charter School will make learning about science exciting, relevant, and fun. As such, the curriculum for each grade incorporates a spiral curriculum developed by Harcourt Education that includes physical, chemical, biological, and earth science topics each year. The focus is on hands-on activities that help students develop the process skills necessary to conduct scientific investigations. A wide range of technology tools are made available to teachers and students to supplement textbook-based learning. Each year, the school sponsors a school-wide science fair that involves all grades. The skills and competencies for each grade are determined by the state standards for science.

Social Science. With regard to the basic tenets for teaching social science, Sankofa Academy Charter School will make learning about social science exciting, relevant, and fun. As such, the curriculum for each grade incorporates the *Social Studies Alive!* and *History Alive!* core programs from the Teachers' Curriculum Institute. The curriculum is sequential in scope and includes the examination of the geography and cultures of the world outside of North America; the study of the geography and history of North America through the twentieth century; and government and economics. Each year, the school schedules several fieldtrips to national museums and historical parks which provide students with additional experiential learning opportunities. The skills and competencies for each grade are determined by the state standards for social science.

Technology/Computer Science. With regards to the basic tenets for teaching technology and computer science, Sankofa Academy Charter School will make learning about technology and computer science exciting, relevant, and fun. As such, technology is infused into all curriculum areas and other aspects of the school. Younger students are taught basic computer science skills, word processing, and Internet skills. Older students are provided instruction in both regular computer science classes and separate technology classes that focus on the development of higher-level skills such as computer programming, data base creation and management, graphic design, and web site creation and management. The skills and competencies for each grade are determined by the state standards for technology.

Cultural Arts. With regard to the basic tenets for teaching cultural arts, Sankofa Academy Charter School visual will make cultural arts exciting, relevant, and fun. The cultural arts program is offered at all grade levels and includes visual, kinesthetic and performing arts. Students participate in a variety of activities that include: dance, music, drumming, martial arts, and graphic arts. Fieldtrips to local cultural arts theaters and special in-house programs are scheduled throughout the year in order to provide students with additional experiential learning

opportunities. The skills and competencies for each grade are determined by the state standards for arts and humanities.

Sankofa Academy Charter School is in the process of further developing its Community Service Learning (CSL) component that will further prepare students for life and work in the twenty-first century. The school is seeking out community relationships that provide students with additional learning opportunities through civic, charitable, social, or environmental involvement. An integral part of the community learning component of the curriculum is the Scholars-in-Residence Program that brings knowledgeable parents and community members to Sankofa Academy Charter School to participate in various aspects of the school's educational program. Similarly, the school seeks to enhance its in-school enrichment programs and after-school extracurricular activities. The purpose of these programs shall be to supplement and complement classroom instruction in the core academic areas, and to provide ancillary experiences for students that broaden their skills, knowledge, and attitudes in areas not addressed by Sankofa Academy Charter School's formal curriculum. The nature and schedule of activities will vary as parents come and go, as community members volunteer their time, as the educational needs of classroom teachers evolve, and as the interests and talents of the student body change from year to year.

Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachments

- Professional Development - Approval Letter
- Teacher Induction - Approval Letter

English Language Learners

Learning best occurs for English language learners when there is a program for English language development that assists, encourages, and motivates students in successfully achieving English language proficiency at the fastest possible rate. Such a program includes structured immersion instruction for English learners, such as specially designed academic instruction in English and sheltered English strategies to ensure access by English language learners to the full range of educational opportunities that Sankofa Academy Charter School envisions for all its students.

Sankofa Academy Charter School has adopted the combined goals of the local school districts for the Education of English Language Learners (ELL). These goals serve as a model for providing opportunities for all students to achieve their personal best in the school setting, become lifelong learners, and become responsible citizens in the local, national, and worldwide community. Sankofa Academy Charter School's program will enable English language learners to achieve the following:

- Self-esteem and pride in one's language and culture and the ability to relate positively to all cultural groups.
- Academic achievement in all subject areas.
- Academic proficiency in all dimensions of the English language.

The Board of Trustees approves policies and procedures for identifying students in need of English language development. The Board of Trustees is also responsible for approving programs and services for English language development that reflect any applicable laws governing charter schools. During the 2008-2009 school year, Sankofa Academy Charter School had no students enrolled who needed ELL services. In anticipation of several English language learners enrolling during the 2009-2010 school year, the school is making plans to contract with and coordinate its ELL program with the Chester County Intermediate Unit's English as a Second

Language (ESL) program. This program is under the supervision of CCIU's Assistant Director of Student Services, Dr. Ambrose Finnegan.

English Language Learners - Attachments

- ELL_LEP Report
- LEP_submission

Graduation Requirements

During the 2008-2009 school year, Sankofa Academy Charter School only served students in grades six through ten. With future plans to expand to include higher grades, the school will require that,in addition to demonstrating proficiency in reading, writing and mathematics as measured by local and State assessments, high school students must earn a minimum of twenty-three credits to meet graduation requirements. These required credits are comprised of the following:

• 4 credits - English
• 4 credits - Math
• 4 credits - Science
• 4 credits - Social Studies
• 2 credits - Physical Education
• .5 credit - Health
• 4 to 8 credits in elective courses.
• Seniors required to complete a Senior Project to fulfill graduation

Special Education

Sankofa Academy Charter School is fully inclusive in providing all special needs students with a free and appropriate education (FAPE) in a least restrictive environment as an integral part of the school's educational culture. Sankofa Academy Charter School's approach to special education is an extension of the school's mission "to develop in each student a love of learning by providing a holistic education that includes critical and creative thinking, artistic expression, and positive character development—combined with a rigorous language arts, math, science, and technology curriculum." As such, the school is fully committed to its creation of personal learning environments that both encourages and challenges each student according to his or her ability through differentiated instruction within an integrated curriculum. Sankofa Academy Charter School's special education program is based on the following values, goals, and instructional strategies:

· Sankofa Academy Charter School shall embrace the diversity of students as individuals and guarantee the right of each student to equity and access to the school's educational opportunities.

· Sankofa Academy Charter School shall act as an advocate of each student who requires individualized attention to participate fully in the school's educational program.

· The unique instructional needs of students shall be identified early and accurately, followed by regular, ongoing reassessments of those needs and the school's success in providing for them.

· Students with disabilities, to the greatest extent possible, shall be integrated with non-disabled peers into Sankofa Academy Charter School's educational environment that spans a home-school-community continuum of educational experiences, and includes the full range of academic, non-academic, and extracurricular activities.

· The individualized education plan (IEP) of each student shall focus on obtaining powerful, positive results through collaborative partnerships that involve the student, the student's parents, teachers, special education personnel, and school administrators.

· The IEP shall be formulated in ways that allow the student with disabilities to meet or exceed Sankofa Academy Charter School's high standards for academic excellence, character development, and lifelong learning, and prepare the student to continue these skills at a college preparatory high school level and beyond.

· Students with disabilities shall be taught or served by fully qualified teachers and special education personnel capable of meeting their needs.

· Regular classroom teachers shall include special education issues as a regular part of their professional development efforts in order to better identify, assess, understand, and serve students with disabilities.

· Sankofa Academy Charter School shall base its special education program on research and best practice, and shall have a Special Education Policy Committee to monitor and revise the school's policy and programs accordingly.

· Sankofa Academy Charter School shall conform to all federal and state laws in its decisions, programs, and actions to guarantee special needs students with a free and appropriate public education (FAPE).

During the 2008-2009 school year, Sankofa Academy Charter School contracted with BETA One, Inc., Theraplay, Inc. and several individual professionals to provide a variety of special education related services: i.e., instruction, speech therapy, occupational therapy, educational and psychological evaluations, and staff support. The local Intermediate Unit also provided administrative and technological training with regards to maintaining students' records and submitting Penn Data information.

Special Education - Attachments

- Special Education: Policies & Procedures
- Special Education: Dispute Resolution Policy
- Special Education: Dispute Resolution Procedures

Special Education Program Profile - Chart I

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Tamika Knox	.25	Learning Support	Sankofa Academy CS	4	N/A
Kelly Freeth	.30	Learning Support	Sankofa Academy CS	8	N/A

Special Education Program Profile - Chart II

Organization	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Theraplay, Inc.	.10	Speech & Language	Sankofa Academy CS	4	N/A
Theraply, Inc.	.30	Learning Support	Sankofa Academy CS	8	N/A

Special Education Program Profile - Chart III

Title	Location	FTE
Special Education Coordinator	Sankofa Academy CS	.75
Psychologist/Counselor	Sankofa Academy CS	.20

Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV

IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual	Title/Service	Amount of Time Per Week
BETA One, Inc.	Educational & Psychological Evaluation Services	2 hours per week
BETA One, Inc.	Staff Development & Administrative Support Services	less than 1 hour per week
IU 24	Administrative/Tech. Support Services	less than 1 hour per week
Tamika Knox	Special Education Coordinator	30 hours per week
Theraplay, Inc.	Speech & Language Therapy Services	4 hours per week
Theraplay, Inc.	Instructional Services	12 hours per week

SECTION IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Student Assessment - Primary

Test/Classification	K	1	2	3	4	5
PSSA/PSSA	No	No	No	No	No	No
AIMS Web - Math & Reading Diagnostics	No	No	No	No	No	No
Brigance Math Assessment	No	No	No	No	No	No
Diagnostic Reading Inventory (DRI)	No	No	No	No	No	No
Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT)-4 Assessment	No	No	No	No	No	No

Student Assessment - Secondary

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

PASA	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
AIMS WEB - Math & Reading Assessments	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Brigance Math Assessment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Diagnostic Reading Inventory (DRI)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT)-4 Assessment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No

Student Assessment

This past year, Sankofa Academy Charter School's PSSA/PASA participation rate was 97%. In addition, students' PSSA and PASA results reflect a significant improvement in the percentage of students who scored at or above proficiency in Math and Reading, compared to last year. School-wide data illustrated a 10% increase in the number of students who scored advanced/proficient in Math, and a 30% increase in the number of students who scored advanced/proficient in Reading, compared to last year. Moreover, 69% of the students who took the PSSA scored advanced/proficient in Reading; and 100% of students who took the PASA scored proficient in Reading. It is expected that these results, in significant part, can be attributed to the implementation of the school's tutoring program and the restructuring of its progress monitoring systems. Sankofa Academy Charter School will use the recent results from the PSSA and other assessments as a baseline to evaluate and monitor students' progress and the school's annual measurable targets and goals. Test scores will be reviewed yearly to ensure they are accurate and on target for each student.

Towards the development of new or revised annual measurable goals and targets, Sankofa Academy Charter School will use multiple measures of student achievement to assess individual student progress and to facilitate continuous program evaluation. The overall goal of the school's assessment procedures will be to monitor the progress of individual students toward attaining the academic excellence, character development, and life-long learning skills necessary to continue their education at a rigorous, college preparatory high school or college/university. Progress toward attaining the graduation skills, knowledge, and attitudes will be evaluated on an ongoing basis in each class, through each grade level, by compiling a comprehensive, longitudinal learning record for each student. This record of achievement will be based upon a variety of assessment methods including but not limited to conventional standardized test results, student portfolios of work accomplished, authentic written observations and evaluations by teachers, written self-evaluations by students, classroom tests and quizzes, presentations of group projects, written evaluations of community service efforts, and student, teacher, and parent surveys. These assessments will be aligned and integrated with state grade-level curriculum frameworks, state grade-level content standards.

During the school year, student achievement plans and records will be regularly monitored through the use of curriculum-based measures. Progress toward mastering state content standards and meeting the student exit outcomes will be evaluated using classroom-level assessments aligned to the school's curricular standards as appropriate for each grade-level and content area. Each fall, during the first reporting period, students will be tested in the core content areas using standardized performance assessments. These assessments will be studied by grade-level teacher groups to determine individual student strengths and

weaknesses. These results will allow for the identification of students who require, for example, differentiated gifted instruction or remedial intervention in the form of in-class attention or after-school tutorials. The standardized performance assessments will be repeated in the spring during the fourth reporting period to assess student progress and identify students who may require remedial instruction during the summer.

In designing and implementing its student achievement plan, Sankofa Academy Charter School, will use established scoring criteria and cross-validation of different measures and different evaluators to enhance the validity, reliability, and objectivity of non-quantitative assessment measures of students' work, such as portfolios and subjective evaluations by teachers. Likewise, in evaluating the more subjective outcomes such as citizenship and leadership, Sankofa Academy Charter School will adhere to school-wide rubrics that can be applied as fairly and consistently as possible to all of the school's students. However, the school will constantly monitor the efficacy of its non-quantitative measures for assessing student outcomes.

Individual classroom teachers will be primarily accountable for assessing their students' achievements with regard to classroom-level work and state content standards. Teachers will be given time to meet on a regular basis to review student work and discuss the efficacy of the curriculum-based performance assessments. Teachers may request other participants in a student's educational program to provide grades, evaluations, or other assessments as may be appropriate for their instructional role. Teachers will be given time to meet on a regular basis to review student work and to establish performance standards.

Student progress toward achieving the school's desired classroom-level, grade-level, and exit outcomes will be communicated to students' parents by means of report cards and regular conferences with the student's teachers and Site Administrator. Assessment methods for students with special needs will be adapted as appropriate according to a student's Individualized Educational Program. Additionally, the school will administer the English Language Development test to assess the English fluency of all students whose primary language is not English. The school's CEO and Site Administrator will be available to explore solutions to problems or situations that may interfere with an individual student's ability to attain the skills, knowledge, and attitudes expected of students.

For those students performing below standards, at-risk of failure, or not making reasonable progress in a particular area, teachers will be instructed to review these sections with the students, while also teaching these areas more in depth. Moreover, Sankofa Academy Charter School will continue to develop, implement, and expand its in-school and after school tutoring programs in order to provide all students an opportunity to strengthen their academic skills, through additional and individualized learning opportunities.

Student Assessment - Attachments

- 2009 AYP School Status Report_July09
- 2009 AYP - 'At A Glance'

- 2009 AYP Report Package
- 2009 PASA Data - Math
- 2009 PASA Data: Reading

Teacher Evaluation

The main features of Sankofa Academy Charter School's teacher evaluation plan focus on critical self-assessment and both formal and informal classroom observations. As such, teachers are encouraged to frequently assess the effectiveness of their lesson plans, teaching methods, and classroom management skills. At the beginning and during the middle of each marking period, the school's Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Site Administrator coordinate classroom observations of each teacher. Subsequently, the CEO and/or Site Administrator will review the assessments with individual teachers to make suggestions for improvement or to encourage the continuation of successful teaching practices and strategies. The CEO, who is evaluated by the Board of Trustees on a semi-annual basis, is also responsible for evaluating the school's administrative staff.

Beginning in the summer, professional development is routinely provided for administrators, educators, and paraprofessionals. The professional development activities take the form of seminars, conferences, workshops, and focus groups. Consistent with the school's mission and commitment to student success, professional development topics include, but are not limited to: academic achievement, best practices, classroom management, community partnerships, conflict resolution, curriculum alignment, differentiated instruction, diverse learning styles, parent involvement, progress monitoring, response to intervention (RtI), and special education. In addition, the school's administrators and special education instructors and paraprofessionals have participated in various training sessions sponsored by the local Intermediate Unit, the Non-profit Center at LaSalle University, and the Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network (PaTTAN).

Teacher Evaluation - Attachment

- Teacher Evaluation Plan

SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

Leadership Changes

No leadership changes were made during the past year with regards to the Board of Trustees Chairperson, the Chief Executive Officer, or Site Administrator. Similarly, no changes were made with regards to the Board of Trustees officer roles of Vice-Chairperson, Secretary, and Treasurer during the past year; although the Board of Trustees general membership recently expanded to include, Mrs. Ana Amarante, Esquire who joined the Board at its annual meeting this past July.

Board of Trustees

Name of Trustee	Office (if any)
Frederick Franklin	Chairperson
Ana Amarante, Esq.	Vice-chairperson
Dr. Reginald Lee	Secretary
Silver Melton	Treasurer

Dr. Dorothy Carroll N/A

Professional Development (Governance)

Dating back to its inaugural meeting in April 2005, Sankofa Academy Charter School's Board of Trustees has received extensive and on-going professional development that pertains to school governance. The majority of these development/training sessions have been conducted by Foundations, Incorporated and the Non-profit Center at LaSalle University. These organizations have provided the Board of Trustees with professional development workshops in such areas that include, but are not limited to: administrative and fiscal duties, accountability and compliance; fund-raising; strategic planning; team building; community outreach; and succession planning. The most Board of Trustees training session was held this past June. This training was conducted by the law firm of Latsha Davis Yohe and McKenna.

As a whole, the Board of Trustees, has both researched and been educated about the Sunshine Law and its application to its meetings. Similarly, each board member has received additional information regarding how the Public Officials Act corresponds to their individual and collective roles as Trustees. As such, Sankofa Academy Charter School's Trustees have worked in accordance with both the Sunshine Law and Public Officials Act in conducting all of its board meetings, as well as executing all board related activities, duties, and/or functions. Moreover, each board member is provided with and maintains a copy of the Sunshine Law, Public Officials Act, school charter, and by-laws for reference use.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School

Sankofa Academy Charter School's Board of Trustees coordinates the governance and management of the school through its Trustees and the school's CEO. The Board of Trustees conducts its regular meetings, on a monthly basis, whereby the school's overall administrative, financial, and service delivery systems are reviewed. As such, the Board of Trustees introduces, revises, and/or adopts school policies; approves employee hirings and/or terminations; and authorizes vendor purchases and/or contracts.

The Board of Trustees holds special meetings and ad-hoc committee meetings when such need arises. The CEO, as an ex-officio member of the Board, attends all regular and special meetings, and attends committee meetings by invitation from the Board of Trustees Chairperson. Outside of the regular meetings, the Board Chairperson communicates with the school's CEO in-person, via phone and/or e-mail whenever issues arise that may be of specific interest to the Board.

The Board of Trustees efforts in maintaining a working relationship with the local Board of School Directors has been primarily facilitated through direct contact between the Board Chairperson and CEO and the local District's administrative staff (i.e., Superintendent's cabinet) and/or charter school liaison, at least once a year. In June, 2006 Sankofa Academy Charter School's Board of Trustees authorized the establishment of an Advisory Board, consisting of community members, parents, and former Sankofa Academy Board members, one a retired educator from the local District. The primary charge of the Advisory Board is to assist the Board of Trustees in coordinating their outreach initiatives towards building new, and strengthening existing partnerships with the local Districts and other constituents within the community as a whole.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School - Attachment

- Board of Trustees Meeting Schedule

Community and Parent Engagement

Sankofa Academy Charter School's Board of Trustees remains critically active in its role and efforts to promote opportunities for both community and parent engagement in school activities. In addition to serving in their volunteer capacity as Board members, the Trustees occasionally assist in the school's day-to-day activities by providing clerical support, tutoring students, sponsoring and chaperoning field trips, and donating supplies. By being actively engaged themselves, the Trustees are able to stand firm in their commitment to, and encouragement of, parents and other community members to become involved in the school. Parents are encouraged to chaperone field trips and to participate in school fund-raising activities (e.g., pizza drives, cookie sales, paper recycling drives, book fair, and flea market) that are held periodically throughout the year. Community members are informed of tutoring and other volunteer activities that are needed both during the regular school year and the summer season.

Parents and community members are also encouraged and invited to attend all monthly Saturday school sessions. These half-day sessions are designed to provide students with supplemental educational and cultural enrichment activities, while also show-casing students' academic achievement, artistic creativity, and educational interests. In the past, such Saturday sessions have featured carnivals, college tours, essay and poetry contests, science fairs, and talent shows. Each year, the school hosts a Kwanzaa community luncheon and an end of the year Honors Awards Banquet. This past June, Sankofa Academy Charter School sponsored its second annual "Family Day" event, and students coordinated a spring semi-formal dance. Each event was well attended by students' family members and individuals from the local community at large.

SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Major fund-raising activities

Major fund-raising activities during the 2009-2010 school year featured Sankofa Academy Charter School's Annual Appeal Campaign. In addition to conducting a similar campaign next year, the school plans to sponsor several cookie sales, pizza sales, and a dinner-dance fund-raiser.

Fiscal Solvency Policies

All fiscal policies are consistent with standard business practices, and are governed by a system of checks and balances between the Board of Trustees, CEO and Business Manager. Receipts are posted when received. Expenses are posted when paid, and all checks require signatures from two of the following individuals: CEO, Business Manager, Site Administrator, Board of Trustees Secretary, and Board of Trustees Treasurer.

The Board of Trustees reviews and authorizes all contracts with school personnel and professional service firms. A minimum of three bids are required for professional service contracts. The school's payroll is processed semi-monthly by an outside payroll company. The school's accounting system is backed up weekly. Financial reports are forwarded to the Board of Trustees Treasurer on a bi-weekly basis, and a detailed budget and financial report is presented to the entire Board of Trustees at each monthly board meeting.

Accounting System

Sankofa Academy Charter School uses NORAVISION Microsoft Software System for all accounting activities. In addition, the school maintains a backup system using Intuit Incorporated's QuickBooks Pro 2004 accounting software program. Both accounting systems are consistent and integrated with the Pennsylvania State Charter of Accounts for Pennsylvania Public Schools and the Annual Financial Report utilizing Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) for budgeting, accounting, and reporting procedures.

Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances

Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances - Attachments

- Signature Page - Preliminary Statement of Revenues 06302009
- Signature Page - Preliminary Statement of Expenditures & Fund Balances 06302009
- Prelimanry Copy Revenues-Expenditures-Fund Balances 2009

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

Audit Firm: Haffner & Associates, LLC - 5200 Geissinger Road, Zionsville, PA 18092.

Date of Last Audit: Audit for fiscal year end June 30, 2009 - completed on October 12, 2009

***Auditor's Opinion*:** No instances of noncompliance with certain provisions of law, regulations, contracts, and grants that are required to be reported under *Government Auditing Standards*.

Auditor's Findings: No matters involving the internal control over financial reporting and its operations considered to be material weaknesses.

Audit for fiscal year end June 30, 2010 will begin the week of August 16, 2010.

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

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Citations and follow-up actions for any State Audit Report

In September 2008, Sankofa Academy Charter School had a State monitoring visit with regards to its Title I program eligibility and compliance. No incidences of non-compliance were depicted.

As a follow-up to its cyclical monitoring conducted by the Bureau of Special Education in the Spring of 2008, Sankofa Academy Charter School implemented and completed several follow-up actions during the past year. These actions included:

* (Re)Development and Adoption of Special Ed Policies (i.e., Assistive Technology; Assistive Technology-Hearing Aids; Due Process; and Surrogate Parents policies)

* Improvement of Student Filing System/Document Organization/Progress Monitoring Reports

* Implementation of Additional Parent Training Sessions (i.e., minimum of three held during year)

SECTION VII. FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

During the 2009-2010 school year, Sankofa Academy Charter School continued to lease the same facility, located in the Borough of West Chester, which it occupied during its first four years of operation. In cases of inclement weather, the school also rented the gymnasium of a neighboring church, on an hourly basis, to conduct physical education classes and club sports activities. During the past year, the school purchased assessment materials, ten computers, three computer printers, two desktop copy machines, and textbooks, and student lockers.

Future Facility Plans and Other Capital Needs

Sankofa Academy Charter School plans to continue to operate at its current location during the 2009-2010 school year. Future plans include adding one high school grade for each subsequent year of the school's charter. As such, the Board of Trustees, consistent with its current strategic plan, has begun to investigate the feasibility of procuring one large facility to accommodate all grades, as well as the feasibility of maintaining the current facility for students in grades five through eight, while also procuring a comparable facility for high school students, beginning the 2010-2011 school year. With the addition of more students it is expected that the school would

need to acquire additional textbooks and furniture, which would include student desks, chairs, and lockers.

SECTION VIII. HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

In August, 2008 Sankofa Academy Charter School contracted with Falcon Fire & Safety Company to inspect, test, and recharge its fire extinguishers. This procedure is routinely implemented each summer prior to the beginning of the new school year. Similarly, the school complied with the Chester County Health Department's requirements to renew its license to operate a public facility in August, 2008 and conducted its annual health inspection in September.

During the 2008-2009 school year, Sankofa Academy Charter School held a severe weather drill, all required fire drills and emergency bus drills. All reports were filed with PDE. All health and immunization records of each student were submitted and maintained in a secured filing system. Periodically, throughout the year, the school, often in collaboration with local professionals (e.g., doctor and dentist), conducted on-site health screenings and eye and dental exams for students, in addition to conducting educational workshops on such topics as health, nutrition, hygiene, and school safety.

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

- School Health Services: Reimbusement - Remit Adv_FY0809
- Wellness Policy

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs

Sankofa Academy Charter School's current insurance coverage policies and programs are provided through the following companies:

Hartford Fire Insurance Company (The Hartford):

* Workers Compensation - Policy #39WEQNX5242
* Umbrella - Policy #39RQHQY18276
* Business Owners - Policy #39UUQTT4971

Keystone Health Plan East/Independence Blue Cross:

* Health Insurance - Policy #0001060707; Account #436772

United Concordia Companies, Incorporated:

* Dental Insurance - Policy #005846739000D000

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs - Attachments

- Insurance Coverage - Hartford
- Insurance Coverage - Keystone Health
- Insurance Coverage - United Concordia

SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff

During the 2008-2009 school year, Sankofa Academy Charter School employed eight staff members which included the Chief Executive Officer, Site Administrator, Administrative Manager, Special Education Coordinator/Teacher, and four Classroom Teachers.

The school's personnel was equally comprised of six women and two men. The CEO, Site Administrator, Administrative Manager, Math and Social Science teachers, and Special Education Coordinator were returning staff from the previous school year. In August 2008, the school hired both a Science teacher, to fill a vacancy created as a result of a former teacher's departure from the field of education, and an English/Language Arts teacher, to fill a vacancy created as a result of a lateral transfer within the school.

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff - Attachments

- SupPer Data
- PDE-414

Student Enrollment

As an open enrollment public school, Sankofa Academy Charter School accepts applications throughout the year for students in each of its grade levels. Beginning in late February, applications are processed through a rank-order lottery, with initial priority granted to siblings of current students and those who reside in the local charter (i.e. West Chester) region. Applications of students not residing in the local charter region are processed subsequent to the admission of all local applicants. When there are more applicants than openings in any given age group, the additional names are maintained on a Wait List. The categories of Wait List are as follows:

* Sibling Wait List - applicants of current students
* General Wait List - applicants from local charter region
* Non-Resident List - applicants residing in Pennsylvania out of local charter region
* Out-of-State List - applicants moving to local charter region

In the event that a class slot becomes available either prior to the beginning of the school year, or during the school year, students from the waiting list are admitted using the aforementioned ranking system. During the 2008-2009 school year, Sankofa Academy Charter School did not need to exercise its waiting list policy.

The following procedures are required for admission:

1. File an application and proof of residency (utility bill) for each student applying.
2. Supply copy of birth certificate and medical card.
3. Observe a classroom and/or tour of the school.
4. Sign a Parent Agreement.

At the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year, thirty-seven students were initially enrolled: four 6th graders; nine 7th graders; eight 8th graders; and nine 9th graders and seven tenth graders. Three additional students were added during the school year: one eighth grader; and two tenth graders. Five students withdrew before the end of the year. Four students-- two 6th graders, one 7th grader, and one tenth grader, returned to their resident district school. One student, an eighth grader, moved during the beginning of the school year. No students were required to leave the school as a result of expulsion or any other culpatory offense.

A total of thirty-five students completed the school year. Of these students, thirty are currently enrolled to return in August, along with an estimated twenty-five new students. All of the non-returning students, two 8th graders, one 9th grader, and two tenth graders will be transferring back to their resident district schools for the 2009-2010 school year. Expressed reasons for students transferring included a desire to play sports, the length of the school day, and a demanding commute.

Compared to last year, Sankofa Academy experienced a decrease in its student enrollment this past year. Exit interviews highlighted male students' interest in playing sports for the local district school and commuting parents' concerns about time and resources as the most frequent reasons given for their not returning this year. Nonetheless, both parents and students returning from last year expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the school's curriculum and supplemental enrichment programs. Although the school's charter provides for more students, the current facilities are highly conducive to an intimate learning community that features small classroom settings and a high-degree of teacher interaction with students. As such, the school remains committed to its mission of providing alternatives to the large classroom environments and learning communities that are characteristic of traditional public school settings. Towards this end, Sankofa Academy Charter School is comparable to and remains on par with other area charter schools (e.g., Chester County Family Academy) during their initial years of operation.

There are currently no supporting documents selected for this section.

Transportation

Transportation is provided by the local school districts for those Sankofa Academy Charter School students who reside within ten miles of the school. The local school districts' bus services are contracted through George Krapf Jr. & Sons and On the Go Kids, Inc., respectively. Upon Sankofa Academy Charter School's submission of its student rosters to the respective local district transportation offices, the districts' transportation department generates and provides the school with a copy of the annual bus schedules and routes. In cases where transportation is not provided because the student resides beyond ten miles of school, Sankofa Academy Charter School assists parents in organizing car pools. In other cases, the school assists with and provides subsidies for public bus transportation.

Special education students are afforded the exact same transportation accommodations as regular students. Sankofa Academy Charter School is examining ways to improve transportation services for students who reside beyond ten miles from school. One suggestion includes petitioning the local school district to assist in identifying and coordinating a central drop-off and pick-up location, that is within ten miles of the charter school and is along a main thoroughfare, for those parents who commute their children to and from school.

Food Service Program

During the 2008-2009 school year, Sankofa Academy Charter School did not participate in the FRL Program, in light of its limited space. At the beginning of the school year, parents were informed of the school's Wellness Policy regarding health and nutrition, and were asked to

provide students with a nutritious bagged lunch and snacks. The school's site administrators and educators monitor students' lunch and snack in-take. Parents are contacted when a student has an inappropriate or non-healthy lunch or snack. In those rare cases or instances where parents cannot provide for their children, and on Saturday sessions, the school provides lunch meals that are donated by or purchased from local vendors. In addition, the school's Board of Trustees and staff donate morning snack items that consist of fresh fruit and juices that are made available to all students. Plans for the 2009-2010 school year include establishing and coordinating a free breakfast and lunch program through the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's regionally operated subsidized food program.

Student Conduct

As it pertains to student behavior and discipline, Sankofa Academy Charter School expects that students will attend school regularly, complete classroom and homework assignments, and conform to all school rules and regulations. Students are expected to be responsible and assist the teaching and administrative staff in the co-creation of a school climate that is conducive to wholesome learning and living. As such, it is expected that students will express their ideas and opinions in a respectful manner, while also refraining from any conduct that:

1. impairs the reasonable freedom of other persons to pursue their studies, research, duties, or lawful activities in the school or to participate in the life of the school; or
2. is otherwise detrimental to the operation of the school or causes damage to school property, or the environment or ecology on or near school property; or
3. contravenes federal, state, or local law; or
4. is otherwise deemed to be inappropriate.

Consistent with the school's discipline policy, it is expected that when conflict arises, students will be afforded due process. Such due process consists of the following:

1. notification of the charges;
2. a hearing;
3. an opportunity to defend with knowledge of adverse evidence;
4. the names of adverse witnesses; and
5. that substantial evidence supports any disciplinary action taken.

Sankofa Academy Charter School's discipline policies are written to comply with Chapter 12 of the Public School Code in that school administrators must be free to invoke fair and reasonable procedures for operation of the school while providing each student with rights and responsibilities vis-à-vis other students. At Sankofa Academy Charter School, the loss of educational opportunities is not taken lightly and any behavior that is subject to disciplinary action must be considered disruptive to the school and interfere with the school officials' carrying out their assigned duties and functions.

During the 2008-2009 school year seven students were involved in eleven suspension incidents. No students were expelled.

Student Conduct - Attachments

- Discipline Policies
- Suspension - Expulsion Policy

Signature Page

Assurance for the Operation of Charter School Services and Programs

School Year: 2011

The Sankofa Academy CS within Chester County IU 24 assures that the charter school will comply with the requirements of 22 Pa. Code Chapter 711 and with the policies and procedures of Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE). PDE will specify, in writing, policies and procedures to be followed. Requests for any deviations from these regulations, policies, and procedures must be made in writing to PDE. The charter school assures:

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

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

_____ _____

Board President **Date**

_____ _____

Chief Executive Officer **Date**

2010 - 2011 Annual Report for Pennsylvania Charter Schools

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

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

Identify the charter school's Chief Executive Officer.
Name: LaMont McKim **Title:** Dr.
Phone: 610-696-0333 **Fax:** 610-696-0620
E-mail:

_____ _____
Signature of the Chief Executive Officer and Date

Identify the charter school's President of the Board of Trustees.
Name: Frederick Franklin **Title:** Mr.
Phone: 610-696-0333 **Fax:** 610-696-0620
E-mail:

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

Identify the charter school's Special Education Contact Person.
Name: Lois Moses **Title:** Mrs.
Phone: 610-696-0333 **Fax:** 610-696-0620
E-mail:

_____ _____
Signature of the Special Education Contact Person and Date

Signature Page - Attachments

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