Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
Department of Education
Cyber Charter School
2011 Renewal Application

The Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School
1332 Enterprise Drive
West Chester, PA 19380

Cyber Charter School Renewal Application

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LEADERSHIP
charter school

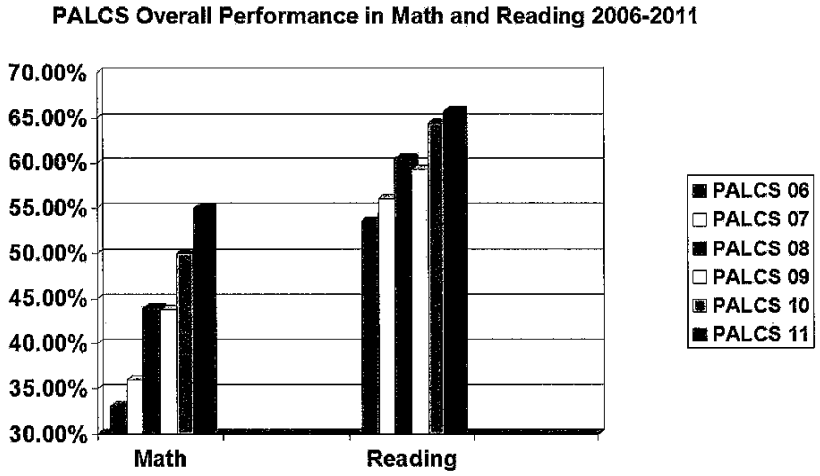
November 22, 2011

Ronald J. Tomalis, Secretary
Pennsylvania Department of Education
Charter School Office
333 Market Street, 5th Floor
Harrisburg, PA 17126-0333

Dear Secretary Tomalis,

It has been my distinct honor and pleasure to have served as the CEO of the PA Leadership Charter School for the past eight years. When I first met with the Charter Committee in October of 2002, I knew in my heart that K-12 cyber schooling was an idea that needed to be explored. Little did I realize the rewards of taking an idea and building it into the school we have today. As I look to the future I can see that we are still on the cusp of what will be happening with communication through technology. For these reasons I am writing to respectfully request that you grant to PA Leadership an additional five year charter.

As you can see from our charter renewal application, we have seen significant steady growth in overall student achievement. In the last five years of study, we made AYP once and narrowly missed making AYP three times. The advances made by our students who have been with PALCS two or more years are even more dramatic.



Our greatest achievements over the last five years are in three areas: 1. The software portal delivery system (MOODLE+) 2. Teacher training, retention and advancement 3. Curriculum

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MOODLE is an open source software (free) that serves 49,952 registered and verified sites including many major universities worldwide. PA Leadership has spent the last four years developing modules that provide for more interactivity, flexibility and integration with every aspect of our school. With the video conferencing online classes, this platform provides the opportunity for there to be more one-on-one and small group teacher / student interaction than the student could get in a traditional setting.

Over the years, our teachers have been given an enjoyable work experience, competitive pay and generous benefits that have created a low turnover (5% or less yearly). The novelty and uniqueness of a cyber charter experience has attracted teachers who are both innovative and motivated. From the beginning, our teachers were tasked to drive the academic engine of the school, utilizing the curriculum the school provides but looking to each teacher to evaluate this curriculum, offer suggestions on improvement and build online lessons that utilize the vast resources of the Internet. Using Learning Focused, the school has fully integrated the curriculum to meet all PA State Standards and has enabled each teacher to see what others have done in previous grades and what other teachers plan to do in the higher grades. Through a strong training and mentoring process, the best practices of our best and most experienced teachers have been passed on to the rest of the professional staff.

Over the last five years, PA Leadership has been diligent to evaluate and re-evaluate to discover our weakness and address them. The recommendations we have received from outside consultants, the Chester County Intermediate Unit, the Department of Education and the Federal Government resources have been taken seriously and implemented. All complaints from parents have been processed and addressed. The few complaints that have reached the Department of Education were dealt with immediately and the resolutions were communicated back to the PDE.

The primary goal of the original charter has remained the same. Taken from the original mission statement:

> The PA Leadership Charter School's purpose is to provide an academically challenging, knowledge-based curriculum, individually designed for each child's needs. PALCS will combine the benefits of a classical basics oriented education with the latest Internet / computer technology and the best teaching and learning education practices. By studying the lives and works of the great leaders in history, PALCS students will develop multi-cultural perspectives and a global awareness. PALCS will prepare students to be informed, responsible citizens with a global mentality who will succeed through mentoring leadership.

Currently, the school offers practically every course that a student would want to take in a K-12 Charter School, including numerous Honors and AP courses. Teachers are given multiple tools to enable them to provide an education "individually designed for each child's needs."

Our Internet delivery system (MOODLE+) provides a rich interactive experience for each student and our Leadership Programs not only allow students to learn about international cultures but actually get to study for as much as a month at a time in 13 different foreign countries.

Not only have we met the goals we set for the school but in many cases we have exceeded them.

The only proposed change in the Charter is that we would request that the cutoff date for Kindergarten be moved from October 31 to September 30 (with an early admission option) as detailed in the charter renewal document.

Should the school's charter be renewed, we will continue to remain true to our original charter and seek to remain on the cutting edge of technology while creating best practices for a cyber school experience.

Sincerely,

James Hanak

Dr. James Hanak
CEO, PA Leadership Charter School

Required Attachments			
Section	**Description**	**Attached (Y/N)**	**If *Not* attached, Explain***
Instructions	Summary letter from CEO **Attachment A**	**Y**	
Application Fact Sheet	Any Leases, Deeds or Real Estate Agreements not Previously Submitted to the Department **Attachment B**	**Y**	
Student Achievement	PSSA Report for Previous Years (chart provided)** **Attachment C**	**Y**	
Student Achievement	Random Sample of Lesson Plans **Attachment D**	**Y**	
Student Achievement	Copy of the School Calendar **Attachment E**	**Y**	
Student Achievement	Copy of the School Improvement Plan (if applicable) **Attachment F**	**Y**	
School Operations and Management	Teacher Turnover Chart (chart provided) **Attachment G**	**Y**	
School Operations and Management	Union Contracts with Professional Employees, if applicable	**N/A**	There are no union contracts with professional employees
School Operations and Management	Certification Level Chart (chart provided) **Attachment H**	**Y**	
School Operations and Management	Most Recent Financial Statements **Attachment I**	**Y**	
School Operations and Management	Annual Audits for Each Year of the Charter **Attachment J**	**Y**	
School Operations and Management	Investments Chart (chart provided) **Attachment K**	**Y**	
School Operations and Management	List of Board Members who have served since the last renewal, the dates they served and in what capacity **Attachment L**	**Y**	
School Operations and Management	Copies of Signed Ethics Forms (as required by the State Ethics Commission) for each Board Member currently serving **Attachment M**	**Y**	
School Operations and Management	Agenda for every board meeting held within the last school year **Attachment N**	**Y**	
School Operations and Management	Evaluations of the External Management Organization (EMO), if applicable	**N/A**	The Pennsylvania Leadership Charter School does not contract with an External Management Organization
Overall School Design	Examples of Communication, Outreach and Marketing to the	**Y**	

	Community and Parents **Attachment O**		
Overall School Design	Agendas and Sign-in Sheets from Parent and/or Community Events **Attachment P**	**Y**	
Overall School Design	Surveys and Response Summaries Conducted by the School **Attachment Q**	**Y**	
Overall School Design	Enrollment Chart (chart provided) **Attachment R**	**Y**	
Overall School Design	Policy for Attendance, Truancy and Withdrawal **Attachment S**	**Y**	
Overall School Design	Attach copies of all forms used for Truancy Communications to parents, resident school district, etc. **Attachment T**	**Y**	
Overall School Design	School Safety Plan **Attachment U**	**Y**	
Overall School Design	Student Handbook **Attachment V**	**Y**	
Plans for the Future	Projected Enrollment Chart (chart provided) **Attachment W**	**Y**	
Plans for the Future	Measurable Outcomes and Goals Chart (chart provided) **Attachment X**	**Y**	
Plans for the Future	Enrollment Charts by Grade (chart provided) – ***only if the school is requesting to increase the number of grades served.***	**N/A**	There are no requests to increase the number of grades served in the next five years
	Signature Page **Attachment Y**	**Y**	

Application Fact Sheet

This Application Fact Sheet is intended for administrative processing of the Cyber Charter Renewal Application. The information furnished below must be an accurate representation of the complete Renewal Application.

Cyber Charter School Name

THE PENNSYLVANIA LEADERSHIP CHARTER SCHOOL

School Address **1332 Enterprise Drive, West Chester, PA 19380**

(If more than one facility, the cyber charter school must identify the administrative office where all student records are maintained pursuant to section 1748-A (h).

County **Chester County** Intermediate Unit **Chester County Intermediate Unit - #24**

Charter Start Date: **July 2, 2007** Date Current Charter Expires: **July 1, 2012**

Federal Employer Identification Number: **35-2225538** AUN: **124 150 004**

Vendor Identification Number: n/a

CEO: First: **James** Middle: **M** Last: **Hanak**

Address: **305 Baywood Road, West Chester** State: **PA** Zip Code: **19380**

Telephone **610-701-3333 x 1111** Fax Number **610-701-3393** E-mail **jhanak@palcs.org**

Grades Served by Cyber Charter School	**Current & Projected 5 year Student Enrollment:**	**Current & Projected 5 year Teaching Staff**
Elementary **K, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5**	**2011-12 2300** **2012-13 2500**	**2011-12 174** **2012-13 189**
Middle **6, 7, 8**	**2013-14 2700**	**2013-14 204**
	2014-15 2900	**2014-15 219**
Secondary **9, 10, 11, 12**	**2015-16 3100**	**2015-16 234**
	20116-17 3300	**2016-17 249**
Circle Appropriate Grade(s) K 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12	Is increase due to addition of grade levels? Yes_____ No__**X**_	Does the cyber charter school have an existing retirement system? Yes __**X**___No_____