
Pennsylvania Department of Education



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

Charter Annual Report

Tuesday, May 07, 2013

(Last Accepted: Thursday, September 22, 2011)

Entity: Independence CS

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CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

Summary Data Part I

Charter School Annual Report Summary Data 2011 - 2012

Name of School: Independence CS

Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval: July 2000/April 2005 renewal/June 2010 renewal

Length of Charter: 5 years **Opening Date:** September 2001

Grade Level: K-8 **Hours of Operation:** 8:30- 3:15

Percentage of Certified Staff: 92% **Total Instructional Staff:** 59

Student/Teacher Ratio: 23/1 **Student Waiting List:** 1000

Attendance Rate/Percentage: 96.8%

Second Site Address, Phone Number and Site Director:

We have moved to 1600 Lombard Street, Philadelphia. This is not a second site but rather our new location as of September 1, 2008.

Summary Data Part II

Enrollment: 790 Per Pupil Subsidy: \$ 8,866/19,067

Student Profile

American Indian/Alaskan Native:	0
Asian/Pacific Islander:	37
Black (Non-Hispanic):	402
Hispanic:	113
White (Non-Hispanic):	187
Multicultural:	50

Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch:
54

Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December: 95

Instructional Days and Hours

Number of:	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (F.Time)	Elem.	Middle.	Sec.	Total
Instructional Days	0	0	180	181	181	0	542
Instructional Hours	0	0	1080	1086	1086	0	3252

SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Educational Community

Independence Charter School (ICS) is a K-8 school located in Center City Philadelphia. ICS is completing its eleventh year of operation. The school is located in the historic district of Philadelphia. The school began as a K-3 school in September 2001 and graduated its first 8th grade in the 2006-2007 school year. Ninety-five percent of our graduating eighth graders are accepted to select admissions high schools.

ICS was founded by parents who were committed to the city of Philadelphia and wanted to provide a challenging world- class program (including second language acquisition and global studies) for their children and the children of Philadelphia. There were 790 students enrolled in 2010-2011. With the exception of a handful of ICS students whose families have moved to the suburbs of Philadelphia, the rest of the students are from Philadelphia. We employ a lottery system in which submitted applications are chosen randomly by a staff team during a public event that is publicized. This selection is for the number of openings in Kindergarten. All others are also "pulled" and placed on a waiting list. Sibling preference is also given to existing ICS families as long as the student is of the correct age of admittance and if there is an opening in that grade. In every year since our opening, our waiting list has continued to grow such that the waiting list for the coming school year number over 1000 with approximately 350 on the Kindergarten wait list. Our school has gone through one renewal phase in 2004-2005. We have gone through a second renewal in 2010 and received a new five year charter in June 2010. In addition, Independence Charter School underwent the Middle States Accreditation process and was accredited in December 2011.

In 2007, the Worlds of Opportunity Foundation purchased a building, the historic Durham school building at 16th Street and Lombard Street. Independence Charter School leases the building

from this foundation. The school began the 2008-2009 academic year in the new building on September 15th. To date, we have been in our new building for four full years.

Our points of pride include

- a strong faculty who are committed to working in an urban school,
- a strong integrated curriculum that includes our own authored curricular frameworks together with published, research based curriculum,
- strong parent involvement
- teacher participation in curricular writing and recommendations
- a unique global studies program
- an exceptional second language studies program with a third language program added in middle school
- quality special education service
- growing utilization of community-based resources
- solid test scores with seven years of AYP in the seven years we have been eligible
- ICS was awarded the Goldman Sachs 2008 Foundation Prize for Excellence in International Education, the only elementary school public or private to receive this award.
- ICS is Middle States Accredited.

ICS has an administrative model that focuses on providing expert support to staff to provide excellence in instruction for students. The CEO has been a teacher for many years and has led ICS for 11 years. In 2008-2009, we introduced the position of Principal to focus on the immediate needs of curriculum and teacher development the school. In 2010-2011 as part of the Middle States process, we reviewed the efficacy of this leadership model and determined that because of the size of the school and because of our commitment to teacher support and growth that we must create two principal positions: one for the lower and one for the middle school. This was put into place for the 2011-2012 school year and has been successful. We have two Deans of Students (upper and lower), a Special Education coordinator a language coach, and teacher leaders who also serve as coordinators for special projects such as service learning, math coaches, etc. Beyond that we have counselors, nurses, special education staff, reading specialists, and the like. In addition, recognizing that students come with varied levels of skills, we provide a part time classroom assistant in each Kindergarten class with additional assistants to be shared by teachers in grades 1-4 to help with flex grouping and to support the teacher. An average classroom size is 23.

Mission

Independence Charter recently concluded a two year Middle States Accreditation process. During that process, the school community reviewed the Mission and Vision of the school. Consequently, we recreated a more concise version of the original Mission although in essence it has not changed. In addition, we have created a set of belief statements that act as guides.

Independence Charter School (ICS) is a community-based K-8 public charter school of academic excellence, centrally located in Philadelphia and serving a diverse community of learners. ICS provides an intellectually-stimulating curriculum with a global focus, designed to develop independent, thoughtful global citizens. We emphasize second language acquisition and integrate arts, ideas and histories from around the world.

ICS Belief Statements

1. We believe that all children can be successful in a safe, nurturing, and respectful environment.
2. We believe that all members of our school community bring unique and valuable perspectives.
3. We believe that students must be provided with a diverse set of learning tools to reach their fullest potential.
4. We believe that by learning other languages and about other cultures, children gain the skills needed to be active global citizens.
5. We believe that we are responsible to a larger community and to one another. We strive to be active stewards of the local and global community.
6. We believe that to reach excellence we must continue to nurture a reflective school community whose members contribute their talents, insights, and hard work in service to our students and to the larger community.

Our Mission is to serve the students of Philadelphia with excellence and to achieve excellence.

Vision

ICS is a community and family-based school. We believe that the best learning will happen when we can resource families and the community to work with our staff and administration to provide individualized, effective learning opportunities for our students. We also believe that it is very important that we provide learning opportunities outside of the traditional mold of schooling. These include bringing in artists, specialists, and going out to learn in the field. We believe that learning in an integrated way builds resiliency and a successful learner.

In addition, we are a highly reflective organization. We utilize surveys and multiple avenues to gauge whether our work is effective. This means that we are ready to change if necessary while holding on to our Mission and our Beliefs.

The global studies component of our curriculum is the defining feature of our school. The curriculum encompasses second language instruction, international music, arts, history, geography, and cultures, with an integrated study of countries in grades K-5, and an integration of global studies through history and technology classes in grades 6-8. Teachers at ICS work to incorporate the global studies component across the curriculum to give students an appreciation for a wide range of world cultures, histories, and languages. Exposure to and involvement with other cultures at an early age will contribute to an increasingly important intercultural competence.

A key commitment is also to second language acquisition. Spanish is the language upon which we focus in grades K-8. We also provide Arabic language instruction in grades 6-8. Each child in the school receives Spanish language instruction including special education and ELL students. As the students progress through the grades, an increasing amount of this instruction is content-based, giving our students a proficiency in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in Spanish. Not only does this give them competency in

Spanish, but it underscores daily the reality that they live in a world comprised of languages other than English. Parents have the option to place their children in a total immersion or a language intensive program. The immersion program features total instruction in Spanish with English Language Arts introduced starting in third grade. Spanish enhanced classes focus on the development of conversational Spanish. The recent awarding of a FLAP (Foreign Language Assistance Program) federal grant for the teaching of Arabic has provided substantial support in expanding Arabic to grades 6-8 in addition to the Spanish program.

We actively invite parents to participate in the life of the school with plentiful opportunities for volunteering. We seek and establish relationships with community organizations and resources.

We also approach each ICS student as an individual and understand that students will need varying levels of support academically, socially, and emotionally. For this reason, we incorporate tutoring during the school day as well as support flex grouping. Similarly, our process for helping students enter high school includes having the counselor meet with each family individually to review the student's "portfolio" and to prepare a thoughtful and substantial application to high schools.

Shared Values

The following belief statements were created by the stakeholders of Independence Charter School through a series of meetings and focus groups.

ICS Belief Statements

1. We believe that all children can be successful in a safe, nurturing, and respectful environment.
2. We believe that all members of our school community bring unique and valuable perspectives.
3. We believe that students must be provided with a diverse set of learning tools to reach their fullest potential.
4. We believe that by learning other languages and about other cultures, children gain the skills needed to be active global citizens.
5. We believe that we are responsible to a larger community and to one another. We strive to be active stewards of the local and global community.
6. We believe that to reach excellence we must continue to nurture a reflective school community whose members contribute their talents, insights, and hard work in service to our students and to the larger community.

Academic Standards

Independence Charter School's (ICS) academic standards complement the PA academic standards. In addition, we have recently begun the process of aligning curriculum goals to the

newly-adopted Common Core Standards. During 2011-2012, teachers under the leadership of the Principals, continued aligning units and lessons to these standards. We have chosen curriculum which is research based, supports student learning and teacher preparation, and allows for differentiation to meet the varied needs of our students. For example, our K-5 Math curriculum, which is Scott Foresman Addison Wesley, is aligned to the PA Standards. Teachers will review their current academic goals and timeline for their grade levels and make adjustments to accommodate the Common Core Standards under the guidance of administration. Our curriculum specialists regularly utilize the PA standards and assessment anchors (in appropriate subjects) to align curriculum goals with classroom experiences as well as to inform teacher training and guidance in those areas. Teachers meet in August and during the school year for professional development sessions that guide them through curriculum mapping and standards alignment. We have implemented "backward design" in our curriculum writing process. Teachers and supervisors have been developing courses and units of study around unifying essential questions and enduring understandings that support our mission and vision as well as target the specific goals of each subject. In addition, our staff has reviewed and modified our assessment process and aligned it to our global education goals as well as our overall mission and vision statements. We review and evaluate our curriculum implementation yearly to assess the efficacy of our products.

ICS has met all of the measured targets since the inception of AYP reporting.

Strengths and Challenges

STRENGTHS: Independence Charter School demonstrates the following strengths:

1. Quality second language teaching (Spanish) for all students K-8 in two language programs. In the Spanish Enhanced (FLES) program, students have 30-45 minutes sessions daily in Spanish to develop conversational Spanish language skills. In the Spanish Total Immersion program, students have all major subjects taught in the Spanish language in K-2, then in grades 3-8 there is an increasing amount of English language instruction. In addition, all of our students receive additional language instruction in grades 6 through 8. All students in these grades learn Arabic as their second acquired language.
2. Exceptional and unique country studies program for grades K-5 and integrated global studies through history for grades 6-8. These programs are integrated across all subject areas.
3. Success in providing supports for the whole child in academics as well as social skills.
4. Solid teaching utilizing best practices that include use of manipulatives, experiential learning, learning at centers, flex grouping for skill levels, differentiation and heterogeneous grouping as well.
5. Strong teacher support in the areas of professional development, collaboration, teacher involvement in planning, support in substantial access to materials and resources.
6. Strong family involvement including a strong PTA. Parent turnout for Back to School Nights and report card conferences ranges 85%-100% in classrooms.
7. Highly qualified staff that is engaged and reflective.
8. Full inclusion of special education students in all aspects of programming.
9. Very strong arts program including the fine arts, music, and dance/movement.
10. Attendance continues to remain strong.
11. Strong and effective Code of Conduct complemented by a school-wide use of Responsive Classroom and Developmental Design
12. Strong PSSA scores, particularly in math.
13. 2008 Winner - Goldman Sachs Prize for Excellence in International Education
14. Member of the *Schools That Can* Network.

15. Completed Middle States Accreditation self-study process. Self-study and visit were quite positive. Official notification of status came December 2011.

AREAS IN NEED OF IMPROVEMENT:

1. Technology: Although we have moved ahead considerably with the integration of technology, and our kids Gr.1-8 have learned considerable skills in the use of computer resources and tools, and although many of our teachers have embraced this initiative, we still strive to have more of our teachers use technology more extensively by integrating it more regularly into their curriculum. We will continue to develop our knowledge base to guide that integration, but are always in need of increased funding for technology. Through our Middle States Accreditation self-study, we have established technology goals which are outlined in our technology report.

2. Attendance for at-risk students: because we are not a neighborhood school but rather attract students from all over the city, and although our attendance is enviable, the problem of late arrivals and absences are nonetheless greater for our at-risk students. In addition, students in grades 7-8 that do not receive school bus service have lower rates of attendance than in other grades. However in the 2011-2012 this has improved.

3. Academics: Although ICS has met AYP every year, and has been consistently recognized for our unique programming, nonetheless, we continue to experience an achievement gap between some of our measured subgroups. A look at the ethnic subgroups (ethnicity data is correct) shows that the number of African American students who perform proficient and advanced is significantly below the number of white students who perform proficient and advanced (in both reading and math). While the gap has decreased between our African American students and the "All" subgroup in both reading and math, it has not significantly decreased between our African American students and our White students. For this reason, we have targeted the reduction in the achievement gap as one of our fundamental Middle States goals.

This year, we targeted at-risk students through in-school tutoring. In addition, we have subscribed to Achieve 300 which provides students opportunities to individualize their learning both in school and at home. In addition, we hired two Part Time teachers to conduct tutoring during school hours.

Our ELL students which now number close to 5% of the school, demonstrate significant growth over a single school year. Nonetheless, this is not as clearly evidenced in PSSA testing. Our Special Needs students are a significant group comprising an overall 12% of the school however with higher concentrations in some of the PSSA tested grades (nearly 18% in some grades) Most of these students do not qualify for PASA testing.

4. Curriculum: As we regularly evaluate and improve our curricular and instructional decisions, we have identified and targeted improvement efforts in many areas. For example, we implemented new reading curriculum in grades K and 1 in 2009, and after further analysis, expanded that curriculum to grade 2. The same was true in the middle school, with the expansion of a new curriculum from grades 6 and 7 to grade 8. In math, we implemented a supplementary curriculum, which emphasizes problem solving, in lower grades as well, as a similar curriculum has proven quite successful in the middle school. We continue to improve writing instruction in all grades, particularly focusing on the construction of rubrics to help guide teacher expectations and assessment of writing. In addition, we have recently defined assessment guidelines to help guide our growth in the area of using student data (such as grades) to inform our instruction. We also refined report cards and interim reports to reflect this philosophy of assessment. Finally, we continue to further structure the Spanish language arts curriculum (both FLES and Immersion) with more materials, and improve foreign language instruction particularly in grades K-4. As a result, we adopted some new curricular materials for the 2010-2011 school year, all of which were outlined in last year's report. In addition, we

contracted with language specialists from ACTFL to evaluate our program. This evaluation provided ICS with concrete goals for the 2012-2013 school year and beyond.

5. Certification requirements from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania are a complicated challenge for ICS. This is because of the native speakers whom we must have to provide the intensive language program that is unique to ICS and part of the mission of our school as stated in our charter. Because we have a Total Spanish Immersion Program, our teachers must be entirely fluent (usually) native speakers. Currently, students receive instruction from more than 15 fully fluent teachers. Many of those teachers hail from more than 10 Spanish-speaking countries. Many were teachers in their native countries but are having difficulties obtaining certification in Pennsylvania due to regulations prohibiting them from obtaining permanent certification. All have plans to become highly qualified and are working on taking PRAXIS tests and college courses to qualify, however, citizenship regulations prohibit them from obtaining the final certification. However, our school maintains a certification rate above the required 75%, and a highly qualified rate of 100% as required by NCLB.

SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Strategic Planning Process

The ICS Board of Trustees (BOT), ICS administration, teachers and staff undergo ongoing reflective review of the academic year with fidelity to Mission and Vision. This is executed through staff and parent surveys done in March, yearly. This information is then used to identify problem areas and set goals for the coming year. In addition, subcommittees to the BOT which are peopled by BOT members, ICS staff and administration and parents meet monthly or as needed on various topics. Subcommittees such as the Curriculum Committee and the Human Resources committee meet regularly and report out to the monthly public BOT meeting.

ICS did undergo a comprehensive and formal Strategic Planning process in 2006-2007. Currently, the Board is undertaking a review and renewal of its role through work being done with an outside consultant: Strategic Arts. This review and renewal has continued throughout the 2011-2012 school year and is expected to conclude December 2012.

ICS has concluded the Middle States Accreditation process. This is a lengthy process that required nearly 20 months of work by committees of the staff and Board of Trustees and with significant input from families, students and staff.

In 2008-2009 we were accepted as candidates for Middle State Accreditation. This process began the summer of 2009 as we formed the structure and finalized the timeline for this evaluation. The Steering Committee formed subcommittees that explored and executed self-study questions in all areas of school performance from Governance, Leadership and Finances to Student Services, Health and Safety and the Educational Program. The subcommittees followed the requirements of the Middle States Accreditation "Designing Futures" program. As such this meant that each subcommittee spent approximately 3-6 months gathering information regarding the questions posed which are about strengths of the program, shortcomings, and which delve in to every area including materials, environment, proof of success, and the like. The participants of the subcommittee utilized surveys, small and large group interviews, and met as a group to write a self-study report that produced short and long term goals. These goals from all of the committees were forwarded again to the steering committee. The steering committee then formed a strategic planning subcommittee which reviewed all of the short and long term goals and formulated 4 to 5 overarching goals for the next 3 to 5 years, with the intention of revisiting in year three (called a mid-year review) their progress in working toward those goals. At the conclusion of the self-evaluation and the formation of the strategic goals, outside evaluators from Middle States Accreditation in the Spring of 2011 observed, reviewed and commented on

our written strategic plan based on our gained information. This was accomplished through a 4 full day visit to the school. During this time the accreditation team of experienced educators reviewed the plan, interviewed stakeholders, observed classes and reviewed artifacts and documents. The public as well as the school family of parents, guardians, and students were included in this process along the way. This steering committee was headed by Jurate Krokys, the CEO. The Steering committee was populated by teachers, and other staff as well as some board members. The focus groups are coordinated by various committee members and target parents/guardians, community members, and students. The Board of Trustees passed a resolution to accept the strategic plan and the newly revised Mission and Beliefs statements. In addition, the administration of the school focuses on increasing the scores of students taking PSSAs so that there is a continued increase in achievement. A reflective stance is taken in regard to reducing suspensions, reducing absences and latenesses, and increasing successful entrance into high schools.

Summer planning meetings by administrative staff occur in late June through late July and resume in mid August. All such planning meetings are reported to the Board of Trustees. Meetings take place in the school building.

Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Allen, Lindsay	Spanish Immersion Teacher and Teacher Leader	Regular Education Teacher	Jurate Krokys
Amy Leigh	ICS	Middle School Teacher	teachers
Barbara Kay	ICS	Middle School Teacher	teachers
Barbara Zisk	ICS	Special Education Teacher	education specialists
Bolivar Poveda, Luz	Independence Charter School	Elementary School Teacher	Jurate Krokys, CEO
Brock, Andrea	Lower School Counselor	Administrator	Jurate Krokys/ CEO
Curren-Preis, Martha	teacher	Middle School Teacher	CEO
David Peterson	ICS	Ed Specialist - Instructional Technology	Jurate Krokys, CEO
Dr. Larry Taylor	ICS	Ed Specialist - School Psychologist	administrators
Eckerman, Lynn	Science Teacher and Teacher Leader	Regular Education Teacher	Jurate Krokys/ CEO
Fernandez-Sheinbaum, Odamis	ICS	Elementary School Teacher	Administration
Gerald Santilli	Santilli and Thomson	Business Representative	Jurate Krokys, CEO
Hoedeman-Eiteljorg, Jenny	Independence Charter School	Ed Specialist - Home and School Visitor	Jurate Krokys, CEO
Jimenez, Leonor	Language Coach Independence Charter	Administrator	Jurate Krokys/CEO
Kareem Thomas	ICS	Ed Specialist - Social Restoration	education specialists
Kristen Long	ICS	Administrator	teachers
Krokys, Jurate	ICS	Administrator	administrators

Lesser, Eli	Board of Trustees, Independence Charter School	Board Member	Jurate Krokys, CEO
Marquez, Kate	Spanish Teacher	Elementary School Teacher	Jurate Krokys/ CEO
Megan Steelman	ICS	Community Representative	board of trustees
Nocco, Kristen	ICS Parent, PTA Member, Board Member	Community Representative	Jurate Krokys, CEO
Norris, Shavon	Independence Charter School	Elementary School Teacher	Jurate Krokys, CEO
Pamela Prell	ICS Board of Trustees	Board Member	strategic planning committee
Rona Buchalter	Board of Trustees, president, parent	Board Member	Board of Trustees
Steven Gendler	business	Business Representative	board of trustees
Susan Burrows	PTA	Parent	board of trustees
Thomas, Kareem	Dean	Other	CEO
Tracey Hill	PTA	Community Representative	board of trustees
Twyman, Dana	Board Trustee, City Year	Board Member	Board of Trustees
Wyatt, Naomi	Board of Trustees	Board Member	Jurate Krokys, CEO

Goals, Strategies and Activities

Goal: Implement Middle States Educational Program Goals

Description: ICS has undergone the process for Middle States Association Accreditation. A major part of this process was a self-study of our school and all of our programming. We emerged from the self-study with outlined strengths and long- and short-term improvement goals in the following educational programming areas: World Languages, K-4 English Language Arts, 5-8 English Language Arts, K-4 Math, 5-8 Math, K-8 Spanish Language Arts, K-8 Science, Music, Dance, Fitness and Movement, and Art.

Strategy: Middle States - Implement 5-8 ELA Goals

Description: Implement long- and short-term 5-8 ELA goals

Activity: English Language Arts Improvements - 5-8

Description: Short-term improvements - Continue coordinating work with the Middle States committee. Review long-term plans to check

for curriculum-assessment anchor consistency, monitor efficacy of formative and summative assessments and integrate with long-term plans, monitor reading scope and sequence to coincide with writing scope and sequence, and coordinate monitoring with reading/language coach who can assist in tracking and providing interventions for struggling students.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kristen Long	Start: 8/1/2012	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Middle States - Implement 5-8 Math Goals

Description: Implement long- and short-term 5-8 math goals.

Activity: Math Improvements - 5-8

Description: Short term improvements - Math coach will collaborate with teachers currently using Investigations (gr.4 and 5) to model/train others to implement in all grade cohorts, continue to send all new middle school teachers to Connected Math training, establish relationship with another school using Connected Math in Philadelphia for observation purposes.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kristen Long	Start: 8/30/2012	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Middle States - Implement Art Program Goals.

Description: Implement long- and short-term art program goals.

Activity: Art Program Improvements

Description: Short-term goals - integrate art lessons with other specials, identify time and create create opportunities cross-curricular lesson planning

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kareem Thomas	Start: 9/5/2012	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Middle States - Implement Dance, Movement and Fitness Goals.

Description: Implement long- and short-term dance, movement and fitness goals.

Activity: Dance, Movement and Fitness Program Improvements

Description: Improvements - Continue to investigate the plan to offer movement/physical education opportunities more often than one time per week, offer dance and movement option beyond grade 5 and fitness in grades K-4, create and implement a system of sharing information with all teachers regarding students' physical, mental, emotional challenges, incorporate technology into dance/movement/fitness class at least weekly, create space/facilities suitable for K-8 programs and students, create arts coordinator position that serves as mentor for arts instructors and liaison between administration and art department.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/5/2012	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Middle States - Implement K-4 English Language Arts Goals

Description: Implement long- and short-term goals

Activity: English Language Arts Improvements - K-4

Description: Short-term improvements - Increase variety, authenticity and frequency of assessments and monitor and use assessments to track student literacy progress, improve standards checklists and align checklists between grades

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 8/30/2012	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Middle States - Implement K-4 Math Goals

Description: Implement long- and short-term K-4 math goals.

Activity: Math Improvements - K-4

Description: Short term improvements - Continue to supplement mathematics with an accompanying technology curriculum, provide tangible ideas and websites for teachers of all grades to use, provide more workshop training including specific uses for sites and features by skill area.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Barbara Kay	Start: 8/30/2012	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Middle States - Implement K-8 Science Goals

Description: Implement long- and short-term K-8 science goals.

Activity: Science Improvements - K-8

Description: Short term improvements - Continue search for materials available in Spanish and identify funding to purchase grade 5 materials in Spanish, review and analyze the 4th and 8th grade PSSA results to identify trends or areas of strength and weakness, determine and implement formative and summative assessments for elementary science, create a content area document to guide science meetings to focus on sharing curriculum and address the needs identified through data-driven assessments, reflect and expand upon the initial piloted global education lessons.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kristen Long	Start: 9/5/2012	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Middle States - Implement K-8 Social Studies Goals

Description: Implement long- and short-term K-8 social studies goals.

Activity: Social Studies Improvements - K-8

Description: Short-Term priorities -
Revise existing country curricula to make sure that global citizenship is tied to each and that lessons are current and linked to Enduring Understandings, ensure each grade has an equally well-written country studies curriculum, continue searching for additional curricular materials in Spanish, revise and refine U.S. units to coincide with overarching global principles of the grade,

align 6-8 curriculum with Common Core Standards, provide common planning time for SS teachers to align their lessons across each grade level, continue to provide more training for teachers to more effectively implement social studies across the curriculum, continue revising Global Citizenship Days (formerly International Festival) to align with Global Citizenship principles.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kristen Long	Start: 9/5/2012	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Middle States - Implement Music Program Goals

Description: Implement long- and short-term music program goals.

Activity: Music Program Improvements

Description: Short-term goals - Create time and space for music teachers to discuss and figure out ways to more effectively incorporate Spanish and Arabic into the program, include choir within the school day to allow more student involvement, increase role of teacher assistant in the music classroom, utilize community resources to rehearse and perform in venues outside of the school building. Connect student learning with student performance for global citizenship days.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Norris, Shavon	Start: 8/30/2012	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Middle States - Implement World Languages Goals

Description: Implement long- and short-term goals in World Languages Program.

Activity: World Language Improvements - Arabic

Description: Short-term improvements - Develop a comprehensive framework for all students, align teaching with ACTFL standards and FLAP grant requirements, implement plan for school-wide vocabulary-acquisition, provide small rewards for students, maintain Arabic as a core ICS subject.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Jimenez, Leonor	Start: 9/5/2012	-
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Finish: Ongoing

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Activity: World Language Improvements - Spanish Enhanced

Description: Short-term improvements- monitor Spanish FLES curriculum framework, develop authentic formal assessments in lower grades, standardize assessment for higher grades, align vertically and spiral skills while also deepening scope

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Jimenez, Leonor	Start: 8/5/2012	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Activity: World Language Improvements - Spanish Immersion

Description: Short-term improvements - Utilize a consistent standardized assessment to evaluate program efficacy and individual achievement, evaluate language time drop in fifth grade and its effect on student proficiency, train teachers in reading strategies to improve language arts skills.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Jimenez, Leonor	Start: 9/5/2012	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Goal: MATHEMATICS

Description: At least 67% of every subgroup of students will be proficient in Mathematics, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments.

Strategy: Improve performance of underperforming subgroups

Description: We continue to analyze PSSA and local assessment data to identify gaps in lower-performing students' skill and knowledge base. We apply the new data to our instructional

practices. In particular, our research into the need for differentiating instruction to meet individual needs has led us to incorporate more proactive strategies to engage students in their instruction. In 2010-2011, all teachers received ongoing, formal training in differentiating instruction and assessment to meet individual needs. Our continued expansion of the Responsive Classroom/Developmental Designs model is aimed at supporting students from varied cultural backgrounds as they navigate different communities. Curricularly, in 2010-2011, we modified our World Language program at the middle school level to focus on one language (Arabic) after reflection on our program led us to realize that students' knowledge of languages and cultures outside of Spanish required more depth. Our choice to introduce a third language in grade 6 reflects our desire to teach languages and cultures from around the world; and, as our mission and vision are focused on global education, all ICS students continue learning about language and culture across our globe throughout their tenure at ICS. We also believe that our students will achieve more as they develop their global citizenship and knowledge skills. As a result of our research of the most progressive and relevant resources, in February 2009, our Curriculum Committee recommended that our Board of Trustees adopt the Oxfam Curriculum for Global Citizenship as "a foundational and guiding philosophy (though not a limiting one) for the school" (From the Curriculum Committee Report to the Board of Trustees, February 2009). The Board approved the adoption of these guidelines, which outline the Knowledge and Understandings; Skills; and Values and Dispositions students need so that they are enabled to develop into global citizens. Based on our research, which included various documents from the Asia Society, Oxfam, the national Network of Global Studies High Schools, the International Review of Education, Theory into Practice, the World Studies Journal, and various other education news and practice sources, we have developed the following proposal for the ICS Board to consider. Students at all grade levels are also exploring many cultures through our social studies curriculum, which focuses on the application of the Oxfam beginning in 2009-2010. Current educational research indicates that teaching such skills helps improve student engagement and therefore achievement. We believe that this approach to educating our students to participate in a global society will help them become more engaged in their learning as they will be able to connect it to their own experiences. As we reflect on and revise our current practices, we expect our achievement gap to continue to decrease.

Activity: Analyze All Assessment Data

Description: Analyze PSSA and local assessment data to identify gaps in lower-performing students' skill and knowledge base. Apply new information to instruction. Teachers will be able to use student quantitative and qualitative data to inform and guide their instruction.

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Krokys, Jurate	Start: 9/1/2011 Finish: 6/15/2012	-

Professional Development Activity Information

Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
1.00	3	36
Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
Independence Charter School	• School Entity	Not approved
Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish

Teachers will be able to use PSSA data to inform curricular decisions for the upcoming year.

The quantitative data derived from the PSSA allows us to identify gaps and strengths in our program and current curriculum. For example, when we see that students overwhelmingly performed low on a particular strand, we know that we must address that strand or skill more methodically in the upcoming year.

For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:

- Enhances the educator's content knowledge in the area of the educator's certification or assignment.
- Increases the educator's teaching skills based on research on effective practice, with attention given to interventions for struggling students.
- Provides educators with a variety of classroom-based assessment skills and the skills needed to analyze and use data in instructional decision-making.

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

Role	Grade Level	Subject Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Classroom teachers Principals / asst. principals School counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early childhood (preK-grade 3) Middle (grades 6-8) Elementary (grades 2-5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening Science and Technology Kindergarten Early Learning Standards Mathematics

Follow-up Activities	Evaluation Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student PSSA data Standardized student assessment data other than the PSSA

Status: In Progress — Overdue

Date	Comment
7/31/2009	We continue to use the PSSA and local information to provide additional services for students at risk.

Activity: Differentiated Instruction Training

Description: Continue training on the Differentiated Instruction Continuum (see attached PD plan). This continuum displays the stages through which educators travel as they gradually move from a non-differentiated “one-size-fits-all” learning environment to one that is highly differentiated. Teachers may begin this process along different stages of the continuum. Therefore, some teachers may progress to stages 3 (Full Implementation) or 4 (Advanced Implementation) by the end of the year.

Teachers have all been familiarized with the background, definition, and goals of Differentiated Instruction (DI) and have progressed through various stages. Training will continue based on teacher progress thusfar.

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
None Selected	Start: 8/1/2011 Finish: 6/15/2012	-

Professional Development Activity Information

Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
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1.00	10	65
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Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
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Staff Development for Educators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Association 	Approved
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Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish
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<p>Stage 1 — Early Implementation</p> <p>Stage 1 defines the initial incremental steps teachers can take to gain confidence and experience as they begin their journey along the continuum. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? learning about students' interests and learning profiles. ? establishing classroom management procedures. ? using pre-assessment to find out students' readiness levels. ? using formative assessments. ? experimenting with flexible grouping. <p>Stage 2 — Intermediate Implementation (Part 1)</p> <p>In stage 2, teachers will continue to take incremental steps along the differentiated continuum. Stage 2 is an expansion of stage 1. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ? designing activities to target students' interests and learning profiles. ? using data from pre-assessments to design lessons. ? using data from formative assessments to guide instruction. 	<p>Staaff Develoment for Educators(SDE) is a well-established training portal. Differentiated instruction has been also well-established as a necessary means toward reaching students' individual needs.</p> <p>From SDE sight - "Today, SDE has grown to become one of America's leading providers of professional development for PreK through Grade 12 educators. Each year, teachers and administrators across the country learn real-world strategies and practical classroom-proven techniques through our seminars, conferences, on-site consulting services, and on-line learning program. And, we remain committed to providing the most up-to-date, cutting-edge topics presented by some of the nation's top authors and educational experts who know what it means to teach. "</p>	<p><i>For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhances the educator's <u>content knowledge</u> in the area of the educator's certification or assignment. • Increases the educator's <u>teaching skills</u> based on research on effective practice, with attention given to interventions for struggling students. • 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. <p><i>For school and district administrators, and other educators seeking leadership roles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides the knowledge and skills to <u>think and plan strategically</u>, 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 <u>access and use</u>
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? exploring types of flexible grouping.

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

Role	Grade Level	Subject Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom teachers • Principals / asst. principals • School counselors • Other educational specialists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle (grades 6-8) • Elementary (grades 2-5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening • Science and Technology • Arts & Humanities • Health, Safety and Physical Education • World Languages • Kindergarten Early Learning Standards • Mathematics • History • Geography

Follow-up Activities Evaluation Methods

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom observation focusing on factors such as planning and preparation, knowledge of content, pedagogy and standards, classroom environment, instructional delivery and professionalism. • Standardized student assessment data other than the PSSA • Classroom student assessment data • Participant survey • Review of participant lesson plans
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Status: Not Started — Overdue

Activity: Identify lower-performing subgroups

Description: Identify lower-performing subgroups and students. Enroll them in school-day support.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kristen Long	Start: 8/1/2011	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: No Longer Occurring

<u>Date</u>	<u>Comment</u>
6/7/2011	We have expanded on this with deeper analysis described in data analysis, performance assessment and differentiating instruction activities.
7/31/2009	this is a regular part of our service to at risk students

Strategy: Maintain and support growth of current math model

Description: Students are currently achieving beyond the required the proficiency percentage rates. Teachers are continuing to implement the "Connected Math" model in the middle school. After a successful pilot of a similar "Investigations" curriculum in the lower school, we have decided to fully implement said curriculum in all grade 3-5 classes. This is all in our effort to better align the two math programs. We will now continue to pilot this curriculum in grades lower than 3 (this year in grade 1) to further analyze the efficacy of the Investigations supplement to our "Scott Foresman" math materials. The middle school division of math into "procedures" and "problem solving" classes have helped us group students both heterogenously and homogenously to most effectively meet student needs. As we continue to research the math skills needed to succeed in a global economy, we continue to revisit and revise our curriculum to best prepare our students for high school and beyond.

Activity: Review and reflect on current math curriculum

Description: see Middle States Educational Program goals, strategies and activities

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Krokys, Jurate	Start: 7/5/2011	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

<u>Date</u>	<u>Comment</u>
7/31/2009	Highly successful and we maintain this practice.

Goal: Middle States - Implement Technology Goals

Description: Implement long- and short-term technology goals.

Strategy: Comprehensive Classroom Technology

Description: Provide comprehensive classroom technology (including but not limited to SMART Boards, classroom response systems, document cameral and projector set-ups, easy access to web-based information) for all ICS classrooms.

Activity: Technology Incorporation Across the Curriculum

Description: Technology goals are woven throughout the ICS curriculum. Students in grades 1-5 take a weekly computers class. They learn all the basic skills outlined in the technology standards. In addition, teachers use technology regularly to support reading, writing, and responsible Internet use.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2010	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Interactive Media Center Creation

Description: Fully develop an interactive media center with a focus on coaching teachers on incorporating technology into lessons, as well as using technology to manage curriculum.

Activity: Development of Media Center/Library

Description: While we have a great start with a growing lending library equipped with a SMART Board, we will continue to fundraise to grow this center to meet our goals of a full-time active media center.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

David Peterson	Start: 9/1/2010	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Provide one-to-one computing for all students and teachers.

Description: Each student and teacher will have his/her own computer at all times as needed at ICS.

Activity: Access to Technology

Description: All students are instructed in technology skills beginning in the early grades. In the older grades, students continue to develop their skills by using technology for research, analysis and presentation. In addition, students are taught appropriate on-line behavior skills (cyber citizenship) through their technology lessons. Students use computers in the classroom both as a group and individually. Teachers are instructed in Internet and technological applications available to them at ICS, as well as how to access computer time for students. We continue to add useful technology to our classrooms, such as document cameras and projectors. Many of our teachers use web-based applications to inform students and families, collect student work, and support specific skills needs. Finally, we have improved communication with families through the addition of student information system (MMS), which allows parents to see information regarding their child's academic progress; and Lunchtime, which allows parents to manage their child's meal accounts.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 7/15/2010 Finish: Ongoing	\$2,000.00
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Status: Complete

Date Comment

7/31/2009 We have been successful in this goal and continue to support this year to year.

Activity: Technology Incorporation Across the Curriculum

Description: Technology goals are woven throughout the ICS curriculum. Students in grades 1-5 take a weekly computers class. They learn all the basic skills outlined in the technology standards. In addition, teachers use technology regularly to support reading, writing, and responsible Internet use.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2010 Finish: Ongoing	-
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Status: Not Started — Overdue

Strategy: Technology Proficiency for all Students

Description: Ensure technology skills are taught throughout years at ICS

Activity: Access to Technology

Description: All students are instructed in technology skills beginning in the early grades. In the older grades, students continue to develop their skills by using technology for research, analysis and presentation. In addition, students are taught appropriate on-line behavior skills (cyber citizenship) through their technology lessons. Students use computers in the classroom both as a group and individually. Teachers are instructed in Internet and technological applications available to them at ICS, as well as how to access computer time for students. We continue to add useful technology to our classrooms, such as document cameras and projectors. Many of our teachers use web-based applications to inform students and families, collect student work, and support specific skills needs. Finally, we have improved communication with families through the addition of student information system (MMS), which allows parents to see information regarding their child's academic progress; and Lunchtime, which allows parents to manage their child's meal accounts.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 7/15/2010 Finish: Ongoing	\$2,000.00
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Status: Complete

Date Comment

7/31/2009 We have been successful in this goal and continue to support this year to year.

Goal: Narrow Achievement Gap

Description: Narrow the reading and math achievement gap between ethnic and economic groups

Strategy: Identify Barriers

Description: Educate staff and parents on at-home academic support and resources and their connection to achievement in school. Our Family and Community Partnerships Liason is focused on assisting parents in navigating the many resources they have available to them as members of the ICS community. We have received very positive feedback from our community regarding this new position (added this past school year).

Activity: Analyze All Assessment Data

Description: Analyze PSSA and local assessment data to identify gaps in lower-performing students' skill and knowledge base. Apply new information to instruction. Teachers will be able to use student quantitative and qualitative data to inform and guide their instruction.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Krokys, Jurate

Start: 9/1/2011
Finish: 6/15/2012

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Professional Development Activity Information

Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
1.00	3	36
Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
Independence Charter School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Entity	Not approved

Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish
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Teachers will be able to use PSSA data to inform curricular decisions for the upcoming year.

The quantitative data derived from the PSSA allows us to identify gaps and strengths in our program and current curriculum. For example, when we see that students overwhelmingly performed low on a particular strand, we know that we must address that strand or skill more methodically in the upcoming year.

For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:

- Enhances the educator's content knowledge in the area of the educator's certification or assignment.
- Increases the educator's teaching skills based on research on effective practice, with attention given to interventions for struggling students.
- Provides educators with a variety of classroom-based assessment skills and the skills needed to analyze and use data in instructional decision-making.

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

Role	Grade Level	Subject Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom teachers • Principals / asst. principals • School counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early childhood (preK-grade 3) • Middle (grades 6-8) • Elementary (grades 2-5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening • Science and Technology • Kindergarten Early Learning Standards • Mathematics

Follow-up Activities Evaluation Methods

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student PSSA data • Standardized student assessment data other than the PSSA
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Status: In Progress — Overdue

Date Comment

7/31/2009 We continue to use the PSSA and local information to provide additional services for students at risk.

Activity: Analyze Reading Support Assessment Data

Description: Analyze performance of students who participated in Study Island and other reading support programs. Use data to inform future use of such programs.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Krokys, Jurate	Start: 7/5/2011	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

<u>Date</u>	<u>Comment</u>
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7/31/2009	this is helpful to some degree
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Activity: Parent Education

Description: Conduct workshops and provide materials guiding parents in how to best support school success with at-home routines. Connect parents to community-based organizations that can help bring stability to struggling homes.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/5/2011	\$1,000.00
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

<u>Date</u>	<u>Comment</u>
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7/31/2009	we are working with the PTA to provide this, more work needed.
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Goal: READING

Description: At least 72% of all students will be proficient in Reading, as measured by the annual state-wide PSSA assessments.

Strategy: Improve performance of underperforming subgroups

Description: ddd

Activity: Analyze All Assessment Data

Description: Analyze PSSA and local assessment data to identify gaps in lower-performing students' skill and knowledge base. Apply new information to instruction. Teachers will be able to use student quantitative and qualitative data to inform and guide their instruction.

<u>Person Responsible</u>	<u>Timeline for Implementation</u>	<u>Resources</u>
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Krokys, Jurate

Start: 9/1/2011
Finish: 6/15/2012

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Professional Development Activity Information

Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
1.00	3	36
Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
Independence Charter School	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• School Entity	Not approved

Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish
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Teachers will be able to use PSSA data to inform curricular decisions for the upcoming year.

The quantitative data derived from the PSSA allows us to identify gaps and strengths in our program and current curriculum. For example, when we see that students overwhelmingly performed low on a particular strand, we know that we must address that strand or skill more methodically in the upcoming year.

For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:

- Enhances the educator's content knowledge in the area of the educator's certification or assignment.
- Increases the educator's teaching skills based on research on effective practice, with attention given to interventions for struggling students.
- Provides educators with a variety of classroom-based assessment skills and the skills needed to analyze and use data in instructional decision-making.

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

Role	Grade Level	Subject Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom teachers • Principals / asst. principals • School counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early childhood (preK-grade 3) • Middle (grades 6-8) • Elementary (grades 2-5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening • Science and Technology • Kindergarten Early Learning Standards • Mathematics

Follow-up Activities Evaluation Methods

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student PSSA data • Standardized student assessment data other than the PSSA
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Status: In Progress — Overdue

Date Comment

7/31/2009 We continue to use the PSSA and local information to provide additional services for students at risk.

Activity: Analyze Reading Support Assessment Data

Description: Analyze performance of students who participated in Study Island and other reading support programs. Use data to inform future use of such programs.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Krokys, Jurate	Start: 7/5/2011 Finish: Ongoing	-
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Date	Comment
7/31/2009	this is helpful to some degree

Activity: Differentiated Instruction Training

Description: Continue training on the Differentiated Instruction Continuum (see attached PD plan). This continuum displays the stages through which educators travel as they gradually move from a non-differentiated “one-size-fits-all” learning environment to one that is highly differentiated. Teachers may begin this process along different stages of the continuum. Therefore, some teachers may progress to stages 3 (Full Implementation) or 4 (Advanced Implementation) by the end of the year.

Teachers have all been familiarized with the background, definition, and goals of Differentiated Instruction (DI) and have progressed through various stages. Training will continue based on teacher progress thusfar.

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
None Selected	Start: 8/1/2011 Finish: 6/15/2012	-

Professional Development Activity Information

Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
1.00	10	65
Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
Staff Development for Educators	• Association	Approved

Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish
<p>Stage 1 — Early Implementation</p> <p>Stage 1 defines the initial incremental steps teachers can take to gain confidence and experience as they begin their journey along the continuum. This includes:</p>	<p>Staaff Development for Educators(SDE) is a well-established training portal.</p> <p>Differentiated instruction has been also well-established as a necessary means toward reaching students' individual needs.</p> <p>From SDE sight - "Today, SDE has grown to become one of America's leading providers of</p>	<p><i>For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enhances the educator's <u>content knowledge</u> in the area of the educator's certification or assignment. Increases the educator's <u>teaching skills</u> based on

? learning about students' interests and learning profiles.
 ? establishing classroom management procedures.
 ? using pre-assessment to find out students' readiness levels.
 ? using formative assessments.
 ? experimenting with flexible grouping.

Stage 2 — Intermediate Implementation (Part 1)

In stage 2, teachers will continue to take incremental steps along the differentiated continuum. Stage 2 is an expansion of stage 1. This includes:

? designing activities to target students' interests and learning profiles.
 ? using data from pre-assessments to design lessons.
 ? using data from formative assessments to guide instruction.
 ? exploring types of flexible grouping.

professional development for PreK through Grade 12 educators. Each year, teachers and administrators across the country learn real-world strategies and practical classroom-proven techniques through our seminars, conferences, on-site consulting services, and on-line learning program. And, we remain committed to providing the most up-to-date, cutting-edge topics presented by some of the nation's top authors and educational experts who know what it means to teach. "

research on effective practice, with attention given to interventions for struggling students.

- Provides educators with a variety of classroom-based assessment skills and the skills needed to analyze and use data in instructional decision-making.

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

Role	Grade Level	Subject Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom teachers • Principals / asst. principals • School counselors • Other educational specialists 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Middle (grades 6-8) • Elementary (grades 2-5) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading, Writing, Speaking & Listening • Science and Technology • Arts & Humanities • Health, Safety and Physical Education • World Languages • Kindergarten Early

- Learning Standards
- Mathematics
- History
- Geography

Follow-up Activities	Evaluation Methods
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom observation focusing on factors such as planning and preparation, knowledge of content, pedagogy and standards, classroom environment, instructional delivery and professionalism. • Standardized student assessment data other than the PSSA • Classroom student assessment data • Participant survey • Review of participant lesson plans

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Activity: Identify lower-performing subgroups and students

Description: Identify lower-performing subgroups and students. Enroll them in during- and after-school reading support. Enlist help from families.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 1/1/2008 Finish: Ongoing	\$1,000.00
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Date	Comment
7/31/2009	this is a regular part of how we provide service

Activity: Targeted Reading Support

Description: We continue to analyze the achievement of our under performing subgroups and

implement supports for those groups. For example, we recognize that, particularly in reading, consistency of exposure to a literate-rich environment is important to maintain skills. Students with identified reading challenges and who also do not have access to much print material at home were given "summer backpacks" to take home. These backpacks included a variety of resources for the students and their parents to utilize during the summer. In addition, we implemented a number of summer reading activities for our students to use throughout the summer, including reading logs, a summer reading challenge, and website and library resources. During the school year, we support our students with reading specialists and differentiated reading options (through Guided Reading, 100-Book Challenge, etc.). We have also had an extensive after-school tutoring program. Our research into the results of tutoring data, however, tells us that, although helpful to the students who attend, the students who most need it often cannot attend or do not attend regularly. This is due to the fact that our students come from all over the city (and some even from outside the city) and their families depend on yellow bus service or after-school programs for after-school transportation and care. In 2011-2012, we will use any available resources to target reading support during the school day, using classroom teachers, reading specialists, and classroom assistants that we can retain to help implement such support.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kristen Long	Start: 9/5/2011	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

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

Description: Current attendance average for 2011-2012 is 96.8% Testing participation is 100%.

Strategy: Identify Concerns

Description: Because we draw students from every area code in the city, a small percentage of them sometimes find it difficult to come to school in a timely and regular fashion. We plan to continue to identify those students who are having problems and arrange meetings with the students and the families to support them in more regular, timely arrival to school. We include teachers, parents, deans, counselors, and, when appropriate, the student, in these meetings. We have found this approach to be successful and plan to continue our current practice.

Activity: Family Meetings

Description: The deans and/or other designated school personnel will meet with students and families to better understand the impediment to timely, regular school arrival. Together, we will create a plan to ensure improvement of students' attendance.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Description: Encourage students to view assessments as opportunities to display knowledge and provide intrinsic participation. In 2009-2010, we began holding a middle school orientation to help students develop more self-sufficiency in regard to understanding the expectations of middle school. We have added to this orientation a workshop focusing on understanding the revised assessment policy and applying it to one's individual school experience. This orientation for students, as well as parent education about the policy, has positively impacted student and family understanding of grades, assessment, and their overall place in one's education.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 8/1/2011 Finish: Ongoing	-
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Status: In Progress — Upcoming

<u>Date</u>	<u>Comment</u>
7/31/2009	successful in this effort

Statement of Quality Assurance

Charter school has met AYP.

There are currently no supporting documents selected for this section.

SECTION III. QUALITY OF SCHOOL DESIGN

Rigorous Instructional Program

ICS utilizes curriculum and materials that are research based and that provide the opportunity for successful learning for the various kinds of learners that populate each classroom. Wherever possible, ICS strives to utilize curriculum that allows for experiential learning to help ensure full student participation. However, we also seek curriculum and materials that help balance the need for project-based learning with that for direct instruction. Using the Pennsylvania standards as our guide, our curriculum reflects the content and processes necessary to prepare students for success as developing learners and global citizens. Below please see an outline of our curriculum:

Independence Charter School (ICS) has developed a world-class curriculum. The Board of Trustees and staff have selected rigorous educational standards that complement those provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education while supporting the global studies Mission and Vision of Independence Charter School.

Charter Schools, by law, have the freedom to determine the philosophical and curricular framework that will guide teaching and learning at their school. Charter School Boards of Trustees are responsible for making decisions regarding this framework, selecting curriculum which compliments the Mission and Vision of the School as written in the charter school application.

Independence Charter School recognizes that students come to school with varying levels of experience and readiness. Furthermore, ICS understands that students need a rich and varied learning environment that recognizes the multiple learning modalities of students. The curriculum and curricular approaches adopted by ICS address learners diversity while promoting a high level of excellence.

Global Citizenship:

“Education for Global Citizenship gives children and young people the opportunity to develop critical thinking about complex global issues in the safe space of the classroom...(It) encourages children and young people to explore, develop and express their own values and opinions whilst listening to and respecting other people’s points of view. (It aims to teach them how to make)... informed choices as to how they exercise their own rights and their responsibilities to others...(and) learn how decisions made by people in other parts of the world affect our lives, just as our decisions affect the lives of others.

“Education for Global Citizenship uses a multitude of participatory teaching and learning methodologies...and is relevant to all areas of the curriculum, all abilities and all ages. Ideally it encompasses the whole school, and is explicit not only in what is taught and learned in the classroom, but in the school’s ethos. It would be apparent, for example, in decision-making processes, estate management, purchasing policies, and in relationships between pupils, teachers, parents and the wider community.” (*Education for Global Citizenship: A Guide for Schools*, p.2 Oxfam, 2006)

During the 2008-2009 academic year, ICS staff, parents and Board members met to research and discuss the future of global education at our school. This initiative grew out of *the Independence Charter School Strategic Plan: 2007-2009* which reiterated our commitment to continually reevaluating, revising and strengthening our curriculum. In addition, the plan outlines the importance of teaching critical thinking and problem-solving skills so that our students become life-long learners. Finally, the plan requires that we “revise, develop, and improve our international/world cultures curriculum so that it is a model program.” The Global Education Task Force (initially the World Cultures and Languages Task Force), a subcommittee of the Curriculum Committee, embarked on its work by investigating broader trends in the field, and quickly agreed that our goals should be focused on formally integrating global education principles into our current design.

As a result of our research of the most progressive and relevant resources, in February 2009, the ICS Board of Trustees, upon the committee’s recommendation, approved the adoption of the *Oxfam Curriculum for Global Citizenship* as “a foundational and guiding philosophy (though not a limiting one) for the school” (from the *Curriculum Committee Report to the Board of Trustees*, February 2009). These guidelines outline the Knowledge and Understandings; Skills; and Values and Dispositions students need so that they are enabled to develop into global citizens. To learn more about the Oxfam principles, please logon to Oxfam.org or, for a specific explanation of the Oxfam principles, go directly to

http://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/gc/files/education_for_global_citizenship_a_guide_for_schools.pdf

Beginning with the 2009-2010 academic year, all school planning considers these guidelines when planning units of study and student experiences at ICS.

Fine Arts

ICS students emerge as sophisticated, critical consumers and producers of art. Grades K-5 students attend weekly art classes where they begin to understand art through the artist and his or her work.

Students learn the language of art and the techniques for producing various styles of art. Students also discuss the influence of culture and historical events on the artist. Where possible,

possible, the fine arts program integrates aspects of ongoing global studies, thereby reinforcing the study of global diversity. In the past, students have studied the Impressionists, Frida Kahlo, Peter Sibanda, and many others. Students spend an average of six weeks studying one artist.

Music

Grades K-8 students attend weekly music classes where music instruction is coordinated to integrate with global studies. Students learn songs in the original language of the countries they're studying. In the earliest grades, students actively participate in music as a continuum of movement and expression. First graders begin to learn through solfège—the “do-re-mi” acquaintance with notes and their own singing voices. By grade 4, students are able to read notes and are introduced to the recorder. In grades 4 and 5, students participate in choir ensembles and performances.

Students in grades 6-8 participate in a weekly percussion class, which includes drumming characteristics of the Middle East, Latin American and West Africa.

Dance/Movement and Fitness

Our dance and movement program allows students in grades K-5 to develop aerobic and muscular strength, expand their cultural studies with ethnic and period dances, and develop a better kinesthetic awareness of their bodies. Research shows that about 85% of school-aged children are predominantly kinesthetic, or physical, learners. Using movement in the learning process helps many students retain and retrieve information more efficiently. Students in grades 6-8 participate in fitness programming which includes introductions to various team sports and individual health education.

The Spanish Enhanced Program

The Spanish Enhanced program at ICS includes all classes where English is the primary language of instruction. Typically, parents have chosen this program for their children with the knowledge that there will be an intense daily infusion of Spanish instruction. Primary instruction goals are to build conversational Spanish utilizing TPR (total physical response) including singing, dancing, acting and the like. In the upper grades, they begin to use middle-school-oriented textbooks and focus more intensely on grammar. Students graduating from ICS in the FL ES program should take entrance exams for Spanish in high school because many may qualify for mid-level entry in Spanish II or Spanish III. Lower grade FLES students will receive daily Spanish instruction of 30 minutes per day for a total of 150 minutes weekly. Upper grade student schedules include four 50-minute Spanish classes for a total of 200 minutes per week of Spanish instruction. Research has shown that second language acquisition is beneficial for elementary and middle school students affecting all subject areas including math, science, and language arts.

Spanish Immersion Program

Students enrolled in the Spanish Immersion program usually enter Immersion in K or first grades. Most students do not speak any Spanish upon entry. The goal of the program is to facilitate successful learning using Spanish as the medium of instruction. This immediate and intense immersion into the language produces students who are fully bilingual (speaking) and biliterate (reading and writing). Homework, outdoor walks, celebrations, discussions, mathematics: all are conducted in Spanish. Parents are sometimes concerned regarding the development of reading skills in English. Parents are expected to read to their children in English at home for 15 to 30 minutes daily, sitting side-by-side. Most students in Immersion absorb English from the dominant culture and media and are reading in English by second grade without any direct instruction. This is in large part due to the ease of transition from a Spanish alphabet/sound system to English. English is formally introduced in Kindergarten as a bi-weekly 30-minute class. By fifth grade, about 50% of an Immersion student's classes are in English. Spanish immersion is maintained through eighth grade. K-4 studies ALL subjects in Spanish. In grade 5, students study science, social studies and language arts in English, and math in Spanish (along with a 45-minute daily Spanish language arts class), and students in grades 6-8 have social studies, computer (World Through Technology), and Spanish language arts in Spanish, with math and science in English (along with an English language arts class).

Other World Languages

Starting in grade 6, students are introduced to another language in addition to Spanish. Students in grades 6-8 will all learn Arabic language and culture. This study allows them to compare and contrast linguistic similarities and differences, further understand linguistic details, and appreciate cultural traditions in great depth. Arabic is considered a critical language today as it is spoken by about 250 million people around the world. It is expected that in the short-term, students will build a strong foundation for the language as well as develop a deep understanding of the cultural and historical background of its speakers; in the mid-term, graduates will be able to continue their Arabic studies in the area high schools offering Arabic in Philadelphia; and in the long-term, graduates will be able to complete their pursuit of Arabic fluency in college and use this skill to succeed in a globalized world.

English and Spanish Language Arts

Reading - English, K-2 - Independence Charter's K-2 teachers in the Spanish Enhanced program will use the *Treasures* Program from Macmillan/McGraw-Hill. The *Treasures* program uses high-quality literature, coupled with explicit instruction to arm students with the tools necessary to become lifelong readers and writers. Students read and write in leveled small groups, as a whole group, and independently to reinforce reading and writing skills.

Reading/English grades 3-8

The English language arts program in grades 3-8 employs authentic literature to reinforce those reading skills and habits learned in grades K-2. We do this by exposing our students to a variety of genres. In addition, in order to reach the variety of skill levels present in each classroom, students in grades 3-5 are assigned to reading groups at their appropriate reading levels thereby allowing students to progress at their own pace. Students in grades 4 -8 read books at their reading levels independently through the *100 Book Challenge* program. Students must read, read, read to reach their reading goals! Students in 8th become playwrights by participating in the *Young Playwrights* program. In grades 3-8, the curriculum has been coordinated in such a way such that, wherever possible, a theme or country being studied in social studies is paired with a language arts reading book. For example, the fifth grade study of Afghanistan is enhanced by their reading of *The Breadwinner* by Deborah Ellis. In addition, teachers in grade 3 use supplemental phonics resources (OpenCourt) to enhance their guided reading program. Another component of the grades 3-8 reading curriculum is the reading of core books, which are books to which we believe all children in grades 3-8 should be exposed. These books provoke discussion, provide a vehicle through which a life lesson or a fundamental/foundational skill can be taught, are of high interest—those that almost all kids of this age love, and serve as an experience that unifies a class and contributes to class culture. Students read between three and five core books per grade level. At least one book ties into that grade's country studies to offer an additional way of learning. K-2 Students in the Spanish Immersion program are exposed to English literature and basic English reading fundamentals through a 30-minute English class two times per week. The main purpose of this class is to introduce students to English reading and writing principles. Students more formally engage in English language arts instruction in grade 3 with a 60-minute daily English class. Grade 4 students have a daily 75-minute English class, grade 5 students have a 90-120 minute daily English class, grade 6 students have a 50-minute English class three times per week, and grades 7 and 8 students have a 50-minute English class 4 times per week.

Reading - Spanish K-3 - The main K-3 language arts program in the Spanish Immersion classroom is *Lectura*. The learning plan includes skills and strategies that provide a literacy foundation in Spanish through reading, comprehension, vocabulary, phonics, word study, spelling, oral language, writing, grammar, literary basics, research, and study skills. This program is aligned with national and state requirements. We complement this program with reading and writing activities from different resources and literature published for native speakers.

Reading - Spanish 4-8 - Grades 4-8 Immersion students continue the Spanish language arts program using a variety of Spanish language resources. Some of the resources used by teachers are Santillana's *Nuevo Siglo*, chapter books, and, in grade 4, the *Junior Greats Books*

program. Students practice Spanish through writing, reading, and oral communication in literature and across the curriculum.

Writing - K-8 - We believe that writing is an integral part of learning in all content areas. Therefore, ICS teachers support their students' writing efforts across the curriculum. From free writing in journals, to writing explanations in math, to structured essays that undergo revision and editing, students are constantly developing their writing skills. Students compile writing folders that follow them from one grade to the next. The writing program is primarily guided by the belief that all children can learn to write, that teachers can help students become better writers by creating a supportive, risk-taking environment in the classroom, and that frequent writing is the key to writing development. Teachers use a variety of resources to guide their teaching of writing, including, but not limited to, *Being a Writer*, *Step-Up-To-Writing*, and the *6 + 1 Traits of Writing*.

Mathematics

K-5 - ICS has chosen a grades K-5 curriculum that provides a spiraling approach (the material builds upon previously learned skills and concepts) to mathematics learning. Hands-on manipulatives, along with opportunities for drill, complement "problem of the day" and other kid-friendly practices. The primary resource for the K-5 math curriculum is the Scott Foresman elementary series. The *Investigations* curriculum in 3rd-5th grade classrooms (and planned pilot in select grade 1 classrooms) allows students to apply math skills to word problems. It encourages student use of those skills to explore and solve problems.

6-8 - The middle school math program at ICS includes two rigorous courses for students: Math Problem Solving and Math Procedures. The Math Problem Solving class uses the *Connected Mathematics 2* program, among other supplemental problem-solving materials, with a heterogeneous group of students. *Connected Mathematics 2* is a problem-centered curriculum in which important mathematical concepts are embedded in engaging problems. Students develop understanding as they explore the problems individually, in a small group, or with the class. Students hone their problem-solving ability, conceptual understanding, and proportional reasoning.

In order to meet the diverse needs of our students, the Math Procedures class is used with the instructional approach of flexible-ability grouping. This class uses the *Prentice Hall Mathematics* curriculum (courses 1, 2, 3 and algebra); the grades 6-12 companion to the Scott Foresman elementary series used in our K-5 program. This allows for continuity in programming for ICS students. The *Prentice Hall Mathematics* program is organized around the major strands and specific objectives in the *National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2005 Assessment Specifications* and the *NCTM Principles and Standards for School Mathematics*. It teaches these standards through real-world connections, ongoing assessment, constant review within instruction, support for reading and writing in math, and test prep for high-stakes testing.

Science

ICS has dedicated science teachers for grades K-4, and science/math subject teachers for grades 5-8. Because the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has an extensive list of goals in science set for public school students, we have adopted an approach that combines text-based learning with hands-on experimentation. ICS uses *Delta Science Modules* and *Pearson* textbooks to form the foundation.

Grades K-5 - Our K-5 science curriculum uses an exploratory based curriculum to cover earth, life, physical, and space sciences. To achieve this goal, ICS implements the Delta Science program. Students not only learn scientific concepts and theories, but experience them through exciting, hands-on, age-appropriate experiments and activities. As students mature, the program employs traditional textbook materials as well to stress the scientific concept being instructed, while also providing additional information not included in the experiments. Students in grade 5 also participate in the Science Fair (read paragraph below).

Grades 6-8 The Pennsylvania State Standards and PSSA Assessment Anchors provide the foundation for the scope and sequence of the ICS Middle School science curriculum. ICS Middle School science teachers primarily use the *Prentice Hall Science Explorer* program to teach this content. This program offers labs and activity options that provide inquiry opportunities throughout the study of earth, life, and physical sciences. Through these opportunities, students think like scientists, constantly asking why and searching for answers. Other activities focus on content

acquisition. ICS's focus on student scientific inquiry is manifested in its Science Fair. During the Science Fair, students begin with a question, design an investigation, gather evidence, formulate an answer to the original question, and communicate the investigative process and results.

Social Studies

Grades K-5 - We believe students are ready for studying the world—locally and globally—at a much earlier age than is typical in most public elementary schools. Our grades K-5 social studies curriculum is divided into three units: one which is locally or US-based and two in-depth country studies. The foci of the country studies are determined according to our global education goals. Students in grades K-5 study the local or US based unit from September through December, and then embark on their country studies beginning in January and running through June. Students are required to examine all areas of our world with the initial goal of becoming aware of the wider world and gaining a sense of their own roles as world citizens. The table that follows outlines the major global citizenship understandings we expect each student to have at the end of each year of study.

Kindergarten — All About Me, Mexico, China
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The students will understand that they are part of a wider world.</i> ▪ <i>The students will gain a greater awareness of the similarities and differences between people.</i> ▪ <i>The students will understand the connections between different places.</i> ▪ <i>The students will understand how individuals are unique.</i>
First Grade (Families and Neighborhoods, Japan, France)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The students will understand that we can have a positive impact in our community and in our world.</i> ▪ <i>The students will understand that there are links and connections among different communities in the world</i>
Second Grade (Democracy in Action - Philadelphia, India, Chile)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Through the study of trade, students will understand the interdependence of countries.</i> ▪ <i>The students will understand the relationship between people and their environment.</i> ▪ <i>The students will understand their potential to change things.</i>
Third Grade (State Studies - Pennsylvania, Russia, Kenya)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The students will understand that things can be better and that individuals can make a difference.</i> ▪ <i>The students will understand the relationship between people and their environment.</i> ▪ <i>The students will understand that many resources are finite.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The students will understand their potential to change things.</i>
Fourth Grade (US Unit - Native Americans,13 Colonies, Independence), Ghana, Australia
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The students will understand how power contributes to conflict.</i> • <i>The students will learn strategies for tackling conflict and for conflict prevention.</i> • <i>The students will understand what Independence means for a country.</i>
Fifth Grade (US Unit - Slavery, Civil War, Civil Rights), Afghanistan, South Africa
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>The students will develop a concern for civil rights.</i> ▪ <i>The students will identify minority and majority groups and recognize how this might lead to inequalities.</i> ▪ <i>Students will identify strategies for tackling conflict and for conflict prevention.</i>

Grades 6-8 - Our middle school curriculum engages students in developing social studies and literacy skills, as well as understanding the big ideas of the past and the present. Students see themselves as decision makers and actors in the curriculum and in history. Students publicly demonstrate their ideas and skills through participation in the National History Day competition. This competition enables students to hone their research, reading, writing, and speaking skills while engaging in primary source-based research.

All grades use components of the *History Alive!* program; however, this program is supplemented by the curriculum written by ICS staff and professionals in the field. The curriculum is largely focused on global citizenship objectives. For example, each grade focuses on a different theme which will be integrated throughout all subject areas in those grades. The themes are as follows:

Grade 6 — *How do peace and conflict lead to change?*

Grade 7 — *What role*

does diversity play in the story of our world?

Grade 8 — *How do different understandings of justice affect our world?*

Courses —The course titles have been changed to reflect our continued modification of the program to align with global education principles as well as examine history through a modern lens.

Gr. 6: *Classical History, Cultures, and Geography* (formerly titled *The Ancient World*)

Gr. 7: *History, Culture and Geography of the Common Era from 1000 — 1600* (formerly titled *The Medieval World and Beyond*)

Gr. 8: *U.S. and Western Hemisphere History and Geography* (formerly titled *The U.S. and the Americas*)

Through the study of history, there is an ongoing integration of the study of people and cultures around the world that have impacted and influenced the world. For example, when studying the American Revolution, our students will study other revolutions past and present to compare and contrast the ideas and events that precipitate revolt.

The grade 6 and 7 multicultural curricula are chronological and global. They introduce students to the **GREATS** of civilizations—**government, religion, economics, the arts, architecture, technology, society**—as well as ethical decision making. Students have to grapple with the rise and fall of civilizations and consider the legacy of civilizations and their influence on current values and understandings. The 8th grade course, *U.S. and Western Hemisphere History and Geography*, consists of a multicultural curriculum that is thematic while maintaining a chronology. It is unique because it places the study of U.S. history within the context of the western hemisphere. Each unit's theme includes a *U.S. Connection*, *Americas (North, Central and South) Connection*, and a *Philadelphia/Pennsylvania Connection*. It focuses on social and political movements and how all people may bring about change. Each unit in the three curricula ends with *Real World Connection* ideas to help students relate what they've studied with current issues/ideas.

Technology

ICS has nine mobile computer labs that may be used for math tutoring, second language acquisition practice, word-processing, and reserved by teachers for in-class research. There are up to 4 stationary computers in every classroom in grades 3-5 and 4 computers in each middle school *World Through Technology and ELA* classroom. Computer instruction begins in Kindergarten and continues through grade 8. Our computer instruction follows guidelines from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

In keeping with the mission of our school, the computer science curriculum incorporates the lessons that students are learning in their social studies classes. Our computer science teacher works closely with classroom teachers to create lessons that build on the instruction these teachers are providing, as well as to help students make real-world connections to their social studies content. In addition to the technology lessons conducted by their classroom teachers, students in grades 1-2 and grade 5 participate in a weekly computer class taught by the computer science teacher. Classroom teachers in grades 3-4 conduct at least one weekly computer class with the mobile lab. Students learn to use the Internet responsibly and for effective research. Teachers integrate the use of LCD projectors, document cameras, and utilize a host of educational websites to support the curricula. Students in grades 3-8 have access to their own accounts with Achieve 3000 and IXL to help them prepare for PSSA testing.

Special Education

Our team of special education teachers works closely with grade-level teachers and specialists to provide identified students with specialized instruction in the classroom (push-in) or in a resource room setting (pull-out). ICS practices full inclusion and provides support within that model to benefit the individual student. ICS special education students participate in all classes and school events. Parents who are wondering if their child may need special education services contact the

Special Education Coordinator. Parents may also speak with the classroom teacher about such concerns, and following such conversations are referred to the Special Education Coordinator.

Gifted Education

ICS does not run a separate, pull-out program for students identified as "gifted." Students may be tested and identified as gifted, an identification that remains with the student throughout his or her even after leaving ICS for high school. The ICS curriculum is already an enriched one, providing arts education and second language acquisition for all students. We have transitioned from a more traditional pull-out program, to one that focuses on providing more enrichment activities for all ICS students. We suggest that students seeking enrichment outside of the classroom join clubs such as *Odyssey of the Mind* and *Drexel Physics*, which encourage critical thinking and problem solving. Finally, and most importantly, the most current research in education promotes the idea of differentiating instruction to meet all students' individual needs, a skill which we are developing in all of our teachers. While there is no specific program or teacher dedicated specifically to students who are identified as "gifted," all teachers will be trained on meeting the enrichment needs (as well as other individual learning needs) of each student. Special education teachers, who are specifically trained in modifying instruction, will support classroom teachers in modifying assignments and creating appropriate challenge/enrichment exercises for students as necessary.

Experiential Learning

Students at ICS, from Kindergarten through eighth grade, are provided with various opportunities to enrich learning experientially. ICS partners with various community members such as the International Visitors Council, The South Asian, African, and Middle East Centers at the University of Pennsylvania, Drexel University, The Science and Clay Mobile, Outward Bound, Need in Deed, Odyssey of the Mind and similar other programs. All students at ICS attend at least one theatre production.

Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachments

- Professional Development Approval Letter
- Teacher Induction Approval Letter

English Language Learners

All students accepted through the lottery must register. The registration requires that all parents/guardians fill out the home language page. This page informs ICS staff that English may not be the home language and that further evaluation of proficiency in English will need to be administered. All non-English home language students are administered leveled tests to ascertain their need for ELL support. ELL student progress is followed and assessed regularly. Students exiting the program remain on the exited students list and we do follow up to make sure they continue to succeed without additional supports.

All English Language Learners (ELLs) are fully immersed in our regular education program. ICS' program begins with small group pull-out instruction of ELL students led by a certified ESL teacher. In these groups, students enhance their oral language and reading and writing skills. In addition, the ELL teacher conducts push-in instruction for students. The teacher serves as a resource for classroom teachers of ELL students by providing background information, professional literature, teaching "tips" and ideas for accommodating lessons to suit the needs of ELL students. The teacher also serves as a resource for parents of ELL students by encouraging participation in school activities, by providing advice about possible enrichment or after school programs, and by ensuring that classroom teachers reach out to these parents and involve them

in their children's education. Finally, one main goal of ICS' program is to ensure that all ELL students feel comfortable and welcome at ICS by providing both emotional and social support and encouragement. Our school has engaged the services of a translation agency for the purposes of providing written and oral translation that may be necessary during report card conferences, for other meetings and for important written documents. We engage these services primarily in Spanish and Indonesian, but do so in whatever language is necessary for the family and school to communicate in the family's native and most comfortable language. Furthermore, we engage interpreters for teacher/administration and parent meetings where that is necessary.

English Language Learners - Attachments

- ELL Report
- ICS LEP report
- ELL Report 2010-2011
- 2011-2012 ELL Accuracy Statement

Graduation Requirements

Our school does not graduate students, we are a K-8 school and as such graduate 8th graders into High School only.

Special Education

ICS practices full inclusion for all special education students and students who qualify for a 504 plan. In addition, those students who are thought to be in possible need of specialized instruction (and may be tested in the near future) are managed as students who need accommodations for testing, seating preference, and all other areas where special needs students are also provided special consideration.

Five special education teachers provide "pull-out" and "push-in" instruction in small groups or individually for students based on their needs and the IEP while maintaining "least restrictive environment". Push-in services occur in the regular classroom setting. The intensity of the specially designed program is appropriate to the special needs of each student. For example, a student who needs most of his/her help in reading but is functioning independently in Mathematics, will get help in Reading as well as support for strategies in the reading portions of mathematics. Students who are cognitively lower functioning may need more intensive time in a resource type setting while other students perform better when the special education teacher sits side by side in the general classroom. Special Education teachers provide special support to teachers in the form of advice regarding testing, grading, accommodations. Instructional strategies employed to ensure student success include the following:

1. utilization of specialized curriculum and approaches to instruction such as Wilson Reading.
2. instruction in flex grouping with attention to time spent in large vs. small groups
3. accommodations for testing time, place, and tested goals
4. provision for behavioral shaping and feedback system if necessary
5. utilization of best practices including addressing multiple intelligences.

Special Education teachers work with parents to write IEPs. Additional supports such as speech and language, occupational, physical therapies are provided for by an outside consultant Pediatric Therapeutic Services. Our School Psychologist performs cognitive testing and consults with parents.

Special Education teachers attend in-services providing by PATTan. Our Special Education coordinator oversees the timely completion of IEP's, 504 plans, scheduling for testing, requests for hearings and the like. Students enter the Special Education program at ICS either by entering as students with IEPs/504 plans, or are identified through a process within the school system SST(Student Success Team). In some cases, parents request testing for special needs. In other cases, students are brought to the attention of the SST which meets weekly. Teachers or other staff who work with students may fill out a SST form which is a checklist of already completed interventions on the part of the teacher. The school counselors schedule the SST presentation of the student case to a team of specialists including the Principal and the teacher. Following other interventions, a student may be recommended for testing by the school Psychologist. ICS completed its State audit in Special Education with commendations in January 2010.

Special Education - Attachments

- Notice of Adoption of Policies and Procedures and Use of Funds/Special Education
- Notice of Adoption of Policies and Procedures 2011 (Assurance for Compliance/Public Officials and Employee Ethics Act)
- 2011-2012 Special Education Policies and Procedures

Special Education Program Profile - Chart I

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Barbara Zisk	.75	Learning Support	Independence Charter	10	Special Education Chairperson and K-2 itinerant teacher
Raymond Tralie	1.00	Learning Support	Independence Charter	22	Works mostly with gr.3-4 children
Brian Flynn	1.00	Learning Support	Independence Charter	22	works mostly with gr.5-6 children
Elaine Gildein	1.00	Learning Support	Independence Charter	21	works mostly with gr.7-8 students
Yerodin Lucas	1.00	Learning Support	Independence Charter	20	works with gr.5-6 students

Special Education Program Profile - Chart II

Organization	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
NA	NA	NA	NA	0	NA

Special Education Program Profile - Chart III

Title	Location	FTE
School Psychologist	Independence Charter	.25
School Social Worker	Independence Charter	1.00

School Counselor	Independence Charter 1.00
Special Education Coordinator	Independence Charter 1.00
Paraprofessional	Independence Charter 1.00

Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV

IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual	Title/Service	Amount of Time Per Week
Pediatric Therapeutic Services	Speech and Language	.50
Pediatric Therapeutic Services	Occupational	.20
Pediatric Therapeutic Services	Physical	.20
School Psychologist	Formal testing for Spec. Ed.	.10

SECTION IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Student Assessment - Primary

Test/Classification	K	1	2	3	4	5
PSSA	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
PASA	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Acuity Assessment	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

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

Student Assessment

Independence Charter School has shown continued academic growth, meeting AYP performance threshold standards for nine consecutive years (since AYP measurement began). Review of 2011 scores reveals that we outperformed the Commonwealth in Mathematics, Science, and Writing. Our reading performance was lower than the Commonwealth's average by 4.2 percent points. The analysis of the 2011 raw figures indicated that our overall percent proficient and/or advanced for grades 3-8 represented a slight loss over the previous year's scores. However, the raw data for the 2012 PSSA scores indicates a rebound, however, these scores are expected to rise even more after adjustments are made for subgroups. Over the last three years of PSSA test taking, performance level results show a similar number of students scoring below basic. However, we do see a slight increase in the percent of students entering the proficient category.

Using growth models developed by the State and represented in the PVAAS reports, ICS students have shown significant evidence of student cohort growth over the last three academic years. Over the same time period, ICS out-performed the state in Math (except for 8th grade)

and in Reading (except for 5th and 6th grades). Reviewing only 2011 school year data, ICS outperformed the state on average. Significant evidence of exceeding growth standards was measured in Math for 4th, 6th, and 7th grades. Evidence of exceeding growth standards was measured in Math for 5th grade. There is evidence that we did not meet growth standards in Math for grade 8. Reading for grades 4th, 6th and 7th indicated exceeding growth standards. For grade 8 reading, there is evidence of moderate growth. Grade 5 reading indicated a failure to meet expected growth standards. Overall, however, there is evidence of significant growth during the 2011 academic year for both Math and Reading PSSA scores. Unfortunately, we only have raw scores for the 2012 testing and cannot comment on them at this time. Raw score analysis however, seems to indicated growth across the board.

Historically, ICS and Pennsylvania as a whole, have seen a drop in Reading and Mathematics scores on the PSSAs in fifth grade. This trend continued for the 2011 year and there is some indication of improvement for ICS in 2012. We attribute the 2011 drop in fifth grade to the fact that a significant number of 4th grade students leave for magnet schools, and their places are taken almost invariably by ELL students (due to our Spanish Immersion program). This year we have made significant changes in the way we provide academic support to fifth grade and use data from the PSSA assessment anchors to target instruction in the areas of need for the grade and for individual students. Another historical trend (both ICS and the State) is the drop in scores for 8th grade Math. We are reviewing the current 8th grade math curriculum to determine if a change in the scope and sequence is necessary. The student achievement coordinator has also worked with the 8th grade math teacher to help improve the quality of the PSSA math style questions built into regular assessments.

A school-wide effort in preparing students to be successful learners has continued this year. With the appointment of an Assessment Coordinator, ICS has focused on developing techniques and strategies to incorporate more data-driven instruction and the fostering of test-taking skills throughout the school year. ICS is committed to closing the achievement gap especially for African-American students: specifically but not limited to reading. To close the achievement gap, we have targeted the way we provide direct academic support to students. This year we hired two part time teachers to work closely with the Math Coach and Student Achievement Coordinator to provide additional pull-out support for struggling students. Restructuring of the tutoring program from an after school event to one that occurs during school has proven to be a success. This is recognition that some of our neediest students are unable to stay after school for tutoring due to transportation and safety concerns. The additional in-school support, furthermore, allowed the Reading Specialist to have smaller group sizes and to meet more often during the week with students.

ICS pays close attention to participation standards on all standardized tests, and has maintained a 99.8%-100% participation rate on all PSSA exams since participation measurement began in 2005. Graduation standards do not apply to our school, as we are a K-8 school. However, it is a primary concern for us to "graduate" our students from elementary/middle to high school in a timely fashion. Regular student attendance is a priority at ICS, and we have maintained an attendance rate average of 95% or above since attendance measurement began in 2003. Currently, our student attendance averages 96.8%.

IN-HOUSE Assessments:

At ICS, we measure student progress at regular intervals throughout the school year. This is integral to the process of creating teaching and learning goals for each student. In grades K-5 benchmark assessments are conducted 4 times during the school year and reported to parents in Interim Reports and Report Cards which are provided in each trimester. We use the following evaluation tools for benchmarks in Grades K-5: EDL2(Spanish version of the DRA for Spanish Immersion students) and the EasyCBM (Curriculum Based Measurement developed by the University of Oregon and currently managed by Riverside Publishing--English Reading and

Math evaluation administered to K-2 Enhanced and all 3-5th graders) In grades 6-8 we currently use the EasyCBM benchmark tool 3 times a year (English Language Arts and Math). At this time , we are piloting different benchmark tools for our Spanish Immersion program. In addition to benchmark assessments we utilize the Woodcock-Munoz (spanish language screening), the Woodcock-Johnson (english reading screening), W-APT (WIDA ACCESS Placement test, English Language Battery), WRAT (Wide Range Achievement Test), QRI (Qualitative Reading Inventory, English), and the Wilson Reading Assessment for individual testing. Data collected is utilized to help differentiate instruction for the needs and strengths of students.

Teacher observations and lesson plan reviews note the use of flexible groupings for student instruction, opportunities to master, practice skills, and apply skills, and to differentiate student assignments. Students are supported in the classroom with whole and small group instruction, guided reading and writing, and with the use of classroom assistants. The primary role of the classroom assistants is to support students within the classroom setting. Additional support is provided by the reading specialist, tutoring staff, special education teachers, and a pull-out academic classroom assistant. Student who continue to struggle after interventions have been in place are referred to the Student Success Team (SST). The SST reviews the student case with the teacher(s) and may indicate eventual testing for learning needs. Parent support is elicited where outside support is needed.

WIDA ACCESS for ELL

Students who have been identified as ELL are part of ICS's ESL program must be evaluated annually to determine gains in language development and possible exit from the ESL program. During the 2011-2012 academic year, we tested 35 active ELL students. Overall, our students showed significant gains in the development of English Language usage. Based on review of scores , ICS will exit 14 students (exiting the ESL program requires the use of PSSA scores which are available only in raw form).

Student Assessment - Attachments

- PVAAS Data Diagnostic
- 2010 AYP Report
- Assessment 2010-2011
- PSSA Analysis 2008-2010
- PVAAS Data 2010
- WIDA ELL

Teacher Evaluation

Teacher Supervision and Evaluation at ICS — 2011-2012

Evaluation and Supervision — an overview

Meaningful supervision and evaluation are integral in assuring quality learning experiences for ICS students, for ICS families, and for assuring meaningful professional growth for ICS teachers.

Teacher supervision and teacher evaluation each have different purposes. The purpose of evaluation is to make judgments concerning the overall quality of the teacher's performance and the teacher's competence in carrying out professional responsibilities. Determined by an evaluator, it is designed to outline a minimum standard of competent performance in the role of teacher, and to ascertain whether a person meets that standard.

The purpose of supervision is to support and promote teacher growth. The person supervising the teacher does not determine proficiency, but instead supports the teacher's and school's goals. S/he works with the teacher, starting wherever that teacher may currently be, and striving to help that teacher move beyond that level. Supervision is driven by a school's and the teacher's philosophy and established beliefs about teaching, learning, and best practices. The teacher and supervisor work together to help the teacher determine goals and areas of growth. The teacher crafts his or her own goals for the students, and then works to achieve those self-designed goals. The colleague supporting the teacher acts "as another set of eyes and ears to capture classroom events and then talk with the teacher to help to make sense of what is happening in the classroom and what impact it is having on individual learners. Supervision is... a professional, community building activity that recognizes that teachers are motivated by internal drives such as a desire to improve their own professional competence and a desire to maximize student learning."

- adapted from Nolan, James F. Jr and Linda A. Hoover, *Teacher Supervision & Evaluation*

Evaluation allows a school to make determinations regarding placement and hiring, as well as provides the teacher with written documentation of his/her performance as determined by the evaluator, but does not in itself promote growth. The supervision process, on the other hand, is the key factor in supporting teacher growth and best practice implementation at ICS.

The Supervision and Evaluation Process at ICS

Teachers receive a year-end evaluation each spring. The year-end evaluation is comprised of formal and informal feedback. The year-end evaluation is based on walk-through evidence, at least one formal observation, teacher input, and the professional demeanor the teacher exhibits throughout the school year.

- Informal Observations (Walk-Throughs)
 - Informal observations can happen at any time. They will focus on the domains of the year-end evaluation —planning and preparation, classroom practice, student management and professional responsibilities. Such informal or walk-through observations occur daily. The principal and/or CEO will conduct at least 4 per year. In addition, a combination of the deans, curriculum specialist, language coach, Special Education coordinator and other coordinators/specialists as applicable will document at least 2 walk-through/informal observations each trimester. Their informal observations are designed to support teachers. This team works closely with the principal and provides valuable feedback.

- Formal Observations:
 - A formal observation is an observation of a full lesson. Teachers will be informed of the week the principal or CEO will be observing. The observer will use the **Classroom Observation Form** to document the lesson observed.
 - After the observation, the teacher will receive a **Post-Observation Reflection Form** to explain the lesson goals and planned strategies, as well as assess the lesson him/herself. The teacher will bring a completed copy of this form to the post-observation meeting. The principal or CEO will bring the completed **Classroom Observation Form**. Both forms will inform the discussion and become part of the teacher's file at ICS.

- Year-End Evaluation:

- The year-end evaluation is completed by both the teacher (voluntary) and the principal/CEO. The final copy of the principal's/ CEO's evaluation(with teacher comments) becomes part of the teacher's file at ICS.

Individuals responsible for teacher and staff evaluation:

Teacher formal evaluations are completed by the Lower and Middle School Principals as well as the CEO when requested. Informal evaluations are done by the Special Education Chair, Language Coach and the Math Coach. Non-teaching staff evaluations such as for cafeteria staff are done by the Operations Manager. Administrative staff evaluations are done by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The Principal evaluations are done by the CEO (who is an experienced Principal). Included in the overall 360 degree evaluation of the Principal and CEO is feedback from surveys of teachers, Trustees, and parents regarding their performance. In addition, the Principals submit a professional portfolio to the CEO, and the CEO submits a professional portfolio to the Board of Trustees as part of their respective evaluations.

The Teacher Evaluation Task Force is an ongoing committee that is continuing to revise this process. Our goal is to increase our focus on meaningful supervision as we revise our system.

Description of professional development related to teacher evaluation:

At ICS, professional development begins in August. Teachers new to ICS and returning teachers are trained in the ICS Mission and Vision, basic information about code of conduct, special education law, classroom management, best practices and induction procedures (new teachers and mentors only). In addition, the new staff is taken on a tour of the local community and community resources. August inservice training also focuses on school procedures and curriculum work. During the school year, we have several professional development days. In addition, we have weekly early dismissals on Wednesdays for teacher and staff meetings and group work. We utilize much of the skill on hand for turn-around training. These included workshops on accommodating for special education needs, student support, spelling, using math manipulatives, etc.. Our Special Education coordinator presents best practices for inclusion. For the past two years, we have invited parents to speak to teachers about students in the mainstream. Time is also set aside to provide grade level meeting time to establish working relationships as well as cross-grade projects. Our evaluators continue their professional development through involvement in challenging seminars and workshops.

Instructional techniques unique to our mission include

- TPR: Total Physical Response used in the Conversational Spanish and other World Languages, which is a language-teaching technique that focuses on using all modalities to teach (and therefore learn) language.
- Total Immersion for the Spanish program which means having teachers speak only Spanish to English-based kids. The students quickly absorb Spanish by being immersed in it.
- Project-based and experiential learning as possible including meeting and working with people from all over the world.

-Differentiated Instruction

Teachers regularly attend professional development in the form of national and local conferences to support their learning of such techniques to support their instruction.

Teacher Evaluation - Attachments

- 10-11 Year-End Evaluation Form
- 10-11 Informal Observation Feedback
- 10-11 Formal Observation Form
- 10-11 Improvement Plan Template
- 10-11 Post Observation Reflection Form
- 10-11 Professional Goals Ideas
- 10-11 Professional Goals Template
- 10-11 Professional Responsibility Form
- ICS Teacher Evaluation Plan

SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

Leadership Changes

Beginning with the 2008-2009 school year, the Board of Trustees created a new administrative position of Principal to complement the work of the CEO. The CEO who had been the Principal and CEO since the school's inception retained the role of CEO. The role of principal was split into two principal roles in 2011-2012: lower school and middle school principals in order to provide closer work on curriculum as well as student and family work. This decision was based on a task force evaluating leadership and support following preparation for Middle States Accreditation. The CEO focuses more on community development, grant writing and the general management of the school and the requirements of the state and local school district. At that time, the Board also created the role of Language Coach which is a very necessary role given the unique emphasis on second and third language development at ICS. For the 2010-2011 school year, the Board also established the full time position of Family and Community Partnerships Coordinator. This long-needed resource provides a communications link for parents, organizes parent support and training, and creates connections to the larger community.

In addition, as part of the Middle States Strategic Planning Process, a committee was formed to review and consider any changes that might have been necessary in support of new strategic plans. The Board has supported the recommended split of the Principal role into a lower and upper school Principal/Director positions. To that end, a search committee was formed and an upper school principal/director was appointed (from an internal candidate). The lower school Principal/director was not appointed as the recommended candidate accepted a position elsewhere. Consequently, we appointed an interim principal. Following a search, a lower school principal has been appointed for the 2012-2013 school year.

ICS has an 14 member Board. Our by-laws allow a 9 to 17 Board composition. The Board undergoes periodic training during the school year. A new board member was elected and he formed a new executive committee from among the board members. The Board had employed outside consultants to guide them through this strategic planning regarding board growth and maturity. At the end of this school year there were 11 board members, 2 board members retired, and one board member serving in a parent seat completed her term. These three were replaced by four new board members. This growth was planned and thoughtfully executed.

There is an ex-officio seat for a teacher representative at the Board Meetings. This teacher is elected by the staff and is required to participate in various committee meetings and make reports to the Board and public at the meetings.

Board of Trustees

Name of Trustee	Office (if any)
Elsie Stern	Board President
Rebecca Clothey	Vice President
Susanna Greenberg	Secretary
Gloria Shabazz	Treasurer
Derrick Johnson	officer
Dana Twyman	officer
Naomi Wyatt	officer
John Eagen	officer
Michael Barsanti	officer
Tre Johnson	officer

Lauren Ayala	officer
Sheila Simmons	officer
Nirva LaFortune	officer
Brigitte Daniel	officer

Professional Development (Governance)

All members of the Board of Trustees underwent training in both the legal responsibilities as public officials and Board Trustees of a charter school in Pennsylvania and in the financial responsibilities in regard the budget and finances of the school. The legal training was provided by Terry Henry our legal counsel from Cozen O'Conner and the financial training was given by G. Santilli of Santilli/Thomson. Board training for growth and strategic planning was provided by Strategy Arts. The internal workshops occur quarterly however, more frequent workshops can occur when special occasions require it. This is ongoing.

Topics of training were as follows:

1. Rules and regulations regarding suspensions, expulsions, and special education law implications.
2. Right-to-know impact
3. By-laws modification policy
4. How to read financial reports and budgets
5. a review of Sunshine Law and the Public Officials Act

This Board of Trustees operates faithfully following the Sunshine Law and the Public Officials Act. Board Meetings are open to the public, posted in advance. Board Meetings include a time on the agenda for public comment.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School

The ICS BOT meets once a month as a whole Board with the exception of one month (usually August) when they are in summer recess. In addition, the Board supports active committees in all major areas pertaining to the governing and administering of the school; these committees are Curriculum, Finance, Human Resources, Community Relations, Development, Discipline, Facilities, and Policy. All committees meet monthly or bimonthly and provide reports to the full board at the monthly BOT meetings. The committees may bring resolutions to the whole board and the board votes on these resolutions but only when they meet as a whole. The Executive Committee is always available to the CEO should there be any questions or concerns pertaining to governance and direction of the school. In addition, each Board meeting is preceded by a written CEO report that details current areas of interest to the Board. Board committees also provide written minutes prior to the monthly board meetings so that board members may read up on current committee work. In this manner, BOT members are informed and involved in all areas.

The CEO maintains a regular dialogue and good relationship with the School District of Philadelphia and specifically the Charter School Office and informs the Board of all current

events. Board Members have also attended meetings with the Charter School Office leaders. The CEO attends meetings called by the Associate Superintendent for Charter Schools and EMOs.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School - Attachments

- Independence Charter School BOT meeting schedule
- Schedule of Board of Trustees Meetings
- ICS Board Meeting Schedule 2010-2011
- Board of Trustees Schedule 2011-2012

Community and Parent Engagement

ICS was founded by parents and the BOT remains committed to the principle and implementation of parent involvement. In addition to the 12 Board seats, the Board also supports two additional parent seats that are elected by parents for two-year terms. Parents are solicited to be candidates for the other open Board seats and to join BOT committees through postings on the website and through letters sent home and through the listserve. ICS also partners with community organizations in many different capacities (for example, for programming and instruction) such as attending theatre productions, cultural presentations, inviting cultural speakers and performers. ICS also participates and supports local community efforts. We are members of the Center City Residents Association and participate in their Center City Tour providing our school as a location for a rest stop. Our students participate in helping to green and clean up the neighborhood.

Parents participate on all of the subcommittees to the Board of Trustees. Community members are invited to assist in committees where applicable. The Development Committee of ICS invites guests from the community to visit our school during special events. ICS has also recently joined some neighborhood community groups. In addition, the BOT supports programs within the general budget that provide additional support for at-risk students, such as tutoring without cost to the family.

A representative of the PTA presents to the monthly public meeting of the Board of Trustees and there is a healthy relationship that is productive between these two groups.

The position of Family and Community Liaison was created. This has been a highly effective Full Time position that helps to support community and parent involvement. With the ending of stimulus monies we have incorporated this position into the regular operating budget.

SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Major fund-raising activities

For the 20011-2012, ICS eliminated the Development Director position and created a part time development associate position. This person manages existing grants and EITC, helps to write new grants, works to develop other fundraising. The following is a list of the activities we undertake to fundraise supporting tutoring, special arts activities, theatre trips, and other experiential learning for students off campus.

1. This year we sponsored an anniversary celebration to celebrate 10 years of excellence. We

also instituted Global Citizen awards for those community members who enhance our global citizenship mission.

2. We do a yearly letter writing fundraiser to all of our families. This year the focus was on technology.
3. Our PTA does a yearly silent auction that raises money for our arts program. Their fundraising is separate from ours however. This year, a subgroup of the PTA created a Donor's Circle that reached out to all parents asking for a more substantial donation.
4. The PTA also does various promotions such as Scholastic book selling or pizza and cookie dough selling to earn more money to support our programs.

It is important to note that we received a sizeable federal grant to support Arabic language teaching in our middle school. This grant was awarded in 2010 and was supposed to be a three year grant. However, due to fiscal stress at the federal level, all FLAP (Foreign Language Assistance Program) grants were terminated at the end of year two. Given the sudden announcement, participants were allowed to extend the grant to finish up use of all monies into 2013.

All grants are approved by the Board of Trustees by resolution.

Grant application plans for next year include continuing applications for various grants at the 10-15K level, fundraising at a yearly celebration in the fall, and strengthening our parent donor base.

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 Controller 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 SAGE MIP 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 - Attachment

- Preliminary Statement of Revenues

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

The school's auditing firm is Citrin Copperman. The last audit is dated December 22, 2011 for fiscal year 2010-2011 and has a clean unqualified opinion. There are no material findings or questioned costs. The 2011-2012 audit will be completed in November and will be submitted under a separate cover.

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

- Independence Charter School Audit 2010-2011

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

The school currently leases a facility at 1600 Lombard Street. from an affiliated non profit, Worlds of Opportunity Foundation. It was purchased and renovated with funds derived from tax exempt financing.

The school purchased furniture and equipment costing \$33,000 after obtaining quotations from various vendors during Fiscal Year 2012. These purchases were funded from the operating budget

Future Facility Plans and Other Capital Needs

In accordance with the school's strategic plan, the School's Board of Trustees (through its affiliate, Worlds of Opportunity Foundation) purchased a former public school building located at 1600 Lombard Street in Philadelphia. The school/foundation has renovated the existing structure and constructed a three story addition. Financing for the project was provided through the issuance of tax exempt bonds. The project was completed on September 1, 2008.

There is a Facilities Committee which has discussed the possibility of building an addition which would provide a gym (which currently does not exist at the school) and would allow for the

expansion of the lunchroom. However, the current economic climate does not allow for the school to consider formal plans.

The school has no formal capital plans for additional space at this time.

SECTION VIII. HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

ICS has complied with all health and safety requirements including fire prevention, fire drills, shelter in place, evacuation, intruder drills. The records for this are available in the front office. In addition, these records are inspected by Licensing and Inspection and the fire marshal yearly.

A safety team comprised of the CEO, the Principal, the Deans, the Operations Director meet to review and revise as necessary the safety plan. The drills are coordinated by the Operations Director in cooperation with the CEO and the Deans.

The health records are reviewed at the end of the school year for returning students and letters are sent to all grades and students whose records are out of compliance. Current students who are not fully immunized may not return to school in September until their parents have provided documentation. New incoming students are not fully accepted as students fully registered until all immunization records are complete. The registered practical nurse, our school nurse who is employed through BAYADA nursing service, is the caretaker of health and immunization records for students.

The Wellness Policy with the amendment remains the same as passed in 2008.

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

- medical reimbursement proof
- Wellness Policy with Amendment
- SHARRS report 2011
- 2011-2012 SHARRS

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs

In fiscal year 2010-2011 for medical Insurance the school offered the following plans in accordance with Act 22 to employees:

- Aetna 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 - Attachments

- Insurance Certificate 2010
- 2010-2011 ICS Insurance/ACCORD list
- ACCORD insurance document

SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff

In the 2011-2012 school year, we have 64 professional staff reported on the PDE 414. In addition, we have the CEO and the Family and Community Partnerships position. Our total staff includes NTA positions, a Director of Operations, clerical and support staff, classroom assistants, IT support personnel for a total of 110 ICS staff members both full and part time.

Of the 64 professional staff, 57 were returning staff or 90%. Among those not returning were staff that left to continue higher education pursuits, be stay-at home moms after the delivery of their babies, or took positions in other schools. All of the professional staff remained for the entire school year.

Generally speaking, the greatest impact on our turnover is maternity leaves that turn in to stay-at-home moms and dads. Our improved retention is a testimony to the improved academic and support structure including the support of two principals.

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff - Attachment

- 414 Verification form

Student Enrollment

Independence Charter School's enrollment policy is as follows: an open lottery system that does not select students based on income, ability or educational success is held every year in February for the following school year. Applications are accepted starting in October. These applications are available in the front office and online at our website. Preference is given to Philadelphia residents and that is why we ask for proof of residency. This is because we always have more applicants than openings, with rare exceptions in our upper Total Spanish Immersion classes. The blind lottery is conducted by the CEO, the CEO's Assistant, a Board Member and at least two impartial staff and PTA members with an audience of parents who attend if they wish to. We use a very traditional system of pulling applications from a translucent container, (or use a "bingo" type wheel) specific to the grade level to which the student's family has applied. The name of the selected student is read aloud and it is entered into the pile of accepted students for that grade. This is recorded automatically onto a spreadsheet and the spreadsheet is visible to all participants through an LCD projector. After all of the slots that are empty are filled, we pull names to create a waiting list. Sibling preference is also given to families who have students currently at ICS as long as those parents have indicated an interest by submitting an application

in October through January and as long as the student is a resident of Philadelphia. Three notices are sent to parents in that regard.

Kindergarten spaces are filled first as they are the only true openings. All other openings are dependent on student enrollment, retention due to failure, and the like (we have a 97% retention of students and families). Therefore, all applications for gr. 2-8 are selected randomly and placed in that order on a wait list. ICS currently has over 1000 students on their wait list with well over 350 of those for the Kindergarten spots. Students on wait lists are admitted as openings occur, whether during the summer or during the school year. Parents are notified of openings by mail or telephone and are given an appointment to present all necessary paperwork. If a parent does not respond, one more attempt is made to contact the family. If there is no response to our phone and mail inquiries, we move on to the next person on the wait list and the aforementioned is removed from the wait list.

Kindergartners must be age 5 by September 1st to be eligible for enrollment at ICS. First graders who are not yet 6 and are coming from a Kindergarten experience must show proof of completion of a Kindergarten program successfully and/or may be required to pass a simple proficiency test to gauge skill levels and readiness for first grade.

grade	students September 2011	# of students transferred out	# of students transferred in	# of students June 2012
k	88	1	1	88
1	93	0	0	93
2	96	2	1	95
3	94	0	1	94
4	94	0	2	96
5	92	1	1	92
6	83	1	0	82
7	86	4	3	85
8	63	0	1	64
totals	789	9	10	789

Of the 789 students who completed the school year, 64 graduated from eighth grade leaving 725 students. We expect 712 students in grades 1-8 to return. We expect another 88 students to enter Kindergarten. This means a total of at least 800 students are expected to enter ICS in September 2012.

ICS retains approximately 97% of its students and families from year to year. We have a high return percentage because of the quality of the program that we provide for students and because of the support available for families. One of our biggest challenges is distance and transportation. Our students commute from 46 zip codes in the city of Philadelphia. Because Kindergarten parents must provide their own transportation, it is often the source of withdrawal due to the frustration of traffic. We did not see that this year. We also have some families leave because they do not like our Code of Conduct. We work hard to inform all new families of this code of conduct but some families do not agree with the consequences to unacceptable behaviors which disrupt learning for all.

Trends in enrollment are as follows: we lose approximately 5-10 students at the end of 4th grade (thus the expected 712). These are students who are accepted into Masterman. Many of those students are in the Total Spanish Immersion program and therefore not easy to replace through the lottery. We have been more successful in increasing the number of spanish speaking students entering the lottery who are biliterate and bilingual. In terms of retention for academic

reasons, we use multiple teams to assess the need for retention. We avoid that in most cases for upper grades, but use it judiciously in the lower grades.

There was one expulsion in the 2011-2012 school year. However 4 students left voluntarily. None of these students were weapons violations students.

Student Enrollment - Attachment

- Student enrollment policies and procedures

Transportation

All students in grades 1 to 6 are eligible for yellow school bus transportation if they live 1.5 or more miles from school. Approximately 300 ICS students ride yellow school buses. There are eleven such busses. Our special education students ride these busses if their parents choose to do so. In some cases, if a student is orthopedically impaired, they may require a special bus. Other special education students require an assistant for the bus and we acquire such assistance by petitioning the school district of Philadelphia. In some cases, the TSS worker accompanies the student on the bus. The School District charges exorbitant fees for an assistant assigned by them on the bus. Currently, we have to pay for the assignment of an assistant on the bus.

Because we do not directly select the bus company that provides our service, and because they are granted a lengthy contract, sometimes there are problems with the quality of drivers, and the response of the company. We work as closely as possible with those individuals and with the School District of Philadelphia which has granted the contracts. We have assigned our own transportation coordinator who works with the school district and the bus company management. This coordinator also manages complaints and requests from parents. We take significant care in providing each bus line (i.e. each bus cohort) with a bus coordinator which is one of the staff of our school. Attendance is taken daily and children are checked twice as they enter the bus. The Deans provide training to students about safe bus behavior. We have a strict bus behavior code of conduct as designated in our student handbook.

Food Service Program

With the move into the new building, we were presented with the possibility of providing a full service lunch for our kids. A parent committee with Board participation researched the possibilities of costs and associated paperwork to run our own lunch program. Members of the committee participated in trainings given by the state, and after considerable research, we posted requests for bids for our full service lunch program. This full program was provided to all students with a free and reduced lunch status as well as any students whose parents had to pay full price lunch (which is \$ 2.35). The number of students eating increased considerably. We managed all of our own applications to the state for the eligibility for lunches and for the commodities that we were eligible for. At present, over 60% of our students use this lunch program while the others bring bagged lunches. We also participated in a Farm to School pilot program for a few weeks. We also provide breakfast for our students. We have this past school year undergone the required re-bidding for a lunch provider as required by the state. We have undergone the federal lunch program audit successfully. We have this year been awarded the Fruits and Veggies grant from the state which we will implement in the coming year.

Our biggest challenge is a small lunchroom and for that reason in the coming year we are piloting the expansion of the lunch room space into the library space. The library will be moved into the resource room.

Student Conduct

Our expectations for student behavior are spelled out in our Mission and Vision statements as well as in our discipline policy. We recognize that students come from various environments and may or may not have the tools to negotiate, to share, to accept criticism, to be constructive in their comments, to be able to focus for long periods of time, to demonstrate respect for peers and supervising adults. We consider it our goal to help students learn those skills if they do not already possess them. We consider it our obligation to involve parents in that same process of teaching, learning, and supporting. We also believe that all students have the right to an environment conducive to learning. Therefore, students who are highly disruptive and not amenable to the complex supports that we attempt to put in place may be brought up for expulsion. This happens only after exhaustive efforts are put in place to support the student including resources inside and outside the school such as outside agencies (inpatient, outpatient services, etc). The supports that we put in to place are:

1. Parent consultation
2. Teacher consultation to help target behaviors and to give behavioral support as well as ongoing teacher training in classroom management.
3. Possible classroom switching.
4. Behavior charts with rewards and consequences
5. Progressive discipline as per our code of conduct
6. Referral to outside sources including: Crisis Centers, Partial Hospitalization, Wrap-around services, family and child counseling.
7. Testing by our school psychologist when indicated
8. SST process/RTI

Student cases which may be brought up for expulsion are reviewed by a team comprised of the Principal and the CEO, Deans of Students, Counselors, teachers, and any other support staff that are relevant. Cases may also be dropped if evidence for expulsion is not indicated. When students receive suspensions in excess of two days, parents are informed of due process to contest the suspensions and may request a hearing.

In respect to expulsion hearings, the parents are informed of all of their due process rights to representation and the like in a letter provided to each parent. Students who are failing academically are never considered eligible for expulsion as a single criteria.

For the 2011-2012 school year: there was one expulsion. Suspensions: 73 students were suspended a total of 162 times.

Student Conduct - Attachments

- 2008-2009 Student and Parent ICS Handbook
- ICS Handbook for Students and Parents/Guardians
- Student Discipline policies

Signature Page

Assurance for the Operation of Charter School Services and Programs

School Year: 2012

The Independence 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
2011 - 2012 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 Independence 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: Richard Trzaska **Title:** CEO
Phone: 215-238-8000 ext.2223 **Fax:** 215-545-2924
E-mail: richtr@icscharter.com

Signature of the Chief Executive Officer and Date

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

Name: Elsie Stern **Title:** President
Phone: 215-238-8000 **Fax:** 215-545-2924
E-mail: estern@rrc.edu

Signature of the President of the Board of Trustees and Date

Identify the charter school's Special Education Contact Person.

Name: Barbara Zisk **Title:** Spec.Ed. Coordinator
Phone: 215-238-8000 ext.2313 **Fax:** 215-545-2924
E-mail: barbaraz@icscharter.com

Signature of the Special Education Contact Person and Date

Signature Page - Attachments

- Signature Page: Assurance for Compliance
- Signature Page: Assurance for Operations
- Signature Pages: Assurance for Operations and Public Officials Acts

- Signature Page 2011 (Assurance for Compliance/Public Officials and Employee Ethics Act)
- signature page 2011 (assurance for the operation of services and programs)
- 2011-2012 Signatures