
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, October 20, 2011)

Entity: Philadelphia Montessori CS
Address: 2227 Island Rd
Philadelphia, PA 19142-1009

CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

Summary Data Part I

Charter School Annual Report Summary Data 2011 - 2012

Name of School: Philadelphia Montessori CS

Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval: March 17, 2004 initial / May 20, 2009 renewed for 1 year term/ August 25, 2010 renewed for remainder of 5 year term (ending June 30, 2014)

Length of Charter: 4 years **Opening Date:** September 23, 2004

Grade Level: PreK (3 years) - 6th Grade **Hours of Operation:** M-Th: 8:30 - 3:30; F: 8:30 - 2:15

Percentage of Certified Staff: 83.98% **Total Instructional Staff:** 20 (10 lead, 10 assistant)

Student/Teacher Ratio: 17:1 (student:teacher) or 10:1 (student:adult) **Student Waiting List:** 66

Attendance Rate/Percentage: 93.5%

Second Site Address, Phone Number and Site Director:
N/A

Summary Data Part II

Enrollment: 235 PreK-6 (ADM 223.4) **Per Pupil Subsidy:** \$8,773 Reg. Ed.; \$19,422 Sp. Ed.

Student Profile

American Indian/Alaskan Native:	1 (0.43%)
Asian/Pacific Islander:	0 (0.00%)
Black (Non-Hispanic):	224 (95.32%)
Hispanic:	2 (0.85%)
White (Non-Hispanic):	6 (2.55%)
Multicultural:	2 (0.85%)

Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch:
72.5% (K-6)

Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December: 37

Instructional Days and Hours

Number of:	K (AM)	K (PM)	K (F.Time)	Elem.	Middle.	Sec.	Total
Instructional Days	0	0	179	179	179	0	179
Instructional Hours	0	0	916.15	1050.4	1050.4	0	1033.62

SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Educational Community

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School (PMCS) is currently is a public Montessori school serving children from preschool through sixth grade in 2011-2012. Montessori is a child-centered educational approach which highlights student autonomy and problem-solving skills, hands-on learning, and student initiated learning. The curriculum emphasizes topics which are of interest to the students, with subjects studied in depth. The ability to do this is grounded by the fact that students remain with the same teacher for three years in multi-age classrooms. Peace education and the interdependence of all things are at the core of the Montessori curriculum.

The school opened in 2004 with preschool through third grade, and has added a grade each year. During the 2010-11 school year, PMCS graduated its fourth class of sixth graders. PMCS is located near the corner of two busy streets in Southwest Philadelphia — Island and Woodland Avenues — less than ten minutes from the Philadelphia International Airport. During the 2011-2012 school year, PMCS enrolled 225 students in prekindergarten through sixth grade, while maintaining a sizable waiting list. The majority of our students come from the following zip codes: 19142, 19143, 19151 and 19153, although we do attract students from throughout the city.

Mission

The mission of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School is to provide early elementary school children in Philadelphia with a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, innovative educational environment

that will enable them to become young adults possessing strong self-discipline, independent and analytical thinking skills, and an enduring love of learning.

Vision

The overarching vision of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School is to offer a fully implemented Montessori program in an urban, public school setting. Building on the School District of Philadelphia's history of Montessori education — the School District has implemented Montessori programs in some variations at the Thomas Mifflin School, Alexander Wilson School, William C. Longstreth School and Overbrook Elementary School — the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School offers a program for students ages 3 to 12 in which the Montessori method is implemented by specially trained teachers who pay special attention to the unique developmental needs of individual students.

Shared Values

The core beliefs and values of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School:

1) **Focus on Education for Life:**

The purpose of PMCS goes beyond helping students to acquire basic academic skills. Students should graduate with both academic skills and the ability to act independently, think analytically, resolve conflicts peacefully, and realize their responsibility to others and to our world.

2) **Student-Centered Classrooms:**

Following the Montessori method, PMCS gives children, within a controlled environment, the freedom to choose their own activities. This stems from the belief that children learn by doing, and this requires movement and spontaneous investigation. Individualized "lesson plans" are developed for each child based on observations of the child's previous skill attainment. Each child is given lessons at his/her own developmentally appropriate level in all subject areas. Lessons are re-presented until the child attains mastery. Presentations and teacher follow-up establish the foundation for spontaneous choice.

3) **Specially Trained Teachers:**

Because of the unique role of the teacher in the Montessori classroom, the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School requires its teachers to have undergone specific Montessori education, which includes rigorous training in child development, psychology, observation, student teaching, use of Montessori materials, and classroom management.

4) **Multi-Age Classrooms:**

The charter school organizes children in multi-age class groupings that correspond with the developmental stages of childhood (ages 3-6 and 6-9) rather than traditional grade groupings (K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd). Younger students are stimulated by older role models, who in turn blossom with the responsibilities of leadership. Students not only learn *with* each other, but also *from* each other.

5) **Prepared Environment:**

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School has carefully prepared each classroom environment to reinforce the children's independence and intellectual development. Rather than rows of desks, the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School's classrooms are set up to facilitate student discussion and stimulate collaborative learning.

6) **Montessori Materials:**

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School uses hands-on Montessori learning materials (other than textbooks and workbooks) that are designed to stimulate the child into logical thought and discovery. The materials are provocative and simple; each carefully designed to appeal to children at a given level of development. Each material isolates and teaches one thing or is used to present one skill at a time, as the child is ready.

7) **Focus on Peace Education:**

In the Montessori classroom, peace education is not taught as a separate curriculum but is the unifying thread throughout the child's academic, social and emotional experience in the classroom. It is "taught" through the interactions between teacher and child, child and child(ren), and children and their use of the materials in the environment. Children are taught continually to respect everyone and everything in the environment and to solve problems through peaceful means. At the elementary level, children will move from the ability to solve problems in their own classroom into a growing understanding, compassion, and tolerance for their world.

Academic Standards

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School has a Primary through 6th grade PA Academic Standard-aligned Montessori curriculum, which has been in place since the school's opening. In 2009-10, as part of our extensive educational reform efforts, PMCS created a scope sequence curriculum, so that teachers in multi-year classrooms will be aware of the eligible content at each grade level throughout the year.

A brief synopsis of the minimum requirements of our school in order to be promoted from one grade level to the next is included in this section of the report. This is not a full description of our academic standards.

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School groups children in developmental age groups as follows in 2011-12: Pre-K - Kindergarten, 1st-3rd grade (6-9 years), and 4th-6th grade in isolated grade level classrooms. In 2012-13, PMCS will be discontinuing their preschool program. On impact of this will be that the Kindergarten students will no longer be split up among four different classrooms (with pre-school students). Next year, approximately 27 kindergartens students will be in the same classroom with two Montessori and PA certified co-teachers. While students will still be taught with the Montessori model, the focus will be on Kindergarten-level skills throughout the entire day (where previously Kindergarten instruction was limited to the afternoon while the preschool students napped). PMCS believes that Kindergarten is the fundamental year to ensure children have the literacy and mathematics foundation to start first grade at or above grade level. First-Third grade will be grouped and there will be two classes of 4th-5th grade (9-11 years) and one middle school class of 6th grade.

Below are the minimum academic requirements for moving from kindergarten to first grade, from 3rd grade to 4th grade, and for graduation from 6th grade. This document was shared with and actively reviewed by all instructional staff on numerous occasions, during professional development meetings on topics of monitoring individual student progress, portfolio assessment, and student promotion and

retention. In addition, these criteria are tied to the Montessori curriculum. When revisiting the criteria, we will also take into consideration how the criteria compare to state anchors in math and reading.

Criteria for Moving from the Primary (3 years - 6 years/kindergarten) Level to the Elementary (6 years/1st grade - 9 years/3rd grade) Level:

At the end of his first three years (i.e. equivalent to kindergarten completion), the child will be proficient in the following areas:

Academic Areas

Language

The child will:

- Be able to read phonetic words, identify a variety of sight words and recognize consonant blends in words.
- Be able to read level-one easy readers.
- Be aware of the function of words and describe them as action, descriptive, naming, connective or positional words (i.e. verb, adjective, noun, etc.).
- Be able to express his/her thoughts in writing and have the hand and finger dexterity to use pencils as instruments for writing.

Mathematics

The child will:

- Be able to count from 1-100 or beyond.
- Be able to identify tens and teens.
- Be able to identify units, tens, hundreds, thousands.
- Be able to add and subtract (with concrete materials) single digit problems.
- Be able to add and subtract (with concrete materials) complex numbers up to 9,000.
- Be able to count by 2's, 3's, 4's, 5's, 6's, 7's, 8's, 9's, and 10's up to 100.
- Have an understanding of addition and subtraction.

Geography

The child will:

- Have some knowledge of the 7 continents, their names and locations.
- Know some simple facts about the people from each continent, their houses, common customs, common religions and livelihoods.
- Will have a developing concept of land and water forms.

Nonacademic Areas

The child will:

- Have a sense of process (be able to follow multi-step directions).
- Have a well-developed sense of order (organization) and control of movement (fine and gross motor skills).
- Be able to concentrate on a task for at least 45 minutes.
- Have developed a good degree of self-control.

Because there is some overlap between the 3-6 curriculum and the 6-9 curriculum, children who have not mastered everything in each area of the curriculum can often be promoted because the receiving teacher will be able to address the skills that have not yet been attained.

Criteria for Moving from the Elementary Level (6-9) to the Elementary (9-12)

At the end of the second three-year curriculum (i.e. when leaving the third grade), the child will be proficient in the following areas:

Academic Areas

Language

The child will:

- Be reading at or above the grade level appropriate for his age.
- Have an understanding of and ability to apply the rules of grammar and syntax.
- Be able to produce a finished piece of writing having gone through rough draft, editing, polishing the piece.

Mathematics

The child will:

- Be able to count from 1-1000 and beyond.
- Be able to use math operations in addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division using complex numbers.
- Be able to read and solve math word problems and describe the process used.
- Have an understanding of squares and cubes of numbers, and multiples of numbers.
- Understand basic geometric principles

Geography

The child will:

- Have in-depth knowledge of the 7 continents; comparing them in size and population.
- Have begun to study a particular continent in depth, including its countries.
- Have a working knowledge of the United States.
- Have made a state book for each of the 50 states.
- Have identified land and water forms on various maps of the world.

A child of 9 will be able to select an area of study, know how to research it and organize the information in at least one way to produce a finished product.

Nonacademic Areas

The child will:

- Have a well-developed sense of process.
- Have a well-developed sense of right and wrong.
- Be able to accept responsibility for his/her behavior.
- Be able to solve conflicts peacefully.

Criteria for Graduating from the 6th Grade at PMCS:

At the end of six years in the PMCS elementary program, the child will be able to:

Academic Areas

Language

The child will:

- Be reading at the appropriate grade level or above.
- Have an understanding of noun and adjective classification, compound and complex sentences.
- The child will have completed an in-depth study of literature and have developed an appreciation of style.
- Be able to express thought through various forms of writing: persuasive, expository, narrative, poetry, etc.

Mathematics

The child will:

- Have an understanding of squaring and cubing, negative numbers, powers of numbers, non-decimal bases, ratio and proportion, and algebra.

Geography

The child will:

- Have an understanding of the nature of the elements.
- Have an understanding of the relationship between the sun and the Earth.

- Have an understanding of the work of air and water.
- Have an understanding of the interdependencies of people.
- Have knowledge of natural resources and the development of industry.

The child of 12 will be able to select several areas of study, know how to research an area using many kinds of sources, and have the ability to organize the information in several ways according to the subject.

Nonacademic Areas

The child will:

- Be able to work independently.
- Be able to help younger children organize a project.
- Be able to mediate problems between other children.

Strengths and Challenges

The 2011-2012 school year continued to be a year of strategic planning and reform efforts at our Montessori school as we revised our school improvement efforts and implemented the transformation model with our School Improvement Grant. In 2011-2012, a newly hired CEO/Principal (Ms. Carrie Kries) continued many of the improvement efforts put into place by the previous CEO and was granted the flexibility to implement a variety of new initiatives and programs to continue the academic strides the school has already made.

Our Successes

1. School Transformation

PMCS was one of 17 Pennsylvania schools granted a School Improvement Grant (SIG) to support a transformation model of school reform over a three year period. In our second year of transformation, SIG funding was used to support an after school program, provide additional curriculum supports including the Wilson reading program, Read Naturally intervention, and Singapore Math. Furthermore, the new principal was granted the flexibility to provide focused professional development on teaching literacy (LETRS) and implementing the Montessori model in a public school.

2. Meaningful Professional Development — In 2011-12, PMCS initiated a number of new professional development activities to help teachers implement the new instructional models and improve the effectiveness of the current curriculum. All teachers received *LETRS* (Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling), which provided the deep foundational knowledge necessary to understand how students learn to read, write, and spell—and why some of them struggle. Rather than replacing the core reading program, *LETRS* brings deeper knowledge of reading instruction by addressing each component—phoneme awareness; phonics, decoding, spelling, and word study; oral language development; vocabulary; reading fluency; comprehension; and writing.

Additionally, PMCS teachers received training in the Wilson Reading System to support the implementation of Wilson Foundations in K-3 and Just Words in grades 4-6. Teachers were also trained to deliver the Singapore Math curriculum. Further professional development was provided on assessment and data analysis from Dr. Alex Schuh from Frontier 21, and teachers

received additional training on the various assessments the school administered including the DRA and IRI, Study Island, and locally developed assessments.

3. Continued Belief In the Montessori Model - PMCS gives children, within a controlled environment, the freedom to choose their own activities. This is based on the belief that children learn by doing, which requires movement and spontaneous investigation. Children may select an activity and work with it as long as they wish, so long as they do not disturb anyone or damage anything, and they put it back where it belongs when they are finished. Both the teacher and the Montessori materials help to facilitate this child-directed learning. Individualized "lesson plans" are developed for each child based on the child's previous skill attainment. Each child is given lessons at his/her own developmentally appropriate level in all subject areas. Lessons are re-presented until the child attains mastery. Presentations and teacher follow-up establish the foundation for spontaneous choice.

4. Data Based-Instruction — PMCS has realized the importance of using data to track their student's progress to inform instruction and school programming. PMCS uses formative and summative assessments to gauge overall and individual student growth as well as identifying strengths and weaknesses that need to be addressed by our teachers. The school uses detailed student data to implement strategic, targeted, focused instructional interventions to improve student learning. Students who experience difficulty mastering proficient or advanced levels in reading and mathematics are identified by a combination of standardized test data, teacher feedback, and student performance on ongoing assessments. Along with the annual PSSA, PMCS uses several assessments throughout the school year.

In 2011-2012, Philadelphia Montessori continued to implement the Study Island benchmarking system. Study Island is based on Pennsylvania content standards and the PSSA assessment. Students at PMCS completed the assessment four times throughout the year. Additionally, students in grades K-3 took the Developmental Reading Assessment, 2nd Edition (DRA) and students in grades 4-6 took the Individual Reading Inventory (IRI). Both tests are administered three times a year to evaluate literacy skills, from letter recognition to reading comprehension. Teachers and administrators used the information to guide student groupings, lesson plans, and teaching strategies. Additionally, the results were vital in identifying students who were performing below level and needed intervention.

Opportunities:

Math and Reading Achievement — While we are thrilled that PMCS students have shown improvements in math and reading over the last couple of years, our excitement is tempered by the fact that we still have a long way to go before we are at the expected levels of achievement. With a new principal at the helm, the 2011-2012 has been a year of ongoing implementation of new strategies. PMCS will continue to provide professional development for teachers to improve the effectiveness of the implementation of current curriculum models including additional Wilson, LETRS, and Singapore Math training.

We will continue to implement the successful reading strategies that garnered such success in reading over the last few years and we will provide ongoing professional development for both

the reading and math curriculum materials to improve the math program and accelerate student achievement. With ever-rising achievement targets in both content areas, we will need to work harder than ever to ensure students show adequate growth in math and reading.

Monitoring Attendance and Student Data — Student attendance and truancy intervention have been a challenge at PMCS. At the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School, perfect attendance is mandatory. Our goal is for all students who are enrolled at PMCS for two consecutive years, with perfect attendance and no cognitive delays to be on or above grade level in math or in reading by the end of two years. The only way to accomplish this goal is for children to attend school every day and actively participate in class. Lateness, early dismissals and absences are interruptions of the student's education and will significantly interfere with their progress and growth, and may preclude a student from being promoted to the next grade level. PMCS has developed attendance and truancy intervention protocol in order to: ensure adequate parent notification; identify barriers preventing the student from attending school, engage the parent in developing and implementing interventions to reduce those barriers; document all efforts and interventions, and work collaboratively with the School District of Philadelphia to improve student attendance.

In 2011-2012, PMCS has revised the attendance policy to outline and revise the steps taken in the event of executive absences or tardiness. The school uses the Powerschool student information system to track student attendance. Parents receive an automated call at every absence and a call from their child's teacher after three unexcused absences. After seven unexcused absences, the Dean of Students and school Social Worker will contact the family to set up a home visit where they will attempt to learn the specific barriers to attendance. At that point, the administration will work with the family to remove any barriers and develop and sign an attendance agreement outlining steps the family and school will take to remedy the attendance issue. After ten absences (not necessarily consecutive, the parent/guardian will be required to attend a meeting with the Dean of Students, Social Worker, and school CEO to discuss further consequences and sign a letter with a commitment to attend every day.

Recruit Highly Qualified Teachers with Montessori Training - In order to meet the Highly Qualified Teacher requirements and certification requirements under the No Child Left Behind Act, we have sometimes had to hire state certified teachers who were not fully familiar with the Montessori curriculum. Although these are often gifted teachers, there is a great adjustment to the rubrics and culture of the Montessori model, particularly because Montessori teacher training is hands-on and requires hours of practice with the hands-on materials that teach abstract concepts in a concrete manner. Moreover, there are no traditional textbooks for an untrained teacher to rely upon as direct instruction models, and furthermore, there are limited Montessori-certified training programs across the country. We are fortunate to have received extensive professional development from Educational Training and Consulting (ETC) to further develop and effectively implement the Montessori curriculum at all levels, including the skills, lessons, hands-on work with materials, scope and sequences; assessment of materials needed to complete the Montessori curriculum; development of a sequence based on the state standards that will allow children to utilize abstract concepts before they are tested on the state tests. Additionally, two Montessori teachers are attending the Montessori Summer Training Institute at Princeton University in order to attain their Montessori certifications. We have actively encouraged our non-Montessori certified teachers to seek Montessori training, but the logistics and costs to do so have become obstacles to completing this particular objective.

SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING

Strategic Planning Process

Philadelphia Montessori Charter School has developed a group of administrators, board members, teachers, parents, and business community partners who regularly convene to assess the strengths and weaknesses of our program and to analyze our internal and external needs. The group is driven by our mission and vision statements and works to implement the Montessori program with fidelity while ensuring student progress is made.

This group meets formally and informally throughout the year to develop and implement strategic improvements to the school; to monitor the implementation of our strategic plans for professional education, teacher induction; to develop strategic plans in educational technology and student services; and to prepare the annual report.

In the summer of 2010, PMCS Board of Trustees and Administration worked together to complete the School Improvement Grant application and develop the school's transformation model for school reform. Implementation of the School Improvement Grant requires ongoing evaluation of school operations as the school meets with PDE three times per year to ensure the grant is implemented with fidelity and must evaluate and revise the plan each year of the three year grant. PMCS completed the second year of School Improvement Grant reforms in 2011-2012. The school conducted a program evaluation at year end, which was submitted to PDE.

Additionally, the school conducted an in depth systems analysis in the creation of the School Improvement Plan, initially developed in the Spring 2011, then revised in the fall. The school will revise this School Improvement Plan again in the summer 2012. The committee will examine the following data for the development of this plan:

- PSSA Spring 2012 test scores for mathematics and reading (grades 3-6) and a multi-year analysis as well as PSSA Spring 2012 test scores for writing (grade 5) and science (grade 4)
- DRA/IRA results in grades K-6
- 4Sight benchmark assessment scores (grades 3-6)
- Student course grades in core academic subjects are reported by teachers
- Student behavior, attendance, and tardiness data
- Parent, student, and teacher feedback on surveys
- Review of teacher credentials (i.e. certification, education level, "highly qualified" status) and professional development needs
- Review of teacher observation records
- Review of State standards and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements

Strategic Planning Committee

Name	Affiliation	Membership Category	Appointed By
Ashley Coleman	PMCS - Special Education Teacher	Special Education Representative	CEO
Aviva Habib	PMCS - Upper Elementary	Elementary School Teacher	Teachers

Bourne Ruthrauff	PMCS - Board member	Board Member	Board of Trustees
Carrie Kries	PMCS - CEO	Administrator	Board of Trustees
Eliza Lofton	Therapy Source - School Social Worker	Other	CEO
Jill Fisher	PMCS - Board member	Board Member	Board of Trustees
Kenneth Martin	Dean of Students and Community Relations	Administrator	CEO
Nicole Walker	PMCS - Board member, parent	Parent	Board of Trustees
Rachel Josloff	PMCS Teacher (Montessori Certified)	Regular Education Teacher	CEO
Stacey Kreger	OmniVest Properties LLC	Business Representative	CEO
Sue Manix	PMCS Board of Trustees	Board Member	Board of Trustees

Goals, Strategies and Activities

Goal: Improve Student Achievement in Reading and Mathematics

Description: We will meet the following academic goals for reading and math: Reading: 2012-13— We will make AYP by achieving 92% of students scoring at or above proficiency; OR we will decrease the percentage of students scoring below proficiency by 10%; or by achieving our designated growth model score. Math: 2012-13 — 90% of student scoring at or above proficiency; OR we will decrease the percentage of student scoring below proficiency by 10% or by achieving our designated growth model score.

Strategy: Effective Implementation of Curriculum

Description: Curriculum-specific professional development will ensure that all PMCS teachers understand how to effectively implement all aspects of the PMCS curriculum.

Activity: Balanced Literacy Approach

Description: Through the past several years we have refined our literacy curriculum to apply direct instruction methods to address our students' deficiencies in literacy skills while maintaining the spirit of the Montessori model. The school has the raw materials (a full guided reading library, SRA kits for all classrooms, American Reading Company leveled libraries in every classroom, Montessori reading materials in the preschool classrooms to teach phonetic skills, Wilson Reading Program to reinforce basic skills with young struggling readers, Catapult After School Program for 100 students) and the expertise at the leadership level to build a successful literacy program.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 8/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Fully Implementing the Great Lessons

Description: PMCS will implement the Great Lessons, which are the basis for the Montessori science and social studies curriculum. The CEO will assemble a team of Montessori elementary teachers to plan for a shared teaching of the Great Lessons. There are five Great Lessons. Teams of teachers and assistants will learn one lesson well, and deliver it in each elementary classroom with other teachers observing and taking notes. Then lesson plans, feedback, and ideas will be shared during team meetings. Eventually, all teachers will be able to deliver all great lessons.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 9/1/2009	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Harcourt StoryTown

Description: In 2010-11, PMCS fully implemented the Harcourt Storytown curriculum in grades one through six. Storytown offers:

- Explicit instructional strategies for Phonemic awareness, phonics and high-frequency words, reading fluency, robust vocabulary, and comprehension skills and strategies.
- Instructional sequences coordinated within the daily lesson plan and by strand of instruction.
- Abundant resources that provide practice opportunities (guided and independent practice activities, decodable books, practice books, small-group instruction, spelling practices books, phonics practice book, and grammar practice books).
- Student materials aligned with instruction.
- An instructional design that considers time allocation.
- Resources for three types of assessments that inform instruction (Entry-Level Assessment, Ongoing Assessments, Summative Assessments).
- Technology components that support instruction.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

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

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Identify Students in Need of Additional Support

Description: PMCS will implement strategies to ensure all students in need of support are identified and properly diagnosed.

Activity: Data Specific Meetings

Description: Data specific meetings occur after every major benchmark and diagnostic exam (attended by teachers from each grade, the reading specialist, special education representative, and CEO/Principal) to analyze specific student data and look for trends.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 9/1/2010	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Detailed Student Observational Records

Description: PMCS teachers are trained to be keen observers and diagnosticians and are constantly making decisions based on observational assessment. Our teachers keep careful records documenting the lessons a child has received, the practice they have completed, and the level of mastery the child has achieved. This is the main form of assessment that our teachers use to inform their planning and instruction.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Ongoing Progress Monitoring

Description: PMCS uses formative and summative assessments to gauge overall and individual student growth as well as identifying strengths and weaknesses that need to be addressed by our teachers. The school uses detailed student data to implement strategic, targeted, focused instructional interventions to improve student learning. Students who experience difficulty mastering proficient or advanced levels in reading, mathematics, and science are identified by a combination of standardized test data, teacher feedback, and student performance on ongoing assessments. Along with the annual PSSA, PMCS uses several assessments throughout the school year including Study Island, DRA, and DIBELS.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Description: The Dean of Students makes frequent home visits on an as needed basis for a variety of reasons including attendance, discipline, addressing academic or behavioral concerns, or retention.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kenneth Martin	Start: 9/1/2011	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Improve Parent Access to Student Information

Description: Using SIG funding, PMCS will purchase the Parent Module for the Powerschool school information system. PowerSchool is used to schedule, take attendance, store grades, produce transcripts, report cards, and more. PowerSchool “brings together teachers, students, parents and administrators” in an easily used web-based data system.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2011	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Parent Advisory Board and Home & School Association

Description: PMCS now has a Parent Advisory Board (PAB) and is working to increase parent involvement in a Home and School Association. The PAB is a group of eight parents, nominated by the school to work closely with the CEO, staff, and the board of directors to support the mission and vision of the school. This involves gathering and evaluating information, supporting the Montessori philosophy at the school and district level and making important decisions for the benefit of students of PMCS. The Council meets monthly. All families and teachers are automatically members of the PMCS Home and School Association and are encouraged to participate.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Kenneth Martin	Start: 9/1/2011	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Parent Participation in In-Service Trainings

Description: PMCS invites parents to attend teacher in-service trainings that may also be beneficial to parents. Childcare is provided so parents can learn how to help support their child at home. Trainings this year included 100 Book Challenge, LETRs Training, and a Catapult workshop.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 9/1/2011	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Prepare Students for Transition out of PMCS

Description: PMCS is committed to the academic future of every student and therefore provides services to help prepare students for when they leave PMCS after the 6th grade.

Activity: Life Skills

Description: Philadelphia Montessori provides life skills training to special education students as needed (i.e. counting change at the market, crossing the street, public transportation, safety, hygiene, etc.). Life skills are taught by the school social worker to four special education students for one hour twice a week.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2011	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Provide Transition Support for PMCS Graduates

Description: Improve the transition support services for PMCS graduates and their families to facilitate their movement from PMCS to other charter, magnet, private, or public schools.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Provide Adequate Support for Struggling Students

Description: PMCS will provide comprehensive supports to students in need of additional support.

Activity: After School Program

Description: As part of the SIG Transformation Model, PMCS extended the school day by providing 1.5 hours of instructional after school programming four days a week for students in grades 1-6. In the additional 1.5 hours, students will receive math and reading instruction from Catapult Learning using a variety of learning models and small class sizes.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 10/1/2010	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Differentiation of Instruction

Description: The nature of the Montessori model is to follow the child and their needs. Students are encouraged to follow their interests and challenge themselves in areas of particular interest. Struggling students are supported with various interventions and provided every opportunity to demonstrate proficiency in the core curriculum. Interventions are tailored to specific student needs as identified in assessments and teacher observation. Classes are grouped together so that younger students can work in the same classroom as older students and if any student is excelling in a particular area, they can work with the older group ensuring that they are challenged. Study Island allows for adjustments to be made to individual student levels on the assignments in both math and reading, and PMCS uses a guided reading program to break students into smaller groups by ability. The 100 Book Challenge program assesses and levels students so that they receive reading material to match their needs.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 9/1/2010	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Extended School Year

Description: This program will be run by two of Montessori's certified special education teachers.

ESY at Philadelphia Montessori Charter School will include approximately 23 students this year. Teachers will be carefully following the IEP's of each student, adhering to the specific goals listed in each student's document. The teachers will be using Read Naturally and Wilson Reading and Just Words for reading instruction and Singapore Math for math instruction. Teachers will also be utilizing MacBooks for Read Naturally and other online relevant learning resources. Breakfast and Lunch will be served daily.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 6/18/2012	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: Not Started — Overdue

Activity: Implement Wilson Reading Program

Description: In 2011-2012, PMCS used the Wilson Reading System in grades K-6 as a supplemental program. The Wilson Reading System is a reading program designed for students who have difficulty with reading and spelling. Its main goal is to teach students language and word structure through a carefully planned program. The Wilson reading program directly addresses student decoding and spelling skills. Through a set of activities students gain early literacy skills that build their vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 8/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Read Naturally

Description: Also in 2011-2012, PMCS implemented Read Naturally, a web-based oral reading fluency program used by special education students as well as approximately 8-10 other students identified as struggling in reading who will benefit from the specific Read Naturally strategies.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 9/1/2011	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Reading Specialist

Description: A full-time, certified reading specialist was hired to work with low performing, non-special education students struggling in reading and to provide additional classroom support for teachers including lesson modeling. The reading specialist helps to support the following interventions throughout the school: the Wilson and Just Words program and American Reading Company's 100 Book Challenge as interventions for identified students. Additionally, the reading specialist oversees Read Naturally's structured intervention programs for upper grade special education students and grades struggling regular education students in grades 5-6. Read Naturally combines teacher modeling, repeated reading, and progress monitoring to improve students' reading proficiency.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 9/1/2010	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: SES Tutoring

Description: Students participated in SES tutoring on Saturdays from January through March provided by approved SES Providers.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Three Tier RTI Process

Description: PMCS utilizes an RTI structure to provide appropriate interventions for students at three different levels. Non-special education students identified as struggling receive Tier I interventions including in-class interventions like adjustments to Study Island assignments and differentiated instruction. If students fail to improve, they move into Tier II interventions including the Catapult afterschool program, SES Tutoring, additional reading support and services from specialists using the Wilson Reading program or additional Harcourt interventions, and in-class small group instruction with the lead and assistant teachers. Tier II also includes teacher reference to the CSAP program where students receive a case manager and additional interventions. If these interventions fail to improve student results, students are recommended for Tier III, which begins the special education evaluation process.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Activity: Peace Education

Description: Peace education is a common theme that runs throughout the general curriculum. The Montessori model allows children to develop as compassionate and intelligent human beings in an atmosphere of love and respect. Children will be taught continually to respect everyone and everything in the environment and to solve problems through peaceful means. The ultimate aim of the peace education component of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School will be to develop children with strong, active commitment to solving problems and living together peacefully. That way, children will be able to break the cycle of distrust, anger and fear, and will carry this spirit of peace and cooperation with them into adulthood. In the Montessori classroom, peace education is not taught as a separate curriculum but is the unifying thread throughout the child's academic, social and emotional experience in the classroom. It is "taught" through the interactions between teacher and child, child and child(ren), and children and their use of the materials in the environment. Children are taught continually to respect everyone and everything in the environment and to solve problems through peaceful means. At the elementary level, children will move from the ability to solve problems in their own classroom into a growing understanding, compassion, and tolerance for their world.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Provide a Comprehensive Student Assistance Program (CSAP)

Description: PMCS' Comprehensive Student Assistance Program (CSAP) supports students who were identified by teachers or parents as having concerning behavioral or academic challenges. CSAP added structure to an informal process that was already occurring in our school and helped to define which situations could best be supported by art therapy, counseling, targeted academic interventions by the regular classroom teacher, targeted academic interventions outside of the regular classroom or an evaluation for special education services.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 8/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: School Social Worker/School Counselor

Description: Philadelphia Montessori employs a certified school guidance counselor as well as a social worker who work with students on an individual and group basis and help remove barriers

to learning. Individual students are free to come to the guidance counselor or school social worker to discuss any problems they may be having. Group counseling may assist students experiencing commonly shared concerns and/or developmental difficulties in areas such as interpersonal relationships, coping with life changes, bullying, anger management, and how to deal with stress. The guidance counselor runs three Girl Power groups (3rd grade, 4-5 grade, and 6th grade). Each group meets two times a week for five weeks (with different groups of girls every five weeks).

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 9/1/2011	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Strategy: Use Data to Drive Instruction

Description: Philadelphia Montessori Charter School will disaggregate data to identify strengths and weaknesses and use summative and formative assessment data together to implement strategic, targeted, focused instructional interventions to improve student learning.

Activity: Detailed Student Observational Records

Description: PMCS teachers are trained to be keen observers and diagnosticians and are constantly making decisions based on observational assessment. Our teachers keep careful records documenting the lessons a child has received, the practice they have completed, and the level of mastery the child has achieved. This is the main form of assessment that our teachers use to inform their planning and instruction.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: DRA -- Literacy skill diagnosing and benchmarking

Description: PMCS used the DRA I test for grades K-3 and DRA II for grades 4-6. The test is used to determine the reading level of the student. Teachers use the data to great reading groups, create lesson plans and interventions. Additionally, the test provides an approximate grade level that is easily communicated to parents and guardians.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 8/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Study Island Benchmark Assessment

Description: Students in grades 3-6 completed this benchmark assessment four times throughout the 2011-2012 school year. Study Island is a web-based program that provides individual instruction that is aligned with the PSSA. The administration and teachers used results to track progress and identify any students who are performing below level.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

Carrie Kries	Start: 9/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Goal: RECRUIT AND RETAIN MONTESSORI & STATE CERTIFIED TEACHERS

Description: PMCS will work to recruit and retain Montessori and state certified teachers to meet NCLB requirements by maintaining a staff that has the following qualifications: 75% or more of all certifiable staff will possess a valid PA certification in the subject area in which they are assigned. 100% of all core content teachers will meet the NCLB definition of highly qualified.

Strategy: Ensure Every Classroom has a State Certified/Highly Qualified and Montessori Trained Teacher

Description: Every classroom will have a teacher that possess all three qualifications or two teachers that between the two have all of correct qualifications.

Activity: Designing the School Roster

Description: PMCS required that a Montessori trained teacher was in every classroom (primary and lower elementary). To meet this goal we had one classroom that had two paid teachers (one Montessori and one state certified) to co-teach. We continued this effort in 2010-11.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

None Selected	Start: 8/1/2008	-
	Finish: Ongoing	

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Activity: Provide for Montessori Training

Description: The SIG grant provided for two teachers to receive Montessori certification training with a three year commitment.

Person Responsible Timeline for Implementation Resources

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

Status: In Progress — Upcoming

Statement of Quality Assurance

Charter school has not met AYP.

Charter school has created a School Improvement Plan.

Charter school has submitted and reviewed its School Improvement Plan with the Intermediate Unit designee.

Intermediate Unit designee met with and when meeting occurred:

PMCS modified their School Improvement Plan in 2010-11 and submitted it to PDE. On June 14, 2010, PMCS met with Adam Braunstein at the School District of Philadelphia, who had reviewed the school's SIP and provided feedback before we submitted it to PDE.

Montessori was not required to develop a new plan for 2011-2012, attached is an assurance showing that the plan from 10-11 still applicable in 11-12.

Statement of Quality Assurance - Attachment

- PMCS - SIP ASSURANCE OF IMPLEMENTATION

SECTION III. QUALITY OF SCHOOL DESIGN

Rigorous Instructional Program

What curriculum does your charter school utilize?

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School primarily uses the Montessori curriculum. Through the implementation of our School Improvement Grant (SIG) over the last two years, PMCS has had the opportunity to invest in additional curricular programs and materials in support of our overall curriculum. These include: Singapore Math, Harcourt Storytown, Read Naturally and The

Wilson Reading System. We also implement 100 Book Challenge to increase independent reading levels for all of our students K-6. The programs listed above enable our teachers to directly address our students' deficits in the areas of literacy and math while capitalizing on the best that the Montessori model has to offer. Additionally, PMCS made a significant investment in Montessori materials throughout the entire school and intensified training for our teachers so that they can most effectively implement the Montessori method in a public school, while also infusing their teaching with the research-based programs listed above.

PMCS teachers have access to documents in English Language Arts and Mathematics that reference state standards, related content and Montessori materials/lessons with other curriculum materials. Teachers use the documentation to identify gaps between traditional Montessori lessons and state standards (such as the absence of clock work, or lessons dealing with money). These documents help the teachers ensure that students have opportunities to learn relevant information and skills included in the state standards but excluded from the traditional Montessori program. All teachers have the appropriate curriculum for their students' grade level and the Primary through 6th grade PA Academic standard-aligned Montessori curriculum is attached to this report.

Reading

In 2010-11, with the support of the School Improvement Grant (SIG), PMCS received Harcourt Storytown and 100 Book Challenge curricula throughout the school. The school has a full guided reading library, American Reading Company leveled libraries in every classroom, Montessori reading materials in the preschool classrooms to teach phonetic skills, Catapult after-school reading and math program with 100 children, and the Wilson Reading System to reinforce basic skills with young struggling readers. This year, PMCS used SIG funding to train teachers and purchase Wilson Reading System materials for all students (not just as an intervention). Additionally, PMCS implemented Read Naturally as an intervention for special education students and a few other struggling readers.

The Wilson Reading System in grades K-6 was implemented as a supplemental program along with Harcourt Storytown and 100 Book Challenge. The Harcourt Storytown curriculum is implemented to address reading comprehension and students were required to complete 400 steps (one step equals 15 minutes of reading) throughout the school year (at home and at school) for 100 Book Challenge. 100 Book Challenge aligns all of the existing reading materials and assessment tools using one simple color-coded leveling platform, keyed to Common Core Standards, that students, teachers, and parents can understand and use to ensure every student is making expected progress towards proficiency. Parents were also invited to attend American Reading Company inservice trainings so that they could better understand how to implement 100 Book Challenge activities from home. In 2012-13, PMCS will require students to double the amount of reading they do for the 100 Book Challenge to 800 steps (15 minute sessions). Students will even be required to read for 100 Book Challenge to and from school on the school bus.

In K-3rd grade, PMCS implemented Wilson Reading System, a research-based, multi-sensory approach that allows teachers to confidently present a carefully structured, completely engaging decoding and encoding (reading and spelling) curriculum. It is implemented as a systematic approach to reading beginning in Kindergarten, utilizing phonics to better understand the complex process of reading and spelling. In grades 4-6, PMCS uses the Wilson

Just Words program. Just Words is a faster version of teaching the Wilson Reading System and is targeted specifically towards students in grades 4 and above. Just Words is a highly explicit, multisensory decoding and encoding program for students who have mild to moderate gaps in their decoding and encoding proficiency but do not require the same level of intensive intervention as their younger counterparts. The Just Words curriculum provides a sophisticated study of word structure appropriate for students beyond the elementary grades and can be completed in as little as one year, as compared to Wilson Reading System, which typically takes 3 years to complete.

Math

Minimal gains in mathematics in 2010-11 led to the reassessment of the math curriculum being offered. In January, teachers implemented a blend of Singapore Math, Saxon Math, and Montessori Math. Singapore Math is a teaching method based on the primary textbooks and syllabus from the national curriculum of Singapore. These textbooks have a consistent and strong emphasis on problem solving and model drawing, with a focus on in-depth understanding of the essential math skills recommended in the NCTM Curriculum Focal Points (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics), the National Mathematics Advisory Panel, and the proposed Common Core State Standards. Singapore Math works well with the Montessori method of math instruction because it contains more critical thinking and hands-on instruction.

Montessori Math utilizes exercises that give sensorial foundations for counting, arithmetic, geometry, algebra, and fractions of whole numbers. In the elementary class, stories are told and experiments carried out to show children how humans used their imaginations in the past, and how they are using them today, to solve problems and come up with great inventions—the use of fire, measuring the earth, compasses, boats, and many others. They see how inventions, geometry and math came about as the result of human progress, to meet specific needs.

In 2012-13, PMCS will fully implement Singapore Math in grades K-6 and discontinue the use of Saxon Math. After implementing Singapore Math alongside Saxon Math and Montessori Math in 2011-12, it was determined that Singapore Math is a better fit with the Montessori instructional model because it is hands-on and includes more critical thinking skills. PMCS will provide additional training on implementing the Singapore Math curriculum to improve the overall effectiveness of the program and the progress students gain in the year.

Do you have documentation that shows that your curriculum meets the chapter 4 content standards and all requirements therein?

The Montessori curriculum meets and often exceeds the Pennsylvania State Standards. PMCS has attached documents labeled Correlation of Montessori with Pennsylvania State Standards below. There are three documents attached, one labeled 3-6 (or pre-K and Kindergarten), another labeled 6-9 (or first to third grades) and a third labeled 9-12 (or fourth to sixth grades). These documents align the three age groupings of the Montessori educational approach with the traditional grades referenced in the PA State Standards.

The Montessori curriculum was developed well before the Pennsylvania content standards, in the early to mid-1900's, through years of observation and research. "Maria Montessori began her work as a scientist in the early part of the twentieth century, willing to delay judgment until

adequate observation had been done and willing to change beliefs if convincing evidence was presented. As a medical doctor, she was trained to observe her subjects in a holistic manner; consequently, her research was naturalistic or ethnographic. From her first observations of children in psychiatric wards to her final work in the experimental elementary classes in Holland, she was constantly the scientist: observing, manipulating the environment or conditions, observing again, revising her approach, seeking other knowledge, and continually experimenting.”

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

The Montessori curriculum is organized into a spiral of integrated studies, rather than a traditional model in which the curriculum is compartmentalized into several separate subjects, with given topics considered only once at a specific grade level. In the early years, lessons are introduced simply and concretely and are reintroduced several times over succeeding years at increasing degrees of abstraction and complexity.

The course of study at the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School uses an integrated thematic approach that ties the separate disciplines of the curriculum together into studies of the physical universe, the world of nature, and the human experience. Literature, the arts, history, social issues, political science, economics, science, and the study of technology all complement one another.

The curriculum is divided into two levels: Primary (ages 3 to 6) and Elementary (ages 6 to 12).

The Primary Curriculum (Ages 3 to 6)

Dr. Maria Montessori noted that children under six have extraordinary powers of mind. They “take in” their environment, the physical space, the language and movement of adults and children, with what Dr. Montessori called the absorbent mind — the brain’s malleability in the early years. The absorbent mind is at its peak receptively before the age of 6.

Because of the absorbent mind, the child learns easily from his/her interactions with the teacher, other children, and the instructional materials. The prepared environment allows him/her to touch, move, manipulate, and explore — learning at his/her own pace. The classroom is designed for children of mixed ages, with three, four and five year-olds all sharing the same space and teacher for three years. Because of their constant interaction, the children learn to take responsibility for themselves and for each other. They also learn to get along with children of different ages and abilities, to respect each other’s work and workspaces, and to treat each other with courtesy.

At this age, the curriculum is organized around five areas:

1. Practical Life - These exercises are designed to enable independent functioning, social grace, and self-esteem among children three to six years of age. Content includes development of coordinated movement, health, safety, in both indoor and outdoor environments and play (spontaneous, free choice of activities.)
2. Sensorial — These perceptual-motor development activities are designed to lead the child to an intelligent and imaginative exploration of the world. Content includes

- identification of a child's process of classifying his world, problem solving, and critical thinking.
3. Language — This area of the curriculum focuses on the development of spoken and written language in the areas of daily life, storytelling, composition, literature, geography, history, biology, science, music, art, as well as the functional aspects of grammar, syntax and reading analysis.
 4. Math - These mathematics exercises give sensorial foundations for counting, arithmetic, geometry, algebra, and fractions of whole numbers.
 5. Culture — These exercises expose children to geography, history, biology, botany, and the physical sciences.

The Elementary Curriculum (Ages 6-9 and 9-12)

The Elementary Montessori curriculum is broad in scope and provides for in depth learning, which results in well-educated and socially responsible human beings. It builds on the rich foundation the child has already received in the Primary Montessori Program (ages 3-6). There are five main themes from which the Elementary curriculum flows:

1. The Story of the Universe (General Science) — The origins and development of the universe are explored through this theme.
2. Life on Earth (Botany, Zoology, Geography) — Biology and botany are introduced to give an understanding of the interdependencies of life on earth. In addition, physical and political geography are introduced to give an understanding of the interdependencies of the Earth and life upon it.
3. History of the Civilization of Humans (History) - Social Studies is introduced to give an understanding of human beings' relationships to the development of the universe.
4. History of Written and Spoken Language (English/Language Arts) - Children are introduced to the concept of the development of spoken and written language. They also learn important functional aspects of grammar that are appropriate for children from 6 to 12 years of age.
5. History of Math — Children are provided with an understanding of and proficiency with key ideas in mathematics. Links between arithmetic and geometry are explored and the importance of problem solving is stressed.

While this curriculum is interdisciplinary by design, the child also learns by following the developmental inner structure of each discipline. Thus, skills and proficiency are developed at the same time, as learning flows from the child's individual interests. For example, while the child is learning the history of math as developed through the ages, the child is using math in all disciplines and moving through all stages of math proficiency. The child learns by practicing and moving forward, fueled by the desire to learn and facilitated by a research based model with the help of structured materials and research instruments. The fact that the Montessori curriculum is organized in three-year segments supports the child in his or her pursuit of curriculum mastery at his/her own rate.

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

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School promotes cross-curricular learning. The intent behind this approach to teaching and learning is described quite articulately by Angeline Stoll Lillard in her recent book *Montessori: The Science Behind the Genius*.

"Dr. Montessori believed interest comes in part through integration and interconnection, and the Elementary curriculum is taught with an eye to making connections across disciplines in what she called Cosmic Education. As the Montessori trainer Phyllis Pottish-Lewis described it to me, 'Cosmic Education is a way to show the child how everything in the universe is interrelated and interdependent, no matter whether it is the tiniest molecule or the largest organism ever created. Every single thing has a part to play, a contribution to make to the maintenance of harmony in the whole. In understanding this network of relationships, the child finds that he or she also is a part of the whole, and has a part to play, a contribution to make.'" This interrelationship is one reason that Dr. Montessori advocated having only one teacher teach all subjects: it enables topic connection. In traditional schooling, when different teachers teach different subjects, at each hour a new teacher will "talk about something completely different, which has no logical connection with the preceding topic.' (1989, p.88 as quoted in Lillard). Interest, she believed, is stimulated by seeing the interrelationships among things."

Elementary research projects, a regular part of the daily curriculum, are intended to inspire an individual child or a small group of children to develop and pursue an area of research based on their own individual interests, carry it out over a few weeks, and then write a report or choose another type of culminating project. These research projects cover topics ranging from science to social studies and current events and projects range from reports to computer-generated comic books and power point presentations to three dimensional art projects. Students present their research findings to their classmates and are also permitted to visit other school adults (the CEO, administrative assistant, etc.) to practice conducting oral presentations of their work.

Our annual school wide science fair is another example of inquiry-based learning. Children at all grade levels begin to learn about the scientific method (in a manner that is developmentally appropriate) and begin learning to ask questions and think scientifically about how they might discover answers to their questions. In the primary grades, teachers guide students in whole class projects, such as watching celery "drink" water with food coloring in it, while individual students test scientific concepts such as which objects will sink or float and which objects are magnetic or non-magnetic. In the elementary grades, children begin to conduct more complex experiments. For several weeks prior to the fair, elementary students work individually or in small groups to develop and test a question of inquiry and then spend considerable time and energy on how that information will be presented during our science fair. Science fair projects are shared with students during the day and with parents and guests in the evening.

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

Teachers at the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School maintain detailed observational records on each student's academic progress. Portfolios are also developed and maintained for each child throughout their tenure at PMCS. DRA and IRI tests are given at the beginning and end of the year to assess language/reading skills. Students who initially tested far below average were watched more closely, and different interventions were attempted to help the struggling

students make progress toward grade level performance, including Wilson Reading, Just Words and Read Naturally. Because so many children are not performing at grade level, many of our interventions are school-wide. Only a few (i.e. Read Naturally in 2011-2012) are targeted specifically to the lowest performing students. In 2012-2013, our students who are struggling in math, will be meeting for support with their teacher and/or Drexel University Interns to practice their math skills in greater depth and intensiveness. In 2012-2013, we will be utilizing AIMS Web progress monitoring to track the mathematic and literacy deficits of our most struggling students. Students who are on or above grade level will be progress monitored three times per year. Our struggling students will be progress monitored monthly, bi-weekly and weekly, depending on the severity of need. This data collection will inform our teachers of the levels of intervention necessary on a more regular basis, so that no time is lost in between assessments.

Montessori 3-Year Curriculum

The Montessori three-year curriculum gives a child ample time to master content. Hands-on materials are thoughtfully designed to isolate and teach one skill. Materials are sequenced (in each subject area) from simple to complex. There is limited time spent in whole group instruction, instead instruction is differentiated based on the needs and interests of each child. Lessons are based on a combination of the child's interest and observations of the child's developmental readiness. Teachers must be subtle investigators, observing how often a child practices with a given material and when s/he attains mastery. Because the Montessori materials are self-correcting, most children recognize their own mistakes and "teach themselves." The teacher's job is to record what s/he observes, and then to remain vigilant to ensure that the child is progressing in a manner appropriate for his or her developmental age.

Response to Intervention

We utilize a Response to Intervention (RTI) model that ensures that each student at-risk of academic failure is provided the supports and resources they need to be able to succeed academically. PMCS's RTI structure provides appropriate interventions for students at three different levels. Non-special education students identified as struggling receive Tier I interventions including in-class interventions like adjustments to Study Island assignments and differentiated instruction. Classroom teaching assistants were trained to work with individual, targeted children using the Wilson materials and other intervention materials (i.e. 100 Book Challenge interventions) to reinforce basic reading and math skills. PMCS has used Study Island not only as a benchmarking system, but also as a means to further differentiation in assignments. Computers in each elementary classroom allow students to complete assignments leveled to their individual needs. Study Island's online program supports both math and reading skills and provides regular reports on student progress toward proficiency. PSSA results and Study Island benchmarking show that those teachers who utilized Study Island for more hours during the school year had students who performed significantly higher on the PSSA exams.

If students fail to improve, they move into Tier II interventions including the Catapult afterschool program, SES Tutoring, additional reading support and services from specialists using the Wilson Reading program or other interventions, and in-class small group instruction with the lead and assistant teachers. Tier II also includes teacher reference to the CSAP program where students receive a case manager and additional interventions. If these interventions fail to improve student results, students are recommended for Tier III, which begins the special education evaluation process.

Reading Specialist

A full-time, certified reading specialist was hired to work with low performing, non-special education students struggling in reading and to provide additional classroom support for teachers including lesson modeling. The reading specialist helps to support the following interventions throughout the school: the Wilson and Just Words program and American Reading Company's 100 Book Challenge as interventions for identified students. Additionally, the reading specialist oversees Read Naturally's structured intervention programs for upper grade special education students and grades struggling regular education students in grades 5-6. In 2012-2013, the Reading Specialist will also be assisting all classroom teachers to utilize Read Naturally for all students in grades 3-6.

Read Naturally

Also in 2011-2012, PMCS piloted Read Naturally, a web-based oral reading fluency program used by special education students as well as approximately 8-10 other students identified as struggling. Read Naturally's structured intervention programs combine teacher modeling, repeated reading, and progress monitoring — three strategies that research has shown are effective in improving students' reading proficiency. Using audio support and graphs of their progress, students work with high-interest material at their skill level. In Read Naturally, students read along while listening to a recording of a fluent reader. This helps students learn new vocabulary words and encourages proper pronunciation, expression, and phrasing. Daily monitoring of student progress has also been shown to improve student achievement. Students who read fluently become stronger comprehenders. Students become more involved in the learning process, and teachers remain aware of each student's progress. In Read Naturally, students monitor their progress by graphing the number of words read correctly before practicing and then again after practicing. The graph shows the students' progress, motivating them to continue to read and improve.

Wilson Reading Program

In 2011-2012, PMCS used the Wilson Reading System in grades K-6 as a supplemental program. The Wilson Reading System is a systematic, explicit, multi-sensory approach to reading and is most effective for students who are reading and spelling below grade level. Its main goal is to teach students language and word structure through a carefully planned program. Extensive practice provides students with multiple opportunities for skill development while assessments monitor students daily and weekly throughout the program. The Teacher's Manual, the instructional multimedia CD, and the online Prevention Learning Community provide comprehensive guidance for teachers and support staff.

SES Tutoring

As mandated by NCLB, we provide SES tutoring for economically disadvantaged students in January through the end of May. Students who qualify will receive summer SES tutoring through an approved provider as well. PMCS' SES program serves 20-26 students for four hours each Saturday. Along with certified tutors from Foundations, four PMCS teachers also attend and work with their grade group with one teacher working with the lowest performing kids who need even more support to attain grade level. Teachers write lesson plan objectives and track what each student completes each week as well as their grades and scores in each of the interventions used.

The SES program combines a variety of math and reading interventions. Tutors and teachers use SkillBuilders workbooks in math and reading comprehension based on academic level as a resource along with the SuccessMaker and First in Math computer programs. SuccessMaker is instructional software that provides adaptive, personalized paths for mastery of essential reading and math concepts and delivers outcome-based data to inform instructional decision making. SuccessMaker is correlated to the state standards and focuses on the most critical math and reading concepts individualized to the individual student. The highly engaging program challenges and motivates students to learn more. The First in Math program is an online program that provides a wide range of games to build mathematic skills. Students solve problems from nine categories that tie to national standards and the program has a build-in assessment module that records each student's proficiency and skill improvement.

After-School Program

As part of the SIG Transformation Model, PMCS has extended the school day by 1.5 hours for struggling students. Students in grades 3-6 who performed basic or below basic on the previous year's PSSA (or teacher recommendation for 3rd grade) attend the after-school program Monday-Thursday from 3:30-5:00 (two days of math and two days of reading). For the most part, students were grouped by grade and ability level. Staff from Catapult worked with PMCS teachers to provide instruction to struggling students. This model allows PMCS teachers to focus on improving the specific skills that need more additional reinforcement, but ensures that the students are receiving instruction from the teachers that know their needs best. Catapult staff helped guide the program and provide additional instructional tips and support.

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

"Dr. Montessori recognized that the only valid impulse to learning is self-motivation of the child. Children must move themselves toward learning. The teacher (director) prepares the environment, programs the activity, functions as the reference person and exemplar, offers the child stimulations; but it is the child who learns, who is motivated through the work itself (not solely by the teacher's personality) to persist in his chosen task. If the Montessori child is free to learn, it is because he has acquired from his exposure to both physical and mental order an 'inner discipline.' This is the core of Dr. Montessori's educational philosophy." — From the PMCS Charter Application

Prepared Environment

Montessori teachers are trained to prepare a learning environment that will be aesthetically pleasing, that will convey a sense of order and calm, and that will stimulate interest in a wide variety of activities. Montessori classrooms are set up with what might be known as "interest centers" or "learning centers" in a traditional classroom. The room is divided into sections that relate to the curriculum. Within a learning center, hands-on learning materials are organized along a shelf from simple to complex. There is typically only one of each type of activity, so children must learn to take turns. A few highlights of the prepared environment include pets and/or plants to teach care of living things, a peace table for resolving disputes, a cabinet with chains of glass beads to teach square and cube roots, a cabinet with drawers full of geometric puzzle pieces, the "movable alphabet" — with large letters to initiate writing words and stories with four and five-year-olds, a robust classroom library, large puzzle maps of the different

continents, and individual set-ups for “practical life” activities such as washing dishes, coring and slicing an apple and serving pieces to friends, or scrubbing a table.

Hands-on Materials

In a Montessori environment, hands-on materials are used at all levels of the curriculum. Rather than teaching place value as an abstract concept to be deciphered on paper, the Montessori Golden Bead materials present place value in a concrete form which is interesting to and easily comprehended by very young children. Four and five-year-old children work with “unit beads” (individual glass beads), “ten bars” (ten glass beads held together by a wire), “hundred squares” (ten “ten bars” tied together by wire to form a square of 100 beads), and “thousand cubes” (ten “hundred squares” wired together to form a cube). Children can manipulate these objects to see relationships (for example: ten unit beads can be lined up to form one ten bar or ten hundred squares stacked on top of one another is the same as a thousand cube). Children of five and six can perform simple operations with very large numbers using these concrete materials. While young children are not yet ready to grasp the abstract concept of place value, they are engaged by these materials, and they are able to gain an impression of number size that creates a foundation for later number learning. Hands-on materials are not restricted to the math curriculum; they are used for language, geography, science, and practical life activities as well.

Freedom and Choice

In a Montessori classroom, children are free to choose their own learning materials, where they will work (on a mat on the floor or at a table), whether to work alone or with friends, and when they are finished. They are limited only by practical concerns. For example, they may not choose something that is already in use, and they may not disturb a friend who is concentrating on another task. They may only choose materials which have been presented to them by a teacher (or a designated student in the case of peer instruction); this ensures that they work on activities at their developmental level. They must treat the materials (and other members of the class) with respect, and they must always put away their work when finished.

Individual and Small Group Instruction

Rather than whole group instruction, teachers in a Montessori environment observe children at work and then give individual or small group lessons based on their observations of children’s skills, interests, and developmental readiness. For example, a child in a first-third grade classroom continually expressed an interest in reptiles. It wasn't necessarily a part of the lesson plan; he was just interested. The special education teacher doing interventions with him noticed this as well. She brought two additional books at his level and helped him to read them. In his regular classroom, he wrote a report on reptiles. It was not assigned; he completed the report because he was interested in what he was learning.

Investment in Technology

Furthermore, the investments in technology through SIG helped improve student access to a variety of instructional tools. Montessori teaching is naturally inquiry-based and in-depth, and technology helps teachers to take full advantage of that learning approach. Students use Macbooks and iPads for research as well small group and individual exercises and projects. In 2012-13, PMCS will take advantage of the new technology attained this year through SIG and EETT funding by investing in additional apps and online subscriptions and programs. PMCS will purchase educational apps for the school’s Macbooks and ipads and attain a site license to BrainPops, animated, curricular content that engages students, supports educators, and bolsters

achievement. BrainPOP supports individual, team, and whole-class learning. The content is mapped to Common Core and aligned to state academic standards.

Copies of Philadelphia Montessori's Induction and PD Approval Letters are attached to this report.

Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachments

- PMCS - 3-6Montessoripa2003Correlation
- PMCS - 6-9Montessoripa2003Correlation
- PMCS - 9-12Montessoripa2003Correlation
- PMCS - INDUCTION APPROVAL
- PMCS - PD PLAN APPROVAL

English Language Learners

To date, no ELL students attend PMCS. However, we recognize that we need to have a comprehensive ELL Plan in place, which could be quickly implemented upon enrollment of an ELL student. This plan is attached.

The purpose of our ELL plan is to increase the English language proficiency of eligible students so that they can attain the statewide academic standards and achieve academic success.

PMCS is prepared to implement a variety of ESL program models, including pull-out, push-in, and sheltered instruction. To determine which educational approach(es) will be used for individual students, multiple factors are considered. These factors include, but are not limited to, English language proficiency data, other evaluation data that may be available, previous school records, teacher recommendations, parent recommendations, and CEO/ESL Coordinator input.

PMCS' ESL program is designed to provide a rich learning environment that is student-centered, developmentally-aligned, and research-based. The program is designed to:

1. Facilitate English language acquisition through communication skills of comprehension, listening, speaking, reading, and writing.
2. Ensure an effective and meaningful participation in regular education.
3. Facilitate the acculturation process in a complex society that is multicultural by exposing students to the customs, traditions, and expectations of their new environment.

Please find attached the ELL Policy, and ELL reports (PIMS and EdHub) for 2011-2012.

English Language Learners - Attachments

- PMCS - EDHUB LEP ACS 2011-2012
- PMCS - ELL PIMS ACS 2011-2012

- PMCS - ELL POLICY
- PMCS - ENROLLMENT LEA PROFILE 2011-2012

Graduation Requirements

Not applicable - Philadelphia Montessori Charter School only serves students through prekindergarten through sixth grade.

Special Education

Students whose academic needs appear to be deemed too severe for the regular curriculum can be referred for a special education initial evaluation. Philadelphia Montessori Charter School offers full-time special education services for those students who qualify. Special needs students participate in the PSSA Examinations. Students are provided accommodations as per IEPs. Consistent with the assessment goals of our school, special needs students participate in the benchmark testing (Study Island) four times a year and portfolio assessment. (Accommodations are provided for all testing).

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School provides Learning Support and Emotional Support to students who are in need of specialized services. The special education intervention team includes three certified special education teachers, reading specialist, Elwyn (school psychologist service), school social worker, and guidance counselor. These individuals work in concert to provide exceptional service to our students with special needs.

At Philadelphia Montessori Charter School, our goal is to educate our special education students in the least restrictive environment. Students receive remedial instruction in our resource rooms in the areas of literacy and mathematics. Students receiving special education services are allowed access to all school events, social and academic, and extracurricular activities available to their non-classified peers. The benefits of general education placement with supplemental support include targeted remediation, one-on-one instruction, increased opportunity to participate in classroom instruction, and decreased academic frustration. Ongoing collaboration between regular education and special education teachers ensures that once students return to their regular education classrooms, accommodations and modifications are properly implemented to help students effectively access the general education curriculum.

Services: Philadelphia Montessori provides speech and languages therapy, occupational therapy, itinerant learning support, psycho-educational evaluations, psychological evaluations, home-school connection, emotional support, life-skills, and any other supports or related services as defined by our students' IEPs.

A copy of the Philadelphia Montessori Special Education Policy is attached to this report. PMCS updated and revised their Special Education Policy in summer and fall 2012, which the Board adopted on October 25, 2012. A copy of this new policy (which supercedes the previous one) is also attached. Please see pages 15-19 for our discipline policy for special education students.

Special Education - Attachments

- PMCS - SPED POLICY
- PMCS Special Education Policy -- Adopted October 2012

Special Education Program Profile - Chart I

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Ashley Coleman	1.00	Learning Support	PMCS	17	N/A
Bridget Flynn	1.00	Learning Support	PMCS	15	N/A
Robin Herring	1.00	Learning Support	PMCS	12	N/A

Special Education Program Profile - Chart II

Organization	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Silver Springs -- Martin Luther,	1.0	Approved Private School -- Day Program -- Full Time Emotional Support	Plymoth Meeting, PA	1	One student placed in this setting as an approved private placement.

Special Education Program Profile - Chart III

Title	Location	FTE
School Counselor	PMCS	1.0
Behavior Support Aide	PMCS	1.0
Behavior Support Aide	PMCS	1.0
Behavior Support Aide	PMCS	0.5

Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV

IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual	Title/Service	Amount of Time Per Week
Therapy Source	Speech and Language Therapy	2 days a week
Therapy Source	Physical Therapy	2 days a week
Nicole Minnet	Occupational Therapy	2 days a week
Elwyn	Assessment and Evaluation Services	as needed

SECTION IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

Student Assessment - Primary

Test/Classification	K	1	2	3	4	5
PSSA (Math & Reading)	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
PSSA (Science)	No	No	No	No	Yes	No
PSSA (Writing)	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
Diagnostic Reading Assessment (DRA)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Individual Reading Inventory (IRI)	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Study Island	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes

Student Assessment - Secondary

Test/Classification	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
PSSA (Math & Reading)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Individual Reading Inventory (IRI)	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No
Study Island	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No

Student Assessment

Using the most recent PSSA data, any locally developed tests and other data that reflects improved academic performance, describe how the evidence indicates significant improvement or continued strong student performance.

PSSA:

In 2011-12, PDE has restructured the way AYP is calculated. Previously, in order to determine Adequate Yearly Progress of academics at the school, all grades are compiled into one set of PSSA scores from which overall proficiency levels are calculated for the whole group and subgroups with over 40 students. However, these overall groupings can mask the fact that there can be wide variation in academic performance of students from grade to grade and subject to subject. So, while the school as a whole might not have made its AYP proficiency targets, individual grades in the school might exceed those targets. As such, PDE has now applied the district level method of calculating AYP, which divides students into three-year grade spans. Under this method, schools who serve more than one grade “span”- i.e., elementary grades 3 to 5 and middle grades 6 to 8 receive credit for making improvements in those areas such that if they make their targets in just one grade span, it is the equivalent of making the targets for the whole school.

However, a review of PMCS’ preliminary AYP files indicates the PMCS did not meet all the targets in either grade span (3-5 or 5-8). As such, PMCS did not make AYP for 2011-12. The chart below shows the preliminary PSSA results for 2011-12.

School Year	Math PSSA % Proficient or Better		Reading PSSA % Proficient or Better	
	3-5 Grade Span	6-8 Grade Span	3-5 Grade Span	6-8 Grade Span
2012	33.8%	36.4%	41.8%	31.8%
2011	34.5%		42.2%	
2010	33.7%		28.9%	
2009	24.4%		24.4%	
2008	8%		24.3%	
2007	6%		14%	

2006	3%	5%
2005	10%	7%

A review of the raw data allowed us to compare 2011-12's schoolwide performance to 2010-11. Our math scores remained the same, with 34.5% proficient or advanced in both 2010-11 and 2011-12. In reading, there was a small decline in proficiency from 42.4% in 2010-11 to 38.4% in 2011-12.

2011-12 was a year of significant change in instructional leadership, professional development, curriculum, and interventions, with many of these changes not being implemented until midway through the school year. We believe that this transitional period contributed to the nearly static student achievement. In 2011-2012, we are committed to renewing our focus on academic improvement and implementing are selected school improvements with fidelity in order to yield the greatest growth. With ever-rising achievement targets in both content areas, we will need to work harder than ever to ensure students show adequate growth in math and reading.

Benchmarks:

PMCS has realized the importance of using data to track their student's progress to inform instruction and school programming. Since 2008, PMCS has used the Study Island, a web-based program that provides individual instruction that is aligned with the PSSA to monitor and track student academic progress throughout the year. Students at PMCS completed the assessment four times throughout the 2011-12 school year. The administration and teachers used results to track progress and identify any students who performed below level.

PMCS' preliminary AYP files and our 2011-12 local assessment data are attached to this report.

How these results influence development of annual measurable goals and targets?

The 2011-12 school year was the eighth year of operation for the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School. Our first year's test scores were considered our baseline data (2004-05). We are consciously following our children's progress from one year to the next to look for improvements. We are not interested in comparing our third grade PSSA scores last year to our third grade PSSA scores this year, because this represents two different sets of children — apples to oranges, so to speak. Instead, we compared last year's third grade scores to this year's fourth grade scores. We feel this is a more accurate predictor of our academic progress. Our longer term goal is to track the progress of each individual child over time, controlling for factors that might impact performance such as: number of years attending our school, attendance, number of disciplinary actions, etc. In 2011-12 we used a variety of diagnostic and benchmarking tests to determine student skill levels and growth. Study Island was used to assess math and reading in grades 3-6. DRA I measured literacy skills in K-3 and DRA II completed the same task for grades 4-6. Additionally, we analyzed the prior year's PSSA scores to determine achievement at the classroom and building level.

Data specific meetings occur after every major benchmark and diagnostic exam (attended by teachers from each grade, the reading specialist, special education representative, and CEO/Principal) to analyze specific student data , look for trends, and identify students in need of additional support. PMCS has weekly Common Planning Time in both upper and lower elementary. The CEO/Principal, special education representatives, and classroom teachers

discuss what is happening in class, analyze student work, and discuss any interventions including best practices that can improve student progress. These meetings are also used to help identify students performing below level and to guide student groupings, lesson plans, and teaching strategies. Regular staff meetings include all staff members and occur after every benchmark exam and offer time for high level data analysis and informing staff of overall progress including discussion of academic reports to the Board.

If locally developed tests are used, discuss how they are used and what impact they have on the curriculum and any measurable goal decisions.

PMCS uses formative and summative assessments to gauge overall and individual student growth as well as identifying strengths and weaknesses that need to be addressed by our teachers. The school uses detailed student data to implement strategic, targeted, focused instructional interventions to improve student learning. Students who experience difficulty mastering proficient or advanced levels in and mathematics are identified by a combination of standardized test data, teacher feedback, and student performance on ongoing assessments.

As mentioned above, data specific meetings occur after every major benchmark and diagnostic exam (attended by teachers from each grade, the reading specialist, special education representative, and CEO/Principal) to analyze specific student data , look for trends, and identify students in need of additional support. PMCS has weekly Common Planning Time in both upper and lower elementary. The CEO/Principal, special education representatives, and classroom teachers discuss what is happening in class, analyze student work, and discuss any interventions including best practices that can improve student progress. These meetings are also used to help identify students performing below level and to guide student groupings, lesson plans, and teaching strategies.

In 2011-12, PMCS began to work with Dr. Alexander Schuh of Frontier 21, who provided additional comprehensive evaluation of data regarding the implementation of the School Improvement Grant, including teacher observations, assessment data, and interviews of program administrators and teachers. Dr. Schuh worked with teachers regarding their ability to use data to identify individual student academic strengths and weaknesses relative to the PA Standards.

Philadelphia Montessori truly strives to deliver data-driven instruction at all levels. By collecting a wide variety of data from several different sources, and understanding how to use that data and communicate it to parents, PMCS teachers have truly learned how to integrate the use of data into instruction. PMCS uses a wide range of data, often embedded in the curriculum and instruction itself, to diagnose student weaknesses, identify the proper intervention, and track student progress.

Please describe features of the student achievement plan and note the usage of teacher observations, surveys, portfolios or other local instruments to measure student progress.

Along with the annual PSSA, PMCS used several assessments throughout the school year in 2011-12 as follows:

- Study Island: Students in grades 3-6 completed this benchmark assessment four times throughout the 2011-2012 school year. Study Island is a web-based program that provides individual instruction that is aligned with the PSSA. The administration and teachers used results to track progress and identify any students who are performing below level.
- DRAs & IRIs: We use Developmental Reading Assessments (DRAs) and Individual Reading Inventories (IRIs) to determine independent and instructional reading levels, show student progress, and plan instruction. These assessments are administered three times a year. We have used DRAs consistently since the school's inception as the assessment provides a thorough assessment of a student's reading accuracy, fluency, comprehension and reading engagement. In 2011-2012, we began to use the IRI in grades 4-6 (replacing DIBELS) to better track the growth in the upper grades. Staff receives training each year related to testing administration and how to use the data collected to inform instruction. DRA and IRI scores are used to substantiate referrals for additional student support and make recommendations for reading interventions. The results are communicated on report cards and during conferences to support families in selecting appropriately leveled text for children at home.
- Locally Developed Assessments: Locally developed tests are used for math and literacy, the results of these tests will inform teachers as to what skills need more help, what skills need to be re-taught and perhaps approached differently. In the lower elementary (K-2), teachers administered locally developed assessments in mathematics aligned to PA standards (including Montessori assessment in Kindergarten). These exams were administered four times in grades 1-2 and only once in Kindergarten (next year, all students will be tested four times in order to track growth).
- Detailed Student Observational Records: PMCS teachers are trained to be keen observers and diagnosticians and are constantly making decisions based on observational assessment. Teacher observations are built into Montessori teaching and are used to determine which students require more intervention in each skill area. Our teachers keep careful records documenting the lessons a child has received, the practice they have completed, and the level of mastery the child has achieved. This is the main form of assessment that our teachers use to inform their planning and instruction. Student portfolios have been used since the inception of the school. These collections of student work are used to measure progress over time, to communicate with parents, and to place summative test results into a broader framework. All of our students have a portfolio that follows them from the time they enter the school until they graduate. Portfolios are housed centrally in a location where teachers have full access.

Based on an early analysis of 2011-12 student achievement data, PMCS has already planned improvements to our system for measuring student progress, as follows:

- Students in grades 3-6 will continue to take the Study Island benchmark in math and reading four times a year.
- New in 2012-13, students in grades K-2 will be assessed four times throughout the year using the locally developed mathematics assessment (aligned to state standards). This will ensure student progress is tracked consistently in both math and reading at all grade levels throughout the year.
- PMCS will also continue to implement the DRA and IRI reading diagnostic assessments three times throughout the school year for all grade levels.

- New in 2012-13, the school will use AIMSweb to assess reading fluency and comprehension and math computation and application at all grade levels (K-6). AIMSweb is a benchmark and progress monitoring system based on direct, frequent and continuous student assessment. The results are reported to students, parents, teachers and administrators via a web-based data management and reporting system to determine response to intervention. The AIMSweb system components provide one comprehensive progress monitoring and RTI Solution. All students will be assessed three times per year for universal screening (early identification) and progress monitoring. At-risk students will be evaluated monthly to evaluate the effectiveness of instructional changes, and special education students will be assessed bi-weekly to accurately identify and track their educational needs.
- PMCS will use the SchoolPace dashboard by American Reading Company, a web-based student achievement dashboard that allows educators to monitor growth and performance in real-time. SchoolPace gives you the flexibility to customize your data collection, performance targets, and demographics by district, school, grade, and time of year. The eIRLA is an online formative assessment tool (designed for the iPad) that measures student achievement in real time to drive instruction. Using embedded assessment, teachers identify the skills that each student has mastered and which ones he/she needs to do next. The eIRLA uses the Common Core Standards for reading literary and informational text. With complete transparency, every teacher and administrator knows which students are achieving, which students need differentiated instruction, and exactly what to do and say.
- Finally, PMCS teachers will create electronic portfolios of student work and will be analyzing reading, writing and math samples a minimum of 4 times a year, using locally developed Rubrics to measure growth in these three areas. The school will continue to work with Dr. Schuh, who will provide in depth evaluation of all school data regarding the implementation of the SIG grant and will help leadership and teachers understand and effectively use assessment data to drive instruction.

b.) Describe the strategies and interventions that are in place to ensure that students who are at-risk of failure, or those not making reasonable progress, are being addressed. What opportunities are they afforded in order to help them succeed? Provide clear evidence that demonstrates how those strategies are proving to be effective in terms of improved academic performance.

We utilize a Response to Intervention (RTI) model that ensures that each student at-risk of academic failure is provided the supports and resources they need to be able to succeed academically. PMCS's RTI structure provides appropriate interventions for students at three different levels. Non-special education students identified as struggling receive Tier I interventions including in-class interventions like adjustments to Study Island assignments and differentiated instruction. Classroom teaching assistants were trained to work with individual, targeted children using the Wilson materials and other intervention materials (i.e. 100 Book Challenge interventions) to reinforce basic reading and math skills. PMCS has used Study Island not only as a benchmarking system, but also as a means to further differentiation in assignments. Computers in each elementary classroom allow students to complete assignments leveled to their individual needs. Study Island's online program supports both math and reading skills and provides regular reports on student progress toward proficiency. PSSA results and

Study Island benchmarking show that those teachers who utilized Study Island for more hours during the school year had students who performed significantly higher on the PSSA exams.

If students fail to improve, they move into Tier II interventions including the Catapult afterschool program, SES Tutoring, additional reading support and services from specialists using the Wilson Reading program or other interventions, and in-class small group instruction with the lead and assistant teachers. Tier II also includes teacher reference to the CSAP program where students receive a case manager and additional interventions. If these interventions fail to improve student results, students are recommended for Tier III, which begins the special education evaluation process.

Reading Specialist

A full-time, certified reading specialist was hired to work with low performing, non-special education students struggling in reading and to provide additional classroom support for teachers including lesson modeling. The reading specialist helps to support the following interventions throughout the school: the Wilson and Just Words program and American Reading Company's 100 Book Challenge as interventions for identified students. Additionally, the reading specialist oversees Read Naturally's structured intervention programs for upper grade special education students and grades struggling regular education students in grades 5-6. In 2012-2013, the Reading Specialist will also be assisting all classroom teachers to utilize Read Naturally for all students in grades 3-6.

Read Naturally

Also in 2011-2012, PMCS piloted Read Naturally, a web-based oral reading fluency program used by special education students as well as approximately 8-10 other students identified as struggling. Read Naturally's structured intervention programs combine teacher modeling, repeated reading, and progress monitoring. Using audio support and graphs of their progress, students work with high-interest material at their skill level. In Read Naturally, students read along while listening to a recording of a fluent reader. This helps students learn new vocabulary words and encourages proper pronunciation, expression, and phrasing. Daily monitoring of student progress has also been shown to improve student achievement. For 2012-13, PMCS will be implementing Read Naturally in all grades K-6, after successfully piloting the program in special education and with severely struggling students.

Wilson Reading Program

In 2011-2012, PMCS used the Wilson Reading System in grades K-6 as a supplemental program. The Wilson Reading System is a systematic, explicit, multi-sensory approach to reading and is most effective for students who are reading and spelling below grade level. Its main goal is to teach students language and word structure through a carefully planned program. Extensive practice provides students with multiple opportunities for skill development while assessments monitor students daily and weekly throughout the program.

SES Tutoring

As mandated by NCLB, we provide SES tutoring for economically disadvantaged students in January through the end of May. Students who qualify will receive summer SES tutoring through an approved provider as well. PMCS' SES program serves 20-26 students for four hours each Saturday. Along with certified tutors from Foundations, four PMCS teachers also attend and work with their grade group with one teacher working with the lowest performing kids who

need even more support to attain grade level. Teachers write lesson plan objectives and track what each student completes each week as well as their grades and scores in each of the interventions used. The SES program combines a variety of math and reading interventions. Tutors and teachers use SkillBuilders workbooks in math and reading comprehension based on academic level as a resource along with the SuccessMaker and First in Math computer programs.

After-School Program

As part of the SIG Transformation Model, PMCS has extended the school day by 1.5 hours for struggling students. Students in grades 3-6 who performed basic or below basic on the previous year's PSSA (or teacher recommendation for 3rd grade) attend the after-school program Monday-Thursday from 3:30-5:00 (two days of math and two days of reading).

Student Assessment - Attachments

- PMCS - AYP SUMMARY 2011-2012
- PMCS - AYP REPORT 2011-2012
- PMCS - LOCAL TEST DATA 2011-2012

Teacher Evaluation

a.) List the main features of the school's teacher evaluation plan.

In 2011-12, PMCS provided teacher observations (two formal and monthly informal) using state evaluation forms for the formal observations. Additionally, the Principal conducted daily walkthroughs of each classroom to provide ongoing support and feedback to teachers on their instructional practices. Teachers receive immediate feedback in writing for all informal observations and any negative reviews result in additional meetings and observations to ensure change occurs.

PMCS uses data collected as part of the evaluation process and the evaluation for the teacher incentive policy to inform decisions across the school. If observations highlight a need for additional professional development (school-wide or individual), the CEO/Principal will arrange professional development or mentoring opportunities for the teacher in need. The data collected is also used to inform decisions about teacher incentives awarded through SIG.

The CEO/Principal has identified detailed remediation process, which has been provided to teachers and outlines the steps taken to provide the proper supports to ensure teachers are successful and effective. The monthly informal observations help to identify any areas in need of improvement lead to a formal meeting with the CEO to address the concerns and design a plan for improvement. Two additional weekly informal observations are conducted to note improvement or need for change.

If improvement is not seen by the third observation, the teacher is asked to observe other teachers demonstrating effective skills. The struggling teacher is then observed by a peer mentor along with the CEO. The mentor teacher work together through email and face-to-face meetings to provide additional support for improvement. After two weeks of mentoring, a formal observation is conducted. If a teacher is identified as unsatisfactory in this formal observation, failing to show significant improvement through the supports provided, they will either not be asked to return the following year (or replaced in the year).

b.) List entities/individuals who are responsible for teacher and staff evaluation.

Carrie Kries, CEO/Principal of Philadelphia Charter School, conducted all the teacher evaluations.

c.) Describe professional development for the evaluators, particularly in the areas of Special Education and instructional techniques, that is unique to the mission of the charter school.

Carrie Kries, CEO of PMCS was responsible for all teacher evaluations in 2011-2012. Ms. Kries has a Master of Science in Professional Education and completed the Aspiring Principals Program at the University of Pennsylvania. She is a seasoned educator, with over 19 years experience in both the public and private sector. Ms. Kries has PA certifications for early childhood and elementary instruction, as well as a K-12 PA certification.

Teacher Evaluation - Attachments

- PMCS - EVALUATION I
- PMCS - EVALUATION II

SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

Leadership Changes

In 2011-2012, Ms. Carrie Kries has joined Philadelphia Montessori as our CEO/Principal. Ms. Kries comes to PMCS from The Academy in Manayunk where she was head of the upper school. Ms. Kries holds a Master of Science in Professional Education and completed the Aspiring Principals Program at the University of Pennsylvania. She is a seasoned educator, with over 19 years experience in both the public and private sector. Ms. Kries has PA certifications for early childhood and elementary instruction, as well as a K-12 PA certification.

In order to improve the overall effectiveness of the administration of the school, Ms. Kries reorganized the school's administrative structure. The former Director of Operations & Family and Community Partnerships role was amended to serve as the Dean of Students & Community Relations. In this role, he focused on improving school climate and the partnership between the home and school. This included making home visits to many family's homes to provide one-on-one communication with parents about the school's extended day program, discipline policy, and parental involvement.

To better facilitate the overall organization of the day-to-day operations of the school, Ms. Kries brought on a highly-qualified and seasoned Executive Administrator to coordinate the SES, facilities, PreK Counts and Head Start programs, office staff, and lunch program. This allows the CEO/Principal to focus her time on overseeing the instructional program, teacher performance, and the integration of the Montessori Model throughout the school. Additionally, she eliminated the Director of Montessori position, opting to use SIG funding to contract with an outside consultant to provide observation and extensive training to teachers and leadership on integrating the Montessori Model in a public school setting.

In 2011-2012, there was one addition to the Board of Trustees. Ms. Patty Jones Thompson has a wide range of experience and expertise that will serve as an asset to the PMCS Board. She has earned a Juris Doctorate degree from the Rutgers University School of Law, a Masters in Social Work from the University of Pennsylvania, and a Bachelors in Sociology from Hampton

University. Ms. Jones Thompson has over a decade of experience in social services and is currently an Adjunct Instructor at Delaware Community College, teaching sociology, human services, and social problems courses.

Board of Trustees

<u>Name of Trustee</u>	<u>Office (if any)</u>
Susan Manix	Chair
Dean Michelson	Vice Chair
Nicole Jones-Walker	Parent Representative
Jill Fisher	Member
Bourne Ruthrauff	Member
Patty Jones Thompson	Member

Professional Development (Governance)

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School's Board of Trustees is committed to staying abreast of developments in the charter school arena and ensuring compliance with the various legal responsibilities of a charter school board. To that end, in 2011-2012, the board received board training from Melanie Burke Reiser of Omnivest Management, LLC. This training provided Board members with a review of the legal obligations of the charter school Board including due diligence, Sunshine Law, Public Officials Act, Right to Know law, etc. This training also included the basic functions of a charter school Board, including fiduciary responsibility, and Board member roles and responsibilities, and a review of effective governance.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School

The Board of Directors functions primarily as a policy-making body, delegating day-to-day administration to the CEO. Its roles and responsibilities include: financial development and management, fiduciary oversight, and programmatic oversight. The board is responsible for: coordination of long-range planning and resource development; overseeing and evaluating the work of the CEO; setting a framework for the budget process and authorizing the annual budget; approving large resource expenditures, significant changes in program or facility use, and expansion into new program areas; exercising final authority over personnel and faculty issues; and, serving as a court of last resort for resolving complaints. The CEO is an ex-officio member of the board and attends all meetings.

An affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the board, duly recorded, showing how each member voted, is used in order to take action on the following subjects pertaining to school management: school calendar; adopting textbooks; appointing or dismissing school administrator or staff members; adopting the annual budget; purchasing or selling land; locating new buildings or changing location; creating or increasing indebtedness; adopting courses of study; designating depositories for school funds; entering into major contracts; fixing salaries or compensation of administrator, teachers, or other employees of the charter school; and, entering into contracts with and making appropriations to an intermediate unit or school district for the charter school's proportionate share of the cost of services provided or to be provided by the foregoing entities.

Relationship with School District of Philadelphia

PMCS went through the renewal process in 2009-10, which included an audit by the School District of Philadelphia; a two site visits by District personnel visit that included a records review, classroom visits, and interviews with Board members, administration, and teachers; and frequent follow-up to requests for additional information. This renewal process provided PMCS with an opportunity to truly demonstrate the uniqueness of our program to the District, and resulted in the renewal of our charter for one year (extended renewal is based on AYP results in 2009-10). On August 25, 2010, the School District of Philadelphia extended this one year renewal to the full 5 year term. Additionally, PMCS modified their School Improvement Plan in 2010-2011 and submitted it to PDE, after review by the School District of Philadelphia.

Coordination of the Governance and Management of the School - Attachment

- PMCS - BOT MEETING SCHEDULE 2012-2013

Community and Parent Engagement

The Board recognizes and embraces the community around PMCS, and has enjoyed strong, positive relations with nearby houses of worship, community groups such as Bartram's Garden, City Lights, the Paschall Library, the Police District Advisory Committee, and the Southwest Community Development Corporation (donated the trees and conducted a presentation for the staff and students who planted the trees on Island Avenue), Drexel University, and has been recognized as a safe place for the community's children.

Community Partnerships in 2011-2012 included:

- **Police Department**
- **Philadelphia Wholesale Produce Market:** Supplied Carrots and Apples to the Primary Children
- **Senator Anthony Williams**
- **Councilwoman Jannie Blackwell**
- **Stacey Cruise of the American Paradigm Schools:** donating space for the 6th grade graduation
- **Josephine Chan:** funding the custodian and technicians for the 6th grade graduation
- **Pacifico Auto:** Christmas party for our students as well as other donations
- **Drexel University:** Couple and Family Therapy Interns and Student Teaching Interns and Volunteers. This partnership will be expanded in 2012-2013 as PMCS will serve as a Clinical Practicum for students pursuing their Master or Post-Master's in Family Therapy.
- **St. Joseph's Preparatory School:** Raised \$2700 for our school doing one dress-down day and brought high school students to PMCS to work with our students in preparation for PSSA
- **Moore College of Art and Design:** PMCS students participated in the 2011 Young Artists Celebrating Creativity Contest in 2011-2012. Five PMCS students were recognized as winners.

PMCS' Dean of Students and Community Relations is charged with coordinating meaningful parent engagement at the school. With feedback from the annual parent survey and the Parent Teacher Group, the school designed meaningful parent events that included explicit strategies for parents to support their children's educational experience. PMCS invites parents to attend teacher in-service trainings that may also be beneficial to parents. Childcare is provided so

parents can learn how to help support their child at home. Trainings this year included 100 Book Challenge, LETRs Training, and a Catapult workshop.

The school provides a wide range of opportunities for parent engagement in their children's education. Letters are sent home often with requests for meetings (discipline or academic) and teachers and members of the student services team call parents for a variety of reasons including follow up for CSAP issues. In an effort to provide a forum for parents to communicate with the CEO and discuss concerns or changes in the program, parents are invited to morning coffee with the CEO each month.

Additionally, the school has a now has a Parent Advisory Board (PAB) and is working to increase parent involvement in a Home and School Association. The PAB is a group of eight parents, nominated by the school to work closely with the CEO, staff, and the board of directors to support the mission and vision of the school. This involves gathering and evaluating information, supporting the Montessori philosophy at the school and district level and making important decisions for the benefit of students of PMCS. The Council meets monthly. All families and teachers are automatically members of the PMCS Home and School Association and are encouraged to participate.

Parents are encouraged to be active participants in their child's education. The school uses the school website, teacher websites, meetings, letters, and monthly newsletters to ensure parents and students have access to all of the schools instructional opportunities. Further, we have regular communication methods which include:

- Parent Meetings (school-wide and grade-specific)
- Parent Education Nights (Primary, Lower, and Upper Elementary)
- Soliciting feedback and suggestions through an annual parent satisfaction survey
- Flyers
- Newsletters
- Powerschool Parent Module (to be purchased and implemented in 2012-13)
- Back-to-School Night (and Annual Title I Meeting)
- Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Parent Involvement Policy and Parent Compact (both developed with parent feedback.)
- Parent and Student Handbook — Our parents and students receive a copy of the handbook every fall.
- Notes, telephone calls, or text message

SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Major fund-raising activities

In 2010-2011, the school applied for and was granted a 3-year \$800,000 Title I School Improvement Grant. These funds have been used to support transitional efforts including an Afterschool program, full implementation new reading and math curriculums, professional development, and other programs for student support.

Primarily in 2011-2012, the school's and the Board's emphasis lay solely on activities aimed at raising student achievement. As such, the school did not conduct its usual level of fundraising this past year. However, the Board has already named a member to steer the school's fundraising efforts, which will include both a drive for private donations and grants. The school also holds a variety of smaller fund raisers (\$1 dress down Fridays, raffles, pretzel and water-ice sales, book sales, etc.). The profits of these smaller fundraisers are invested in the educational program, often supporting field trips.

Fiscal Solvency Policies

To improve the school's fiscal solvency, PMCS' Board established stricter spending controls, including a more detailed review of contracts. The school contracts with OmniVest Properties Management, LLC (an education management company) to provide back-office support and ongoing financial planning services. OmniVest prepares monthly financial packets to be shared with the school administration and Board treasurer and be presented to the full Board of Trustees at the monthly, public Board meetings. These packets track actual revenues and expenditures versus the budget, to ensure that any abnormalities are recognized and addressed promptly.

PMCS understands that a positive fund balance is a necessary buffer in the event of unforeseen circumstances such as unscheduled repairs and maintenance, delay in the receipt of federal funds, lower than anticipated student enrollment, etc.

Accounting System

The School has contracted with OmniVest Management LLC to provide back office and fiscal management services. OmniVest ensures that the general ledger structure and account classifications are in accordance with the Pennsylvania Department of Education guidelines. The School also utilizes OmniVest Management, LLC's internal controls and procedures, which include annual and monthly budgeting, cash management, general ledger control, monthly financial reporting, and account reconciliation. The accounting software system used is QuickBooks Premier Accountant Edition 2012. This software is customized with the Pennsylvania State Chart of Accounts for Pennsylvania Public Schools. The school is 100 percent compliant with the Pennsylvania State Chart of Accounts for PA Public Schools. All of the school's financial and budgetary reporting is prepared in accordance with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and the applicable standards set by the Government Accounting Standards Board(GASB).

Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances

Preliminary Statements of Revenues, Expenditures & Fund Balances - Attachment

- PMCS - PRELIM STATEMENTS OF FUND BALANCE

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

The School's Board of Trustees has engaged J Miller & Associates, Certified Public Accountants (1221 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107) to conduct our audit for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2012. The audit report for fiscal year ended June 30, 2012 is expected to be completed in November 2012. The School will provide PDE and the School District of Philadelphia with a copy of this audit report immediately upon its completion.

To date, the school has an audit report for each fiscal year through June 30, 2011. The Independent Auditor's Report for fiscal year ending June 30, 2011 is attached to this report. The audit was performed by J Miller & Associates, Certified Public Accountants (1221 Locust Street, Philadelphia, PA 19107). The "Management's Discussion and Analysis" can be found on pages 3-6 of this document. A summary of audit results includes the following:

- The auditor's report was unqualified, as was the auditor's report issued on compliance for major programs.
- There were no material weaknesses or significant deficiencies identified in the internal controls over major programs (i.e. Title I School Improvement).
- No reportable material weaknesses in internal control over financial reporting were identified, however, the audit identified two (2) significant deficiencies in internal control over financial reporting, as follows:
 - **In the review of 40 payroll disbursements, 10 out of 40 timesheets were missing or incomplete.** The auditor recommended that management review its procedures for timesheet completion and approval and ensure that the procedures are being followed by all employees. They further recommended that the school should consider electronic timekeeping systems for the capture of time work. Since this audit, PMCS has purchased, installed, and implemented an electronic, biometric timekeeping system. Additionally, the hard copy timesheets are still completed by employees, to ensure the school has a back-up system for capturing time worked, at least for the first year of implementing the electronic system. PMCS also has had a new experienced business professional in the role of Business Manager since late summer 2011. She has been trained in proper timekeeping and verification procedures.
 - **In our review of 33 employee files, 3 employees did not have child abuse clearances.** The auditor recommended that management review all employee files to ensure that all child abuse clearances have been obtained. They further stated that the child abuse clearances should be obtained prior to the employee's start date. The audit covered the FY ending June 30, 2010. At the start of FY 2011, the PMCS hired a new CEO and a new Business Manager. With the support of the school's business management company (OmniVest

Management), both new employees (including the Business Manager who has prior experience in human resources) have received guidance on securing and maintaining personnel documents, including the three required background checks. The Business Manager conducts periodic internal audits of employee files to verify their completeness. OmniVest is also available upon the school's request to conduct an annual review.

PMCS believes that the new and experienced school leadership, supported by the school's business management company, has remedied these deficiencies.

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

- PMCS - AUDIT 2010-2011
- PMCS - AUDIT ENAGEMENT 2011-12

Citations and follow-up actions for any State Audit Report

The School did not undergo a state audit conducted by the Auditor General in 2008-2009, 2009-2010, 2010-2011 or, to date, for 2011-2012. In 2010-2011, the School forwarded our Financial Statements and Supplementary Information for the year ended June 30, 2011 to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's Office of Budget, Bureau of Audits. We understand that the Auditor General has the right to review expenditures and to audit the expenditures made from state appropriated moneys.

SECTION VII. FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

The School leases a 14,400 square foot facility from an affiliated company, Montessori Initiative for Education, a non-profit organization who purchased the property from the City Of Philadelphia in February, 2006. The result of this lease is a newly renovated and modern school facility that will serve the needs of the School for the long term future. In 2011-2012, the only major expenditure was approximately \$98K in computer technology. There were no major capital expenditures with the exception of minor expenditures for repair, maintenance, and replacement costs.

Future Facility Plans and Other Capital Needs

The school would eventually like to renovate our existing building and/or build on our existing property in an effort to enhance our abilities to offer subjects such as physical education and simply to support our growth and expansion. However, this is not planned during the current (2012-2013) school year.

SECTION VIII. HEALTH AND SAFETY RESPONSIBILITIES

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

Safety

In accordance with the Philadelphia Fire Prevention Code, fire drills are conducted throughout the year for the charter school (in accordance with The School District of Philadelphia Policy and Procedure Number 110.4 and Sections 703.1 & 2 of Chapter 7 of the Philadelphia Fire Prevention Code).

The school follows the foregoing fire evacuation procedures:

- There will be an “all clear” issued, to advise persons in the fire drill exits to return their floor upon completion of the drill.
- The date and time of fire drill will always be announced in advance. Every student and employee of the school is instructed as follows: If you hear a fire alarm and there has been no prior notification, you must assume that there is a real fire emergency.
- All fire alarm drills are recorded in a logbook with all of the relevant information; date, time of drill, the actual time for evacuation, and any other factors. The Philadelphia Fire Department is free to inspect this logbook and typically inspect it annually.

A copy PDE-4101 Certification is attached to this report.

Health

Philadelphia Montessori has a full-time certified school nurse. The school nurse is responsible for checking the vision, height, weight, and hearing of students and making necessary referrals to parents when problems are found. Upon admission to the school, each student is required to submit a physical examination, proof of appropriate immunizations, and dental, audio, and visual screenings. State mandated screenings are scheduled, implemented, recorded and monitored throughout the school year.

Each student is given an individual file which contains physical, copy of immunization records, screening results, pupil medical history, emergency contact form, any professional observations, progress notes, problem list with follow up, copy of any nursing care visits, medical administrative release forms, and doctors’ prescriptions. Certificates of immunization are kept under separate cover. Student confidential health information and immunization records are kept organized and stored in a locked file cabinet.

Finally, PMCS is committed to providing a school environment that promotes and protects children’s health, well-being, and ability to learn by supporting healthy eating and physical activity. As such, we have developed and implemented a school Wellness Policy, which is also attached to this plan.

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School recognizes that student wellness and proper nutrition are related to students’ physical well-being, growth, development, and readiness to learn. The Board of Trustees is committed to providing a school environment that promotes

student wellness, proper nutrition, nutrition education, and regular activity as part of the total learning experience. In a healthy school environment, students will learn about and participate in positive dietary and lifestyle practices that can improve student achievement.

Nutrition Education: The goal of nutrition education is to teach, encourage, and support healthy eating by students. Promoting student health and nutrition enhances readiness for learning and increases student achievement. PMCS provides nutrition education to students in a variety ways including:

- Fruit of the Week — teachers bring a fruit to class to learn about and share and students in the primary grades learn how to cut and serve fruit.
- Students are only allowed to bring healthy foods in for class birthday parties.
- Pennsylvania Nutrition Education Tracks — In 2012-13, PMCS will participate in TRACKS, the statewide program that provides Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) to low-income individuals and families who are eligible to receive SNAP benefits. The program aims to foster positive behavioral changes related to nutrition and physical activity.
- The Great Body Shop Curriculum — nationally recognized comprehensive health and substance abuse prevention program used by preschool, elementary and middle schools throughout the US. The program meets all state and national standards, is affordable, easy to teach, and provides an educational environment in which it is enjoyable to learn. Combining current research from the fields of substance abuse and violence prevention, educational psychology, neuroscience and human behavior, the program synthesizes accurate, developmentally appropriate content with effective instructional processes.
- Eat Right Now — Next year, Philadelphia Montessori Charter School will implement the Health Promotion Council to implement the Eat Right Now (ERN) program. ERN aims to provides nutrition education and outreach to students, caregivers, and staff in order to foster positive behavioral changes related to nutrition and physical activity. ERN Nutrition Educators provide interactive lessons in the classroom during the school day and reach students consistently throughout the school year. These lessons align with Pennsylvania Department of Education curriculum standards while stressing the importance of a healthy lifestyle. The Educators work directly with the students and also provide additional nutrition-related educational resources for teachers and nurses in the schools they reach. ERN educators have the capacity to also provide assistance with school garden start-up and garden-based nutrition education, hands-on cooking clubs for students and caregivers, and assists with wellness councils helping to change the nutritional wellness of the school environment.

Physical Education: PMCS strives to provide opportunities for developmentally appropriate physical activity during the school day for all students as well as in after school programs. Students at all grade levels participate in Physical Education class at

least once a week with a certified P.E./Health Teacher. All students are also encouraged to get exercise during a daily 20 minute recess. Finally, PMCS provides a variety of after school activities promoting physical activity including: tennis at all grade levels and flag football for grades 4-6. The school is investigating adding intramural basketball or karate in the 2012-13 school year. Additionally, on Friday's school lets out early for teacher in-service and many students remain to participate in parent-led chess and scrabble clubs from 2:30-4:00. PMCS incorporates exercise into these activities by first doing a physical activity (football, kalestetics, etc.) before beginning the activity.

The Pennsylvania Department of Health's "Request for Reimbursement and Report of School Health Services" for 2011-2012 must be submitted by PMCS to the Division of School Health in September 2012. At the time of this report's submission, PMCS had not submitted the 2011-2012 reimbursement form, but we will forward a copy of this reimbursement form to the charter authorizer upon our submission to the PA Department of Health. A copy of our 2010-2011 request for reimbursement is attached. Also attached are the school's wellness policy and Immunization Law Report for 2011-2012.

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

- PMCS - HEALTH REIMBURSEMENT 2010-2011
- PMCS - IMMUNIZATION LAW REPORT 2011-2012
- PMCS - PDE 4101 2011-2012
- Wellness Policy

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs

For the 2011-2012 school year PMCS procured liability insurance coverage through the insurance brokerage firm Boardman-Hamilton Company as follows:

Type of Insurance Coverage	Limit
Professional Liability	\$2,000,000/\$1,000,000
Commercial General Liability	\$2,000,000
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Products-completed operations aggregate • Per Occurrence • Personal & advertising injury • Damage to Rental Premises (ea. Occurrence) • Medical expense (any one person) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$2,000,000 • \$2,000,000 • \$2,000,000 • \$300,000 • \$10,000
(includes sexual molestation and physical abuse)	
Automobile Liability	\$1,000,000
Excess Liability/Umbrella	\$5,000,000

Workers Compensation & Employers' Liability	\$500,000
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A copy of the 2011-2012 ACORD Certificate of Liability Insurance is attached to this report as well as the 2012-2013 ACORD.

All full time employees receive health, dental and vision coverage through Keystone Health Plan East. Staff is enrolled in the Pennsylvania School Employees Retirement System as well. The school has purchased life and disability insurance for its employees.

Current School Insurance Coverage Policies and Programs - Attachments

- PMCS - ACORD 2011-2012
- PMCS - ACORD 2012-2013

SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff

PMCS employed 22 professional staff members during 2011-2012 (See attached PDE-414) and one member left during the school year. At year end, 83.98% of our professional staff met Pennsylvania certification requirements, exceeding the 75% certification requirement. Additionally, 100% of Montessori teachers are highly qualified as noted in the HQT ACS attached.

For the 2012-13 school year, 17 of the 22 professional staff members returned to PMCS (16 in professional positions, 1 as a teaching aide). This represented a 77% retention rate. The 5 professional staff members who did not return did not for a variety of reasons including: certification issues, elimination of positions due to the elimination of our pre-K program and budgetary constraints, retirement, and changes in program offerings.

Staff turnover and retention:

Recruiting and retaining teachers in a public Montessori school brings with it many inherent challenges. The first is the need to find teachers who are both Montessori and state-certified. Because there are many more private than public Montessori schools, most Montessori trained teachers do not seek state certification. Additionally, it is challenging to find teachers who have experience teaching the Montessori method *and* teaching urban students.

A copy of the PMCS LEA Staff Profile and HQT ACS for 2011-12 is attached to this report as well as the PDE-414 mentioned earlier.

Quality of Teaching and Other Staff - Attachments

- PMCS - HQT COURSE INSTRUCTOR ACS 2011-2012
- PMCS - LEA STAFF PROFILE ACS 2011-2012
- PMCS - PDE 414 2011-2012

Student Enrollment

As part of our renewal process, the School District of Philadelphia's Auditing Services Department conducted an enrollment audit in December 2008. The final report, released in January 2009, stated, "We noted no exceptions in our tests of student enrollment. PMCS accurately reported the student data that the District used to make per pupil subsidy payments."

In the admission of students, the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School complies with § 17-1723-A of the Charter School Law. Specifically, the charter school is open to all resident children in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. If more students apply to the charter school than the number of attendance slots available in a given year, then students are selected on a random basis (a lottery) from a pool of qualified applicants meeting the established eligibility criteria and submitting an application by the our deadline. However, preference is given in enrollment to siblings of students presently enrolled in the charter school. Also, first preference is given to students who reside within the School District of Philadelphia.

In 2011-2012, PMCS collected enrollment applications for the 2012-2013 school year on a rolling basis throughout the year. A lottery held on April 30, 2012 selected students to fill open slots in all grades K-6 and to fill the incoming 3-year old slots. The position of students on the waiting list was also determined by a random lottery for each grade level. As seats opened in the school during 2010-11, enrollment was extended to the highest ranked student on the waiting list in the grade with the corresponding opening.

Applications for parents of new students wishing to attend the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School may submit an application to the office at any time to be placed on the waiting list for the current school year. Students are placed on the waiting list, by grade level, in the order that applications are received. Applications can be obtained from the school office or downloaded from our website: www.philadelphiamontessori.org- click on "Register Your Child".

The cut off for birthdays is September 1st (i.e. to be eligible for enrollment for 2011-12, the youngest children must turn three by September 1, 2011; to be eligible for Kindergarten, a student must turn five by September 1, 2011).

Based on the charter school law, siblings of students already attending the previous school year as well as children of the school's founding members receive first preference, unless that number exceeds the number of spots available; then, those students will be placed into a separate sibling/founder lottery. The grade that is filled out on the application is the grade in which the student will be entered into the lottery; students may not be moved from one grade's acceptance/waiting list to another after the lottery has taken place. As spots become available throughout the school year, we will pull from the waiting list and contact the parent.

Philadelphia Montessori Charter School is a free, public school open to Philadelphia residents. There are no tuition or application fees.

Provide an enrollment history for the past year, by grade level, including the number of students initially enrolled, number dropped, and number added. For students who transferred out, indicate the school(s) to which they transferred, if known.

	Initial enrollment	Number dropped	Number added	Year End
K	18	0	5	23
1	25	3	2	24
2	22	0	3	25
3	24	0	3	27
4	25	2	2	25
5	23	0	2	25
6	23	1	0	22
Total	160	6	17	171

Provide the number of students who completed the 2010-11 year who are currently enrolled to return in September

126 of the students in grades K-5 (in 2011-2012) will be returning in the fall. PMCS has recommended the retention of five students at their current grade level.

Provide numbers of students who were required to leave the school (expulsions, other), and the numbers who left voluntarily.

One student was expelled in 2011-2012. All other withdrawals were voluntary

Student Enrollment - Attachment

- PMCS - ADMISSIONS POLICY

Transportation

The School District of Philadelphia provides transportation to our students in grades 1-6. Kindergarten students are not eligible to receive bus service and those parents (as well as parents of our preschool students) drop their children off and pick them up daily. PMCS has hired bus aides in each of the two school buses that pick up our students in order to ensure discipline on the bus and the safety of all students.

Food Service Program

The Philadelphia Montessori Charter School offers all students the option of school breakfast and/or lunch. We also serve snacks to children in our after school reading program and our after school daycare. We participate in the National School Lunch Program - with about 72.4% of our students (K-6) qualifying for free or reduced price breakfast/lunches. Some parents choose not to participate and send bagged lunches. In 2011-2012 we partnered with the

Archdiocese of Philadelphia for the provision of nutritious meals (lunch and breakfast) through the NSLP.

In 2011-2012, to promote a calmer and more peaceful environment around the lunch/recess transition, PMCS followed the example of other Montessori schools, scheduling recess prior to lunch with the first ten minutes of lunch as mandatory silence. This has been found to greatly reduce conflict and increase classroom improvement by creating a calmer and more productive learning environment. Space is limited at the school and in the past students have had to eat lunch in their classrooms. In 2012-2013, PMCS will be converting an open area into a dining room for all students.

Student Conduct

a.) Describe your expectations for student behavior and discipline.

For a full copy of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School Code of Responsibility, Respect and Self-Control, please see attached. It articulates compliance with all necessary laws and lays out due process procedures. In terms of expectations of student behavior and discipline, the following is excerpted from the Code of Responsibility, Respect and Self-Control.

Responsibilities of Students

- Children will be involved in making classroom rules and are expected to follow all classroom and school rules.
- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- Use calm, quiet voices and kind words.
- Listen to what other children and adults say. Try to listen to both their words AND their feelings.
- Treat your classmates, your teachers, classroom pets, classroom materials and the school environment with respect. Think of how you would like to be treated.
- Do not disturb another student who is concentrating on his or her work.
- Never hurt another living thing.
- If you have a problem, use your words to work it out.
- If you make a mess, clean it up.
- If you see someone who needs help, see if you can help them.
- If you do something wrong, or break something, tell the teacher and ask him or her to help you figure out a way to fix it or make it better.
- Come to school every day, unless you are sick.
- Always do your homework.
- Think about how you can make the world a better place.

In 2011-2012, the former Director of Operations & Family and Community Partnerships role was amended to serve as the Dean of Students & Community Relations. In this role, he focused on improving school climate and the partnership between the home and school. This included making home visits to many family's homes to provide one-on-one communication with parents about the school's extended day program, discipline policy, and parental involvement.

One goal in the School Improvement plan submitted to PDE in June 2011 was to improve discipline procedures throughout the school. To that end, leadership has worked tirelessly to refine the discipline procedures and improve school climate. Elements of our revised plan for school climate include behavior management, positive behavior reinforcement, restorative practices, and effective guidance counseling to help identify out-of-school issues that may impact a child's behavior.

Behavior Management

In an effort to improve school climate, the Dean of Students & Community Relations has developed a school-wide guiding behavior plan based on four guiding principles: Respect, Safety, Responsibility, and Teamwork. These four principles set the tone for school climate and are enforced in weekly community meetings with students (Lower School Community and Upper School Community).

PMCS' new behavior management plan includes several levels of intervention including: Peace Education, classroom management techniques, Peace Conference, in school support, restorative questions, parent conferences, and out of school suspension if nothing else is effective.

Peace Education: Peace education is a common theme that runs throughout the general curriculum. The Montessori model allows children to develop as compassionate and intelligent human beings in an atmosphere of love and respect. Children will be taught continually to respect everyone and everything in the environment and to solve problems through peaceful means. The ultimate aim of the peace education component of the Philadelphia Montessori Charter School will be to develop children with strong, active commitment to solving problems and living together peacefully. That way, children will be able to break the cycle of distrust, anger and fear, and will carry this spirit of peace and cooperation with them into adulthood. In the Montessori classroom, peace education is not taught as a separate curriculum but is the unifying thread throughout the child's academic, social and emotional experience in the classroom. It is "taught" through the interactions between teacher and child, child and child(ren), and children and their use of the materials in the environment. Children are taught continually to respect everyone and everything in the environment and to solve problems through peaceful means. At the elementary level, children will move from the ability to solve problems in their own classroom into a growing understanding, compassion, and tolerance for their world.

Classroom Management: One area PMCS has worked to improve has been teacher management of student behavior in their classroom in order to reduce the number of student referrals to the Dean of Students. First, teachers should use and integrate Peace Education into their lessons. If student behavior gets out of line, the teacher should do individual or class-wide verbal redirections or re-teach appropriate behavior by modeling.

In School Support: If these in-class strategies fail to work, the student will be referred to a member of the student services team to participate in a Peace Conference where they must complete the restorative questions. The Restorative Questions are used as a staff tool to create an action plan for each student. The questions are:

- 1) What happened?
- 2) What were you thinking at the time?
- 3) Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?

4) What do you think you need to do to make things right?

Once students have answered these questions, the student services member will determine what follow-up action is necessary. Follow-up may consist of peer mediation, counseling (one-on-one or group), parent conferences, or a break from the community (suspension).

Teachers will maintain discipline and behavioral documentation on the classroom level. If problem behavior persists after the teacher has made a documented effort to address it (including parent notification and individual counseling of the student by the teacher), the student services staff will intervene and maintain any documentation on contact with parents or disciplinary actions. The Dean of students handles any major incidents, tracks overall student behavior, and analyzes the effectiveness of the policies/procedures and teacher's ability to handle problem students. The Behavioral Support Team will promptly intervene when students exhibit chronic problem behaviors. This team includes the CEO/Principal, Dean of Students, Safety/Security Aide, Guidance Counselor or Social Worker, and Special Education Coordinator.

Recognize/Reinforce Positive Behavior

PMCS believes it is important to reinforce students' social, emotional, and academic learning skills in order to improve and sustain academic achievement and mental and emotional wellbeing of all students. PBS schools focus on prevention, intercede to correct individual student behavioral "miscues," and consistently and frequently reward students who do the right thing. Family and student engagement is essential to PBS schools' success.

In the 2011-2012 school year, we created a Student Ambassador Program. Student Ambassadors are nominated by students and teachers because they consistently follow the Guiding Principles: Respect, Safety, Responsibility, and Teamwork. Student Ambassadors work with the CEO regularly to develop and work on projects including a Peer Mentorship Program, Peer Mediation Program, and some service learning activities. The Student Ambassadors started by creating an Exemplary Student Rubric. Each teacher rates their students once monthly to determine who is "Exemplary." Exemplary Students are "pinned" with an Exemplary Student pin, which they wear on their collar every day. Exemplary Students earn privileges and mentor other students to help them become Exemplary. The slogan for the program is Each One Teaches One. The whole school is engaged in a t-shirt design contest to create the logo for Each One Teaches One. Exemplary Students will be given this shirt as a gift and permitted to wear it on Dress Down Fridays.

Restorative Practices

PMCS uses restorative practices, where students are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and given the opportunity to improve their behavior prior to suspension. The restorative approach is based on the belief that the people best placed to resolve a conflict or problem are directly involved, and that imposed solutions are less effective, less educative and possibly less likely to be honored. The Restorative Questions are used as a staff tool at PMCS to create an action plan for each student. The questions are:

- 1) What happened?
- 2) What were you thinking at the time?

- 3) Who has been affected by what you have done? In what way?
- 4) What do you think you need to do to make things right?

Once students have answered these questions, the student services member will determine what follow-up action is necessary. Follow-up may consist of peer mediation, counseling (one-on-one or group), parent conferences, or a break from the community (suspension).

Counseling

PMCS' student services staff provide individual and group counseling for a wide range of needs from fighting to students just having a rough day. Our small school setting benefits students, as their teachers have an intimate knowledge of every students' needs. If a teacher is concerned about a student for any reason (i.e. family scenarios such as foster care, jail, divorce, domestic abuse, etc.) they will contact the student services team and the guidance counselor or social worker will provide support, counseling, or referral for the family.

Counseling is also an important component of the PMCS behavior management program. The student services team will provide one-on-one counseling to students as needed if they are exhibiting discipline problems in the classroom. The counselor and social worker will work with students and their parents to develop behavior plans with daily or weekly follow-up (depending on circumstance). Additionally, the guidance counselor provides anger management counseling to boys and girls who need it on a weekly basis through their Calm is Cool counseling program.

The social worker provides additional counseling support in the primary grades (3 and 4 y/o pre-K and Kindergarten), particularly with the transitions where students need help adjusting (i.e. when school starts), behavioral concerns, and identifying students who need additional testing.

Explain how your discipline policy complies with Chapters 12 of the Public School Code, particularly with respect to due process.

Due Process for Informal Suspension Hearings

In suspensions of four to ten days at PMCS, parents and students have the right to an informal hearing. The informal hearing is meant to encourage the student's parents/guardians to meet with the CEO or her designee to discuss ways by which future offenses can be avoided.

The steps below are followed to ensure due process:

- The student and the parent/guardian are notified in writing the reasons for the suspension.
- Parents are provided with sufficient notice of the time and place of the informal hearing.
- Students have the right to question any witnesses present at the hearing, and has the right to speak and produce witnesses on his/her own behalf.
- The informal hearing is held within the first 5 days of the suspension.

Due Process Expulsion Procedures

A Board decision is required to expel a student. Expulsion is exclusion from school for more than 10 days. All expulsions require a prior formal hearing. During the period prior to the hearing and decision of the Board of Trustees in an expulsion case, the student, unless on suspension, shall be placed in his normal class except:

- if it is determined after an informal hearing that a student's presence in his normal class would constitute a threat to the health, safety, morals, or welfare of others, AND,
- if it is not possible to hold a formal hearing within the period of a suspension, the student may be excluded from school for more than 10 school days, if the formal hearing is not unreasonably delayed.

The steps below are followed to ensure due process:

- Notification of the charges will be sent to the student's parents/guardian by certified mail.
- Parents will be provided with sufficient notice of the time and place of the hearing.
- The hearing will be held in private unless the student or parent requests a public hearing.
- The student will have the right to be represented by counsel.
- The student will have the right to be notified of the names of the witnesses against the student, and copies of the statements and affidavits, if any, of those witnesses.
- The student will have the right to request that any such witnesses appear in person and answer questions or be cross-examined.
- The student will have the right to testify and present witnesses on his own behalf.
- A record will be kept of the hearing, either by stenographer or by tape recorder.
- The proceeding will be held with all reasonable speed.
- In the event the student is dissatisfied with the results of the hearing, an appeal may be filed in accordance with the Local Agency Law to the Court of Common Pleas within thirty (30) days of receipt of the Adjudication. If it is alleged that a constitutional issue is involved, the student may be able to file a claim for relief in the Federal District Court. The student and their parents/guardian will be apprised of these rights.

Description of the Due Process Hearing

At the beginning of the hearing, a duly authorized committee of the Board, or a duly qualified hearing examiner, who need not be a member of the Board, but whose adjudication must be approved by the Board (herein called Hearing Officer) shall inform the student and the student's representative(s) that:

The School's and the student's representatives shall have the right to examine and cross-examine witnesses; the student has the privilege against self-incrimination, but that if the student does testify, he/she shall be subject to cross examination; the charter school has the burden of proving the charges by a preponderance of credible evidence; a transcript of the proceedings shall be maintained and made available to the student's representative upon request; and the hearing shall be private or open to the public, as determined by the student's representative.

The person conducting the hearing shall not have intimate knowledge of the details of the charges to assure an impartial, unbiased hearing of the case.

The Hearing Officer shall inform the parties that:

- The case will proceed by having the school present its evidence through witnesses and other evidence first;
- The school's witnesses shall be subject to cross-examination by the student's representative; and
- The student will then have the opportunity to present witnesses on his/her behalf, subject to cross-examination by the school's representative.

Following the conclusion of the testimony and the introduction of other evidence matters, the parties shall be afforded the opportunity to present oral arguments to the Hearing Officer indicating the reasons why the charges should be sustained or dismissed. The Hearing Officer shall then reach findings of fact upon the charges.

In the event that one or more of the charges is sustained, the Hearing Officer shall then entertain statements from the parties regarding the appropriate penalty outcome. In the event that the parent and/or the student, in an appropriate case, have been served with a copy of the student's past disciplinary anecdotal record in a timely fashion, for consideration at the hearing, such record may be considered by the Hearing Officer in determining an appropriate penalty. The incidents contained within the past anecdotal record shall be subject to proof to the extent that they are denied by the student, as expressed by the student's representative.

The Hearing Officer, upon the conclusion of the portion of the proceeding dealing with penalty determinations, shall make findings of fact and penalty recommendations, if any, to the person or body which designated him/her immediately upon the conclusion of the long-term suspension hearing.

The Board shall make its own findings of fact and penalty decision, by adopting those of the designated Hearing Officer, where applicable, in whole or in part, or by reaching independent findings of fact and penalty determinations. This process shall be concluded at an open public board meeting, reasonable notice of which shall be provided to the parent prior to the meeting.

The Board's decision (Adjudication) will be communicated to the parent within five days of the Board meeting.

Discipline of Special Education Students

Please note that all students are expected to abide by the Philadelphia Montessori Code of Responsibility. And, in accordance with Pennsylvania law, all students at PMCS (including special education students) are protected by due process procedures regarding disciplinary exclusions. However, PMCS first determines, when considering a disciplinary exclusion of any student, whether the student is an eligible student under 22 Pa. Code Section 14.1. If the student is an eligible student, then PMCS determines whether the disciplinary exclusion being contemplated is a change in educational placement. If we determine that the disciplinary exclusion being contemplated does constitute a change in educational placement, PMCS follows

the requirements of 22 Pa. Code Chapters 14 and 342 and IDEA 2004, including requirements for manifestation determinations, functional behavior assessments, and positive behavior support plans.

A copy of PMCS' Code of Responsibility, Bullying Policy, and Safe Schools Report are attached.

Student Conduct - Attachments

- PMCS - BULLY POLICY
- PMCS - CODE OF RESPONSIBILITY
- PMCS - SAFE SCHOOLS ACS 2011-2012

Signature Page

Assurance for the Operation of Charter School Services and Programs

School Year: 2012

The Philadelphia Montessori 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 Philadelphia Montessori 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: Ms. Carrie Kries **Title:** Chief Executive Officer
Phone: 215-365-4011 **Fax:** 215-365-4367
E-mail: c.kries@philadelphiamontessori.org

Signature of the Chief Executive Officer and Date

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

Name: Ms. Susan Manix **Title:** Board Chair
Phone: 215-365-4011 **Fax:** 215-365-4367
E-mail: susan.manix@verizon.net

Signature of the President of the Board of Trustees and Date

Identify the charter school's Special Education Contact Person.

Name: Ashley Coleman **Title:** Special Education Contact
Phone: 215-365-4011 **Fax:** 215-365-4367
E-mail: a.coleman@philadelphiamontessori.org

Signature of the Special Education Contact Person and Date

Signature Page - Attachment

- PMCS - SIGNATURE PAGES 2011-2012