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# Pennsylvania Department of Education

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

**Charter Annual Report**  
**Tuesday, May 07, 2013**  
**(Last Accepted: Tuesday, May 29, 2012)**

**Entity:** Sylvan Heights Science CS  
**Address:** 915 S 13th St  
Harrisburg, PA 17104  
**Phone:** (717) 232-9220  
**Contact Name:** Kevin Moran

# CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY DATA

## Summary Data Part I

### Charter School Annual Report Summary Data 2011 - 2012

**Name of School:** Sylvan Heights Science CS

**Date of Local Chartering School Board/PDE Approval:** 11/19/2007 (renewal)

**Length of Charter:** 5 years    **Opening Date:** 8/1998

**Grade Level:** kindergarten through 4th grade    **Hours of Operation:** 8:00 am-4:00 pm

**Percentage of Certified Staff:** 96%    **Total Instructional Staff:** 15.5

**Student/Teacher Ratio:** 14:1    **Student Waiting List:** 380

**Attendance Rate/Percentage:** 94%

## Summary Data Part II

**Enrollment:** 220 **Per Pupil Subsidy:** 9,646.97 (Harrisburg SD, regular education)

### Student Profile

<b>American Indian/Alaskan Native:</b>	0
<b>Asian/Pacific Islander:</b>	2
<b>Black (Non-Hispanic):</b>	189
<b>Hispanic:</b>	16
<b>White (Non-Hispanic):</b>	3
<b>Multicultural:</b>	10

**Percentage of Students from Low Income Families Eligible for a Free or Reduced Lunch:**  
83%

**Provide the Total Unduplicated Number of Students Receiving Special Services (Excluding Gifted) as of Previous December:** 19

## Instructional Days and Hours

<b>Number of:</b>	<b>K (AM)</b>	<b>K (PM)</b>	<b>K (F.Time)</b>	<b>Elem.</b>	<b>Middle.</b>	<b>Sec.</b>	<b>Total</b>
Instructional Days	0	0	182	182	0	0	182
Instructional Hours	0	0	1183	1183	0	0	1183

## SECTION I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Educational Community

#### A HISTORY OF SYLVAN HEIGHTS SCIENCE CHARTER SCHOOL

In 1997, when the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania passed enabling charter school legislation, Greater Harrisburg YWCA CEO Patricia Schwartz submitted a charter school planning grant to the Pennsylvania Department of Education for an elementary school that would focus on science, math, and related technology. When the grant was awarded, Christie, Hansen & Associates was hired to assemble a group of volunteers and to prepare the application for a charter. This planning committee entailed interested educators, community activists, businesspersons, parents, and YWCA staff. The group included: Taja Barber, Cheryl Giles,

Cheryl Harmon, Maryann Havalchak, Louise Kunkel, Brook Lenker, Fredrika McKain, Linda Moser, Bill Mosher, Jeanne Predmore, Stinson Stroup, Donna Weldon, and David Wise.

The first task of this group was defining the mission, vision, and core beliefs for the school. The group reviewed research on charter schools and school reform movements and made school visits. By the end of June 1997, the basic philosophy for the school was established and curriculum goals were set. In addition to the focus on science and math, another distinguishing characteristics of the school was to develop family and community connections. The school's application was submitted to the Harrisburg School Board in September 1997.

In January 1998, the Harrisburg School Board granted the Sylvan Heights Science Charter School a provisional charter, dependent on completion of items related to facility provisions, hiring of staff, and coordinating the school's calendar with Harrisburg School District. The school's first Board of Trustees was named, with YWCA President Sheila Dow-Ford serving as President of the school. Ms. Dow-Ford, an attorney and educator, was joined by five parents: Taja Barber, Julia Hoskins, Deidre Lenker, Fredrika McKain and Pamela Roberts; educators: Stinson Stroup, Cheryl Harmon, Louise Kunkel; business person: John Zarbus; and community activists: James Everett and David Wise. A group of parents known as the Founding Families helped to organize the school lottery system and ran the school office for four months. Parents also functioned as part of the Curriculum Committee, chaired by Louise Kunkel; the Personnel Committee, chaired by Stinson Stroup; the Finance Committee, chaired by Pamela Roberts; and other groups necessary to get the school operating. Principal/CAO Susan Spadafore, M.Ed. was hired in June 1998 and a five-year charter was granted by Harrisburg School District in July 1998. Parents continued to participate in determining the dress code, parent-school compact, and behavior code.

On August 31, 1998, Sylvan Heights Science Charter School opened its doors, becoming Harrisburg's first charter school, receiving 88 students in grades K-2. As the year progressed, the need for a larger facility became apparent. In October 1999, the school was moved to 915 South 13<sup>th</sup> Street after a new site was leased and renovated. Expansion of grade levels continued as planned, with annual renovations and increases in student population. Kevin J. Moran, Ph.D. was hired in July 2001 as the new principal/CAO. Since the school has opened, the Board of Trustees has been chaired by Sheila Dow-Ford (1998-99), Fredrika McKain (2000-01), Louise Kunkel (2002-04), Joseph Summers (2005-07), Colleen Ulrich (2007-08), J. Michael Troutman (2008-09), William Feist (2009-2011), and Chad Hotsko (2011-present).

On March 17, 2003, Harrisburg School District Board of Control approved the renewal of the SHSCS charter, allowing the school to operate through June 30, 2008. The charter was again renewed on November 19, 2007, allowing the school to operate through June 30, 2013. The current enrollment is 220 students in grades K-4<sup>th</sup>.

Today, Sylvan Heights Science Charter School serves a predominantly African-American and Latino pupil population in grades kindergarten through fourth. Our curriculum has a strong science focus which maintains high student interest and provides students with a strong knowledge base in an area having great potential for future career choices. Its governing board of trustees is composed of a diverse group of local citizens, parents, and community leaders having a vested interest in the success of the community, the experience to plan responsibly, and a wide-range of expertise to oversee all areas of school operation.

In January 2008, Senator Jeffrey Piccola presented Sylvan Heights Science Charter School with its first Keystone Achievement Award for having attained Adequate Yearly Progress on state-wide PSSA tests for the previous two years. The school has since earned four more Keystone Achievement Awards for PSSA achievement testing.

Although the city of Harrisburg is a financially distressed city, and its school district reflects the financial difficulties it is experiencing, there are many resources available in the area to give students rich learning experiences. For example, Sylvan Heights takes advantage of having the Whitaker Center for Science and the Arts nearby. We send each class to the science center yearly to experience discovery labs associated with the science curriculum of that particular grade level. Based on the generosity of local residents, we were also able to send our students to the Whitaker Center during winter to view a ballet presentation, developing within our students an appreciation for the fine arts. We also make use of the city's parks for teaching outdoor science lessons. We often use our city's Forum concert hall for winter music programs and the State Museum for our graduation ceremonies.

Other community partners include the Tri-County OIC, the YWCA, and the Harrisburg Senators. Our school supports the activities of the Tri-County OIC in referring parents to their organization for job skill and GED training. In turn, the OIC brings their Book-Mobile to our school on Reading Night events to donate books to our students. Our school also partners with the Harrisburg YWCA by allowing them to use our facility for before and after school child care. The Harrisburg Senators baseball team support reading achievement in our school by sending their mascot to some of our monthly achievement assemblies and Reading Night activities and by offering game tickets to our students for reaching reading goals.

## **Mission**

The mission of the Sylvan Heights Science Charter School is to enhance children's lives through educational experiences that are grounded in a comprehensive, science-driven interdisciplinary program highlighting discovery and creativity.

## **Vision**

We envision our school to be a place where ...

- All students experience success.
- Students become proficient in the Sciences, Reading and Mathematics and are prepared for their next level of education.
- The sciences are infused throughout the curriculum.
- The curriculum, programs and services are routinely reviewed to ensure that they meet quality standards.
- Different learning styles and stages of development are recognized, and the faculty and staff help each child progress to reach his/her maximum potential.

- Students are engaged in the creative and performing arts.
- The school community reflects diversity in all of its dimensions.
- The school complements the broader educational community and works collaboratively with the community to ensure students are equipped with the necessary skills for future career opportunities.
- Educational opportunities are provided to our parents and others in the community.
- The faculty and staff are dedicated to teaching and learning in a charter school environment, which they believe in and respect.
- The school nurtures and supports the learning of faculty and staff by providing ongoing professional development opportunities.

## **Shared Values**

The following are values that we share:

- All children are entitled to a quality education in a safe, nurturing environment.
- A child's education is a shared responsibility between the family and the school.
- Successful learners demonstrate self-discipline and personal responsibility through a structured and academically challenging environment.
- The learning atmosphere promotes creativity and effective approaches to problem solving.

- Inquiry-based science and hands-on learning experiences are pathways to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing, high-tech society.
- The learning atmosphere promotes and encourages diversity.
- The school community is respectful of the beliefs, ideas and values of all people.
- Caring, well-trained, and motivated educators are key to effective instruction.

## Academic Standards

Pennsylvania Standards Guide Curriculum: Our school has used the Pennsylvania academic content standards and the Standards Aligned System (SAS) as our guides to curriculum revision. During the process of updating our curriculum, our teachers met as a group, listed the PA standards for each subject area, assigned grade level responsibility for teaching each standard, and decided upon activities for addressing each standard. This ensures that our curriculum meets Pennsylvania's academic standards, keeps teachers current of trends in teaching, and makes the best use of available resources. In this work, we organize subject content around science themes. The thematic approach keeps students' attention on learning and adds depth to the science content knowledge we teach.

Our curriculum framework lists, by grade level and subject, each Pennsylvania standard, performance indicators, activities to demonstrate competency, and resources used to teach the standard. This model (used by Pittsburgh Public Schools) was chosen after the faculty reviewed several different models. As curriculum subject areas were completed, they were entered into a "shared file" on our computer server, where teachers can easily and securely access them from any computer in the school. Teachers also receive a paper copy of their grade level curriculum. During the summer months, our curriculum and data adviser and some teachers make additions and revisions to the curriculum framework to more fully develop it.

In teachers' use of interdisciplinary thematic units, the themes selected are related to the science topics which our faculty teaches. This model is based on a similar approach taken by the highly successful Gateway Elementary and Middle School in St. Louis, MO, which is reported in research conducted by former National Science Teacher Association President Jo Anne Vasquez of Arizona State University (*Science Educator*, 12: 1, 2003). For example, in a kindergarten unit titled "Where is Kinderwood Forest?" students' science and ecology goals are to: a) identify and describe our planet including its physical characteristics and its location in the universe; and b) identify how human actions affect environmental health on planet Earth. The Reading/Language Arts goal is to apply knowledge of the structural features of spoken and written language and the use of picture and context clues to derive meaning from texts related to knowledge of planets. Health and safety skills include: a) identifying environmental factors that affect health (pollution--air, water, soil; waste disposal, temperature extremes; insects and animals); and b) identifying and using safe practices in physical activity settings (including proper use of equipment, knowledge of rules, sun safety, guidelines of safe play, warm-up, and cool-down). In Social Studies, student learning goals are to: a) identify and locate places and regions on Earth; and b) identify the human characteristics of places and regions by their cultural characteristics. In the Arts and Humanities, student learning goals are to relate works in the Arts to geographic

regions (examples from each of the seven continents). Student learning goals in Math are to: a) determine lengths and heights of objects with non-standard units; and b) identify a problem and implement possible solutions to determine the most appropriate solution. In the area of Writing and Grammar, student learning goals are to: a) describe roles of people, places, and things from the stories they read; and b) organize these words into complete sentences. As a result of using this thematic approach to teaching, our students gain a deeper understanding of science information.

In 2004 through 2006, our faculty teamed with Reading Consultant Merita Marek of the Capital Area Intermediate Unit to implement our own reading comprehension initiative titled "The Sylvan Six" which involved the building of reading comprehension and vocabulary skills in subjects across the curriculum. Building on this project, our faculty received professional development during 2007-2009 in the methods of "Learning Focused Schools (LFS)," which incorporated most of the activities we started with The Sylvan Six and extended them. Our goal in creating the Sylvan Six and then adopting LFS practices was to reach or exceed the PSSA proficiency levels in reading and math. In addition, to keep focus on meeting Pennsylvania standards of achievement on a daily basis, we adopted the practice of citing PA standards in teachers' lesson plans. Learning Focused Schools training was presented to our faculty by curriculum specialists from the Capital Area Intermediate Unit and from national presenters such as LFS founder Dr. Max Thompson.

To give teachers additional strategies for increasing academic learning time through behavioral management, a behavior specialist from the Capital Area Intermediate Unit instructed teachers on evidence-based behavioral interventions and best practices in behavioral management.

After having received training on many of the best, science-based approaches to teaching and learning over the past few years, and to make greater use of the expertise our faculty has developed through graduate coursework, our faculty is poised to begin a different approach using this knowledge--the professional learning community model (DuFour, 2005; DuFour et al, 2010). This is an ongoing process through which teachers and administrators work collaboratively in recurring cycles to reach higher achievement levels through inquiry and action research and practice. Briefly stated, our faculty will create clear, measurable goals; use a teamwork approach to reaching goals; use data to monitor effectiveness; and focus on weaknesses. A new faculty position, curriculum and data adviser, had been created in 2010 to ensure that teachers and administrators work as a team to increase student achievement, and that achievement data is utilized to identify skills that need to be retaught. The curriculum and data adviser supports teachers in developing lessons that address student weaknesses and will be responsible for maintaining the common assessment data.

## Strengths and Challenges

*School Strengths:* Our school's strength in **Curriculum** comes, in part, from our work in continually reviewing, enhancing, and refining the curriculum. The purpose is to ensure that our curriculum meets Pennsylvania's academic standards, as well as to update our curriculum to remain current with trends and to make use of available resources. In this work, our teachers have organized subject content around science themes. The thematic approach keeps student attention on learning and adds depth to the science content knowledge we teach. During the summer of 2010, our faculty revised its language arts writing curriculum, incorporating ideas presented in Ruth Culham's (2005) *Six + One Traits of Writing*. Our reading texts, Scott-Foresman *Reading Street*, also incorporates *The Six Traits* methods, bringing more integration to our Language Arts curriculum.

During the summer of 2011, our science curriculum was rewritten to incorporate Pennsylvania's Standards Aligned Systems (SAS) through FOSS (Full Option Science System) kits and our

Macmillan *Science: A Closer Look* (2009) texts. Our thematic approach will divide the school year into three topic areas of science: Earth Science, Physical Science, and Life Science. It ensures a proper amount of overlap and depth of knowledge to meet Pennsylvania's standards.

**Professional development** activities for the 2011-12 school year had been especially chosen to make the professional learning communities model successful at our school. In-service time was devoted to informing teachers and instructional aides about research based strategies for *Second Step* social skills training; *Fluency First* and *Text Talk* instruction and assessment; FOSS science instruction; and Eric Jensen's (2009) *Super Teaching* shared reading book on brain-based instructional strategies. Preparation for the 2010-11 school year included presentations on writing learning goals and tracking student progress; prioritizing lesson plans; using data to inform instruction; using summarizing strategies; conducting Fountas & Pinnell benchmark reading assessments; and analyzing leveled reading assessment results. Professional development was also devoted to improving student behavior with information for working with difficult and challenging children (Henry & Roach, 2006); analyzing teacher language (Denton, 2007); how to conduct *Responsive Classroom* (Kriete, 2002) morning meetings; and a study of our students' community. With the purchase of Mimio white boards for each classroom, teachers were instructed on their use for creating engaging lessons.

In November of 2011, the faculty attended the Keystone State Reading Association Conference in Lancaster. In November of 2010, half of the school's faculty attended the annual conference of the Pennsylvania Council of Teachers of Mathematics (PCTM) in Camp Hill while the other half attended the regional meeting of the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) in Baltimore. Our teachers took turns sharing ideas from these conferences at subsequent morning faculty meetings. All of our teachers are also active members of the NSTA and the Pennsylvania Science Teachers Association (PSTA) and are involved in the state science networking initiative titled "Building a Presence for Science."

Earning a fifth Keystone Achievement Award in the Fall of 2011 highlighted our school's **academic strength** this past year. The award is presented to schools that have reached levels of Adequate Yearly Progress for at least two consecutive years on state PSSA testing. Our 2011 PSSA test results for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders showed that 65.9% were advanced or proficient in math, and 73.1% were advanced or proficient in reading. Among 4th graders, 81.8% of students were advanced or proficient in science, 80.9% scored at the advanced or proficient levels in math, and 65.2% were advanced or proficient in reading.

The school also shows strength in **Parent Involvement**. Attendance at our academically-oriented Family Reading Night and Open House filled our school to capacity. Nearly all kindergarten parents and children attended kindergarten's Cat-in-the-Hat Pajama Party in the Spring. The evening performances for our Winter Music Program at The Forum were also attended by nearly all of our parents. Our 4th Grade graduation ceremony also filled the PA State Museum Hall.

In addition, we scheduled three parent-teacher conferences during the year to coincide with report card distribution.

2011 was the third year for our Summer Reading Project titled "**Sylvan's Got Books.**" It was strongly supported by parents through their participation in Family Advisory Committee fundraisers. As a means to avoid summer reading skills loss and to encourage the habit of reading during leisure time, students received specially-selected books to be read during summer. According to a follow-up parent survey, 74% of the students read between 7-9 of the summer books; 59% of parents said that their child read more than they had expects during summer; 91% of parents said that they helped their children with unfamiliar words; 96% of parents said that the books sparked conversations about the books' topics; and 76% of parents thought that the project helped to make reading a leisure time habit.

During the school year, we held **tutoring classes** twice weekly afterschool for one-hour sessions. We also held **summer tutoring** classes (reading and math) for five weeks during the summer months for students who are struggling academically. These sessions lasted two-hours each day.

School Areas for Improvement:

Our school had administered the Terra Nova 3 tests in Spring 2011. The data show average performance. The national percentile rates for students across grade levels for reading, math, and social studies rank around the 50% level, while science ranks around the 60% level.

Areas for improvement include:

a) With NCLB benchmarks rising for the 2012-13 school year, special attention need to be devoted to increasing PSSA reading and math proficiency; b) increase Terra Nova reading and math scores (Grades 3-4); and c) preparing 3rd and 4th graders for taking the PSSA writing field test.

## **SECTION II. STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLANNING**

### **Strategic Planning Process**

At its retreat on May 19, 2007, the Sylvan Heights Science Charter School Board of Trustees invited Dr. Dale Baker of Creative Educational Services and former Chief of the Pennsylvania Department of Education Office of Educational Initiatives to speak about the process of strategic planning. The group discussed ways to plan for the future of the school using the eStrategic Planning website. A planning committee formed as a result of this meeting, which met on several occasions to make recommendations for the board to consider. The committee included parents, board members, building administrators, teachers, and business and community representatives. During these meetings, the group reviewed the school's mission, goals, academic achievement levels, standards, curriculum, building needs, parent and teacher surveys, and charter renewal process.

The eStrategic Planning Committee held meetings on June 26 and July 17, reviewed the entire Annual Report, and recommended submission to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Prior to the May retreat, a charter renewal planning committee met on January 29, 2007 and March 26, 2007 to discuss many of these same issues in preparation for the upcoming charter renewal application process.

During the 2007-08 school year, the Board of Trustees held two retreats (Oct. 20, 2007 and April 26, 2008) in addition to its monthly board meetings. Part of the time during the retreats was devoted to reviewing progress on Strategic Planning. A timeline was developed for addressing the issues that were uncovered in the planning meetings and retreats.

At its November 2008 board retreat, the board reviewed concepts of efficient and effective board leadership with Dr. Edward Frye, former CAIU Executive Director and professor of educational administration at Penn State Harrisburg. Guided by this knowledge, the board then reviewed progress on the planning goals.

During the summer of 2009, the board upgraded the building with energy-efficient lighting fixtures and HVAC units, following the state regulations for the bidding process.

In 2011, the board had made student achievement and building needs a top priority. To these ends, it has created a new position titled curriculum and data adviser. This instructor is credentialed with a principal's letter of eligibility and has expertise in curriculum writing. He facilitates teachers' use of data to improve instruction. He ensures that teachers collaborate in the creation and administration of common assessments, their analysis, the redesign of lessons that target student weaknesses, their implementation, and follow-up reflections and model teaching.

With the closure of several schools in the Harrisburg School District, our board contacted the district's business manager about the possibility of buying Steel Elementary School. Several board members visited the school and then hired an estimator to appraise the property. At this time, it does not appear that the district will be able to sell the school to Sylvan Heights, but our board will continue to search for adequate properties and to determine more efficient ways to use the space we have on our 13th Street site.

In preparation for a June 2012 board retreat, the personnel committee of the school's Board of Trustees created a parent survey and a teacher survey to collect data on the status of school activities and satisfaction. The parent survey showed 94% of parents surveyed were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with the education their children were receiving at our school. Regarding the school curriculum, 96% of parents were "satisfied" or "very satisfied" with what their children are taught. Open-ended comments had very positive themes, such as "Outstanding!" and "Challenging students." Regarding support services, 87% of parents gave a "Satisfied" or "Very satisfied" approval rating. (The remaining 13% rated this area "Unsure" since their children were not in need of those services. No parents rated this category "Unsatisfactory.") The survey showed that 100% of parents were "Satisfied" or "Very satisfied" with the level of resources (e.g., library, computers, tutoring) available to their children. When asked why they chose Sylvan Heights for their child, many parents responded by stating that the school has a reputation for having a strong curriculum and discipline; co-workers, siblings, other relatives, and parents of neighborhood children recommended our school to them; and parents' desire for wanting "the best" for their children. The teacher survey pointed out the need to make improvements in three areas--increase communications, improve discipline, and increase parental involvement.

The results of both surveys were discussed at length at the June 2012 retreat. The administration was given the directive to develop plans to address parent and teacher concerns, taking into account board members' comments and recommendations.

## Strategic Planning Committee

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Membership Category</b>	<b>Appointed By</b>
Ann Carbon	Attorney	Board Member	Board of Trustees
Cahill, Jennifer	Visiting Nurses Association	Ed Specialist - School Nurse	Education Specialists
Constance Ferguson	Sylvan Heights Science Charter School	Board Member	Board of Trustees
Cruz, Vanessa	Sylvan Heights Science Charter School	Parent	Board of Trustees

Dale Baker	CES	Community Representative	Board of Trustees
Ed Jaroch	EDS	Business Representative	Board of Trustees
Evelyn Sanchez	Boys and Girls Clubs	Community Representative	Board of Trustees
Fisher, Sarah	SHSCS	Administrator	Dr. Moran/Principal
Gary Johnson	International Shared Service	Business Representative	Board of Trustees
Hanshaw, Thomas	Sleber & Associates	Ed Specialist - School Psychologist	Education Specialists
Hess, Timothy	SHSCS	Elementary School Teacher	Teaching faculty
Hotsko, Chad	Board Member	Board Member	Board of Trustees
J. Michael Troutman	Citizens Bank	Business Representative	Board of Trustees
Jackie Potter	Sylvan Heights Science Charter School	Parent	Board of Trustees
Jackson, Sherita	SHSCS	Special Education Teacher	Education Specialists
Kevin Moran	Sylvan Heights Science Charter School	Administrator	Dr. Moran/Principal
Louise Kunkel	Tri-County OIC	Community Representative	Board of Trustees
Najee Ferguson	Carlisle Area School District	Secondary School Teacher	Board of Trustees
Pat Peffley	SHSCS	Elementary School Teacher	Teaching faculty
Raheem Potter	Sylvan Heights Science Charter School	Parent	Board of Trustees
William Feist, IV	Community Bank	Board Member	Board of Trustees
Witmer, Janet	SHSCS	Elementary School Teacher	Teaching faculty

## **Goals, Strategies and Activities**

### ***Goal:* Building improvements**





Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Kevin Moran	Start: 1/18/2010 Finish: 1/18/2010	-

**Professional Development Activity Information**

Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
4.00	1	25

  

Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
Capital Area Intermediate Unit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Intermediate Unit</li> </ul>	Approved

Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish
As part of the Learning Focused Schools training, teachers learned math strategies for comprehending math models, problem solving, computation, teaching math vocabulary, and applying appropriate skills to a problem	The strategies presented in Learning Focused Mathematics are research based and promote higher order understanding, retention of information, develop procedural fluency, and teach students how to communicate math ideas.	<p><i>For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enhances the educator's <u>content knowledge</u> in the area of the educator's certification or assignment.</li> <li>Increases the educator's <u>teaching skills</u> based on research on effective practice, with attention given to interventions for struggling students.</li> </ul> <p><i>For school and district administrators, and other educators seeking leadership roles:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Empowers leaders to create a <u>culture of teaching and learning</u>, with an emphasis on learning.</li> </ul>

## Educator Groups Which Will Participate in this Activity

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Role	Grade Level	Subject Area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Classroom teachers</li><li>• Principals / asst. principals</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early childhood (preK-grade 3)</li><li>• Elementary (grades 2-5)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Kindergarten Early Learning Standards</li><li>• Mathematics</li></ul>

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### Follow-up Activities

- Team development and sharing of content-area lesson implementation outcomes, with involvement of administrator and/or peers
- Analysis of student work, with administrator and/or peers

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### Evaluation Methods

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

**Status:** Complete

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### Date      Comment

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7/24/2009 Lehigh University professor to deliver math in-service to faculty in August 2009 and ongoing. Students received summer tutoring in reading and math during the months of June and July. Tutoring scheduled to occur in September 2009

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8/2/2010 Fall 2009--Lehigh University professor Lanette Waddell presented math workshop sessions to faculty. Faculty tutored students during the school year and also during summer months.

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## **Goal: READING**

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

### **Strategy: Differentiated instruction**

**Description:** Through the Reading Street and My Sidewalks (2008) reading programs, all

students will receive reading instruction at their own level within the classroom; selected students will receive a second, additional daily small group instruction session from a reading specialist.

**Activity: Three tiered intervention model**

**Description:** Teachers will learn to use a three-tiered instructional model through ongoing professional development

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Kevin Moran	Start: 8/20/2008 Finish: 8/20/2014	-

**Professional Development Activity Information**

Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
2.00	1	25

Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
Sylvan Heights Science Charter School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Entity</li> </ul>	Approved

Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish
Teachers will learn how to strengthen their Tier I Reading Instruction and learn several brief assessments to use to determine if students have comprehended the reading lesson skills.	The methods used are drawn from Kelly Harmon's Response to Intervention: Implementing Powerful and Practical Strategies to Identify and Serve Students with Learning Challenges.	<p><i>For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increases the educator's <u>teaching skills</u> based on research on effective practice, with attention given to interventions for struggling students.</li> <li>Provides educators with a variety of classroom-based <u>assessment skills</u> and the skills needed to <u>analyze and use data</u> in instructional decision-</li> </ul>

making.

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

- Provides leaders with the ability to access and use appropriate data to inform decision-making.
- Empowers leaders to create a culture of teaching and learning, with an emphasis on learning.

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

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<b>Role</b>	<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Subject Area</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Classroom teachers</li><li>• Principals / asst. principals</li><li>• Other educational specialists</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Early childhood (preK-grade 3)</li><li>• Elementary (grades 2-5)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reading, Writing, Speaking &amp; Listening</li><li>• Science and Technology</li><li>• Environment and Ecology</li><li>• Kindergarten Early Learning Standards</li><li>• Mathematics</li><li>• History</li><li>• Geography</li></ul>

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### **Follow-up Activities**

- Creating lessons to meet varied student learning styles

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### **Evaluation Methods**

- Classroom observation focusing on factors such as planning and preparation, knowledge of content, pedagogy and standards, classroom environment, instructional delivery and professionalism.
- Classroom student assessment data

**Status:** In Progress — Upcoming

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### **Date      Comment**

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7/24/2009 Students receive reading instruction using a 3-tier model--whole group, small group, pull-out for struggling readers with reading specialist; resource teacher also provides pull-out and inclusion reading instruction for students with IEPs.

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8/2/2010 Practice has been implemented and is ongoing. Model will be evaluated during 2010-11 school year.

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8/2/2011 With the use of reading benchmark assessments, we were able to better apply strategic interventions. These will continue and intensify in the upcoming year.

## **Goal: Science**

**Description:** Identify and analyze excellent elementary science instructional models for adoption consideration

### **Strategy: Selecting science curricular models**

**Description:** Locate science specialist to present models to planning committee; analyze program costs and building needs; decide on model; provide teacher training and implement

### **Activity: Model presentation and steps**

**Description:** Model presentation; in-service; curriculum writing; continue using Learning Focused Schools instructional methods for science curriculum and critique its effectiveness

<b>Person Responsible</b>	<b>Timeline for Implementation</b>	<b>Resources</b>
Kevin Moran	Start: 8/20/2008 Finish: 6/30/2014	-

### **Professional Development Activity Information**

<b>Number of Hours Per Session</b>	<b>Total Number of Sessions Per School Year</b>	<b>Estimated Number of Participants Per Year</b>
4.00	4	25

<b>Organization or Institution Name</b>	<b>Type of Provider</b>	<b>Provider's Department of Education Approval Status</b>
Capital Area Intermediate Unit and Sylvan Heights Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School Entity</li><li>• Intermediate Unit</li></ul>	Approved

Charter School

**Knowledge and Skills**

**Research and Best Practices**

**Designed to Accomplish**

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Teachers will design lessons with clear, measurable goals; they will use grade level teams to set goals; they will use data to monitor effectiveness; they will design new strategies to address student weaknesses

The techniques are recommended in research conducted by Richard DuFour in developing a professional learning community model.

*For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:*

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

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

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

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

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<b>Role</b>	<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Subject Area</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom teachers</li> <li>• Principals / asst. principals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early childhood (preK-grade 3)</li> <li>• Elementary (grades 2-5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading, Writing, Speaking &amp; Listening</li> <li>• Kindergarten Early Learning Standards</li> <li>• Mathematics</li> </ul>

<b>Follow-up Activities</b>	<b>Evaluation Methods</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team development and sharing of content-area lesson implementation outcomes, with involvement of administrator and/or peers</li> <li>• Analysis of student work, with administrator and/or peers</li> <li>• Creating lessons to meet varied student learning styles</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom observation focusing on factors such as planning and preparation, knowledge of content, pedagogy and standards, classroom environment, instructional delivery and professionalism.</li> <li>• Classroom student assessment data</li> <li>• Review of participant lesson plans</li> <li>• Review of written reports summarizing instructional activity</li> </ul>

**Status:** In Progress — Upcoming

<b>Date</b>	<b>Comment</b>
7/24/2009	State science and ecology standards were mapped by grade level during inservices from January through May 2009. Science educator demonstrated to faculty how to use the state's Standards Aligned System (SAS) as a resource in curriculum writing and lesson plan writing. Faculty revised the school's science and ecology curriculum in June 2009. New science textbooks and materials were selected after faculty review and critique of texts and materials from various science vendors.
8/2/2010	Summer 2009-rewrote science curriculum Summer 2010-upgraded student writing curriculum & report cards. Identified need to review school reform models for possible implementation (e.g., Learning Focused Schools, LoTi)--Which model would best fit our mission?
8/2/2011	Upcoming professional development activities include attendance at the state reading association conference and state science conference. We also plan to work intensely as professional learning communities.

# Goal: Technology

**Description:** Upgrade technology infrastructure to provide more academic skill development uses for students and to better assess students' academic needs

## Strategy: Hardware and software upgrades

**Description:** Technology team will determine hardware needs for board members to review and to then provide funding. Teachers, and administrators will determine software needs; make purchases and install

## Activity: Professional development

**Description:** Provide additional professional development on using new software; begin using software

Person Responsible	Timeline for Implementation	Resources
Kevin Moran	Start: 9/1/2008 Finish: 6/30/2014	-

### Professional Development Activity Information

Number of Hours Per Session	Total Number of Sessions Per School Year	Estimated Number of Participants Per Year
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2.00	2	25
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Organization or Institution Name	Type of Provider	Provider's Department of Education Approval Status
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Sylvan Heights Science Charter School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School Entity</li> </ul>	Approved
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Knowledge and Skills	Research and Best Practices	Designed to Accomplish
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Teachers in grades 2-4 will learn how to use Study Island software assessments and lessons to administer benchmark tests based on Pennsylvania standards; how to target instruction toward areas in which	Assessment results will provide teachers with the most current data regarding students' skills. Teachers will be able to design new lessons based on this information and also activate Study Island remediation	<p><i>For classroom teachers, school counselors and education specialists:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides educators with a variety of</li> </ul>
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students show weaknesses; and how to analyze student test results.

modules to address student weaknesses.

classroom-based assessment skills and the skills needed to analyze and use data in instructional decision-making.

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

- Provides leaders with the ability to access and use appropriate data to inform decision-making.

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

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<b>Role</b>	<b>Grade Level</b>	<b>Subject Area</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom teachers</li> <li>• Principals / asst. principals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Early childhood (preK-grade 3)</li> <li>• Elementary (grades 2-5)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading, Writing, Speaking &amp; Listening</li> <li>• Science and Technology</li> <li>• Mathematics</li> </ul>

<b>Follow-up Activities</b>	<b>Evaluation Methods</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Team development and sharing of content-area lesson implementation outcomes, with involvement of administrator and/or peers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom observation focusing on factors such as planning and preparation, knowledge of content, pedagogy and standards, classroom environment, instructional delivery and professionalism.</li> <li>• Student PSSA data</li> <li>• Classroom student assessment data</li> <li>• Review of participant lesson plans</li> </ul>

**Status:** In Progress — Upcoming

<b>Date</b>	<b>Comment</b>
7/24/2009	Software for easy storage of student documents for evaluating and monitoring purposes was installed in July 2009. Teachers will receive training for using document storage in August 2009. Faculty will determine the types of documents to store for creating a digital portfolio. Faculty are reviewing software for monitoring student progress on PSSA-type tasks.

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8/2/2010 Spring & Fall 2009--Present inservice on using computerized assessment tests for Reading Street; use of Study Island for PSSA test prep. Fall 2010--Mimio interactive board professional development scheduled

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## **Statement of Quality Assurance**

Charter school has met AYP.

## **Statement of Quality Assurance - Attachments**

- 2011 AYP Overview and Performance Report
- 2011 PSSA Local District Comparison
- 2011 Terra Nova Results

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

### **Rigorous Instructional Program**

Pennsylvania Standards Guide Curriculum: Our school has used the Pennsylvania content standards and the Standards Aligned System (SAS) as guides to curriculum revision. During the process of updating our curriculum, our teachers met as a group, listed the PA standards for each subject area, assigned grade level responsibility for teaching each standard, and decided upon activities for addressing each standard. Our purpose was to ensure that our curriculum meets Pennsylvania's academic standards, to keep current of trends in teaching, and to make best use of available resources. In this work, we organized subject content around science themes. The thematic approach keeps students' attention on learning and adds depth to the science content knowledge we teach.

Our curriculum framework lists, by grade level and subject, each Pennsylvania standard, performance indicators, activities to demonstrate competency, and resources used to teach the standard. This model (used by Pittsburgh Public Schools) was chosen after the faculty reviewed several different models. As curriculum subject areas were completed, they were entered into a "shared file" on our computer server, where teachers can easily and securely access them from any computer in the school. Teachers also receive a paper copy of their grade level curriculum. During the summer months, our curriculum and data advisor and our teachers make additions and revisions to the curriculum framework to more fully develop it.

In teachers' use of interdisciplinary thematic units, the themes selected are related to the science topics which our faculty teaches. This model is based on a similar approach taken by the highly successful Gateway Elementary and Middle School in St. Louis, MO, which is reported in research conducted by former National Science Teacher Association President Jo Anne Vasquez of Arizona State University (*Science Educator*, 12: 1, 2003).

To keep focus on meeting Pennsylvania standards of achievement on a daily basis, we adopted the practice of citing PA standards in teachers' lesson plans. Lesson plans are reviewed weekly by administrators and used in observing and rating teachers.

Developmental and Academic Needs: Through the use of *Reading Street* and *Sidewalks* (2008) and other research-based practices and assessment strategies for Reading, we are addressing the skill development needs of both recent transfers to our school and continuing students. To best meet the needs of our students, we evaluate individual student performance and assign students to reading groups which meet their reading level. Our school has a special education teacher, a reading specialist, and a resource teacher to provide Tier 2 and 3 instruction when learning needs cannot be reached in regular reading group settings. Our teachers use the Fountas and Pinnell *Reading Benchmark Assessments* four times during the year to monitor progress in reading and to modify instruction to meet students' needs. Students also receive DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Learning Skills) assessments four times during the year to monitor reading achievement and to drive instruction.

Throughout the school, reading has the highest priority and is taught in the first block of time each day in each classroom. As a result, the music, art, and computer teachers do not have classroom responsibilities during first period and are able to be reassigned to other classrooms as co-reading teachers. This affords the opportunity to reduce the teacher/student ratio, creating smaller reading groups within classrooms and giving students more attention and practice.

One of our teachers who received her reading specialist certification has been sharing effective reading practices with the faculty on individual and group levels. Other faculty members and our reading specialist share professional knowledge regularly at teacher inservices and through sharing journal articles.

In the area of Mathematics, our school adopted the *Harcourt Math* program in 2007-08 for grades kindergarten through third, and supplemented it with a variety of materials so that each PA math standard is met. Our fourth grade classes use *Saxon Math* and had much success with it. We also purchased through a federal grant (Enhancing Education through Technology) two math software programs from *SuccessMaker—NCS Learn* to supplement math instruction. The software provides us with up-to-date assessments of student abilities and provides instruction and remediation based on individual student performance. The two software packages ("Math Concepts and Skills" and "Math Corner") are research-based and aligned with PA standards, providing basic skills instruction, thinking skills instruction, and tutoring when necessary. Students are able to work at their own pace, and teachers are able to communicate results with parents through computer-generated reports.

Students in grades 3 and 4 also use Study Island's computerized benchmark assessments for reading and math in preparation for state PSSA testing.

For the summer of 2010, our teachers updated the school's writing curriculum, identifying common assessments to be used for analyzing and improving student writing skills. *Kidwriting* and the *Six Traits of Writing* are the primary sources used to support the writing curriculum.

During the summer of 2011, our curriculum and data adviser rewrote our science curriculum to include the use of FOSS (Full Option Science System) kits at all grade levels in teaching science so that our students would have greater opportunities to develop skills that scientists possess, including: observing objects and events, relating observations to what students already know, testing ideas in a scientific way, generating data through testing, generating explanations regarding their new information, and communicating results. We believe that the best way for students to learn scientific information is through their own inquiries, investigations, and analyses. We divided the year into three parts to teach Life Science, Physical Science, and Earth Science using related FOSS kits. As a result of teaching and learning science in this manner, we expect students to be able to utilize the scientific method to gain an understanding of scientific concepts. In addition, we use the environment and ecology curriculum materials developed by Dr. Patricia Vathis of the PA Department of Education to teach environment and ecology standards.

During the Fall of 2011, the school's social skill training curriculum was revised, using Second Step social skills training program. Teachers received inservice regarding the use of the new materials.

#### Promoting In-Depth Inquiry-Based Teaching and Learning:

Since the PA standards require teaching and learning to cover so many skill areas, we are coordinating science content to be taught across disciplines, adding depth to information studied during a school day.

Our teachers are using an inquiry-based approach to teaching, which effects teaching and learning in several ways. In general, inquiry-based instruction gives students more opportunities to explore ideas with materials and with other students. Lessons are structured around "big ideas" or carefully structured "Essential Questions" to guide students to conceptual understanding. Using this approach, teachers spend more time listening to students to find out what students understand and misunderstand. Opportunities are given for students to use tools to make observations, to collect and record data, and to use that information to make explanations.

Additionally, much professional development time has been devoted to increasing teachers' facility with science subject matter knowledge, knowledge of best practices in instruction, and knowledge of PA standards and methods of curriculum writing. Over the years, our teachers have received instruction from representatives of Capital Area Intermediate Unit, the Whitaker Center for Science and the Arts, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. For example, at our January 2012 inservice, the science director from the Whitaker Center who is a FOSS trainer demonstrated the techniques involved in presenting an exemplary FOSS unit lesson to our faculty. We included our instructional aides in this and most all of our professional development activities.

Addressing needs of students performing below average: During the 2011-12 school year, our school offered a full range of services to meet students' needs. Our special education teacher gave instruction aimed at meeting the specific needs of students in reading, math, language arts, and emotional support. A reading specialist also provided instruction to students who have reading difficulties. A resource teacher provided additional support for students who struggle with reading, writing, and math.

In addition, we employed the services of a speech therapist and an occupational therapist through the Intermediate Unit. We purchased the services of a part-time social worker through Adams-Hanover Counseling Services. One of our teachers who is certified in ESL gives our English Language Learners language arts instruction daily.

The ability grouping strategies mentioned earlier for Reading accommodate the needs for students throughout the school. In Math, teachers make use of enrichment and remediation activities in our non-special education classrooms for meeting instructional needs of individual students.

During the school year, our teachers offered 1-hour afterschool tutoring twice weekly for additional reading or math instruction.

During five weeks of summer, our school offered two hours of tutoring daily in math and reading to those students who were performing below average during the school year.

As an additional means to help curtail summer reading skill loss, our school also raised funds to purchase reading books to send home during the summer months to each student.

Active engagement: Teachers make use of many resources such as manipulatives, use learning centers, and use a variety of instructional techniques such as cooperative learning to keep students actively engaged. We believe that active engagement leads to greater understanding and the ability to apply learning to life situations. We also make use of the resources of the larger community to provide additional learning opportunities. Over the year, students have taken academic field trips to places such as the annual Pennsylvania Farm Show, Wildwood Nature Reserve, the Pennsylvania State Museum, Whitaker Center for Science and the Arts, Susquehanna Art Museum, Kreider Farm, Indian Echo Caverns, the Planetarium, and Hershey Zoo America. During our final week of school, we prepared a week of science/environmental education for students at Fort Hunter Park. The highlights of this year's trip were sessions from Susquehanna Service Dogs on training animals; leadership and responsibility from motivational speaker Tracey Jones and her dog Mr. Blue; how compasses work; qualities of sound; balance and motion; and nocturnal and diurnal animals. The richness of our community in learning opportunities lets us extend the classroom beyond its four walls.

## **Rigorous Instructional Program - Attachments**

- Professional Education Report 2012
- Teacher Induction

## **English Language Learners**

Through our Home Language Survey, we identified students for additional language support. An ESL instructor from Capital Area Intermediate Unit tested these students using tests such as Woodcock-Munoz Language Survey to determine if they needed additional language support. We found that two continuing students needed ELL services during the 2011-12 school year. One of our five ESL-certified teachers provided language arts instruction for these students.

Depending on the students' needs, ELL students received an hour of instruction daily in pull-out classes or through inclusion practices.

The following is our program outline:

### 1. Statement of program goals and objectives

In accordance with the Sylvan Heights Science Charter School (SHSCS) Board of Trustees' goal to provide a quality educational program for all students, the school provides appropriate planned instruction in ESL and content classes for identified students whose dominant language is not English. The objectives of the program include: a.) developing English language skills, leading to English proficiency; and b.) providing for meaningful participation in subject area content.

### 2. Student and parent orientation process

Every effort will be made to orient students and parents to the practices and procedures of the school. Guidance will be given, if needed, for completing registration forms. Forms may be translated into the native language when necessary.

### 3. Identification and placement

a. Screening procedures, entry/exit criteria Home Language Survey is administered for all new students, which is filed in the students' permanent record. When one of the three required questions is answered "not English," the students' English language proficiency is assessed.

b. Assessment process

Identified ELLs are assessed for their achievement levels and native language proficiency using multiple measures such as standardized tests, PSSA, curriculum assessments, and others.

4. Instructional program

a. Describe type of program

Students are placed in appropriate level of ESL instructional program. The ESL instruction is based on sound educational and language learning theory and staffed by an appropriately prepared instructor. The program is evaluated at least twice yearly.

b. Describe planned instruction standards

The planned instruction in ESL will include Language Arts areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing.

c. Indicate amount of time in: ESL classes

The amount of time allotted for instruction will be based on the proficiency of the student. Approximate times are two (2) hours daily for beginners; 1 hour daily for intermediate learners; and 1 hour daily for advanced students. Student performance will be monitored for one year after they have graduated from these classes.

Content classes

Students will receive content instruction aligned with the PA standards of instruction. Teachers will accommodate to the individual learning needs of the student when students experience difficulty in comprehending instruction.

5. Student participation in related and extracurricular activities

ELLs will have the opportunities to participate in all extracurricular activity programs for which they qualify.

6. Pupil personnel services

a. Counseling

Counseling is provided through Adams-Hanover Counseling Services, staffed by a licensed social worker.

b. Special education

An IEP will be developed for students who have a disability that is not due to a lack of proficiency in the English language. In developing an IEP, interpreting service will be available for parents if necessary.

c. Other related services

Any service offered to other students will be made available to ELLs.

## 7. Staff development related to program

Staff receives inservice at the start of the school year from the ESL instructor. Inservice focuses on effective, research based practices as well as factual cultural information. In addition, the school encourages its faculty to become qualified to teach ESL. Currently five teachers are certified and another has started program certification. The school supports ESL professional development by paying the tuition for teachers to attend classes and rewards them with a \$1000 annual stipend.

## 8. Community involvement

### a. Program planning

Funds will be allotted to implement the ESL program at the rate of other core subject areas.

### b. Communication with students' homes

Information disseminated to students and their parents will be provided in a language preferred by parents, including report cards, standardized tests, and policy handbooks.

### c. Program advisory committee or existing committee which includes ESL stakeholders

The ESL teacher, special education teacher, principal or administrative designee, and community resource agency will plan the school program and inservice activities.

## 9. Program evaluation procedures

Program will be evaluated twice annually to assess its effectiveness for teaching English to students. Revisions will be made to the program for its improvement.

## **English Language Learners - Attachment**

- 2012 ELL Proficiency Report

## **Graduation Requirements**

Not applicable

## **Special Education**

Students are first instructed with the supported-inclusion model. In this model, the general education teacher, reading specialist, and special education teacher consult on ways to best meet the needs of the students through accommodations or adaptations in the general education classroom. Our teachers utilize authentic assessments and tasks, and portfolios in the classroom as alternatives to the basic pencil and paper assessments. They also use anticipation guides in order to assess prior knowledge in order to better serve the students needs. Co-teaching is also used by the regular education teachers and our special education teacher. If additional instructional time or alternative materials are necessary for student success, the special educator, reading specialist, or resource teacher provide these services in a pull-out model in the resource room. For instance, students with reading difficulties in grades 2-4 receive additional reading instruction time through the program *Soar to Success* from Houghton Mifflin and supplemental

materials. Students struggling with math receive additional help through the *Touch Math* or Saxon series.

For students having speech impairments or other language disabilities or the need for occupational therapy, services to meet these needs were purchased through the Capital Area Intermediate Unit. Students received services through in-classroom and pull-out models, depending on students' annual goals and objectives. IU staff provides support to classroom teachers as well as to the special educator.

The school also purchases the services of a Special Education consultant from the Intermediate Unit to coach our special education teacher. She helps to ensure that the needs of students with more challenging educational disabilities are met.

To meet the learning needs of a full-time emotional support students during the 2011-12 year, the school paid the tuition, transportation, and assessment costs to send the child to the Capital Area Intermediate Unit emotional support class at Linglestown Elementary School and at Wordsworth Academy.

## Special Education - Attachments

- Child Find
- Student Records Confidentiality Policy
- Assistive Technology Policy
- Independent educational evaluation policy

## Special Education Program Profile - Chart I

Teacher	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
Mrs. Witmer	1	reading specialist	Sylvan Heights Science CS	39	Excellent resource to classroom teachers--advises and consults
Ms. Jackson	1	learning support	Sylvan Heights Science CS	10	Excellent resource to teachers-- supports students by inclusion and pull-out models
Mrs. Peffley	1	resource teacher	Sylvan Heights Science CS	44	Excellent resource to teachers-- advises and consults

## Special Education Program Profile - Chart II

Organization	FTE	Type of class or support	Location	# of Students	Other Information
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CAIU #15	1	Emotional support	Linglestown Elementary	1	(FTE 1 represents 1 full-time teacher all week.) Tuition cost \$54,517.42 annually
Adams-Hanover Counseling Services	.5	Social worker	Sylvan Heights	17	Program cost \$22,500
CAIU #15	.1	Occupational therapy	Sylvan Heights	5	4 hours per week at a cost of \$ 8,370
CAIU #15	.2	Speech & language	Sylvan Heights	7	16 hours per week at a cost of \$38,592.00
Wordsworth Academy	1	Emotional Support	Wordsworth Academy	1	Tuition cost at \$140/day ( \$25,200 annually)

### Special Education Program Profile - Chart III

<u>Title</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>FTE</u>
Special education teacher	Sylvan Heights	1.0

### Special Education Program Profile - Chart IV

<u>IU, Public Agency, Organization, or Individual</u>	<u>Title/Service</u>	<u>Amount of Time Per Week</u>
Sleber Associates	Psychological Services	11 evaluations @ \$400 per evaluation
IU # 15	Special education coaching	11 hours @ \$1,166

## SECTION IV. ACCOUNTABILITY

### Student Assessment - Primary

<u>Test/Classification</u>	<u>K</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>5</u>
PSSA	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No

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PASA	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
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Terra Nova 3	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
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## Student Assessment - Secondary

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Test/Classification	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
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PSSA	No						
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## Student Assessment

School Improvement Planning Goals:

- A. Continue program of increasing students' reading comprehension abilities
- B. Increase math proficiency

During the 2011-12 school year, Sylvan Heights adopted the "Professional Learning Community Model" (DeFour, 2010). A professional learning community is an ongoing process in which educators work collaboratively in recurring cycles of collective inquiry and action research to achieve better results. Using this model, our teachers work collaboratively to clarify learning outcomes; monitor student learning; provide systematic interventions, time, and support for students who struggle; and extend and enrich learning when students master intended outcomes. Teachers work interdependently to set and achieve common goals with mutual accountability. Using this model, teachers work as professionals, sharing knowledge, gathering evidence, developing and implementing strategies, evaluating their effectiveness, and applying new knowledge to the next cycle of continuous improvement. Through professional learning communities, we focus on tangible results in which improvement is all faculty members' responsibility.

To these ends, grade level teams met bi-weekly with an administrator to analyze past results, set new goals, develop strategies, share strategies that worked or failed to work, and create new goals after achieving goals.

During the year, we administered practice reading and math tests to 3rd and 4th graders in preparation for PSSA testing. We used Study Island, PSSA released items located on the PDE website, and other resources such as *PSSA Coach*. The results of the testing were analyzed by teachers, specialists, and administrators. The team met bi-weekly to create lessons that addressed the weaknesses in the student test scores. Teachers completed bi-weekly team meeting logs to assist in monitoring the effectiveness of interventions. The process included an ongoing cycle of assessment, analysis, collaboration, and reteaching (Schmoker, 2006).

Our plan for improving reading comprehension is driven by the research of Jeanne Chall *The Reading Crisis: Why Poor Children Fall Behind* (1990) which points to vocabulary and language development differences between poor and middle class students as the primary cause in achievement differences by social class and racial groups. Nationally, achievement scores have a

tendency to begin dropping near the 4<sup>th</sup> grade level among poor children, when significant vocabulary differences among social classes of students affect the ability to comprehend text.

Our school plan is to continue addressing the need to increase reading comprehension achievement. In order to meet this goal, we direct energies and funding toward activities that promote reading. We included our entire student body and their teachers in these activities to assure coordination of efforts in increasing reading achievement and continue their successful reading trajectory.

We have used DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills), Monster, and Cowboy tests three times per year to benchmark, target instruction, and determine growth in literacy skills. These tests were recommended by the Pennsylvania Department of Education at a Governor's Institute for Reading.

Over the past few years, our school has made great strides in increasing students' ability to read by focusing instruction on the research-based "five building blocks of literacy" (phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and text comprehension). The last of these five elements, text comprehension, is the reason for reading. It tends to make up an increasingly larger portion of reading tests by 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and is a difficult task for a large portion of students.

Because of the growth in teachers' skills in teaching reading, we moved away from direct instruction programs (*Reading Mastery* and *Corrective Reading*) to Scott Foresman *Reading Street* (2008) and *My Sidewalks* (2007), utilizing a three tier intervention plan. This new reading series was chosen by faculty after reviewing several series. *Reading Street* makes use of research-based teaching strategies and allows for differentiated instruction. It also incorporates the Learning Focus Schools teaching and learning strategies.

Classes will typically have three reading groups based on student ability. Students who are at risk of failure receive a "double dose" of reading instruction daily in small group settings, once with the classroom teacher and once with the reading specialist or special education teacher as a pull-out intervention program. They also receive large group reading instruction which utilizes stories that are more literature-based, rather than skill-based stories that are used during small group instruction.

Instructional aides and specials teachers (i.e., art, music, computer teachers) assist classroom teachers in organizing and running centers and small groups in classrooms during reading class.

The results of our PSSA scores in reading led to our faculty making two instructional goals a) increase the amount of vocabulary instruction; and b) incorporate summarizing as a daily student practice. The extra attention given to summarizing has the potential of producing a 34% gain in achievement scores, according to Marzano and ASCD (2001). We have increased vocabulary instruction with programs such as *Words Our Way* and *Text Talk*.

Research also shows that students need to read outside of school in a variety of genre in order to improve their reading skills. The research (e.g., Alexander, et al, 2007; Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2008; Kim, 2006) also shows that students' reading skills decline over the summer months, particularly those of students from low-income homes, due to academic inactivity. Therefore, our Family Advisory Committee (similar to other schools' PTA) used their fundraising efforts to purchase books to be sent home for students to read over the summer and keep. This initiative aims to develop the habit of reading during leisure time among students as well as a means to avoid summer reading skills loss among students.

We surveyed our parents regarding the effectiveness of the summer reading project in September 2011. We found that 60% of our students read between 7 and 9 of the books we sent home over summer, and an additional 31% of students read between 4 and 6 of the books. In

fact, 88% of parents stated that they believed their child read more than what they had expected during summer. Parents reported that 87% of their children were eager to receive their weekly books. The activity increased parent involvement in their children's reading activities by helping to define words for their child (87%), have further discussions about the book topic (91%), make additional trips to the library for more books (50%), and make trips to the store for more books (54%).

For students who need additional support in reading or math, teachers gave one hour of afterschool tutoring in small groups twice each week during the school year. We also offered five weeks of summer tutoring in small groups for two hours daily. Title I money supported teacher wages and transportation costs.

During the summer of 2008, our teachers revised our school's math curriculum as we adopted new math texts. The texts we selected, after comparing the qualities of four different programs, are aimed at increasing students' ability to problem solve and build critical thinking skills. During the 2008-09 school year, we also incorporated the daily use of the "Rocket Math" program so that students will increase their ability to recall math facts fluently. Fluent retrieval of basic facts is necessary for students to attain higher-order math skills. With each year, fact fluency appears to be rising.

We proudly mention that our 2011 PSSA Science results for 4th graders show that we 83% of our 4th grade students were proficient in science. This is the highest science achievement level we have experienced. With our school's focus on science, we are fulfilling our mission in giving students a strong foundation and keen interest in science. This serves as a basis for further coursework and careers in science-related occupations, an area with too low minority representation.

## **Student Assessment - Attachments**

- 2011 PSSA Local District Comparison
- 2011 AYP Overview and Performance Report
- 2011 Terra Nova Results

## **Teacher Evaluation**

a.) Instructional I teachers are expected to be formally evaluated at least two times during the course of the school year, and Instructional II teachers at least once. We use PDE forms 426 and 428 along with a classroom observation analysis worksheet which complements these forms. Teachers are critiqued for demonstrating their skills in areas such as planning and preparation, classroom environment, instructional delivery, professionalism, assessment, and meeting individual student needs. Teachers discuss the results of their observations with the principal.

b.) Principal/CAO Dr. Kevin Moran and Assistant Principal Mr. Timothy Hess were responsible for teacher and staff evaluations.

c.) Dr. Moran holds a principal letter of eligibility and has received training in his graduate studies for evaluation. He has participated in the in-service training teachers received, including the inquiry model. He also participated in the training for use of *Reading Mastery*, *Corrective Reading*, and *Reading Street*. He attended the Governor's School for Reading with a team from our school. Dr. Moran also attended workshops provided by the Capital Area Intermediate Unit related to special education during the year and workshops presented by the Keystone State Reading Association in 2008. He has completed his Act-48 Continuing Professional Education Activity hours for years 2005-2010 with 191.5 hours (180 hours are needed). He completed 120 Act-45 administration hours (114 are needed) and continues to take Pennsylvania Inspired Leadership (PIL) courses. In November 2007, he attended the teacher evaluation sessions for Learning Focused Schools (LFS) administrators. He attended LFS sessions on Acceleration and Vocabulary as well as Days 1-4. He has also attended workshops on the Six Traits of Writing with other faculty members. In 2010 he completed the LoTi Administration Course for school improvement. He attends all of the workshops given by presenters at Sylvan Heights in order to be fully knowledgeable about the professional development of his faculty.

In December 2010, Mr. Hess completed coursework and testing at Penn State-Harrisburg to earn a principal letter of eligibility. At Penn State, he was instructed by many of the outstanding educational leaders in the mid-state area. His academic training, internship projects and tasks, and highly commendable teaching experience have given him the expertise to be an effective teacher evaluator. His coursework topics included observation and evaluation, supervision, educational leadership, school law, instructional support, curriculum development, technology applications, and other topics. He attended workshops such as Marzano and Pickering's "From Knowing to Doing: Leading the Art and Science of Teaching" and implemented many of these ideas. Mr. Hess is an active member of the Capital Area Intermediate Unit's Curriculum Advisory Council, enabling him to keep our school up-to-date with the latest information on state requirements and new curricular innovations. He has recently begun attending the Pennsylvania Inspired Leadership courses, too.

To support student success, Dr. Moran and Mr. Hess held regular meetings with faculty and with grade level teams. They provided training and support to faculty in areas including improving learning goals, student engagement, implementing Fountas & Pinnell benchmark assessments, and data analysis. They created action plans for teacher improvement and provided coaching. They met regularly with novice teachers to inform them of the expectations of classroom management, planning and preparation, instructional delivery, observation, and evaluation, as part of their induction plan. They also conducted informal walk-throughs and observations for all faculty. Mr. Hess has created a data collection system so that student progress can be easily accessed and regularly monitored. A special education consultant from the Capital Area Intermediate Unit also provided support for the school's special education teacher. The school purchases blocks of time for special education coaching each year to support the needs of special education.

## Teacher Evaluation - Attachments

- Instructional I teacher evaluation form
- Instructional II teacher evaluation form

## SECTION V. GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS

### Leadership Changes

According to Board of Trustee By-Laws, board members must retire from the board after two three-year terms. This by-law did not affect the composition of our board last year.

The executive committee of the board is voted upon and approved by the entire board. It comprises:

Chad Hotsko, President

Warren Persak, Vice President

Tracey Jennings, Secretary

Sam Giannelli, Treasurer

There were no other changes to leadership roles in the school.

### Board of Trustees

Name of Trustee	Office (if any)
Chad Hotsko	President
Warren Persak	Vice President
Tracey Jennings	Secretary
Samuel Giannelli	Treasurer
Lori Lauver	Director
Shavonne Diggs	Director
Nicole Jordan	Director
Jennifer Gallagher-Blom	Director
Jamie Marshall	Director
Steve Vedder	Director
William Feist, IV	Director

### Professional Development (Governance)

New board members receive a detailed packet of information which includes information regarding the Sunshine Law and Public Officials Act when they join our board. The packet also includes detailed information about all aspects of our school. A veteran board member or CAO

also discuss laws, by-laws, and expectations with new board members. Board members are expected to join board committees in addition to serving on the voting body of the board of trustees.

Stock & Leader, the school's attorney firm, invites board members to its two annual workshops to keep them informed of updates in legal decisions. They also provide a document titled "The Sunshine Law: Highlights for Newly Elected Officials" to all board members. The school attorney usually attends monthly board meetings.

During the 2008-09 school year, our entire Board of Trustees was involved in a professional development activity that took place during a retreat held at the Harrisburg Area Community College Wildwood Conference Center. Our guest speaker was Dr. Edward Frye, former executive director of the Capital Area Intermediate Unit and superintendent of schools. He assisted the board in analyzing how it operates and how to become more efficient. Following Dr. Frye's presentation, the board reviewed school achievement data, discussed fund-raising ideas, and considered the reconfiguration of school committees.

At its annual conference, the Pennsylvania Coalition of Charter Schools provides updates on the Sunshine Law and other changes in school law, which board members are invited to attend. All board members complete the required financial disclosure forms annually.

During June of 2012, the board held a retreat to review parent and teacher surveys and to discuss initiatives as a means for school administration to address parent and teacher concerns in the 2012-13 school year. Topics include increasing communication, increasing parental involvement and improving student discipline.

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

Per the By-Laws, board members are responsible for establishing and guarding the mission and vision of the school; approving the budget and major contracts; policy adoption; hiring, firing, and evaluating performance of principal/CAO; authorizing teacher appointments; student expulsion; strategic planning; recruitment and training of new board members; conducting monthly board meetings and work sessions; ensuring that board records are kept in proper order; and monitoring the CAO's management of the school. The Family Advisory Committee shares public relations and parent relations activities with the principal/CAO. To conduct this work, the board has several standing committees that report on their tasks at monthly board meetings. These committees include: By-Laws and Policies, Community Relations, Facilities & Finance, Family Advisory, Personnel, and Resource & Development. The board president meets or communicates through email regularly and meets monthly with the principal/CAO to discuss progress on the work of committees, general operations, and board meeting agenda setting.

To maintain relationships with the charter-granting school district, our board of trustees invites Harrisburg School District administration to our annual October Meeting where our new board members are initiated. Last year, Superintendent of Schools Dr. Knight-Burney met informally with Principal Kevin Moran in August 2011 to discuss last year's Charter School Annual Report. She also invited Dr. Moran to present information about Sylvan Heights Science Charter School to Harrisburg's School Board at a September board meeting in 2011.

Sylvan Heights' board members attend many community functions that members of Harrisburg School District's administration attend. Through these relationships, communication occurs and progresses toward a more effective working relationship.

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

- 2011 Board of Trustees Meetings
- 2012-13 Board of Trustees Meeting Dates

## **Community and Parent Engagement**

The Board of Trustees provides parents and community members several ways to become engaged in school activities. First, parents and community members comprise the board, giving parents and community organization members direct involvement in the highest level of the school decision-making process. Second, parents are encouraged to become engaged in school activities by volunteering their services to the school. Board policy requires parents to volunteer 12 hours of time to projects and activities each year. Third, events and activities are publicized through a monthly newsletter, providing parents with details about how to become involved. Fourth, the school offered workshops addressing parent concerns about their children's education such as "Life after Sylvan Heights Night," "Open House," "Family Reading Night," and "The Cat in the Hat Pajama Party." The school provided family educational activities such as our "Black History Program" and a winter concert.

The school provides information to parents on where to get services in the community. For example, the school publicizes the Salvation Army's Christmas Present Drive and summer camps, and the Tri-County OIC's GED program so that parents and other adults may gain reading, math, and other necessary work—related skills to prepare for entrance into the workforce.

Lastly, the school's Strategic Planning Committee is comprised of representatives from the board, community and parents, giving community and parents opportunities engage in the development activities of the school.

## **SECTION VI. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

Our 2011-12 budget of \$2.4 million comes from three main sources: State sources (5.4%); federal sources (6.3%); and local sources (88.3%). Among the local sources, tuition payments collected from local school districts are our main source of funding, amounting to \$2.1 million.

Our major federal program funding source is our Title I Regular and Title II programs, which amounted to \$139K during the year and supplemented reading and math instruction and paid for parent involvement activities.

SHSCS did not have any major fund-raising activities for 2011-12 and does not have any planned for 2012-13.

### **Fiscal Solvency Policies**

The Board of Trustees' facilities and finance committee meets at least quarterly to discuss the school's financial situation. During this time, the committee reviews the cash disbursement journal, quarterly financials, and other budget concerns. The treasurer reports on the work of the facilities and finance committee at the monthly Board of Trustees meeting. The committee has

developed internal controls for the school administration to follow relating to cash disbursements, purchasing, cash receipts, bank reconciliation, investment policy, petty cash, and credit card use.

In addition, the school has a full-time Business Manager to manage school finances. She attends all of our facilities and finance committee meetings and board meetings, prepares financial statements, and runs reports using the state chart of accounts.

The school has a \$100,000 line of credit with Citizens Bank to cover financial emergencies. The line of credit has never been used.

## **Accounting System**

To remain fully informed about changes to educational accounting procedures, the school's business manager regularly attends useful workshops and webinars offered by the Department of Education and PASBO. She attends all of the school's facilities and finance committee meetings and board meetings, prepares financial statements, and runs reports using the state chart of accounts.

SHSCS uses an accrual basis of accounting for budgeting, accounting, and reporting purposes. The school has also implemented GASB Statement No. 34, Basic Financial Statements and Management's Discussion and Analysis for state and local governments as of June 30, 2005.

This is in accordance with Generally Accepted Accounting Principles. This system is reviewed each year by an independent auditor, Sager Swisher and Company, LLP.

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

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

- Preliminary Statement of Revenues, Expenditures, and Fund Balances for 2012

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

The board contracts with the accounting firm of Sager, Swisher and Company, LLP of Columbia, PA for auditing and financial consultation. The last audit was completed for year ending June 30, 2011. The auditors reported that: "In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities, the business-type activities, each major fund, and the aggregate remaining fund information of Sylvan Heights Science Charter School, as of June 30, 2011, and the respective changes in financial position and, where applicable, cash flows thereof for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America."

The 2011-12 audit will be completed by October 31, 2012 with the Annual Financial Report (PDE-2057).

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

- 2011 Financial Audit

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

The Performance Audit Report from the Auditor General's Office dated February 2012 found that Sylvan Heights "complied, in all significant respects, with applicable state laws, contracts, grant requirements, and administrative procedures, except as detailed in two findings." Both compliance-related findings have been addressed before the close of the 2011-12 school year by the board of trustees and school administration.

Finding No. 1: Certification Deficiency--One member of Sylvan Heights special education staff did not have an emergency certificate for part of the 2008-09 school year, based on a conversation administrative personnel had with the Department of Education. The employee was enrolled in a special program for gaining permanent certification. During this time, this employee did not write or sign IEPs but did teach under the guidance of a fully certified special education teacher. Since that time, the employee has received emergency certification while she completes her program. The school's intention was to increase its number of minority faculty members by supporting her while she completes the program.

The board of trustees has passed policy that requires all special education and core subject teachers hold current PA certification before being hired.

Finding No. 2: Failure to Develop Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Local Law Enforcement--At the start of the audit, Sylvan Heights did not have an MOU with the Harrisburg Bureau of Police because it was unaware of the requirement to have one. Before the close of the audit, however, the school developed and executed an MOU with the police department. Its board of trustees also adopted a policy which requires the school to consult with its solicitor, review, update, and re-execute the MOU every two years as required by the School Code.

## **SECTION VII. FACILITY RESPONSIBILITIES**

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

With the support of the Harrisburg Redevelopment Authority, the school was able to secure a loan through Citizen's Bank to purchase its building from its owner in January 2005.

Regarding furniture, fixtures and equipment, the principal/CAO bases acquisition decisions on projected needs, incrementally purchasing furniture and equipment. Computer purchases were made using the PEPPM list. Several room carpets were replaced using bidding guidelines listed in Section 751 of the School Code.

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

As a means to find areas where our school can become more energy efficient and cost effective, we hired the McClure Mechanical Company to conduct an energy audit of the building in Fall 2009. They reported their findings to the school's building and finance committee, which made a recommendation to the board to replace the lighting and HVAC systems. With the promise that the federal government was releasing stimulus money to the school for energy efficiency projects,

the school engaged architects CS Davidson to draw blueprints for replacing the lighting and HVAC systems. Following the School Code for the competitive bidding process, the school hired Kolva Electric and RS Bortner to replace lighting and HVAC during the 2010 summer.

For the upcoming year our Finance and Facilities Committee will conduct a feasibility study to determine how to better utilize building space to provide additional room for instruction and to determine the affordability of such plans.

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

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

SHSCS complies with all federal, state, and local health and safety laws and regulations. The building was inspected by city inspectors and inspectors from Labor and Industry and granted a certificate of occupancy. The Harrisburg City Fire Department conducts an annual inspection, including a smoke alarm drill, to promote fire safety in the school. The school conducts monthly fire drills and annual severe weather drills. The automatic sprinkler system was inspected as recently as July 2012. The school does not use any explosive or flammable compounds in connection with courses taught at the school. The school was tested for asbestos and none was found.

SHSCS has contracted with the Visiting Nurses Association to provide comprehensive health services as required under Article XIV, including screening for eye, dental, measures of height and weight, TB (if necessary), hearing, and other tests. They ensure that students have had proper physical examinations and that students have proper health records and immunizations. A nurse is on-site at the school for at least two hours daily throughout the school year. We currently contract the services of Dr. Meada J. McAllister from the Children's Check-Up Center as our school physician, who is "on-call" for the school.

Student health records are located in two locked fireproof files in the Nurse's Office. Current student academic and other records are kept in files in the Administrative Assistant's Office. Records of current faculty are also kept in the Administrative Assistant's Office. Our Records Room holds records of previous students, faculty and staff.

The Request for Reimbursement and Report of School Health Services for school year 2010-11 was submitted and approved. The report for 2011-12 is due on September 30, 2012 and will be submitted by then.

Health forms are available on the school website for easy access.

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

- 2011 Request for Reimbursement and Report of School Health Services
- Student Wellness Policy

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

Property, general liability, professional liability, physical damage, terrorism, employee dishonesty liability coverages are secured through Riverport Insurance Company. Blanket accident and health policy is secured through Markel. Workers' compensation is secured through Lackawana American Insurance Company. Liability for the board of trustees directors and officers is covered through Carolina Casualty Insurance Company. (All of these are handled through the Nonprofit Insurance Services in Hanover, PA.) Health, dental, vision, prescription, and group life are provided through PCI Insurance.

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

- 2011-12 Insurances

## **SECTION IX. ADMINISTRATIVE NEEDS**

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

Total number of full-time teachers during 2011-12 school year: 15. Total number returning from 2010-11: 15.

Total number of part-time teachers: 1.

All of the 15 full-time teachers are PA certified. One special education teacher was enrolled in the PaTTAN Ace II program for special education certification and has an emergency teaching certificate. The part-time computer teacher is not PA certified.

Speech and language therapy, and occupational therapy are taught by certified instructors from the Capital Area Intermediate Unit. An ESL certified teacher on our faculty teaches the two ELL students daily.

The principal/CAO has an Administrative II certificate and an assistant superintendent letter of eligibility from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The principal was selected on the basis of proven leadership ability and the sense of commitment to fulfill the mission of the school. He began his eleventh year with the school in 2011-12.

The school's Assistant Principal has a masters degree from Penn State Harrisburg and a principal's letter of eligibility from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. He taught at Sylvan Heights for 12 years before being promoted to this post. Among his many assignments is to lead professional learning community tasks, using data to direct instruction and learning.

The Dean of Students has a masters degree from Clarion University of Pennsylvania and began working here in 2003-04. He assists in improving student attendance, achievement, and behavior.

The school's reading specialist is state certified and has a masters degree.

Teachers are selected for their:

\*Expertise in science, math, technology, language and the arts

\*Commitment to life-long learning

\*Successful experience in work with young children from various backgrounds

\*Willingness to work beyond the minimum required

\*Dedication to the mission, vision, and values of SHSCS

\*Ability to work as part of a team, as leader and as follower

\*Ability to plan and to follow-through without close supervision

Other staff members are selected for their dedication to the mission of the school, their ability to work with children, and their qualifications for fulfilling the functions of their jobs.

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

- 2012 PDE-414
- 2012 PIMS Highly Qualified Teacher Certification

## **Student Enrollment**

a.) Enrollment Procedures and Admissions Policy: SHSCS advertises in the local newspaper during Spring to inform residents of the existence of openings for students.

We have found that “word of mouth” advertising by our parents to friends and neighbors has been one of our most successful methods for publicizing our school. We are developing a stronger reputation based on our results with each passing year.

At SHSCS, we have an open door policy for parental visitation. We encourage the parents of potential students and their families to visit the school and observe instruction on a typical day. With proper notice, a staff member is made available to give families a tour and to answer questions they may have regarding our school.

As a result of these practices, our school enrollment has been near full capacity, with waiting lists for each grade level. As long as parents approve of the work that is done to educate their children, we expect to continue operating at capacity.

Age Requirements and Selection Process: Students who are five years old by September 1<sup>st</sup> are eligible for enrollment. Parents first return to our school a completed application form for their children. Students are assigned a lottery number if there are more applicants than available slots in their grade level. Lottery drawings are held in mid-May for the open slots. The lottery viewing is open to the public. Children who have siblings already in our school are accepted first when slots are available. Children residing outside of the Harrisburg School District are not considered until all Harrisburg students have been accepted. A waiting list is maintained for students who had not won a slot in the lottery and for those students who apply after the lottery.

There are a full range of services, programs, and alternative placements available for implementation of the special education programs in SHSCS. We use the Child Find System to locate, identify, and evaluate children who are thought to have a disability eligible for special education. Child find data is collected, maintained, and used in decision-making for placement along with a conference between parents and an instructional team.

Students with disabilities are included in the general education program and extracurricular and non-academic programs and activities to the maximum extent appropriate in accordance with an Individualized Education Plan.

These policies further the mission of SHSCS to remain nondiscriminating in the selection of students. SHSCS shows no preference on the basis of gender, social class, race/ethnicity, English proficiency, aptitude or achievement, or disability. Our lottery system also eliminates selection on the basis of special educational needs. Students with and without disabilities are admitted on the same basis (lottery).

#### Enrollment History--

Number of kindergarten students enrolled in August 2011: 44

Number of kindergarten students enrolled in June 2012: 44

Number of kindergartners returning to SHSCS in August 2012: 43 (One student is enrolling in a cyber charter school.)

Number of 1<sup>st</sup> grade students enrolled in August 2011: 45

Number of 1<sup>st</sup> grade students enrolled in June 2012: 44 (Child returned to his home district-- Central Dauphin.)

Number of 1st graders returning to SHSCS in August 2012: 44

Number of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students enrolled in August 2011: 45

Number of 2<sup>nd</sup> grade students enrolled in June 2012: 44

Number of 2nd graders returning to SHSCS in August 2012: 40 (Two went to home districts(Central Dauphin and Steelton), 1 went to private school, one went to Milton Hershey School)

Number of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students enrolled in August 2011: 44

Number of 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students enrolled in June 2012: 43

Number of 3rd graders returning to SHSCS in August 2012: 42 (One went to home district-- Susquehanna Twp.)

Number of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled in August 2011: 43

Number of 4<sup>th</sup> grade students enrolled in June 2012: 43

Number of 4th graders returning to SHSCS in August 2012: 1 (One student was retained. All other 4th graders graduated and will not be returning.)

No students left our school due to expulsion.

Sylvan Heights averaged 219 students during the year with 218 students completing the entire 2011-12 school year. We expect 169 of them to return in August 2012. We will need 51 new

students in the Fall of 2012--44 will be new kindergarten students and 7 will fill other grade levels.

In general, what these data tell us is that SHSCS has a low student turnover rate (about 4% last year). Even when families move to other districts, they often keep their children enrolled in our school.

There are currently no supporting documents selected for this section.

## **Transportation**

Harrisburg School District transports our students who live more than  $\frac{3}{4}$  mile from the school through the private services of First Student Transit, Inc.

Other districts from where we draw our students arrange to have district busses or private vans transport our students. This arrangement has been successful during the 2011-12 school year.

For adjunct classroom days and field trips, SHSCS hires bus services as necessary.

During the summer months when SHSCS provides summer tutoring for selected students, SHSCS provides transportation to and from each child's house through First Student Transit, Inc. Funding for transportation is drawn from Title I monies.

Bus monitors would increase the safety of students riding these busses. The new security cameras are very helpful in maintaining student behavior on busses.

## **Food Service Program**

SHSCS contracted with The Nutrition Group during 2011-12 to provide breakfast and lunch for our school. Students were given monthly calendars which provided the month's menu so that they could choose whether to purchase a meal that day.

SHSCS participates in the National School Lunch Program for free and reduced priced lunches. During the school year 2011-12, SHSCS had an 83% free and reduced priced lunch rate.

The school's food service program was audited by the Department of Education's Division of Food and Nutrition in November 2008. The school passed the review and may continue operations. The next review will occur in four years.

For record keeping purposes, the school uses Lunchbox Software and barcoded student cards.

## **Student Conduct**

a.) Our faculty has received training from a Capital Area Intermediate Unit behavior specialist who made several site visits to inform her recommendations. Our faculty has developed a list of school-wide rules to follow for when students are outside of their classrooms. Classroom rules are developed by teachers and students within each class, based on a combination of ideas from the IU behavior specialist, the research of Lee Cantor, and *1-2-3 Magic*. The behavior specialist also reported her findings to our Board of Trustees at a semi-annual board retreat. During August of 2011, new *Second Step* social-emotional skills training program materials were purchased for teachers. Teachers received in-service on use of these curricular items. In general, teachers use a series of warnings and time-outs with increasing

consequences for repeat offenses to manage student behavior, with communication to the children's parents. It is our intention to turn misconduct occurrences into learning experiences for students so that students understand the consequences of their actions and make better choices.

Every effort is made to avoid suspension and expulsion. For students with disabilities, the procedural safeguards of 22 Pa. Code, Ch. 703 are utilized.

We also take a proactive approach with discipline by teaching from the character building curriculum titled *Second Step: A Violence Prevention Curriculum*. It instructs students in anger management, empathy training, and conflict resolution. Through its use, students learn to use their words to resolve differences, rather than resorting to violence. In addition, our third and fourth grades use *Steps to Respect* to prevent bullying behaviors and to improve peer relations through respectful actions.

b.) 12 students were involved in 16 suspension incidents. No students were expelled.

## **Student Conduct - Attachment**

- Code of Student Conduct

## **Signature Page**

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

School Year: 2012

The Sylvan Heights Science CS within Capital Area IU 15 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 Sylvan Heights Science 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:** Kevin Moran **Title:** Dr.  
**Phone:** (717) 232-9220 **Fax:** (717) 232-9221  
**E-mail:** kmoran@shscs.org

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*Signature of the Chief Executive Officer and Date*

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

**Name:** Chad Hotsko **Title:** Mr.  
**Phone:** (717) 232-9220 **Fax:** (717) 232-9221  
**E-mail:** chad.hotsko@pnc.com

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

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

**Name:** Sherita Jackson **Title:** Ms.  
**Phone:** (717) 232-9220 **Fax:** (717) 232-9221  
**E-mail:** sjackson@shscs.org

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*Signature of the Special Education Contact Person and Date*

### Signature Page - Attachments

- 2012 Signature Page
- 2012 Assurance of Operation