

DELAWARE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT

CHARTER SCHOOL INFORMATION

Charter School Name: Providence Creek Academy

Mailing Address: 273 W. Duck Creek Road

P. O. Box 265

City/State/Zip: Clayton, DE 19938

Email: Amy Santos Board of Directors President

akt120@yahoo.com

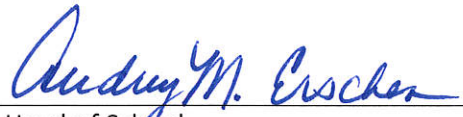
Audrey Erschen Head of School/Principal

audrey.erschen@pca.k12.de.us

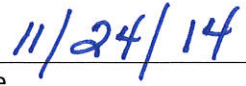
Telephone: (302)653-6276

Fax: (302)653-7850


Website: <http://providencecreekacademy.org>



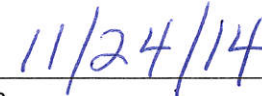
Head of School



Date



Board President



Date

SUBMISSION DEADLINE: December 1st (September 30th for renewing charter schools)

All schools submit one (1) signed copy (PDF via email preferred) to the DDOE Charter School Office

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ABSTRACT

Providence Creek Academy Charter School, Inc. (PCA) opened its doors in September 2002, after a modification to change name, location and opening date. From the opening to the present, Providence Creek Academy Charter School has had two modifications and two renewals:

July 2003 Modification for separation from Management Company

February 2006 First charter renewal

February 2008 Modification to build new facility

January 2011 Second charter renewal

Currently, PCA has an authorized enrollment of 669 students in grades K through 8.

Demographic specifics as of September 2013 are included in Appendix 1. PCA is located in Clayton, Delaware on 42 acres.

Mission

Providence Creek Academy is a charter school: which is a tuition free alternative to a traditional public school. At PCA we focus on Academics, Athletics, and the Arts for kindergarten through 8th grade. This focus allows teachers to educate the whole child. The goal of the staff is not just teaching your child subject matter, it's educating your child to become a better citizen inside and outside of the classroom. We believe in a disciplined climate and high expectations for our children. Our staff has strong relationships with students, parents, colleagues, and administration; this approach promotes helpful interactions that positively affect our community. PCA is a close-knit family in which communication is constant and always evolving. Our collegiate-styled campus allows for an extension of the classroom beyond four walls. Our students travel between buildings to attend classes in art, music, world language, physical education, health, library, and technology. The vast landscape allows for exploration and discovery of the world around us.

Vision

The vision of Providence Creek Academy Charter School is to provide a dynamic educational experience for children to realize success in academics, athletics, and the arts. Academics at PCA is hands-on, child-centered, and aligned with the State of Delaware Standards as a minimum educational requirement with high expectations to exceed beyond the minimum. Parents enjoy an active and collaborative role in the effort to integrate foundational skills with a broad scope of diverse and global knowledge.

Students are given the tools to promote lifelong learning and growth in a safe and supportive learning environment by highly qualified and effective educators. Additional support to students and the school is provided by working partnerships with support staff, specialists, administrators, parents, families, business members, and the school community.

This year-end report covers the 2013-2014 school year. It is intended to be used by the Board of Directors to formally evaluate the school's performance. It will also serve as the document to report our progress to the Department of Education.

ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE:

What are the school's academic performance outcomes that will demonstrate student growth, proficiency, and college and career readiness levels as measured by the Performance Framework? Provide an analysis of strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth in these areas.

The following data represents the academic performance of students at Providence Creek Academy on DCAS in 2013-2014, as defined by the Delaware Academic Performance Framework. The complete analysis indicates that PCA's overall academic school rating is "Does Not Meet", however there are several areas in which PCA students did meet the standard and several areas in which PCA students were above the State average.

Measure 1 – Student Progress Over Time (Growth)

At PCA growth from fall to spring is one of the most important indicators of our success and achievement. Unfortunately, PCA students have struggled to keep up with the increasing instructional growth targets over the past two years and we have seen a decline in students reaching these targets. However we have seen growth in the number of students meeting the standard on DCAS. The numbers have fluctuated over the years but over all we have seen an upward trend in the number of students meeting the standard since the 2010-2011 school year.

Math:

- 40.8% of PCA students met their fall to spring instructional growth target
- 47.9% of PCA students in the lowest quartile met their fall to spring instructional growth target
- 73% of PCA students are on track to achieve proficiency within 3 years or by 10th grade

ELA:

- 47.4% of PCA students met their fall to spring instructional growth target
- 52.7% of PCA students in the lowest quartile met their fall to spring instructional growth target
- 74% of PCA students are on track to achieve proficiency within 3 years or by 10th grade

While meeting instructional growth targets over the years has been a challenge; based on Measure 1c: "Are students making enough annual growth to maintain or achieve proficiency status within 3 years or by 10th grade?" in both Math and ELA PCA students are 10 and 11 percentage points higher than the state target of 63%. This indicates that we are moving in the right direction of preparing students for proficiency. Our students may not be making the significant growth that is expected by the State, however they are making progress toward meeting the standard.

2. Student Achievement (Status)

Math:

- 64.7% of PCA students were proficient, compared to the State average of 66.3% and Smyrna School District's average of 75.3%
- 52.8% of PCA students with low socio-economic status were proficient compared to the State average of 57.4%
- 54.7% of African American students at PCA were proficient, compared to the State average of 56.4%
- 73.1% of White students at PCA were proficient, compared to the State average of 78.9%

ELA:

- 76.7% of PCA students were proficient, compared to the State average of 70.2% and Smyrna School District's average of 78.9%
- 70.4% of PCA students with low socio-economic status were proficient compared to the State average of 62.3%
- 76.6% of African American students at PCA were proficient, compared to the State average of 62.2%
- 77.1% of White students at PCA were proficient, compared to the State average of 81.4%

In each of the ELA categories, with the exception of our white students, PCA was above the State average. This data shows that PCA is meeting the standard in ELA and our work to refine ELA units of instruction to align with the Common Core State Standards has been successful. Math has consistently been a weak area for PCA students. In the past years, teachers have not had the opportunity to fully implement the Pearson resources that they have been provided. We have fluctuated back and forth between different resources and have determined that we must give one resource time to be implemented properly and have full effect. Further actions that have been taken to increase proficiency in the 2014-2015 school year include:

- Replacing the former Math Coordinator with a new Math Specialist
- Implementing the Math Specialist working with Tier 3 RTI students to provide further focus on areas of individual need
- Implementing a rigorous Math program (TenMarks) that is aligned to Smarter Balanced
- Increasing Math classroom time for students in grades 7th and 8th
- Implementing a tutoring program to occur during breaks from school to keep at risk students on track over breaks
- Using Custom Assessments on STAR 360 for progress monitoring to help teachers focus on specific skills that students struggle to master
- Increasing the amount of time the math specialist is in math classrooms

In addition to the data from the Academic Performance Framework, the following chart shows DCAS proficiency levels at each grade level across several years. Read across the rows to compare 2014 students to those students in the same grade level from a previous year. Read down a colored diagonal to follow the “same” group of students over several years.

Grade	ELA Spring 2011	ELA Spring 2012	ELA Spring 2013	ELA Spring 2014	ELA State Average 2014
2	57	50	71	92	
3	51	72	64	68	70
4	67	66	72	61	73
5	60	81	72	77	76
6	69	88	92	81	73
7	69	86	81	86	71
8	65	86	85	88	71

Grade	Math Spring 2011	Math Spring 2012	Math Spring 2013	Math Spring 2014	Math State Average 2014
2	75	78	92	95	
3	53	78	69	75	72
4	68	71	72	72	75
5	62	83	59	62	71
6	67	68	69	57	66
7	56	80	64	68	66
8	57	65	66	51	69

In grades 3 and 7 PCA students were above the State Average in 2014 in Math. In grades 5, 6, 7 and 8 PCA students were above the State Average in 2014 in Reading. PCA upper school (6-8) students in ELA have consistently demonstrated proficiency above the state average.

Measure 3 – State and Federal Accountability

PCA has met AYP for the past four years.

Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities for Growth

Since our last charter renewal in 2010, our school has revised our entire curriculum to align with the Common Core State Standards. Our teachers have worked diligently to create stellar units of instruction that engage students in authentic learning. This work is continuing in the 2014-2015 school year with changes and improvements to our classroom assessments.

While students are growing each year, there needs to be a more rigorous plan to close the gap. More students are meeting proficiency yearly; however they are not meeting the rigorous growth targets that are set for them by the state. With the transition to Smarter Balanced in the 2014-2015 school year, PCA is providing more targeted instruction to different levels of students. An analysis of our class level data shows that typically it is our higher level students that are not meeting their growth goals, especially at the 8th grade math level. We have

purchased IMP (Interactive Mathematics Program) for our Algebra students in order to push them higher and provide them with a more rigorous curriculum.

As a school we need to look at the instructional strategies of high achieving classes and use those strategies in lower performing classes. In years where we have seen drops in scores we have also had significant staffing changes, in some cases an entire grade level was new. We have implemented a salary scale for teachers to try to be more competitive with local districts and are implementing a stronger mentoring program to assist with retaining teachers from year to year.

Other plans for the 2014-2015 school year include a close look at all assessments. It has come to our attention that the assessments given at the classroom level do not match the rigor needed for our students to be successful on high stakes testing. During PLC's throughout the school year our teachers are working on creating more rigorous, application based assessments that require a deeper depth of knowledge. We are also implementing more parent nights to give parents further information about what they can do with their child at home to help them be more successful in the classroom.

We have strengthened our Tier 2 and Tier 3 RTI process and are including more parent meetings to help provide additional guidance and support at home. We have also added STAR 360 to our current STAR Reading and STAR Math Program. STAR 360 allows us to design short, custom assessments for individual students based upon their specific areas of need. During small group instruction students work on strengthening their areas of weakness and the custom assessments allow teachers to monitor their individual progress toward mastery.

We have also added Ready Common Core ELA to our K-8 ELA classes; and Ready Common Core Math to our 6-8 Math classes. These resources are fully aligned to the Common Core and provide application questions and rich informational text.

FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE:

What are the school’s financial performance expectations that will demonstrate viability and sustainability as measured by the Performance Framework? Provide an analysis of strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth in these areas.

Based on the last four years on the Delaware Financial Performance Framework, PCA has received an overall rating of Meets Standard. While PCA Did Not Meet in 2b. Debt to Asset Ratio, the school has ended each of the last four years with a financial surplus to ensure fiscal viability and security.

Year	1.a.	1.b.	1.c.	1.d.	2.a.	2.b.	2.c.	2.d.	OVERALL RATING
10-11	M	M	M	M	NR	D	NR	M	M
11-12	M	M	M	M	NR	D	NR	M	M
12-13	M	M	M	M	M	D	M	M	M
13-14	M	M	M	M	M	D	M	M	M

External auditors have audited our school finances annually and have found neither findings nor acts of impropriety. It is anticipated that this performance will continue into the future. The school's budget is reviewed and approved by the Board of Directors on a monthly basis. Monthly financial reports are reviewed by the Citizens Budget Oversight Committee (CBOC) and the Board of Directors. The DOE Monthly Financial Summary report is posted on our website as required.

Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities for Growth Strengths

The school's financial future is secure. Our school has met or exceeded enrollment expectations for each of the last four years. A waiting list is maintained in the event of any unexpected openings. Every financial decision the school makes is based on sound and planned reasoning. Both the Board of Directors and the CBOC are involved in those decisions.

Challenges and Opportunities for Growth

Funding for our school is a function of enrollment. As a charter school our funding levels can vary from year to year. Additionally, our school is dependent on consistent local funding numbers. Shifts in the number of students from one school district or another can cause funding to increase or decrease. The local funding received from school districts varies annually as well, which makes it difficult to plan, especially during the current budget cuts and downshift in the economy. For a charter school these fluctuations can seriously impact our budgets and planning. These shifts also create challenges in maintaining human capital with competitive salaries.

ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE:

What are the school’s performance expectations in meeting its organizational responsibilities including, but not limited to, administrative operations, reporting, and legal responsibilities as measured by the Performance Framework? Provide an analysis of strengths, challenges, and opportunities for growth in these areas.

Based on the 2013-2014 Delaware Organizational Performance Framework, PCA has been rated as Meets Standard.

Year	1.a.	1.b.	2	3.a.	3.b.	3.c.	4.a.	4.b.	4.c.	4.d.	5.a.	5.b.	6	OVERALL RATING
11-12	M	M	M	DNM	M	M	M	M	N/A	M	M	M	M	Meets
12-13	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Meets
13-14	M	M	TBD	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	M	Meets

The purpose of the Organizational Performance Framework is to communicate to the charter school and public the existing compliance-related expectations to which the charter school is held. The Organizational Performance Framework lists expectations the charter school is required to meet through state and federal law and the charter Performance Agreement. For each measure a school receives one of two ratings: "Meets Standard" or "Does Not Meet Standard." PCA has received a rating of Meets Standard in each of the assessed framework elements for the 13-14 school year with rating on Financial Management and Oversight pending evaluation of the annual audit report submitted October 1, 2014. During the 11-12 PCA did not have all Board of Director Meeting Minutes posted on its website therefore was rated "Does Not Meet Standard" in 3a. *Is the school complying with governance requirements?* This oversight has been corrected and the monthly meeting minutes are now posted on the website once they are approved.

Strengths, Challenges, and Opportunities for Growth Strengths

PCA has always strived to be in compliance with all requirements. We plan to continue this practice. We have strong internal capacity to continue to meet all organization expectations. Our administrative team, Board of Directors and staff strive to ensure that we are viewed as an outstanding organization.

Challenges and Opportunities for Growth

The greatest challenge that we face is the continuously changing education landscape not only in Delaware, but nationally. Each year brings new regulations, requirements and expectations. Outside pressures continue to utilize resources that should be focused on educating the students who attend our school.

We have overcome many challenges during our existence, and will continue to do so.

STATUS OF CONDITIONS PLACED UPON THE CHARTER:

All conditions placed on Providence Creek Academy at its renewal in 2010 were met by the required deadline. No conditions existed for the 2013-2014 school year.

STUDENT RETENTION GOALS AND TARGETS:

The percentage of students who have re-enrolled from the prior year according to ESEA demographic categories

89% (547 out of 614) of the non-graduating students enrolled at the end of 2012-2013 school year reenrolled in our program for 2013-2014. The school's demographics for reenrollment were as follows:

AM IND/AK	2%
Asian	2%
BLACK	29%
WHITE	67%

A total of fifty-four students did not reenroll. Of those nine moved out of state, three began home school, seven moved out of the twenty mile transportation radius, two went to another charter school, one enrolled in a private school, six are unknown and twenty-three returned to their district of residence. Of the twenty-three that returned to their district nineteen parents indicated transition to district school prior to high school as the reason. Three indicated transportation scheduling conflicts, and two indicated dissatisfaction with discipline at Providence Creek Academy.

The number of students who have left your school before the year is over or before the end of the charter school's grade configuration per ESEA demographic category

BLACK	10%
WHITE	90%

A summary of why students chose to leave

One student chose to leave during the 2013-14 school year. The one student moved out of state and attended another charter school.

The percentage of students who did not pass from one grade to the next

1.6% (11 out of 681) of our students did not pass from one grade to the next.

Your plan to improve student retention and average daily attendance if less than your stated targets

We do not see student retention as a problem for our program. This past year the economy had an impact on student retention as families made employment related moves from the area. Transportation is an issue with the geographic location of hub stops and pick-up/drop-off times. For the most part, once a student attends our school they typically remain. Our goal is to always have our students reenroll in our program; however, family situations have an impact.

INNOVATION:

Providence Creek Academy strives to create a partnership with our parents and community, as both are a vital part of our success. We utilize the latest innovations in teaching with rigorous academic content aligned to the Common Core State Standards to stimulate the child's mind and instill a passion for learning. We use a proven combination of instructional techniques, such as project based learning, technology and an academic content with a strong emphasis on literacy. All of our classrooms have installed SmartBoards, as well as having access to one of several mobile laptop carts. Our parents and community are involved through PCA PTO, athletics, and the arts programs offered at PCA.

This is accomplished by offering students opportunities in the Arts and Athletics in conjunction with Academics. PCA offers students both vocal and instrumental music opportunities through a Choral program and a band program. Each area also has specialty groups which include a percussion ensemble, male and female choirs, and smaller ensembles. We value the PCA Ballet Theater program offering a variety of dance genres in which students may participate. Due to the success of this program it is open to the community outside of PCA.

Providence Creek Academy offers a rigorous sports program that emphasizes teamwork, good sportsmanship, and being a positive role model. While our program continuously grows, we currently offer: Football, Cheerleading, Cross Country, Baseball, Softball, Volleyball, and Basketball. A dedicated, knowledgeable coaching staff instructs the fundamentals of the sport while supporting academics. Our student athletes represent themselves, their parents, and Providence Creek Academy while building skills, strength, and passion for sports.

Strong community ties are built through annual Service Learning projects. All of our students participate throughout the year by adopting an organization or project to give back to their community. Examples include Habitat for Humanity, Relay for Life, Chimes of Delaware, and the Food Bank of Delaware. Two days a year are devoted to actual service hours given to these organizations.

Providence Creek Academy has created a culture of extended family within our organization. Not only do our students' families participate, but so do our staff families. Events at PCA draw a huge crowd from all areas among our stakeholders. These connections have created a place where students are able to grow as individuals to become college or career ready. A strong measure of our success is when graduates come back "home" to visit and share their accomplishments.

Appendix I

PROVIDENCE CREEK FALL ENROLLMENT (2013-2014)

Fall Student Enrollment By Grade and By Student Sub-Group										
Grade	N Students	% Male	% Female	% Hispanic	% African American	% White	% Other Minorities	% ELL	%Low-Income	% Students with Disabilities
Kindergarten	80	46.3	53.8	-	27.5	68.8	-	-	23.8	-
Grade 1	79	49.4	50.6	-	24.1	70.9	-	-	26.6	-
Grade 2	80	53.8	46.3	-	23.8	66.3	-	-	21.3	-
Grade 3	79	40.5	59.5	-	22.8	68.4	-	-	21.5	-
Grade 4	78	55.1	44.9	-	34.6	57.7	-	-	21.8	-
Grade 5	79	51.9	48.1	-	30.4	55.7	-	-	26.6	-
Grade 6	77	53.2	46.8	-	35.1	55.8	-	-	27.3	-
Grade 7	73	52.1	47.9	-	24.7	64.4	-	-	26.0	-
Grade 8	72	38.9	61.1	-	27.8	59.7	-	-	25.0	-
Total	697	49.1	50.9	< 5.0	27.8	63.1	5.0	-	24.4	< 5.0