



Agora Cyber Charter School

Minutes for the Jan 5, 2010

Board of Trustees Meeting

Place of Meeting: Agora Cyber Charter School,
995 Old Eagle School Rd,
Suite 315, Wayne, Pa 19087

Board Members Present: Travis Gery, Bonita Harmon, Kadedra Haynes, James Parsons, Mary Steffey

Others Present: Sharon Williams, Kevin Corcoran, Allison Dracha , Jane Swan, Tim Kreider

I. Preliminary

A. Call to order. The meeting was called to order at 6:35 pm.

B. Roll Call: All board members present

II. Old Business:

A. Approval of previous meeting minutes

Bonita Harmon made a motion to approve the minutes of the Nov 30, 2009 meeting
second by Mary Steffey

Mary Steffey made a motion to approve the Dec 15,2009 minutes
Second by Bonita Harmon

III. New Business: Report to the Board

A. Enrollment: Tim Krieder (Operations Manager) gave a report on enrollment (see attached Board Report)

B. Finance: Kevin Corcoran gave the financial report (see attached Board Report)

C. Personnel: Sharon Williams updated the BoT on positions available (see attached Board Report)

D. Academic: Alison Dracha gave a report on Elementary

Amy Rupp gave a report via elluminate on Middle School

Jane Swan gave a report on High School (see attached Board Reports)

E. Community Updates: introduction of Parent booster program and return of Bus Stop was announced (see Board Report)

F. Charter Renewal Status Updates were given (see Board Reports)

G. PDE Updates: (see attached Board Reports)

H. Parent Updates (see attached Board Reports)

I. Policy Recommendations

i. Overview of School Handbook

ii. Conflict of Interest Policy: was presented as an amendment to the bylaws

IV. Public Comment

V. Adjournment: Motion to Adjourn by Mary Steffey at 7:43 pm

Elluminate Recorded Link

<https://sas.illuminate.com/site/external/jwsdetect/playback.jnlp?psid=2010-01-05.1341.M.701F07B97850429C0D5915C91801E2.vcr>

Minutes respectfully submitted by Mary Steffey

Board Report
January 5, 2010

Enrollment as of 12/29/09

Total School Enrollment: 5358 students

K-6: 2196

7-8: 939

9-12: 2223

Total Regular Ed: 4398

Total Special Education: 960

Total Pending Students: 554

Regular Education: 436

Special Education: 109

See Appendix A for Enrollment by Grade Level

Personnel

Total number of Agora Employees: 287 including teachers, counselors, advisors, para-educators, and nurses.

Total number of K12 employees: 15

One High School English Teacher Resignation as of January 8, 2010

Replacement position interviews launched

Job Postings

HR support position

Accounting and Finance Analyst

Part time Accounts Payable Support

Director of Special Education

Finance

Revenues: School revenues through Nov 30th total \$20.1M dollars and are in-line with revised Oct 1 enrollment projections. Approximately 4.5 M came in through Title, IDEA Additional inflows from federal Title and ARRA funding, along with normal reimbursements from school districts, project to total approximately \$49M through June 2010.

Expenditures: School expenditures through Nov 30th total \$20.6M, and are also in line with assumptions surrounding the Oct 1 enrollment case. Notable items include approximately \$425K spent by previous and new Board on external legal fees, and – on a positive note – the removal of more than \$3M in Cynwyd LLC fees that would have contractually been paid during the 2009-10 school year.

Net Fund Balance/Deficit: currently in a deficit position of \$550K for the year (which is normal at this time of year due to up-front costs associated with student enrollments), the school projects an end-of-year fund balance of \$2.1M at this time, or 4.5% of revenue.

The academic leaders of the school look forward to working with the members of the board on designing additional programs and services using these funds to drive student achievement.

Academics

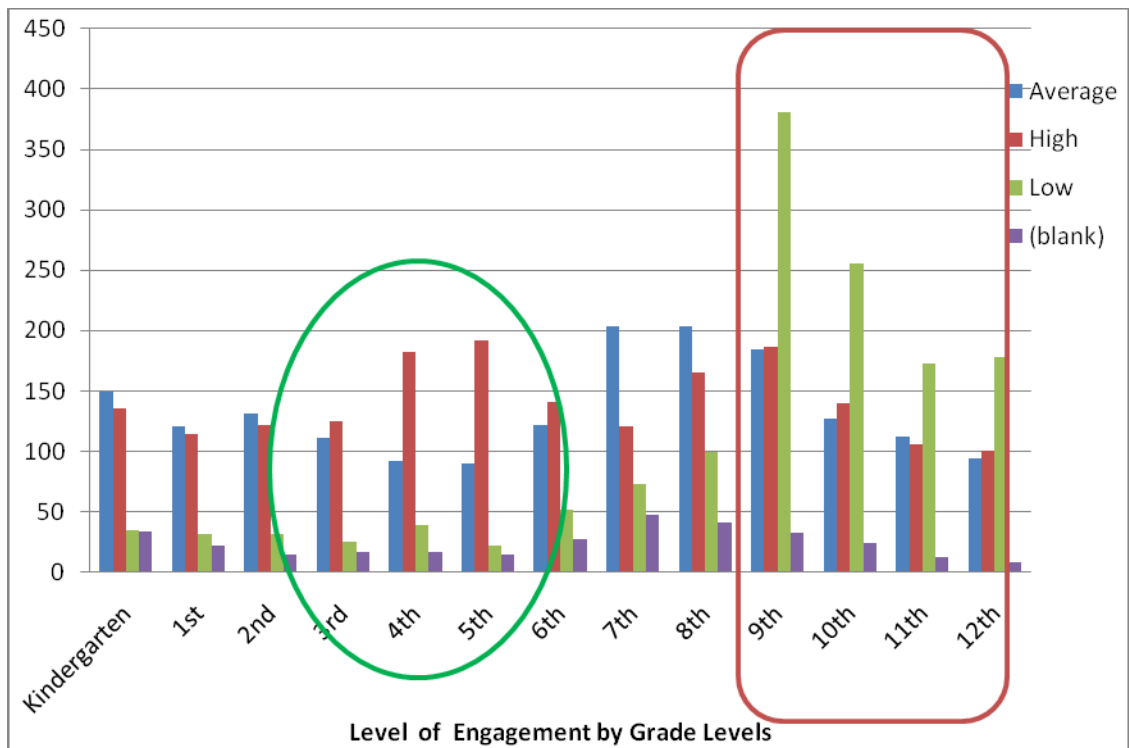
Academic Leaders have stronger tools and data than ever before to use for early identification of students who are “at risk” and to inform intervention strategies that are being implemented across ALL testing grade levels. The list below is a summary of strategies implemented to enhance the 2009 -2010 academic program in order to completely fulfill the school’s commitment to academic achievement and meeting annual yearly progress (AYP) expectations mandated by the state of Pennsylvania.

2009-2010 High Level View of the Academic Program

- A rigorous analysis of student performance data (see charts below) inform decisions to continue targeted direct instruction of academic standards in small groups until content mastery is achieved.
- All students in grades 3-12 are expected to take the **Scantron Performance Series** Assessment. (Over 90% of all current students have taken the assessment to date)
- All students in testing grades are expected to complete a **Scantron Achievement Series assessment** weekly, measuring student performance on single strand assessment standards. A score of 80% or better is considered “mastery” of the content. Students who do not master the content areas receive daily intensive online instruction until mastery is met.
- Reading and math specialists are utilized to increase the intensity and number of interventions per student and decrease the size of the small group remediation sessions.
- 16 paraprofessionals/aids assist with student engagement ensuring that students attend sessions and to provide assistance to students where needed.

Levels of Engagement

Teachers are provided a rubric to define student levels of engagement analyzing student progress in the online school, timely submission of assignments, consistent participation in teacher directed instructional sessions, and attendance. Data is used for remediation and intervention tactics to increase student achievement across all grade levels. Academic leaders are addressing the lower engagement levels found in the high school population which is a direct correlation to academic success.



See Appendix B Engagement Rubric

Aims Web (Grades K-2)

Building strong a foundation in the early childhood years is critical for consistent student academic growth and development. Teachers in grades K-2 are utilizing data captured from AIMSweb that individually assess each kindergarten through second grade student in his or her progress toward proficient reading and math. AIMSweb screenings are a set of standardized, individually administered measures of early literacy and early numeracy development. Kindergarten and first grade assessments are done face to face all around the state.

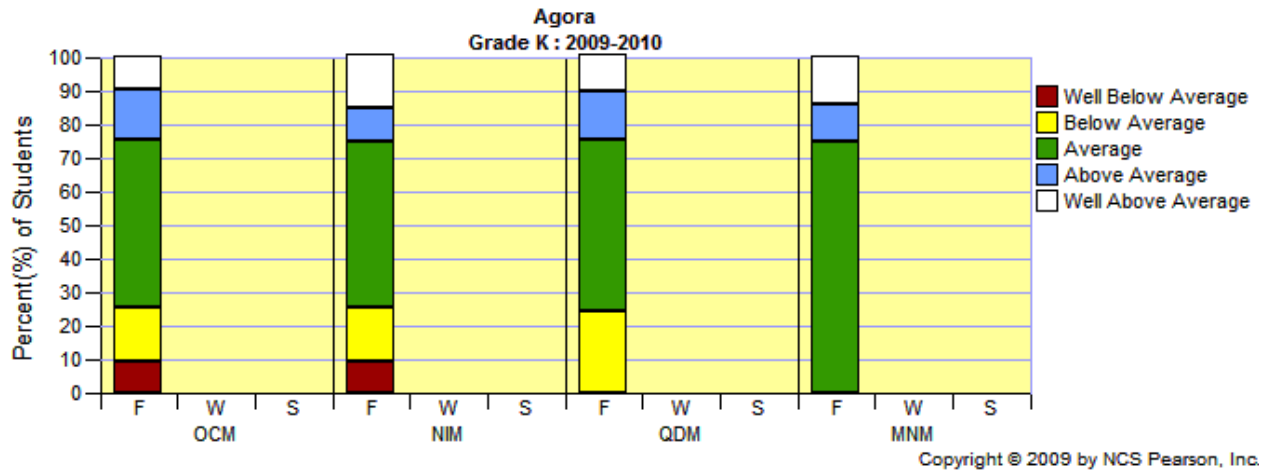
AIMSweb focuses on critical early literacy and numeracy skills that have been proven to indicate later success in reading and math. Each measure takes only a few minutes to administer and allows educators to quickly determine how students are responding to their instructional program. Teachers are able to intervene early and adjust the instructional program to meet the needs of each student. Another aspect of the screening is to have student work with the teacher on a drawing/writing piece.

Teachers will administer this screening three times a year. The Screening windows are September 14-25, January 4-15, and May 10-21.

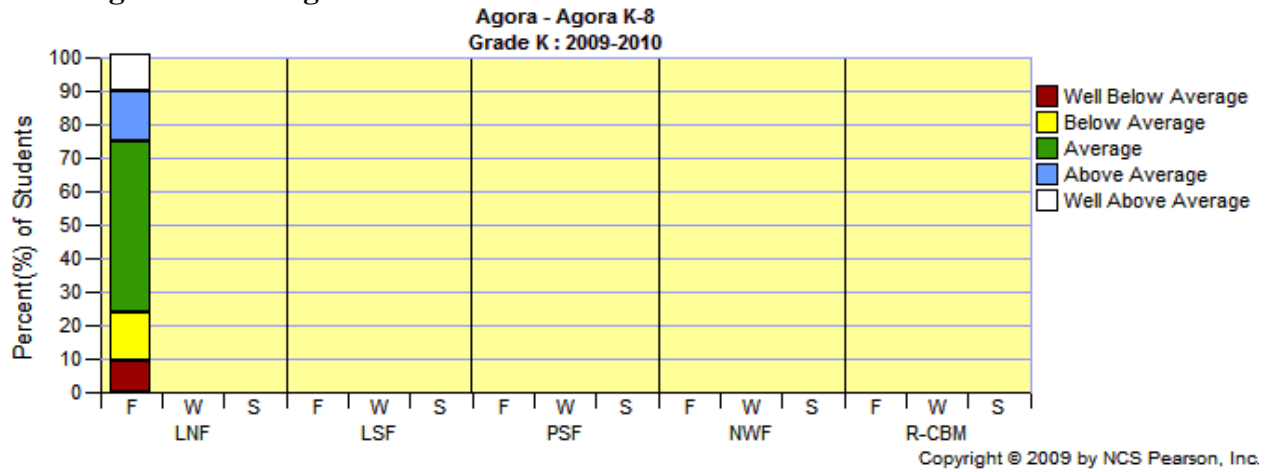
The results of the AIMSweb screening will place a child in one of three categories; benchmark, strategic or intensive. Each tier provides a different level of support from the primary grade teachers and lead teacher.

At this time baseline score charts are below. Our next window will illustrate the level of student growth and achievement since the first testing window:

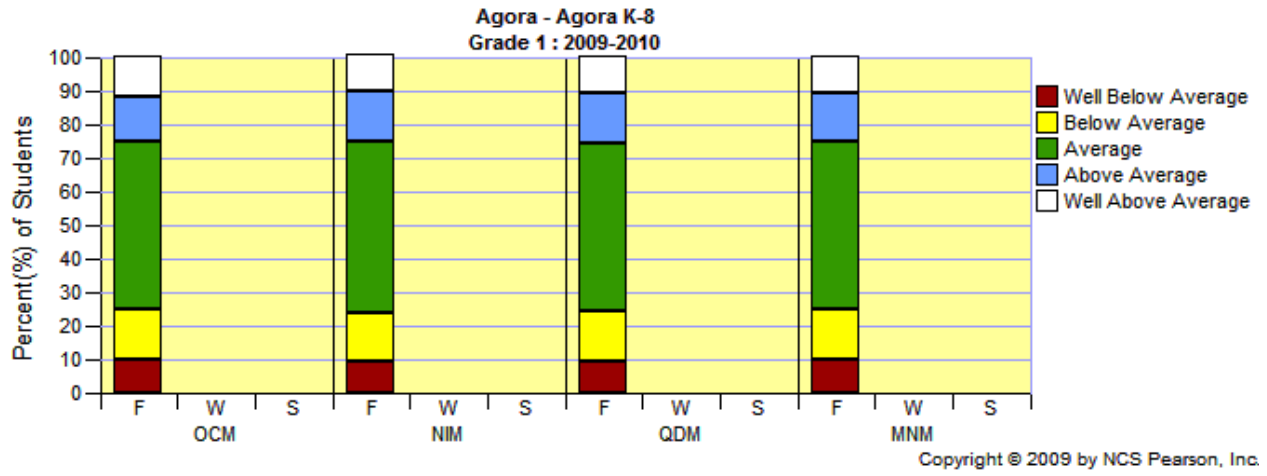
Kindergarten Math



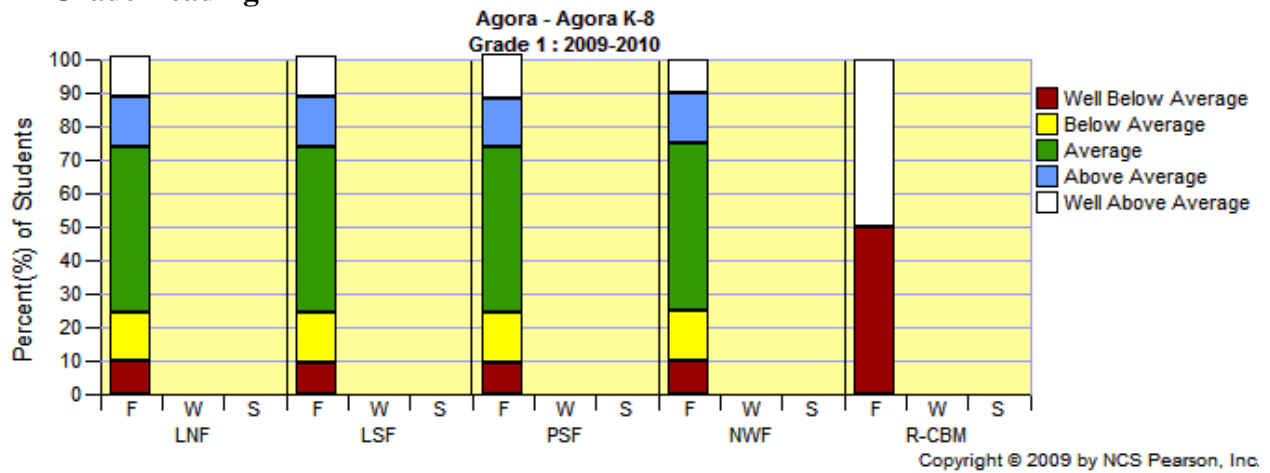
Kindergarten Reading



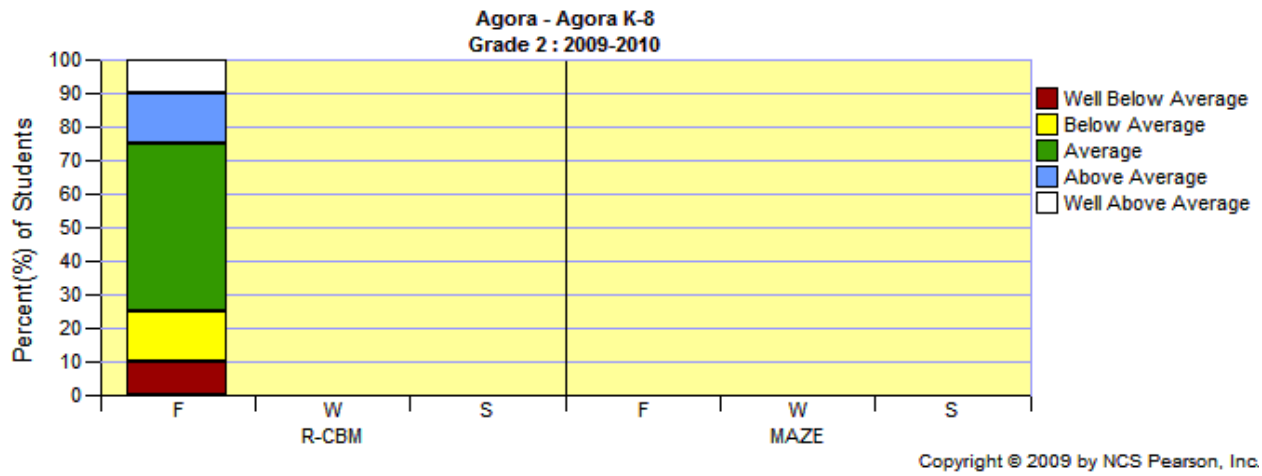
1st Grade Math



1st Grade Reading



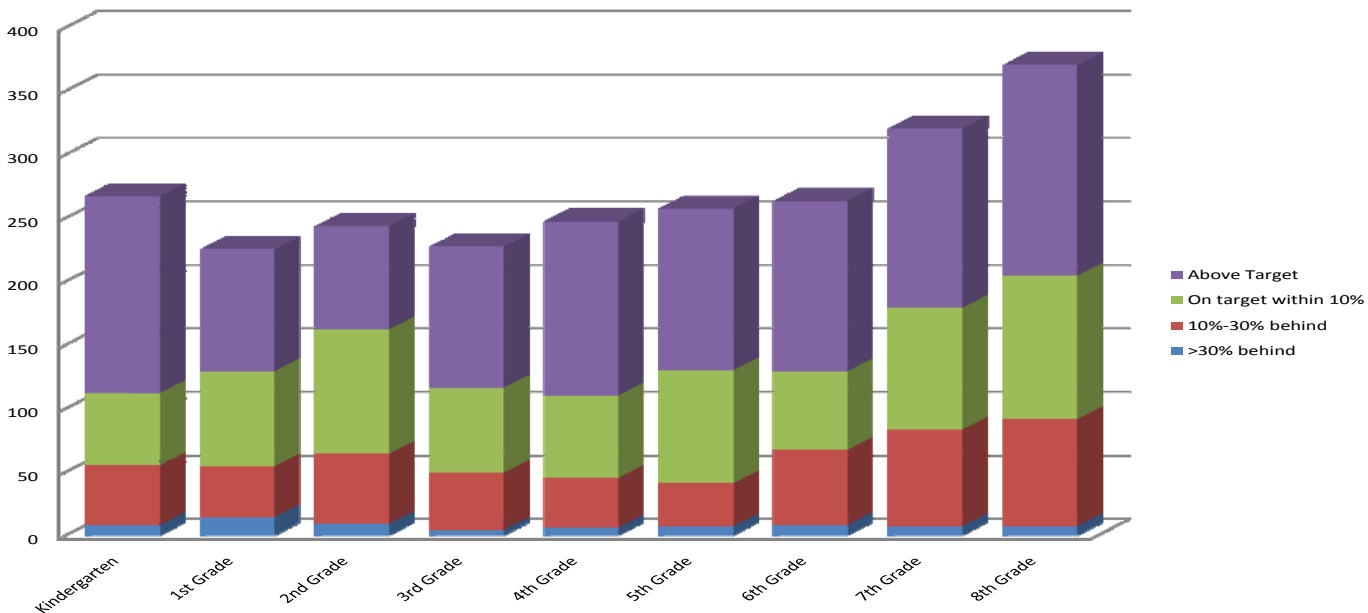
2nd Grade Reading



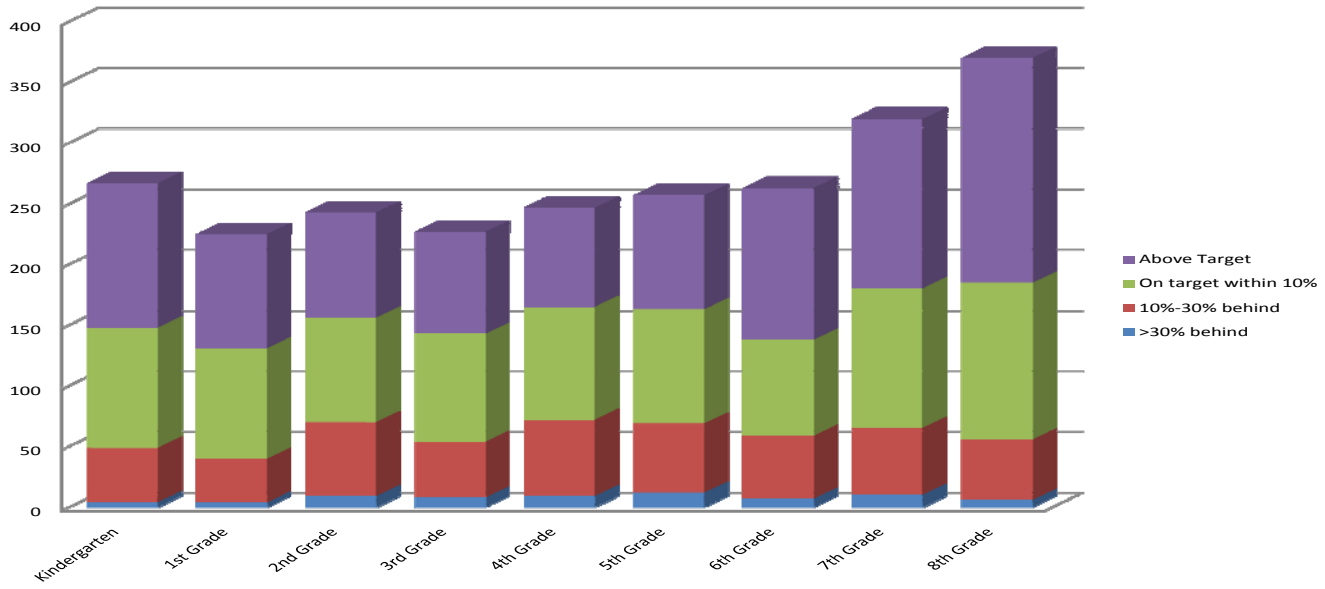
Grades 3-8 Online School Achievement

Students are expected to master 100% of all core lessons in the online school in order to be prepared for the next grade level, as the comprehensive rigor of the curriculum confidently prepares students to master grade level standards. Teachers regularly monitor student progress of online school (OLS) lesson completion. Below are charts illustrating lesson completion progress as of 12/29/09 for students enrolled since October 1st or earlier.

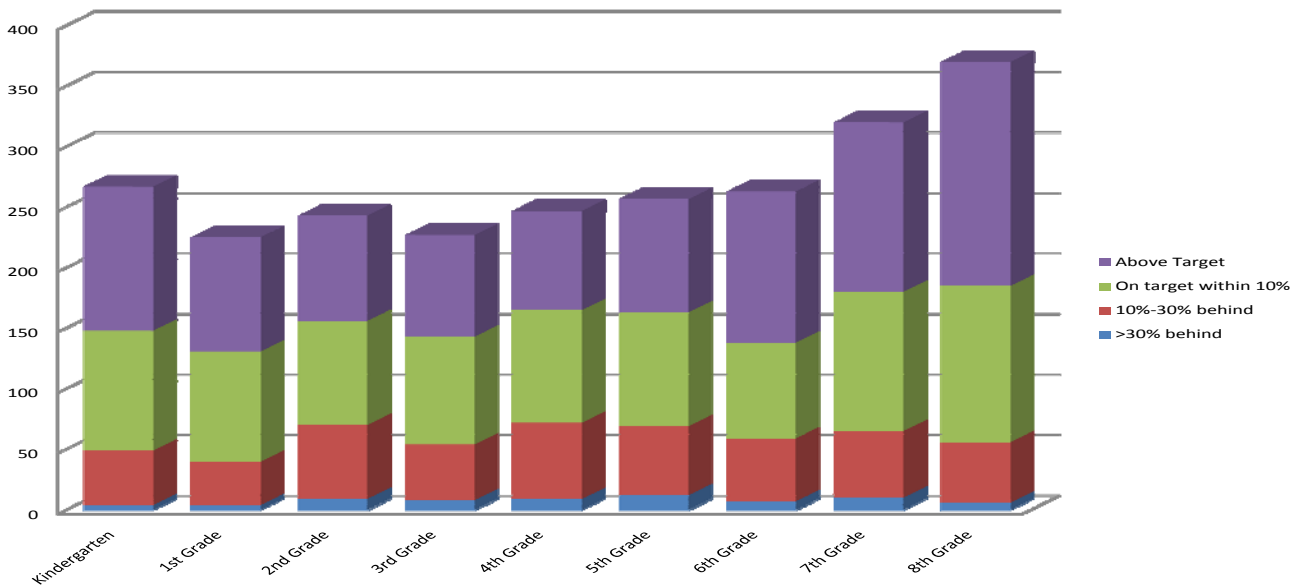
Language Arts Progress – AYP Students



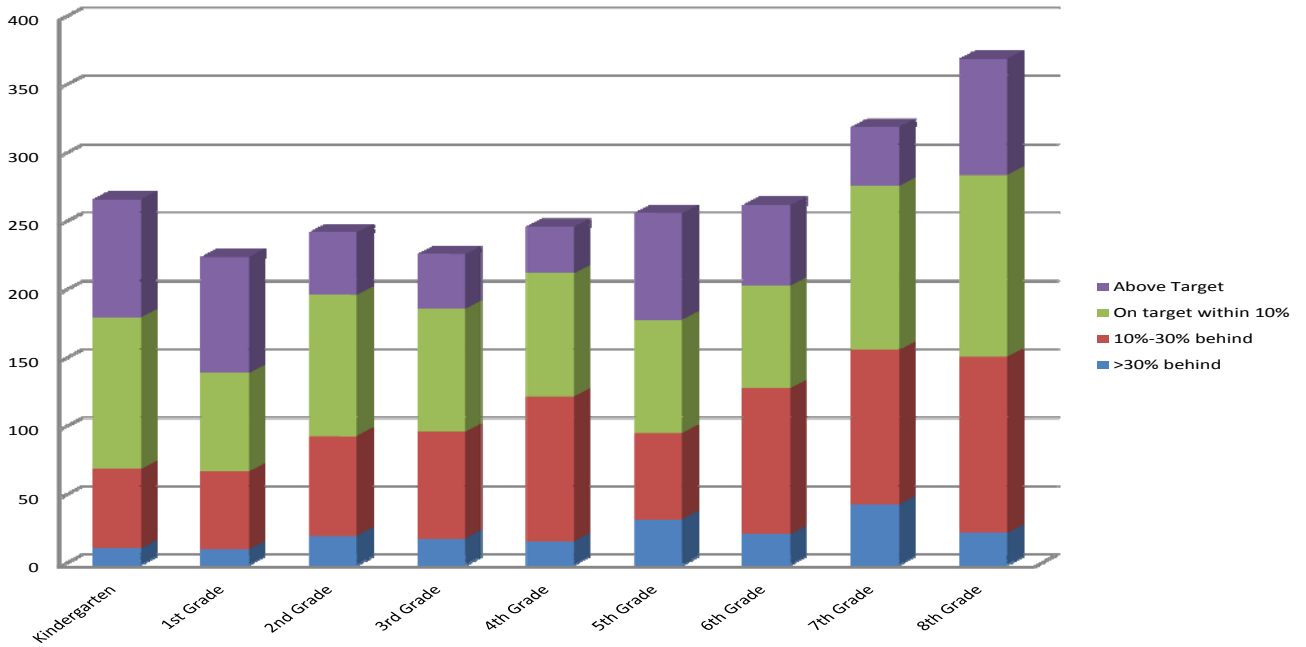
Math Progress – AYP Students



Math Progress – AYP Students

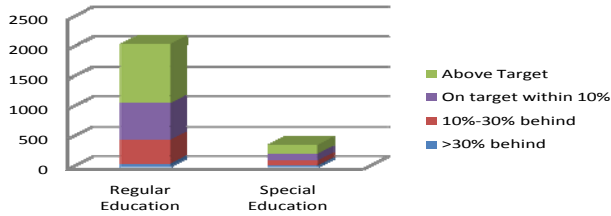


Science Progress – AYP students

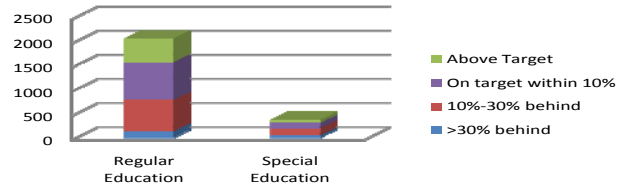


Regular Education vs. Special Education

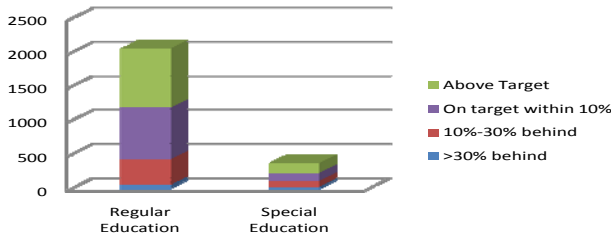
Language Arts



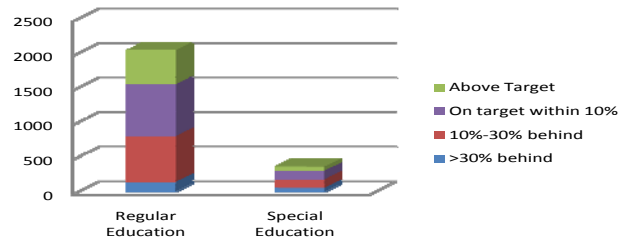
History



Math



Science



High School GPA Summary

The high school leadership team distributed grade reports to students November 25-30, 2009. The data continues to be under review and the development of next steps is on - going. The High School developed a plan to address disengaged learners.

Individualized phone calls, letters and invitation to “Back on Track” sessions were launched in December with the effort to re engage students to support efforts to increase their achievement levels. A Winter Education Series will be offered for all newly enrolling families to discuss: learning coach responsibilities, how to access the online school, and Agora events and outings to try to build stronger foundation for new students enrolling during the second semester.

High School GPA Report

GPA Range	# of Students	% of Total
0.0-1.0	1329	59.6%
1.0-2.0	311	13.9%
2.0-3.0	292	13.1%
3.0-4.0	299	13.4%
TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS	2231	

Community Updates

A lot of great events have been happening at Agora throughout the fall. So far this year, families enjoyed **Orientation** and **Back to School picnics**, many different **online club** opportunities, and the most recent **Gingerbread events** that happened live across the state in many different locations. Many families are also enjoying **Agora Days Out** which has been a wonderful opportunity where students can experience the perfect blend of socialization and academics. These bi-monthly instructional programs allow teachers, parents and families to regularly get involved in their students’ learning and their Agora community. Currently, we host 18 locations across the state. Each locations meets on a consistent day and time to offer students an opportunity to participate in face to face instruction, field trips and special presentations with teachers and their peers.

Charter Renewal Status

Memo to update amended charter renewal submission including:

1. Change of Address
2. Change/Update of Board Membership
3. Change of Leadership

See Appendix C for Memo to Pennsylvania Department of Education

Parent Updates

“Bus Stop” Reunion!

For a couple school years, parents had the opportunity to attend Bus Stop sessions in Elluminate meant to simulate the casual conversation and story swapping opportunity that typically happens at the local corner bus stop. Sharon Williams will host the **first session on Monday, January 11th at 7:30 pm** to support families with hard to answer questions. Parents are encouraged to take this opportunity to connect with others and share their experiences, learn tips and tricks, and share the lessons learned from working in this model of education.

Agora Boosters

Part of the national K¹² Booster Program, we are looking forward to launching opportunities for parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, to join together to grow school spirit, help to welcome new families and provide parent led, small group activities in neighborhoods across the state.

Parent Satisfaction Survey Results

A parent survey was electronically sent to all parents and open from November 25-December 21, 2009. Questions ranged from understanding the parent experience and engagement with teachers and administrators, to investigating parents' interest in community involvement, online v. Elluminate meetings, and understanding parents' comfort level in facilitating instruction in the areas of reading and math. Survey results will help the administrative team understand the strengths and challenges of our service to families around communication, and provides opportunities to engage families in community activities and parent training. Approximately 800 parents responded to the survey which is slightly greater than 10% of the student population, remembering that many families have multiple children.

See Appendix D for complete Survey Results

Policy Recommendations/Discussion

1. School Handbook Overview
2. Conflict of Interest Policy

See Appendix E for Conflict of Interest Policy Recommendation

Upcoming Events

Academic Leadership Professional Development	January 6, 2010
Special Education File Audit and Professional Development	January 11-14, 2010
End of 1 st Semester	January 25, 2010

Appendix

A. Enrollment by Grade Level

GRADE	Reg Ed Enrolled	SPED Enrolled	Reg Ed Pending	SPED Pending
10th Grade	440	127	94	16
11th Grade	355	88	104	26
12th Grade	331	58	57	13
1st Grade	269	30	6	1
2nd Grade	263	34	10	2
3rd Grade	240	37	12	4
4th Grade	265	51	6	0
5th Grade	263	49	6	4
6th Grade	261	71	11	4
7th Grade	341	92	26	5
8th Grade	398	108	25	7
9th Grade	626	198	65	26
Kindergarten	346	17	14	1
Grand Total	4398	960	436	109

Appendix B Engagement Rubric

Student Engagement Rubric

LOW Engagement

Student exhibits two or more of the indicators below:

1. Student has inadequate progress in LA and/or Math
2. Student does not turn work samples in as requested
3. Student does not participate in Elluminate sessions
4. Student/parent does not participate on a regular basis in scheduled conference calls
5. Student has many periods of little to no attendance

AVERAGE Engagement

Student exhibits two or more of the indicators below:

1. Student has erratic progress in LA and/or Math
2. Student turns work samples in only after prompting
3. Student participates in some but not all Elluminate sessions
4. Student/parent participate erratically in scheduled conferences or only after repeated prompting
5. Student has sporadic attendance

HIGH Engagement

Student exhibits two or more of the indicators below:

1. Student has expected progress in LA and/or Math
2. Student turns in work samples as expected
3. Student participates regularly in Elluminate sessions
4. Student/Parent participate regularly in scheduled conferences
5. Student has expected attendance



Appendix C Memo to Pennsylvania Department of Education

MEMO

January 4, 2010

To: Dr. Parker Martin
Gregory Spadafore
Cc: Judy Shopp
Travis Gery, Agora Board President
From: Sharon Williams, Head of School
Re: Updates for Agora Cyber Charter School

Please accept these updates for Agora Cyber Charter School since Amended Renewal Submission dated November 16, 2009.

Change of Address approved by the BOT during December 15, 2009 Public Meeting

995 Old Eagle School Road
Suite 315
Wayne, PA 19087

Main Phone number remains the same.

Changes/Additions to Board of Trustees

Current Board

1. Travis Gery, Board President (Confirmed November 30, 2009)
2. Bonnie Harmon, Vice President (Confirmed October 13, 2009)
3. Jim Parsons, Treasurer (Confirmed November 13, 2009)
4. Mary Steffey, Secretary (Confirmed October 13, 2009)
5. Kadedra Haynes, Member (Confirmed November 30, 2009)

Resignations

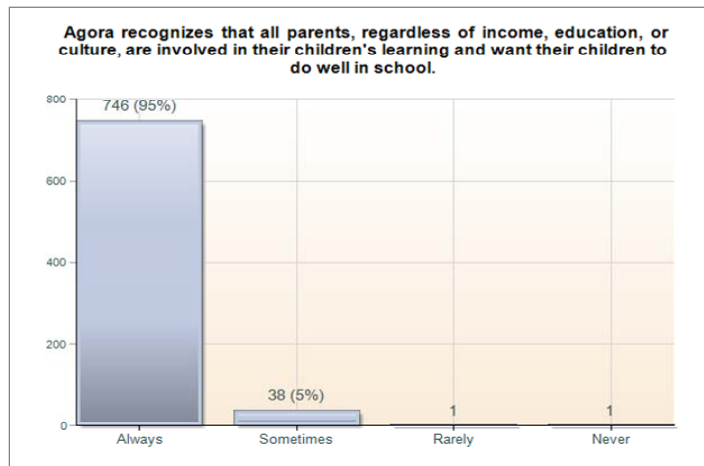
Tyler Bui Resigned during November 30, 2009 Public Board Meeting

School Leadership

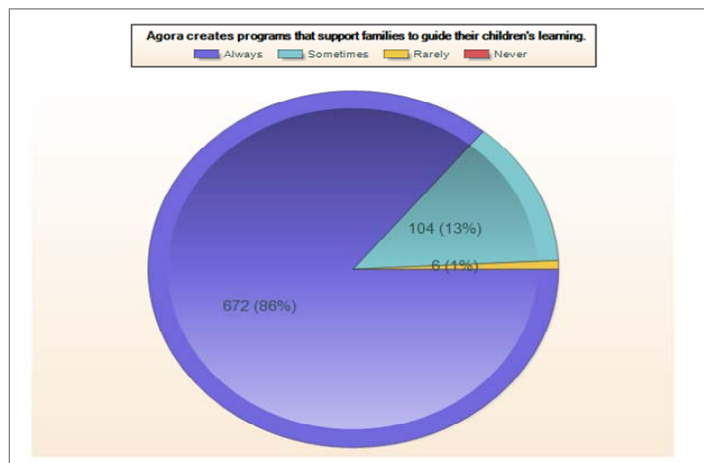
Sharon Williams approved as Head of School during Dec. 15, 2009 Public Meeting

Zoomerang Slide Presentation

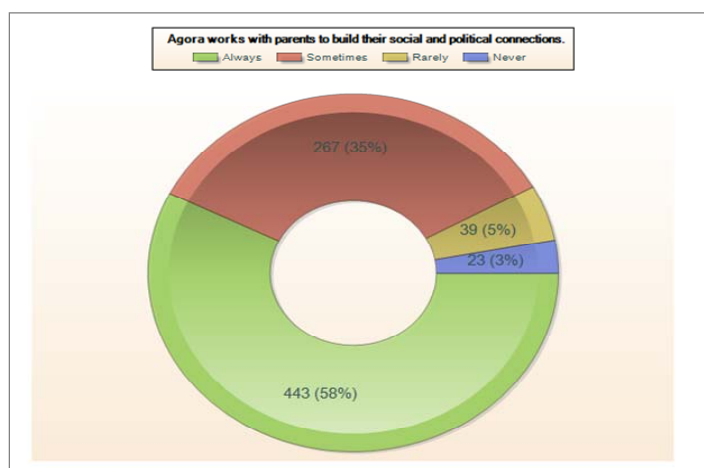
Parent Involvement Survey: Agora recognizes that all parents, regardless of income, education, or culture, are involved in ...



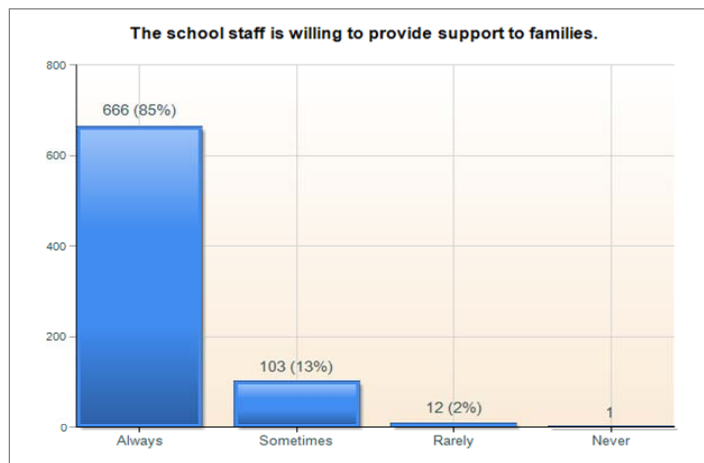
Parent Involvement Survey: Agora creates programs that support families to guide their children's learning.



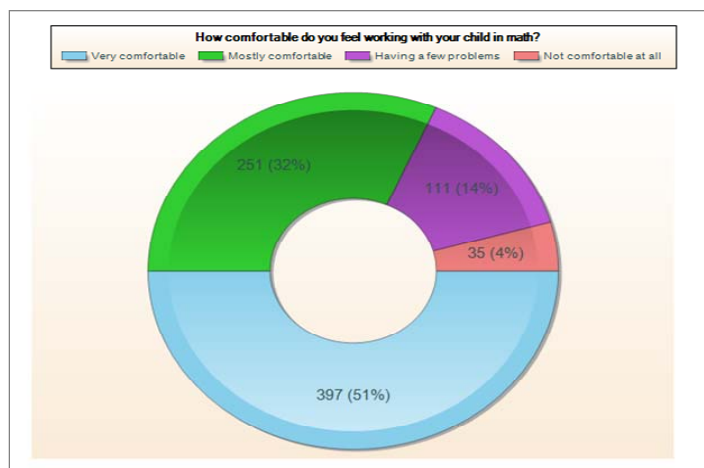
Parent Involvement Survey: Agora works with parents to build their social and political connections.



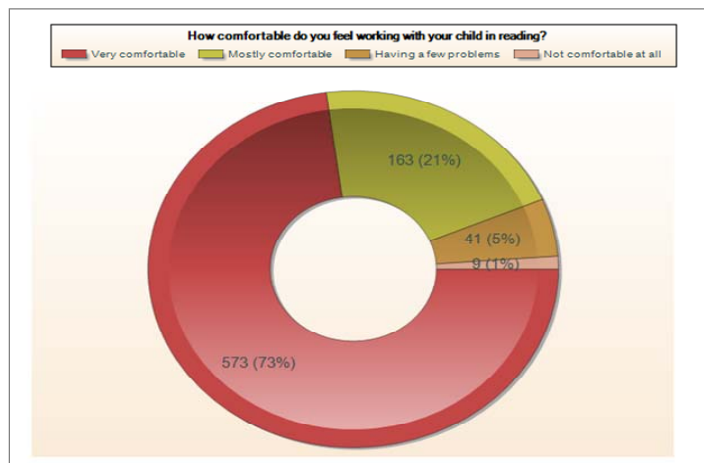
Parent Involvement Survey: The school staff is willing to provide support to families.



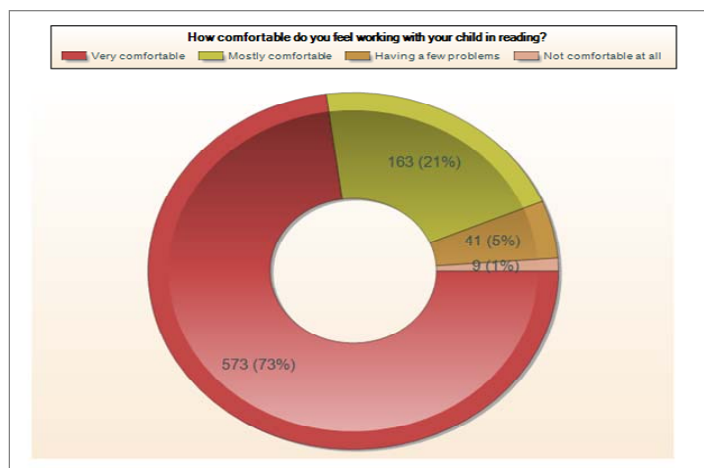
Parent Involvement Survey: How comfortable do you feel working with your child in math?



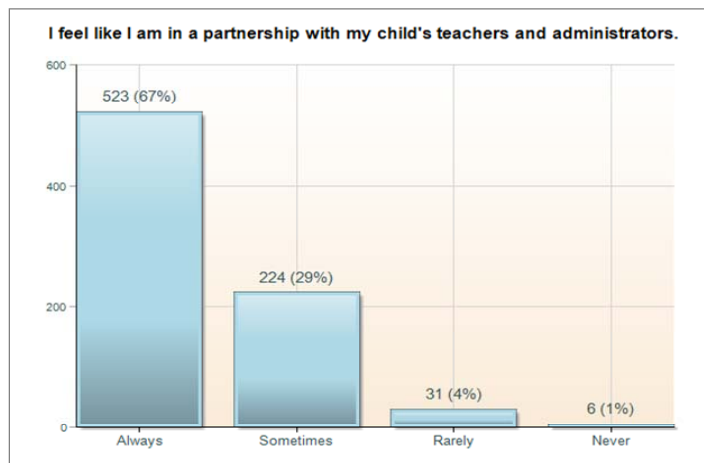
Parent Involvement Survey: How comfortable do you feel working with your child in reading?



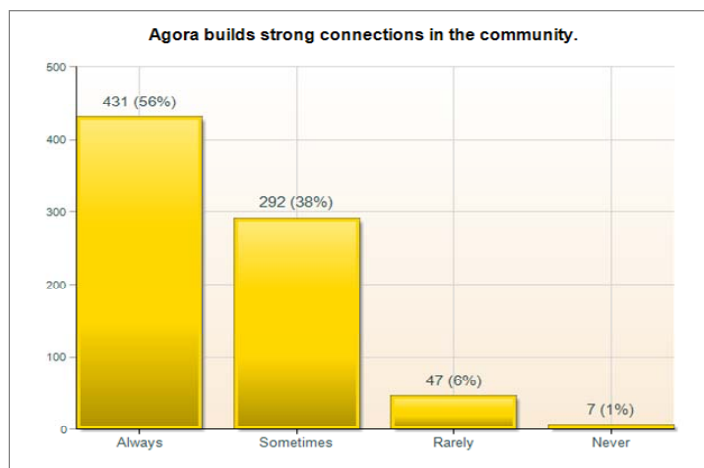
Parent Involvement Survey: How comfortable do you feel working with your child in reading?



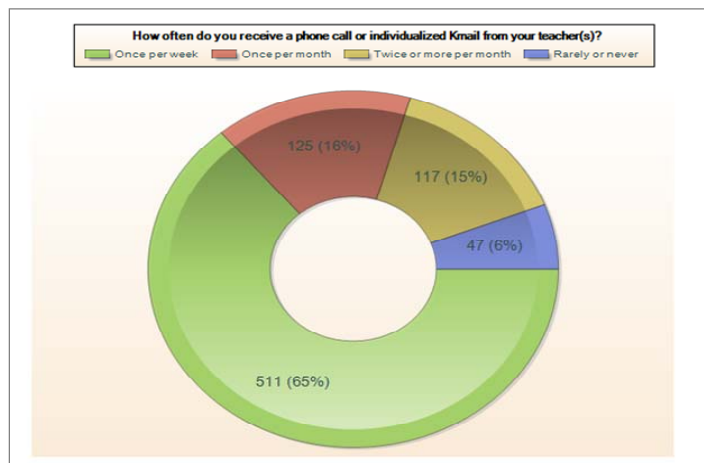
Parent Involvement Survey: I feel like I am in a partnership with my child's teachers and administrators.



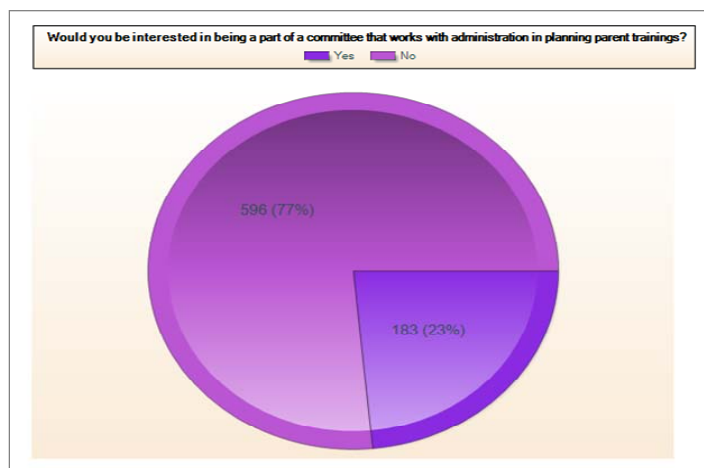
Parent Involvement Survey: Agora builds strong connections in the community.



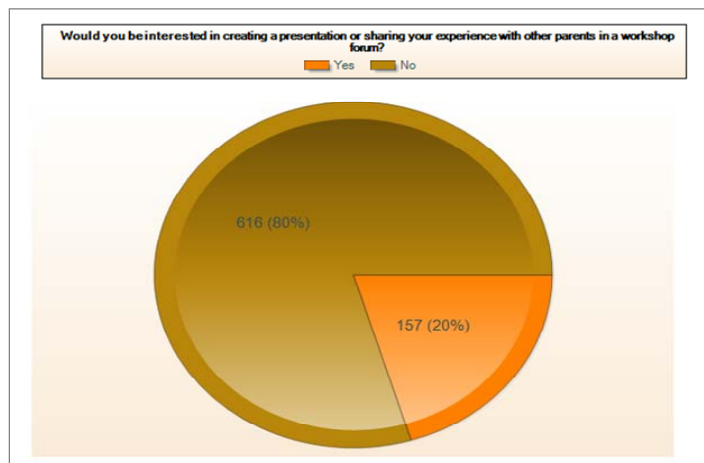
Parent Involvement Survey: How often do you receive a phone call or individualized Kmail from your teacher(s)?



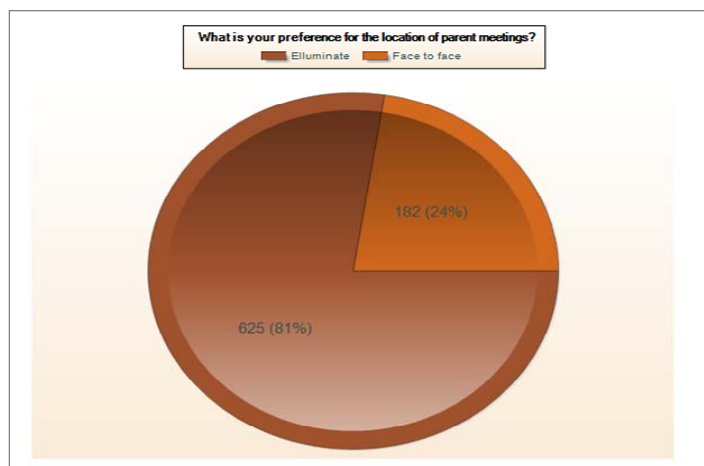
Parent Involvement Survey: Would you be interested in being a part of a committee that works with administration in planning ...



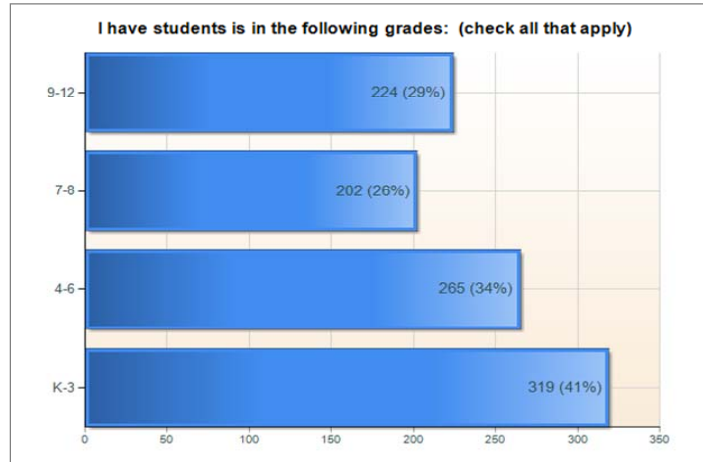
Parent Involvement Survey: Would you be interested in creating a presentation or sharing your experience with other parents ...



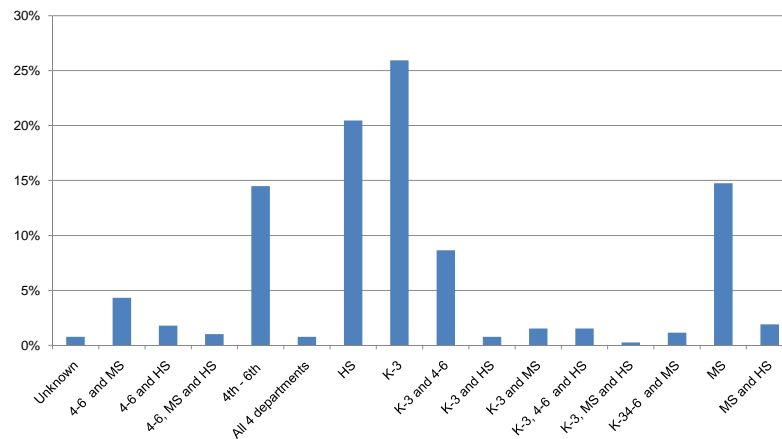
Parent Involvement Survey: What is your preference for the location of parent meetings?



Parent Involvement Survey: I have students is in the following grades: (check all that apply)
that apply)



Learning Coaches who filled out this survey had children in these grades



Appendix E Conflict of Interest Policy Recommendation

Compensation and Conflicts of Interest. No Trustee shall as a private person engage in any business transaction with Agora, be employed in any capacity by Agora, or receive from Agora any pay for service rendered to Agora. Voting on any matter involving a conflict of interest shall be governed by the Public Official and

Employee Ethics Act, 65 Pa. C.S. § 1101 et seq. Notwithstanding the foregoing, common interested Trustees may be counted in determining the presence of a quorum at a Board meeting in which a transaction described above is authorized, approved or ratified.