



Annual Report 2009

July 27, 2009

Submitted to:

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SCHOOL DESCRIPTION
University Heights Charter School

Startup and Current Year. University Heights Charter School opened in September 2006 and just completed its third year of operation.

Address (List all Locations). The school is located at 74 Hartford Street, Newark, NJ 07103.

Facility. The school is housed in a two-story building, leased from Bethany Baptist Church, with over 22,000 square feet of interior space that formerly served as a pre-school.

Number of Students, Grades and Classes. The school's charter authorized a maximum enrollment of 240 students in 2008-2009 in grades K-5. The enrollment at the beginning of the school year was 216 students. At the end of the year the enrollment was 212 students.

Maximum Class Size. The maximum class size is 20 students per class, with 2 classes per grade.

School Day. In 2008-2009 the school day began at 8:00 AM and ended at 4:00 PM. Breakfast was available from 7:30 AM to 8:00 AM. The Title I Tutoring Program took place from 4:15 PM-5:15 PM.

School Year. School began September 3, 2008 and ended June 22, 2009 for all students for a total of 180 days.

Student/Teacher Ratio: 10.5/1.

Planned Expansion. None at this time.

Approved District(s) or Region of Residence. The school draws its students from the following districts: Newark Public Schools (97%), Irvington Public Schools (2%), East Orange (1%).

Employees. The school employs an executive director, headmistress, school business administrator, office manager, office clerk, 11 full-time classroom teachers, 7 full-time instructional aides, 3 special education teachers, an arts teacher, a music teacher, a physical education teacher, a Spanish teacher, 2 cafeteria workers, a nurse and a social worker.

Lead Person. The school's lead person for 2008-2009 was Misha Simmonds (Tel. 973-623-1965), (Fax 973-632-8511), (E-mail msimmonds@uhcs-newark.org).

Theme/Defining Attributes. University Heights Charter Schools seeks to develop in each student the character, scholarship, and leadership necessary to succeed in life, college, and community.

Organizational Affiliation (if any). The school's startup was sponsored by Bethany Baptist Church. Significant additional support was provided this year by the Newark Charter School Fund.

**1. REVIEW OF STATE AND LOCAL ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES
AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT RESULTS
IN THE CONTEXT OF THE SCHOOL'S GOALS
AND REQUIRED NCLB ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS**

Academic Goals and Objectives: Assessment Results

State Assessment Results. During the 2007-2008 academic year, University Heights Charter School expanded from grades K-2 to grades K-5. Therefore, this was the school's first year for the administration of state assessments since the testing program starts in Grade 3. The Spring 2008 NJ ASK results are summarized in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1 Spring 2008 NJ ASK Results Overview

Grade	Language Arts Literacy			Mathematics			Science		
	Percent Tested	Scale Score Mean	Percent Proficient	Percent Tested	Scale Score Mean	Percent Proficient	Percent Tested	Scale Score Mean	Percent Proficient
3	100%	188.3	37%	100%	189.5	29%			
4	95%	188.5	41%	100%	185.6	33%	100%	192.7	46%
5	100%	179.7	21%	100%	182.9	24%			
	Average LAL Proficiency		33%	Average Math Proficiency		29%	Average Science Proficiency		46%

Overall, only 33% of students were proficient in Language Arts Literacy, 29% in math, and 46% in science. In addition, each grade tested fell short of the charter's stated standard of achievement of 75% proficiency (see Appendix A for the school's Academic Goals and Objectives). This was true for all relevant subgroups, as indicated in Table 1.2:

Table 1.2 Spring 2008 NJ ASK Results by Subgroup

	Number of Students	Proficient in Language Arts Literacy	Proficient in Mathematics	Proficient in Science (Grade 4 only)
Grade 3				
Overall	38	37%	29%	
<i>Gender</i>				
Female	20	50%	20%	
Male	18	22%	39%	
<i>Race</i>				
Black	35	37%	29%	
Other	3	33%	33%	
Grade 4				
Overall	39	41%	33%	46%
<i>Gender</i>				
Female	22	52%	36%	59%
Male	17	25%	29%	29%
<i>Race</i>				

Black	37	40%	35%	46%
Hispanic	2	50%	0%	50%
Grade 5				
Overall	33	21%	24%	
<i>Gender</i>				
Female	18	17%	33%	
Male	15	27%	13%	
<i>Race</i>				
Black	33	21%	24%	
Other	0	0	0	

Discussion of Progress. University Heights Charter School was disappointed by these 2007-2008 student achievement results. At the time of assessment, grades that were tested had only been open for one school year, so there was still time to meet the two-year proficiency goals set in the charter. However, not enough progress was made toward these goals in the given time to be confident that students who have attended for over two years would be successful in achieving them unless significant changes were taken.

Therefore the board recruited new leadership for the school, including Executive Director Misha Simmonds and Headmistress Rahshene Davis, to address this challenge. Nearly 50% of the teaching staff was changed as well.

Under new leadership and staffing, the school has made significant improvements in professional development, curriculum, technology, special education, and the Title I program designed to raise student achievement toward the school’s academic goals. This progress is documented below in Table 1.3:

Table 1.3 Progress made to address academic deficiencies

Area	Progress Made
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two-weeks of intensive pre-service professional development • Monthly internal professional development workshops on Comprehension Strategies, Vocabulary, Phonics, and Use of Technology. • External professional development for Wilson Foundations, Saxon Math, Scholastic Reading, Open Court Reading, Everyday Math • Weekly 90-minute professional development sessions for all teachers. • Six hours of common grade-level planning time each week. • Tri-annual performance reviews and personal improvement plans. • System of quarterly interim assessments implemented to track progress. • Mentoring program for novice teachers established.
Curriculum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research-based lesson plan format implemented school wide. • School wide use of backward planning from state standards. • All students took Spanish, Physical Education, Music, and Art twice a week. • Acquisition of supplemental curricular materials, including Saxon Math and

	<p>Guided Reading.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization and enhancement of school library.
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MacBook laptops for all teachers to facilitate lesson planning, collaboration, and instruction. • Installation of new student computer lab with 24 iMac computers. • Acquisition of overhead projectors for each classroom and 4 LCD projectors. • Addition of photocopier for teaching staff.
Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addition of self-contained special education classroom to meet IEP goals. • Additional second special education teacher to meet IEP goals. • Remediation of delinquent speech services.
Title I Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding restored after forfeit due to non-compliance in previous school year. • Teacher aides hired for every grade level 1-4 to support struggling students • Daily afterschool tutoring implemented for 40-50 student/day. • Seven sessions of “Weekend Warriors” Saturday Program held. • Title I Professional Development provided for all these programs

The Office of Charter Schools noted this progress and subsequently lifted the schools probationary status in January 2009.

Teachers noted significant improvement in the school’s academic leadership in the annual teacher survey, giving an average rating of proficient or advanced in all areas. The survey results are summarized in Table 1.4:

Table 1.4 Teacher survey results on academic leadership

Academic Leadership	Needs Improvement (Score =1)	Emerging (Score =2)	Proficient (Score=3)	Advanced (Score=4)	Average Score (out of 4)
Sets clear, measurable goals	10.5%	0.0%	52.6%	36.8%	3.16
Provides specific, actionable feedback	5.3%	21.1%	31.6%	42.1%	3.11
Provides high-quality professional dev’t	0.0%	10.5%	26.3%	63.2%	3.53
Creates an effective data-driven culture	0.0%	15.8%	36.8%	47.4%	3.32
Supports a strong special education program	10.5%	26.3%	36.8%	26.3%	2.79
Provides clear and timely evaluation	0.0%	21.1%	47.4%	31.6%	3.11

The most frequent feedback regarding the special education program was its lack of full alignment with the regular education program. The school is working on ways to better facilitate collaboration and information exchange to improve this area.

While state assessment results for Spring 2009 are not available at this time, internal assessments indicate significant growth in student reading levels, particularly in grades K-3. Most of grade 5 was already on grade level in grade 5, and those who were not still showed growth in proficiency. While every grade 4 student improved in reading proficiency, 49% still remain below grade level. The school is currently revisiting our grade 4 curriculum to address this. The results are summarized below in Table 1.5:

Table 1.5 Student progress on reading proficiency

Grade	On Grade Level				Growth	
	Beginning of Year		End of Year		# of additional students on grade level	Increased % of students on grade level
	# Students	Percent	# Students	Percent		
Kindergarten	9	23%	30	75%	21	+53%
Grade 1	14	35%	23	61%	9	+26%
Grade 2	7	19%	25	68%	18	+49%
Grade 3	18	47%	33	87%	15	+39%
Grade 4	17	46%	19	51%	2	+5%
Grade 5	13	87%	13	87%	0	0%

In May 2009, students in grades 1 and 2 also took the NJPASS, a criterion-referenced test aligned to the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards in Language Arts and Mathematics. The results are promising. Overall, in grades 1 and 2, 73% of students were proficient or advanced in English Language Arts and 82% were proficient or advanced in math. Thus in English the school nearly reached its stated goal of 75% proficiency in English, and exceeded it in math. A full breakdown is provided in Table 1.6:

Table 1.6 Grade 1 and 2 results on the May 2009 NJ PASS

% of students	English Language Arts				Math			
	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	Proficient & Advanced	Basic	Proficient	Advanced	Proficient & Advanced
Grade 1	21%	15%	64%	79%	10%	44%	46%	90%
Grade 2	34%	47%	18%	66%	26%	55%	18%	74%
Overall	27%	31%	42%	73%	18%	49%	32%	82%

We are now analyzing the detailed results based on performance on individual standards and by individual students to see how we can adjust our curriculum and instruction so that we approach 100% proficiency next year. A particular area of focus will be second grade math, which had the lowest performance overall.

Non-Academic Goals and Objectives: Assessment Results

Assessment Results and Discussion of Progress.

Parent, student, and staff feedback after the 2007-2008 school year indicated that the school was also not meeting its non-academic goals. Teachers noted that discipline was inconsistent and varied from classroom-to-classroom. Students complained of poor behavior distracting their learning. Parents registered multiple complaints with the school’s board of trustees. The Department of Education also noted the lack of a full time nurse and inadequate health education.

With new leadership, the school has made considerable advances in character education, discipline, health education, and physical education to raise student achievement toward the school’s non-academic goals. This progress is documented below in Table 1.7:

Table 1.7 Progress made to address non-academic deficiencies

Area	Progress Made
Character Education & Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hiring of full-time Dean of Students to lead character education and discipline programs. • Comprehensive discipline code, including, uniform system of school wide rewards and consequences, established to support positive behavior modification. • Implementation of REACH Core Virtues (Respect-Excellence-Accountability-Caring and Honesty) to guide all character education and discipline. • Morning meeting held daily to teach and reinforce character education. • Distribution and review of parent and scholar handbook at Parent Night. • Development of college preparatory orientation, reinforced by each classroom being named after a teacher’s alma mater, student learning of college features and chants, and college visit for every student.
Health & Physical Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time nurse hired • Daily recess and physical education every other day established. • Health education incorporated into weekly schedule. • Dental hygiene provided by UMDNJ • Partnerships with Playworks/Sports4Kids established to provide organized recess and afterschool physical activity.

Teachers identified significant enhancement of the school’s cultural in the annual teacher survey, giving an average rating of proficient or advanced in all areas, and no one giving a rating of “Needs Improvement.” The survey results are summarized in Table 1.8:

Table 1.8 Teacher Survey Results on Leadership

Cultural Leadership	Needs Improvement (Score =1)	Emerging (Score =2)	Proficient (Score=3)	Advanced (Score=4)	Rating Average (out of 4)
Effectively communicates school mission/values	0.0%	0.0%	26.3%	73.7%	3.74
Ensures a physically safe learning environment	0.0%	10.5%	36.8%	52.6%	3.42
Ensures emotionally safe learning environment	0.0%	15.8%	26.3%	57.9%	3.42
Ensures student conduct reflects REACH	0.0%	21.1%	36.8%	42.1%	3.21
Effectively communicates to parents	0.0%	15.8%	42.1%	42.1%	3.26
Ensures that academic success is celebrated	0.0%	0.0%	26.3%	73.7%	3.74
Builds a collaborative culture among staff	0.0%	10.5%	42.1%	47.4%	3.37

2. REVIEW OF PROGRESS: INCORPORATING THE NJCCCS, DELIVERING AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM LEADING TO HIGH ACHIEVEMENT FOR ALL STUDENTS

Incorporation of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards

Summary of Curriculum Development Progress.

Last summer all the NJCCCS and aligned curriculum materials were assembled into binders that were reviewed on July 15th by the NJ Department of Education Office of Charter Schools. These binders provided invaluable tools for teachers to align lesson planning to NJCCCS.

During pre-service professional development teachers participated in several workshops dedicated to general curriculum development. This included:

- **Clarity & Standards** – Teachers examined the NJ Core Curricular Content Standards at each grade level and began to create “Power Standards” for the first 9 weeks of school in each subject area. They learned the technique of turning state standards into “child friendly” language by using the W.I.L.F (What I’m Looking For) method as a way to bring clarity to objectives and directions.
- **Lesson Planning** – Teachers reviewed the protocol of Understanding by Design and the research around effective lesson planning and the formats for lesson planning that the school expects. They discussed unit planning and using the standards and assessment to drive the lesson planning not the textbook. Teachers also explored how to use the textbook as a vehicle to reach proficiency and the standard as the driver of instructional planning.
- **Interim Assessments** – Administration introduced data-driven instruction and the cycle for interim assessments and re-teaching. Teachers learned how interim assessments are a way to target instruction based on the assessment and helps them teach with targets in mind for each child and the entire class. They saw it as an aid to maximize instructional time and meet the needs of all students.
- **Differentiated Instruction** – The headmistress shared research around differentiated instruction and how it begins with assessment and flows through the content, process and product of all instruction. She explained how it affects and enhances student achievement when classrooms and instruction are differentiated.
- **Questioning/Rigor** – The headmistress shared research around effective questioning and probed into the question of “What is Rigor?” Participants developed and shaped a common definition around “rigor.” They identified three types of questions (L.I.E – Literal, Inferential and Evaluative) and how infusing more inferential and evaluative questions brings increased rigor to the lesson.

The school adopted a mandatory common lesson plan format, based on research and best practice. Elements included objectives, standards, anticipatory set, words of inspiration, guided

practice, independent practice, and assessment. This common template ensured all the elements necessary for strong instruction that were identified in pre-service were incorporated into daily planning. Lessons were reviewed weekly by the headmistress and returned with comments. She followed up with observation of instruction to gauge level of implementation and areas for improvement.

During pre-service and throughout the year, instructional staff also participated in a number of content-specific professional development sessions that enhanced curriculum development.

Topics included:

- **Writing Process** – Teachers learned about the Six Traits Writing Process to teach writing and the importance of students knowing and understanding the five stages of the writing process.
- **Literacy Curriculum** – Kindergarten through 2nd grade teachers attended a one-day off-site training in using Open Court, the school’s early elementary literacy program. A Harcourt Publishing representative came to train 3rd, 4th and 5th grade teachers on literacy.
- **Phonics/Word Study** – The headmistress explained current phonics debate between analytic versus synthetic phonics. She shared the research around synthetic phonics being the most effective for struggling readers. Teachers learned ways to make phonics “Fun, Fast and Engaging” for students and ways to assess phonics development and growth in student
- **Every Day Math** – Teachers received external training in the Everyday Math curriculum. Instructors stressed the importance of classroom management being in place in order to play the games in the program. They explained that the games are the replacement for the drill/practice of traditional lessons, and therefore they need to be played by students.

Delivery of an Educational Program Leading to High Achievement for All Students

Delivery of Services to At-Risk Students. University Heights Charter School considers all its students to be at-risk due to the challenging socioeconomic circumstances associated with inner city Newark. Therefore, the entire program is designed with a child-centered focus to accommodate the needs of a 100% at-risk student body with the following elements:

- **Emphasis of efficacy:** Students learn early and often that with hard work they will be successful in academics and life. Failure and difficulty are not seen as shortcomings but as feedback that helps students develop and grow. Peers who express disdain for hard work or academic success are quickly addressed individually and with parent involvement so it is absolutely clear that excellence in academics is the only stance that is accepted at the school.
- **Expectation of college-readiness:** Despite the young age, students at University Heights Charter School constantly hear the message that they are going to college. Expectations for behavior and academics are set high, and no student is allowed to fall through the cracks. Each classroom is named after a college. Students attend college presentations, and every child visits at least one college every year.

- **Small classes:** There are no more than 20 students in each class to make sure students get the attention they deserve. Kindergarten classes have full-time aides, while grades 1-5 have an aide shared by two classes.
- **Differentiated instruction:** Each classroom teacher plans to differentiate instruction in terms of content, process, and product. This includes using multiple approaches to match each student's preferred learning modality, whether it is visual, auditory, or bodily-kinesthetic.
- **In-class support:** Two special education teachers support classroom teachers to meet educational and developmental needs beyond the general education range. These teacher support in-class instruction through small group work and individual tutoring.
- **Title I Extended Day Programs:** Starting in November the school established an afterschool-tutoring program for reading comprehension. The program targeted students who were reading below grade-level and provided small group instruction from 4:15-5:15 using the Guided Reading program. In addition, during the winter, the Weekend Warriors program was held on alternate Saturday morning to enhance student skills for success on state assessments.

Innovative/Exemplary Programs and Practices. University Heights Charter School implemented two noteworthy innovations this year to enhance teaching and learning:

- **Weekly Grade-Level Professional Development:** Every 4 days all teachers attended 90 minutes of grade level professional development in groups of 6 to 8. During this time teachers learned new techniques, worked on common planning, observed model lessons, and provided each other feedback. This was built into the schedule so teachers would get professional development on a regular basis. It also ensured that there was follow-up on what was learned in previous weeks. Teachers responded very enthusiastically to this program. The lack of professional development in previous years was a major concern.
- **Interim Assessment:** Students took interim assessments four times year. There were two parallel systems. One system, known as the Writing and Reading Assessment Program (WRAP) used a running-record approach to assess student reading proficiency. The results showed teachers each student's reading level and provided information on what each student needed to learn next to advance to the next level. Every child's name and reading level was tracked on a giant reading wall so teachers could note progress. It also served as a clear reminder of which student continued to need extra support. Every child showed improvement in reading levels, as documented above in Table 1.5. A second system of assessment, developed in conjunction with the Massachusetts Public School Performance organization, mimicked the style of the NJASK and assessed children on progress in meeting state standards. The data was returned with detailed analysis by question and standard and served as the basis for developing re-teach plans to address student weaknesses. In 2008-2009 we will be participating in the state-sponsored Learnia Interim Assessment Program to further enhance our use of data to drive instruction.

3. REVIEW OF SCHOOL GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Board of Trustees.

In 2007-2008, the board faced a challenging year as it responded to disappointing operational and academic performance, which culminated in hiring new executive leadership in August 2008. At the same time, the board decided to reconstitute its membership to facilitate the leadership and operational transition. A waiver was sought and granted that allowed the board to temporarily reduce the board size to four members. The small size allowed the board to meet twice a month through out the year and make decisions quickly to address various issues.

The Board of Trustees is currently operating with four voting board members and five vacancies. Members include:

- **Richard Roper, President, Chairman and Lead Person**, is founder and president of the Roper Group, a public policy consulting firm specializing in economic and social policy research and evaluation.
- **Raymond Occasio, Chair of the Finance Committee**, is executive director of La Casa de Don Pedro, Inc., a Newark community based development organization.
- **Anzella Nelms, Chair of Personnel Committee**, is a former State District Deputy Superintendent for the Newark Public Schools.
- **De'Shawn Wright, Member**, is a Partner at the Newark Charter School Fund.

The board is actively recruiting additional board member to fill in the vacancies, and has identified four candidates who are expected to join the board this summer.

School Administrators.

In August 2008 the school hired a new Lead Person, Executive Director Misha Simmonds. His main responsibilities include oversight of all operations, serving as liaison to the Board, establishing school priorities and budget, ensuring all regulatory compliance, performing all staff evaluations, recruiting students and staff, managing and community and partner relations. He also oversees special education, facilitates the daily morning meeting, manages the school's technology resources, and addresses school culture and discipline issues.

The school also hired a new Headmistress, Rahshene Davis. She manages the academic side of the school and spends most of her time leading professional development, providing feedback for teachers, coordinating curriculum development, managing the afterschool program, and meeting with parents.

Both Mr. Simmonds and Ms. Davis are graduates of the New Leaders for New Schools program and are supported by the Newark Charter School Fund.

In November 2008, the school also hired Karen Johnson as a full-time School Business Administrator. She had previously worked with the school on a part time basis and was instrumental in helping the school become fiscally compliant. She now manages all the school’s finances and operations, including accounting, budgeting, purchasing, reporting, facilities, and the school nutrition program. Progress made in these areas are highlighted below in Table 3.1:

Table 3.1 Financial and Operational Progress

Area	Progress Made
Finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full-time school business administrator hired • Previous year’s deficit was eliminated • Forfeited Title I money was recovered • E-Rate and Child Nutrition Program money restored • GAAP Accounting System implemented • Compliant purchasing system established • Previous payroll and pension mistakes resolved • Fundraising netted \$330,000 in additional support
Operations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fingerprint electronic system implemented for Child Nutrition Program • All staff now properly certified and documented • Status of required submissions to Dept. of Education is currently up-to-date • Day custodian hired for better upkeep of school • Security guard hired to provided enhanced school security

The team has worked effectively to address the multiple issues identified by state review and assessment results. As noted above, probation status has since been lifted and early academic results are promising.

Overall teachers recognized significant improvement in operational leadership. Survey results are summarized in Table 3.2:

Table 3.2 Teacher Survey Results on Operational Leadership

Operational Leadership	Needs Improvement (Score =1)	Emerging (Score =2)	Proficient (Score=3)	Advanced (Score=4)	Rating Average (out of 4)
Prepares clear, timely schedules	5.6%	0.0%	27.8%	66.7%	3.56
Provides sufficient instructional resources	5.3%	0.0%	78.9%	15.8%	3.05
Provides sufficient materials (paper, pens, etc)	0.0%	21.1%	63.2%	15.8%	2.95
Communicates policy and changes effectively	5.3%	26.3%	36.8%	31.6%	2.95
Handles HR issues effectively	5.3%	15.8%	47.4%	31.6%	3.05
Handles financial and payroll issues effectively	5.3%	15.8%	21.1%	57.9%	3.32
Responds to teacher requests effectively	0.0%	15.8%	26.3%	57.9%	3.42

The school will continue to work to improve the level and speed of resources provided to teachers, as well as provided more lead time in promulgating any policy changes.

4. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES TO INVOLVE PARENTS AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS AND PUBLIC RELATIONS AND OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

Parent and Community Involvement Activities and Outcomes

Outreach Procedures. University Heights Charter School offered many opportunities for parents to become involved in the school and their child’s education.

In August, before the school year started, the school held a “Parent Orientation” where parents learned the school’s culture and expectations. It is also provided a chance for parents to meet and begin relationships with their child’s new teachers.

In February the school held a “Mid-Year Review” where parents learned more about the progress the school made and how they could best support their children.

Four times a year the school held report card conferences. Teachers shared with parents the progress of their child in meeting academic and behavioral standards and offered advice on how they could best support their children in making further progress.

Informally, classroom teachers made regular communications to parents by phone and letter. These were used not only to communicate behavioral and academic concerns but also to praise student accomplishments. Making sure to communicate both positive and negative messages helped strengthen teacher-parent relationships and fostered their collaboration in supporting student learning.

The school also held a Holiday and Spring Student performance with over 95% attendance by parents of students that performed.

Parent Satisfaction. Parents gave high marks for the school’s academic and non-academic results, indicating that the school’s overall quality went from a “B” to an “A” and giving an average rating of A or A+ in all areas evaluated. The survey results are summarized in Table 1.7:

Category	Score (Scale: 1-5)**
Overall quality of the school this year*	4.0
Overall quality of the school last year*	3.2
Overall instructional quality	4.3
Teacher communication regarding academics	4.5
Teacher communication regarding behavior	4.4
Dean communication regarding behavior	4.0
Principal/Director communication (general)	4.0
Parents/Guardians feel welcomed at this school	4.3
Children are safe at this school	4.4
Building is clean and supportive of learning	4.2

*In these two rows, data is only included for families who had been at school both this year and last year.

**Actual scale was A+, A, B, C, and F. For purposes of calculation, A+ = 5; A = 4; B=3; C=2; and F=1.

Parent Information. University Heights Charter School utilized several tools to notify parents of school information. Teachers, administrators and office staff regularly called parents. Flyers were sent home weekly. A phone broadcast system was implemented. In case of an emergency school closing, parents were automatically notified by telephone. All board meetings were open, with schedule announced at the beginning of the year, so all parents could attend. The school

has also reactivated its website so that information can be provided to parents (www.uhcs-newark.org).

The University Heights Charter School Annual Report for 2008-2009 will be shared at the September Board Meeting. A notice will also be posted on the parent information board where interested parents can request a copy.

Training/Support. Parents are primarily trained and supported during the August Parent Orientation and the Mid-Year Review. Report card conferences also provide an opportunity to teach parents on new and effective ways to support their children.

A “Parent University” was also started that provided workshops to support stronger parent involvement. Workshop topics included supporting child literacy and implementing positive behavior management.

Plans. A Dean of Parent and Community Outreach has been hired to support deeper parent involvement and stronger outreach. He will lead efforts to enhance the Parent Council, expand Parent University, and find other ways to deepen parent participation and satisfaction.

Public Relations and Outreach Activities and Outcomes

Public Relations/Engagement and Partnerships. Several community partnerships were established this year to enhance the school’s education program, including:

- **Bethany Baptist Church:** Provided venue and screen for viewing Obama inauguration with students and community members watching together on a giant television projection screen. Church members volunteered to support the development of our library and help with student reading level assessment.
- **Teach For America:** Provided five highly qualified novice teachers to the school and supported them with professional development.
- **New Leaders for New Schools:** Trained Executive Director and Headmistress and provided ongoing coaching and support during the school year.
- **TeacherNex:** Worked with executive director to strengthen the school’s teacher recruitment and hiring process.
- **Project U.S.E.:** Led professional development day for staff emphasizing teambuilding. Working with staff now to provide outdoor education opportunities for students throughout the year.
- **Playworks/Sports4Kids:** Piloted a recess and playtime program for students emphasizing leadership and collaboration. They will be returning this fall to provide a full-time staff member to lead recess and afterschool activities.
- **Kids Camp:** Provided free trips to students to visit their camp for several days and enjoy various outdoor education learning experiences.

- **College Trips:** Students went on a number of field trips to expand their educational experience beyond the classroom. Each class from kindergarten to fifth grade visited at least one college campus, including the University of Pennsylvania, Princeton University, Rutgers University, Bloomfield College, Farleigh Dickinson University, Kean College, Montclair State University, and Ramapo College. At Princeton they met coaches from the men's basketball team and spent time with noted professor Dr. Cornell West.

Community members gave formal recognition for our student's contributions and written praise for their good behavior. The fourth and fifth grade classes received the "Slam Dunk the Junk" and "Golden Broom" for noteworthy participation in community clean-up activities.

One organization that led field trips wrote to say that, "We were all amazed how fantastic all of the children (and teachers) were. Please pass along to the kids that they were absolutely our favorite group....(don't tell anyone else) and that we are sad that we don't have any more University Heights Charter trips to look forward to this year."

Counselors at another organization commented that University Heights Charter school students were a "Very respectful, extremely inquisitive and adventurous group. They were absolutely wonderful! I was able to teach more because they listened well and were not repeating the same questions. The teachers were very helpful with enforcing respect and positive team activity.... We loved the group, please send them back!"

5. DESCRIPTION OF STUDENT AND STAFF RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES

Admissions Policies

Admissions Timeline and Recruitment Activities. The University Heights Charter School is open to all Newark students from Kindergarten to Grade 4 on a space available basis and shall not discriminate in its admission policies or practices on the basis of intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a handicapped person, proficiency in the English language, or any other basis that would be illegal if used by a charter school.

Admission is determined by age. In accordance with N.J.A.C 6A:11-4.6, a Kindergarten student must be 5 years of age on or before October 1st to be considered for admission. A 1st grade student must be 6 years of age on or before October 1st to be considered for admission. Completion of Kindergarten in a privately sponsored program will not qualify a child for the first grade unless the age requirement is met.

Recruitment primarily happens through word of mouth, parents interested in the school attending school events, announcements at local churches, and broadcasts on the local cable channel.

Admissions Results. Across all grades there were 156 applicants from across Newark for admissions to University Heights Charter School for the 2009-2010 school year. Table 5.1 below summarizes the number of spots available, the number of applicants, number of seats filled, total enrollment, and the number of students remaining on the waiting list for each grade:

Table 5.1

Grade	Returning Students	Seats Available	Applicants	Seats Filled	Total Enrollment	Waitlist
Kindergarten	1	39	68	39	40	29
1st Grade	40	0	22	0	40	22
2nd Grade	37	3	25	3	40	22
3rd Grade	37	3	23	3	40	20
4th Grade	37	3	18	3	40	15
Total	152	48	156	48	200	108

Student Withdrawals and Exit Interviews. In terms of retention, the only real challenge for University Heights charter school was among students entering the fifth grade. There are a number of strong charter middle schools in Newark that run from grade 5 to grade 8, and for parents who want a chance for their children to attend those schools it is essential that they apply for the grade 5 entry point.

If parents do not take the opportunity to enroll in these schools in fifth grade, it becomes very difficult to enroll them in sixth grade as there are few openings available. Thus it is not in their best interests to stay at University Heights for fifth grade if spots become available at high performing middle schools.

Furthermore, the resulting enrollment instability in fifth grade makes it difficult to plan and budget accurately. Initially the school had two classes in fifth grade, but when enrollment dropped below 20 we had to reduce to one grade, which impacted staffing.

Therefore the school petitioned the state department of education and received approval to not serve fifth grade in the 2009-2010 school year. Not serving fifth grade will also enable us to focus more intensely on grades K-4 and provide the best preparation for students when they graduate to middle school.

The school recognized the impact this change would have on families of current fourth grade students and planned accordingly. In early February the school held a parent meeting to notify the community of the change. We sent a letter the following day to notify all families in writing, and then called all affected parents of fourth grade students to make sure they were fully aware of the change and fully aware of their options. Subsequently another parent meeting was held where North Star Academy, Greater Newark Charter School, TEAM/RISE Academy, PRIDE Academy, and other schools made presentations to families and children and distribute their applications for grade 5. The executive director and headmistress followed-up with each fourth grade family individually to make sure they understand their options and helped them complete their applications by the deadline in early March.

Grade 4 and 5 graduates are still finding out whether or not they have been accepted to schools. We plan to follow-up in the fall to track where they ended up.

Staff Recruitment

Recruitment Results. Teachers were evaluated three times during the school year and given feedback on their performance and support to improve. Those that did meet school quality standards were invited to return for the 2009-2010 school. All those that were invited subsequently accepted the offer.

Four openings were available for the 2009-2010 school year. These openings are identified in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2 Staffing for 2009-2010 School Year

Grade level	Returning	New Hire	Total Staff
Kindergarten	3	1	4
1st Grade	1	1	2
2nd Grade	2	0	2
3rd Grade	1	1	2
4th Grade	1	1	2
Special Education	3	0	3
World Language	1	0	1
Physical Education	1	0	1
Art/Music	2	0	2
Computer Literacy	1	0	1
Nurse/Social Worker	2	0	2
Total	18	4	22

Over 200 resumes were reviewed for the 4 open positions, and over 50 candidates were interviewed (about 10 for each position.) All positions were posted on NJ Hire. Candidates came from the TeacherNex, charter school job fair, program, applications on NJ Hire, and through network relationships.

Interviews followed a standard rubric and probed for teacher expertise, classroom instruction and management skills, and fidelity to the University Heights Charter School approach to teaching and learning.

All instructional positions were filled by June 1 and the school is excited about the strong team that has been assembled for the upcoming 2009-2010 school year. Unlike previous years, all incoming teachers have two or more years experience and demonstrated academic results. This will add much needed bench strength to the school's instructional talent.

Exit Interview Procedures and Data.

Each teacher was individually informed of whether or not his or her contract would be renewed by the Executive Director, on behalf of the Board of Trustees, by May 15, 2009 as required by law. Reasons for separation were also discussed. All data on the teachers who were not retained for the 2008-2009 school year remains on file for future reference.

6. REVIEW OF THE SCHOOL'S SELF-EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN (SEAP)

Self-Evaluation and Accountability Plan

Description of Major Areas of Self-Evaluation. On June 29, 2007 University Heights Charter School was placed on probationary status by the State Department of Education to address programmatic and fiscal deficiencies. In response, the school developed a Corrective Action Plan, submitted July 13, 2007, that served as its Self-Evaluation and Accountability Plan for the 2007-2008 school year.

Program issues included: failure to demonstrate provision of special education and related services to students; failure to employ a certified school nurse; large number of board members who have an ongoing relationship with Bethany Baptist Church (also landlord of the charter school); failure to fully constitute the board as detailed in the approved charter; and little observable evidence of teaching and learning.

Fiscal issues included: failure to remit over full employee-withheld NJ State Health benefits; over \$200,000 deficit; lack of executed 2007-2008 lease; no evidence of governmental GAAP accounting system; failure to adhere to public school contract guidelines; lack of proper approval of school expenditures; lack of school register; lack of a functioning Custodian of School Funds; and lack of county reporting.

Current and/or Proposed Changes to the SEAP.

There are no proposed changes to the Self-Evaluation and Accountability Plan at this time.

Summary of Progress in Achieving Strategic Improvement Plans and Milestone Goals.

At this time all the above issues identified in the corrective action plan have been addressed, and the school leadership is currently working on a set of new goals to take school performance to the next level. Planned priorities for 2009-2010 include:

Area	Priorities
Culture & Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve before-school experience (Brain Breakfast/School Nutrition Program) • Tighter implementation of attendance, tardiness, and uniform policies • Better systems to address students with chronic behavior problems • Codification/rubric of what REACH core virtues actually look like • Expand student leadership opportunities, internal and external
Curriculum & Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redesign of upper elementary curriculum with interdisciplinary classes • School wide implementation of Writer's Workshop • Implementation of high quality rubrics & standards based grading • Establishment of science lab • Integration of computer time into curriculum • Grow library and implement electronic card catalog

Community Outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire Dean of Parent & Community Outreach and Special Programs • Enhanced Parent Council & Parent Volunteering • Required Report Card conferences every trimester • Website for resources and announcements • Increased partnerships with local universities & organizations
Title I Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishment of “Kindercamp” summer program to ease adjustment • Diversify afterschool program to include math and enrichment • Elevate level of instruction in Title I programs • Apply for schoolwide Title I program
Special Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve quality and alignment of special education instruction • More common planning time and information sharing with classroom teachers • More special education professional development for ALL teachers
Regulatory Compliance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipate compliance deadlines and plan more • Implement computerized information system (Powerschool) to ease reporting • Prepare for 5-year charter renewal in 2010-2011
Finance & Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversify funding base beyond Newark Charter School Fund • Get approval to become a schoolwide Title I program • Implement petty cash and activities funds to address small cash expenses
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire Computer Literacy Teacher to support instruction and maintenance • Pilot interactive white board technology • Use technology to better support teacher collaboration • Full implementation of student information database • Completion of website, including teacher pages
Facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repaint school and address numerous small fixes • Address signage and trash issues outside school • Implement enhanced security camera system run from own office • Implement lockers in grades 3-4 to support curriculum redesign
Board/ Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restore board to full 9 members with diverse skill set & affiliations • Anticipate required board resolutions with resolution calendar • Develop 5-year strategic plan

Appendix A: Copy of Board Resolution Approving 2008-2009 Annual Report

BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESOLUTION

Approval for 2008-2009 Annual Report

University Heights Charter School
74 Hartford Street, Newark, NJ 07103

Subject of Resolution:

It is hereby resolved that the Board of Trustees of University Heights Charter School approves the attached 2008-2009 Annual Report.

Motion made by: _____ **Seconded by:** _____

Tally of Votes

	Names	Yes	No	Abstain
<i>Member 1:</i>	Anzella Nelms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Member 2:</i>	Ray Ocasio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Member 3:</i>	De'Shawn Wright	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Member 4:</i>	Richard Roper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I, Richard Roper, certify that the above resolution was passed by a majority of a quorum of this Board of Trustees, as indicated above.

Signature: _____ Date of Board Meeting: _____

Appendix B: Copy of Board Resolution Naming the Lead Person

BOARD OF TRUSTEES RESOLUTION

Appointment of Lead Person

University Heights Charter School
74 Hartford Street, Newark, NJ 07103

Subject of Resolution:

It is hereby resolved that the Board of Trustees of University Heights Charter School appoints Misha Simmonds as Lead Person of University Heights Charter School.

Motion made by: _____ **Seconded by:** _____

Tally of Votes

	Names	Yes	No	Abstain
<i>Member 1:</i>	Anzella Nelms	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Member 2:</i>	Ray Ocasio	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Member 3:</i>	De'Shawn Wright	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Member 4:</i>	Richard Roper	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I, Richard Roper, certify that the above resolution was passed by a majority of a quorum of this Board of Trustees, as indicated above.

Signature: _____ Date of Board Meeting: _____

Appendix C: Copy of Academic and Non-Academic Goals and Objectives

Academic Goals

Academic Goal #1: To ensure the intellectual development of students through acquiring core proficiency skills in reading, writing and mathematics, problem solving skills, development of critical thinking, analytic ability, research skills, and the acquisition and practical application of knowledge.

Objective 1A. Students will learn to read, to write and to perform mathematics functions at or above grade level.

Objective 1B. Students will demonstrate exemplary critical thinking, analytic and problem solving skills.

Objective 1C. Students will demonstrate a grasp of information at or above grade level.

Measurement: Will include standardized tests as grade appropriate, state required testing, performance-based assessments and individual portfolios.

Academic Goal #2: To teach the rights, responsibility and duties of citizenship, and instill in students a sense of duty and honor for their community and country.

Objective 2A. Students will learn the structure and operation of government in an age appropriate manner.

Objective 2B. Students will appreciate the process of our common history

Measurement. Will include grade appropriate performance-based assessments and individual portfolios.

Academic Goal #3: To provide competency with computers and technology.

Objective 3A. All students will have access to and operate computers.

Objective 3B. Students will demonstrate age-appropriate proficiency with computers.

Measurement: Will be documented in student portfolios and class records.

Academic Goal #4: To build academic self-confidence through the experience of academic success.

Objective 4A. All students will be challenged by high expectations and demonstrate high achievement.

Measurement: Will include standardized tests as grade appropriate, performance based assessments and individual portfolios.

Academic Goal #5: To demonstrate academic relevance through application of skills to school and community based projects.

Objective 5A. Students, teachers and parents will design and implement community projects.

Measurement. Each project will be designed with an individual measurement component.

Non Academic Goals

Non-Academic Goal #1: To provide character education integrated seamlessly into all aspects of the schools culture of excellence.

Objective 1A. Teach students the importance of character traits such as integrity, fairness, respect, responsibility, and citizenship

Objective 1B. Incorporate character education through the existing curriculum

Objective 1C. Create a safe school

Objective 1D. Create classroom environments that promote effective learning and encourage students to respect one another

Objective 1E. Teach students how to solve conflicts fairly and respectfully without resorting to intimidation or violence

Objective 1F. Develop leadership skills and offer students opportunities to serve others

Objective 1G. Engage parents and the community in cooperative efforts to build and model good character.

Measurement: The school will implement a character education curriculum which incorporates a system for documenting student's assimilation of a strong values driven ethic. In addition the school will document stakeholder feedback both formally and informally from various means such as surveys, focus groups, and discussion at board meetings.

Non-Academic Goal #2: To incorporate parent/caregivers, staff, students and community into a collaborative unit sharing ownership, responsibility and commitment to success.

Objective 2A. Board members will reflect this Goal.

Objective 2B. Parent/caregivers will participate in school activities; supporting student achievement, sharing in setting school policy, and improving their own skills.

Objective 1C. A school - community partnership will be developed.

Measurement. Board member list; minutes and records of meetings and activities; and, records and agreements relating to community partnerships.

Non-Academic Goal #3: To encourage the physical growth and development, hygiene and health of students; including concerns relating to AIDS, STDs, sexuality, and violence.

Objective 3A. All students will receive regular health exams, inoculations, and health care referrals.

Objective 3B. An age appropriate health education curriculum will be developed and implemented.

Measurement. The Board will approve the health curriculum; activities will be documented and assessed through formal and informal feedback measures; confidential health records will be maintained.

Appendix D: Copy of Admissions Policy and School Application Forms

The *University Heights Charter School* shall be open to all students from Kindergarten to Grade 4 on a space available basis and shall not discriminate in its admission policies or practices on the basis of intellectual or athletic ability, measures of achievement or aptitude, status as a handicapped person, proficiency in the English language, or any other basis that would be illegal if used by a charter school.

Admission will be determined by age. In accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:11-4.6, a Kindergarten child must be 5 years of age on or before October 1 for the September-June school year. A 1st grade child must be 6 years of age on or before October 1 for the September-June school year. Completion of Kindergarten in privately sponsored programs will not qualify a child for first grade unless the age requirement is met.

A certificate of the child's birth will be required as evidence of age. The legal evidences of age, in order of preference, are as follows: 1. Certificate of birth; 2. Baptismal certificate; 3. Passport; 4. Immigrant certificate.

The Headmaster is responsible for verifying each applicant's eligibility for admission to school according to the following criteria and procedure:

1. Initial entrance into kindergarten or first grade shall be according to administrative regulations.
2. Residence shall be established at the time of admission, checked periodically by recording the following:
 - a) Legal home address of parent guardian.
 - b) Evidence of domicile or residence will be required of each parent or guardian, established by appropriate documentation.

Immunization

This *University Heights Charter School* will require that every child who enters school produce a certificate of immunization for the following:

1. Diphtheria, Whooping Cough, and Tetanus
2. Oral Polio
3. German Measles
4. Mumps
5. Measles
6. Mantoux TB skin test.

Preference for enrollment shall be given to students who reside in the Newark Public School District in which this charter school is located. If there are more applicants to enroll in the *University Heights Charter School* than there are spaces available, the students will be selected by lottery held in accordance with N.J.A.C. 6A:11-4.4. The school shall allow any student who was enrolled in the school in the immediately preceding school year to enroll in the charter school in the appropriate grade. The school shall give enrollment priority to a sibling of a student enrolled in the charter school.

Any student whose parents or guardians have moved from the school district during the school year can be authorized to attend the *University Heights Charter School* until the concluding of the school year at the discretion of the Headmaster and approval of the Board of Trustees.

Non-Discrimination Policy

No admission policy will be used to reflect the mission and goals of the school. The admission policy has no criteria that would bar or discourage any applicant. The School will make a strong effort to enroll a group of children representative of all of Newark's diverse groups. The application process will be designed to ensure that race, religion, gender, academic ability, etc. are never considered as part of the admission process.

If there are fewer applicants than the number of spaces available, the School will initiate an intensive outreach program until all spaces are filled.

Non-residents students from other school districts may attend the *University Heights Charter School* provided there is room for them; i.e. unfilled spaces at the scheduled date for the lottery.

Lottery Policy

If there are more valid applicants than can be admitted, applicants will be assigned a number, the numbers recorded on equal slips of paper, placed in a box and drawn at random from the box. Each grade will have a separate lottery. The drawing will be publicly held with all interested parents/caregivers invited. A waiting list be maintained and given priority in future years.

The School will maintain a waiting list for the admission of grade-eligible students that:

1. Begins with the close of the annual recruitment period and first random selection process and ends with the close of the subsequent school year; and
2. Is divided into two groups: students residing within the Newark School District and students from non-resident districts.

During the recruitment period, the School will notify parents that their children's names will remain on the waiting list for enrollment for the subsequent school year only.

In the initial year of the School's operation, all siblings will be considered as a single applicant within the lottery and accepted or assigned to the waiting list together.

Siblings of students currently enrolled in the school will be given first right of refusal for admissions. In the case of siblings applying at the same time, they will be considered as a single applicant within the lottery.

The admission policy has no criteria that would bar or discourage any applicant. The School will make a strong effort to enroll a group of children representative of all of Newark's diverse groups.

**Appendix E: Copy of Board Resolution Naming the Affirmative Action Officer,
the Section 504 Officer and the Title IX Coordinator**

Motion by Trustee:	seconded by Trustee:			
Record of Board Vote	X – Indicates Votes	AB-Absent	NV-No Vote	
Board Member	Yes	No	NV	AB
ANZELLA NELMS	X			
RAY OCASIO	X			
RICHARD ROPER	X			
DE'SHAWN WRIGHT	X			

- a. Affirmative Action Officers.....Mrs. Patricia Anaemejeh
- b. Public Agency Compliance Officer.....Misha Simmonds
- c. 504 Officer.....Gwendolyn Gunn-Ingram
- d. Title IX Coordinator..... Gwendolyn Gunn-Ingram
- e. Board Committee Chairpersons/Members.....*Assignments to follow*
- f. Compliance Officer RTK and AHERA Contact Person... Misha Simmonds
- g. New Jersey School Boards Association Delegate..... *Assignment to follow*
- h. Integrated Pest Management Coordinator..... Karen Johnson
- i. Physician..... Dr. Kia Grundy
- j. Board Secretary.....Karen Johnson
- k. Purchasing Agent.....Karen Johnson
- l. Treasurer of School Monies.....Christopher Lessard
- m. Custodian of Public Records.....Karen Johnson
- n. Resolution to employ the firm of **McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter, LLP as legal counsel** as follows:

WHEREAS, the Public School Contracts Laws (N.J.S.A. 18A:18A-5) requires that a resolution authorizing the contracting of “Professional Services”: without competitive bids be adopted;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it resolved by the University Heights Charter School Board of Trustees that the firm of **McElroy, Deutsch, Mulvaney & Carpenter, LLP** be appointed as legal counsel for University Heights Charter School for the **2009-20010** school year without competitive bidding as a “Professional Service” in accordance with 18A:18A-5 of the Public Contracts Law.

Appendix F: Copy of School Student Recruitment Plan

The strategy for publicizing the application process will ensure that all groups are made aware of the school. The school will employ both formal [newspaper, flyers, public service announcements] and informal [networking] methods of publicizing the school. A brochure describing the school program will be distributed to interested persons. Applications will be accepted, dated, and evaluated. Public meetings for interested parent/caregivers will be scheduled in advance of the application period. The public meetings will be held in an adequate number and variety of locations needed to ensure access to students from all neighborhoods and groups within Newark. The flyers, brochures and announcements will be distributed through a thoroughly representative group of public and private organizations, including (but not limited to) schools, churches, civic groups, social service organizations, the Newark Public Housing Authority, etc. The School will reach out to the other Charter Schools in Newark to share and coordinate outreach efforts.

Although Newark's population is predominantly minority, the School will encourage all district students in grades K-5 regardless of racial or academic factors to apply for admission.

Representatives of the *University Heights Charter School* will visit, make presentations and publicize the existence of the School, the availability of enrollment in the School, as well as the educational goals, objectives, methods and philosophy of the School in a variety of locations around Newark in order to seek the enrollment of a cross section of the community's school age population. The action plan implemented this past year was as follows:

Date	Action
2/9/09	All marketing materials prepared <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications • Flyers and ads
2/10/09	Parent Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announce recruiting and placement plan • Distribute Declaration of Intent Form • Distribute application
2/12/09	Distribution of materials with student take-home folders
2/17/09	Advertisement in Newspaper
2/20/09	All Declaration of Intent Forms submitted
2/23-3/10	Marketing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visits to Pre-Schools • Speak at Churches
3/5/09	Hold Open House
3/10/09	Hold Lottery

Appendix G: Copy of School Staff Recruitment and Retention Plan

University Heights Charter School worked closely with TeacherNex to upgrade its staff recruitment and retention. TeacherNex is a service program of the The New Teacher Project, a national non-profit organization dedicated to increasing the number of outstanding individuals who become public school teachers and to creating environments for all educators that maximize their impact on student achievement.

In November administration conducts an initial performance review. It provides specific and detailed feedback to teachers about their performance and includes personal improvement plan to address any issues. This is followed up with observation, more feedback, and professional development.

In January teachers are provided with information about the hiring process, including a detailed timeline of evaluation and contract offering. At the same time, they are asked to fill out a Declaration of Intent form indicating their level of interest for returning. This provides an opportunity to begin a discussion with teachers about their specific intentions or concerns. It reinforces the idea that gaining an accurate sense of your teachers' intentions for the next year is important, and that the school is invested in the teacher. It also provides opportunities to address issues that are a barrier to good teachers returning before they have found employment elsewhere.

This Declaration of Intent is followed up with one-to-one conversations to clarify and address any issues.

In March the administration conducts a second performance review. It highlights progress made since the first review and identifies any new or outstanding areas for improvement.

Teachers the school seeks to rehire are offered contracts in early April. This ensures that any luring of outstanding teachers by other schools is preempted.

Based on teacher response and teachers not asked to return, openings are identified by mid-April. Jobs are posted on NJ Hire. The Executive Director attends job fairs and works with placement agencies like TeacherNex to identify candidates.

As soon as high quality candidates are identified, they are invited for an interview, which include a demonstration, reflection on the lesson, writing sample, and general interview. Desirable candidates are made offers quickly to raise the odds of acceptance.

Ideally all positions are filled by June 1 so that students have access to the highest quality teachers possible.

Appendix H: Copy of Self-Evaluation and Accountability Plan

The Lead Person will be responsible for producing the self-evaluation. The organizational structure, governance, policies, and operational effectiveness of the *University Heights Charter School* will be assessed. This will include facility, financial and programmatic audits. The *University Heights Charter School* self-evaluation will include student outcomes, student assessment, staff success, parent involvement, community partnerships, and cost efficiency.

At the completion of the total school self-evaluation, it will be time to develop a plan for improvement that is consistent with the goals of the *University Heights Charter School*. (There may also be a need for modification of school goals.) An assessment method will be designed to comprehensively evaluate these areas and solicit input from administration, staff, parents, students, and consultants. The evaluations of the school will be included in the administration's annual report to the Board. Consultants play an invaluable role in evaluating objectively and in developing systems that evaluate programs effectively. There are several colleges, and research groups that can be utilized for that purpose.

The required annual report will include the self-evaluation report and improvement plan as approved by the board. It will be filed with the Newark School Superintendent, the Essex County Superintendent and the Commissioner by August 1 following the end of each year. A copy will be provided to the parents of all students, and made available at the school for all other identified stakeholders and interested parties. This is a public document.

This annual report will consequently serve as a mechanism for resource development. The annual report will serve as a valuable instrument in securing additional funding for enhancements and expansion; from foundations, corporations, and professional organizations.

The preparation of the annual report will be an ongoing process integrated into the School's Self Assessment and Evaluation. The Headmaster will use the report's structure as outlined below to guide a continuous process of measuring, documenting, and improving the School. The Report's structure will also serve as a guideline for feedback on progress to be delivered monthly to the Executive Director and as a Headmaster's Report at each meeting of the Board of Trustees.

The report will be completed in such form as specified by the New Jersey Department of Education guidelines. It will describe in detail the following:

- Achievement of the Schools Mission, Goals and Objectives.
- Efficiency in the Governance and Management of the School
 - Summary of Board Accomplishments
 - Board Policies
 - Board Meetings
 - Board Committees
 - Open Public Meetings Act Compliance
 - Board Training
- Attainment of the New Jersey Core Curriculum Content Standards and the Delivery of an Educational Program Leading to High Student Achievement
 - Incorporation of Content Standards

Summary of Progress
Planned Activities
Innovative Programs and Practices
Family Activities
Academic Programs: Math Program; Reading Program; Writing Program
Science Program; Spanish Language Program

Technology Education

Professional Development/Support Provided for Teachers and Staff

- Statewide Assessment Program Results and Local Assessment of Students
 - Summary of Assessment Plan
 - Results from Standardized Assessment Reporting System
 - Accountability
- Degree of Parental and Community Involvement in the School
 - Parental Involvement: Outreach Procedures; Organizations and Committees; Parent Satisfaction; Training and Support
 - Community Involvement: Outreach Procedures; School Community Activities; Plans.
- Public Relations and Outreach Efforts
- Student Admission Policies and Staff Recruitment Plan
 - Admission Policies: Timelines and Activities; Admission Results; Student Withdrawals and Exit Interviews
 - Staff Recruitment: Timelines; Application Review and Interview Procedures; Recruitment Results; Exit Interview Procedure and Results
- Contextual Factors Regarding Student Success Achievement
 - Diverse Learners: Students with Educational Disabilities; Bilingual/ESL Students; At-Risk Students.
 - Non-Academic Programs
 - School Culture
- Annual Financial Report

The Lead Person will be evaluated by the Board. The Lead Person's job performances will be assessed by a high standard of accountability. The Board will expect that the school leader has accomplished the goals and objectives set forth in the School's Charter. The annual report, direct observation, and feedback from the community, parent/caregivers and from staff will all be used as instruments in evaluating the School's executive leader.

The Lead Person shall be responsible for evaluating all teachers and support staff. School staff evaluated will include input from administration, peers, and parent/caregivers. The Lead Person will observe teachers in the classroom to determine their effectiveness as facilitators of learning, and their ability to reach children using various modalities. A critical part of the teacher's evaluation will be outcome based, measuring students' achievement, and implementation of the curriculum. Parent/caregiver surveys will be developed to help measure the teacher's effectiveness and responsiveness. A performance agreement will be developed with each teacher prior to the school year. The annual performance assessment will be based on those standards.

The School will establish clearly defined criteria for performance review. These criteria include

- 1) Commitment to the School's mission and goals;
- 2) Successful implementation of the curriculum and educational philosophy;
- 3) High level of professionalism;
- 4) High level of accomplishment; and
- 5) Effective participation in the School's staff "team."

Tools to be used in the evaluation process will include:

- 1) Written evaluations based on classroom observations;
- 2) Students' performance on major assessments; and
- 3) Feedback from parents.
- 4) Special contributions by the staff to the School's program will also be an element in the performance review.

Appendix I: Receipts from the District(s) of Residence

New Jersey Department of Education Office of Charter Schools Receipt of 2009 Annual Report
From: Newark Public Schools Date: _____ Time: _____ Number of Copies: 1 Received by: _____ Signature: _____
Thank You!

New Jersey Department of Education Office of Charter Schools Receipt of 2009 Annual Report
From: Irvington Public Schools Date: _____ Time: _____ Number of Copies: 1 Received by: _____ Signature: _____
Thank You!

New Jersey Department of Education Office of Charter Schools Receipt of 2009 Annual Report
From: East Orange Public Schools Date: _____ Time: _____ Number of Copies: 1 Received by: _____ Signature: _____
Thank You!

New Jersey Department of Education Office of Charter Schools Receipt of 2009 Annual Report
From: Essex County Superintendent's Office Date: _____ Time: _____ Number of Copies: 1 Received by: _____ Signature: _____
Thank You!

Appendix J: 2009 Charter School Annual Report Checklist

Checklist Items	Yes
1. Have you prepared the annual report on 8 1/2 X 11” white paper, at 12 point or larger computer font? (Note: smaller font is acceptable for large tables.)	✓
2. Have you included a cover page, the prescribed table of contents and the school description page?	✓
3. Have you included the complete proper names for the charter school, the number and the name of the report section in the header?	✓
4. Have you included the page number in the footer and numbered all pages sequentially including the appendices?	✓
5. Have you numbered the tables and figures in the annual report sequentially?	✓
6. Have you provided a title for each table/figure and identified the data in the table?	✓
7. Have you clearly labeled the rows and columns in each table?	✓
8. Have you provided a discussion of each table or figure?	✓
9. Have you responded completely to each of the instructions/directives (e.g., describe, list, discuss, summarize, present) under each of the headers and sub-headers for the nine sections of the annual report? (Remember, interpret the instructions literally.)	✓
10. Did you staple/bind each appendix separately and bundle the appendices (A-J) for the copies of the annual report into sets/bundles?	✓
11. Did you submit three copies to the <u>Office of Charter Schools</u> no later than 4 p.m., Friday, July 31, 2009 (i.e., the original as one document and two copies appropriately separated)?	✓
12. Did you submit one copy of the annual report to each <u>District of Residence</u> no later than 4 p.m., Friday, July 31, 2009?	✓
13. Did you submit one copy of the annual report to the <u>County Superintendent</u> no later than 4 p.m., Friday, July 31, 2009?	✓
14. Did you submit an electronic copy of your annual report to Maria Casale via email attachment (maria.casale@doe.state.nj.us)?	✓