

U.S. Department of Education
2014 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program

[X] Public or [] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I [X] Charter [] Magnet [] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Noel Rodriguez

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Academy of Dover Charter School

(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 104 Saulsbury Street

(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Dover State DE Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 19904-2705

County Kent County State School Code Number* 85-584

Telephone 302-674-0684 Fax 302-674-3894

Web site/URL http://www.aodcharter.org E-mail nrodriguez@aod.k12.de.us

Twitter Handle _____ Facebook Page _____ Google+ _____

YouTube/URL _____ Blog _____ Other Social Media Link _____

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*Mr. Noel Rodriguez E-mail: noel.rodriguez@aod.k12.de.us
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Academy of Dover Tel. 302-674-0684

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

Date _____

(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board
President/Chairperson Kimeu Boynton
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify that it is accurate.

Date _____

(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

Include this page in the school’s application as page 2.

The signatures on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school configuration includes one or more of grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even a K-12 school, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made its Annual Measurable Objectives (AMOs) or Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
3. To meet final eligibility, a public school must meet the state’s AMOs or AYP requirements in the 2013-2014 school year and be certified by the state representative. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2008 and each tested grade must have been part of the school for the past three years.
6. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, or 2013.
7. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award if irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 1 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
 - 0 Middle/Junior high schools
 - 0 High schools
 - 0 K-12 schools
- 1 TOTAL

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:
- Urban or large central city
 - Suburban with characteristics typical of an urban area
 - Suburban
 - Small city or town in a rural area
 - Rural
3. 6 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.
4. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	36	34	70
1	30	40	70
2	31	28	59
3	23	21	44
4	21	22	43
5	7	15	22
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12	0	0	0
Total Students	148	160	308

5. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 1 % Asian
 - 85 % Black or African American
 - 3 % Hispanic or Latino
 - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 10 % White
 - 0 % Two or more races
 - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

6. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2012 - 2013 year: 6%

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

Steps For Determining Mobility Rate	Answer
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the school year	12
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2012 until the end of the 2012-2013 school year	6
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	18
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1	282
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.064
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	6

7. English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 0 %
0 Total number ELL
 Number of non-English languages represented: 0
 Specify non-English languages:
8. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 90 %
 Total number students who qualify: 100

If this method is not an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the free and reduced-priced school meals program, supply an accurate estimate and explain how the school calculated this estimate.

Under provision II we pay for the students who do not qualify for free meals, hence 100% of our students receive free breakfast and lunch.

9. Students receiving special education services: $\frac{9}{26}$ %
26 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| 1 Autism | 1 Orthopedic Impairment |
| 0 Deafness | 6 Other Health Impaired |
| 0 Deaf-Blindness | 14 Specific Learning Disability |
| 0 Emotional Disturbance | 31 Speech or Language Impairment |
| 0 Hearing Impairment | 0 Traumatic Brain Injury |
| 2 Mental Retardation | 0 Visual Impairment Including Blindness |
| 0 Multiple Disabilities | 2 Developmentally Delayed |

10. Use Full-Time Equivalent (FTEs), rounded to nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of personnel in each of the categories below:

	Number of Staff
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers	14
Resource teachers/specialists e.g., reading, math, science, special education, enrichment, technology, art, music, physical education, etc.	9
Paraprofessionals	6
Student support personnel e.g., guidance counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	1

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 22:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

Required Information	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Daily student attendance	93%	94%	93%	92%	92%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools)**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2013

Post-Secondary Status	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.

Yes No X

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

PART III – SUMMARY

Vision: The Academy of Dover Charter School will serve as a community pillar for life-long learning, pride, and self-actualization. Looking to the past to prepare students for the future, the Academy of Dover Charter School will combine the beneficial rigors of a classical education with the latest technology and the best teaching and learning practices worldwide. The Academy of Dover Charter School student will cultivate and promote multi-cultural and global awareness. Students will be prepared and encouraged to be entrepreneurs, well informed, and responsible world citizens with purpose, passion, and proficiency.

Mission: The mission of the Academy of Dover Charter School is to open portals of opportunity for children and adults in the community through excellence in public education.

Academy of Dover is a choice school, meaning parents have the option of sending their children to a Charter school rather than their home district. There is no lottery process or waiting list at the Academy of Dover. Parents are able to enroll their child after meeting with the Principal for an informational session and taking a school tour. Students are accepted up until the charter agreement of 300 students is reached.

The Academy of Dover's demographic is 85.23% African American, 12.42 % Caucasian, 1.01% Asian, .67% Pacific Islander, and .67% American Indian. The Academy of Dover services 7 school districts in Delaware and over 50 feeder schools. Students are accepted from throughout the State on a first come first serve basis, preferences are given to (as outlined in Delaware Code Title 14) 1) siblings of students already enrolled, 2) students attending an existing public school converted to charter status, 3) children of persons employed on a permanent basis, 4) children of the school's founder.

In 2003, a retired educator had a vision of providing the community with an alternative school setting from which the community's students could choose. The focus of the Academy Charter School is Entrepreneurship. It is part of our goal to ensure that all students at the Academy of Dover receive instruction in fiscal awareness and responsibility.

Although the Academy of Dover had some difficult years in the beginning, it has earned the respect of the Educational and community at large. It is accurate to describe the Academy of Dover as a true, "Turn around School."

Our instruction focuses most heavily on developing our students' higher order skills: analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. We reach our objectives through a combination of traditional and innovative instructional techniques. Our lessons and assessments include: research projects, PowerPoint, essays, and various Smartboard presentations. Our educational objectives are: to develop students who are technologically literate and able to understand and make use of computers and laboratory instruments.

To insure that the students of the Academy of Dover are given a well-rounded education, students also study Spanish, Art, Physical Education, Music, Technology and Entrepreneurship.

The Academy of Dover boast the only Elementary Marching Band in the state, the only school where a student can start learning to play an instrument in Kindergarten. Lessons in piano, violin and guitar are also available.

In the Art Program, students learn about all the mediums of Art to include pottery starting in Kindergarten.

From 2008-2013, the Academy of Dover students in third and fourth grades have shown significant growth from 2008-2013 in third and fourth grades in both reading and math. On average, proficiency has increased more than 20 percentage points during this time period in these grades. Additionally, proficiency in second grade reading increased by 44 percentage points during the 2008-09 to 2009-10 school years. Furthermore, in 2009-2010, Academy of Dover made AYP for the first time and was among only 22 schools who reached this goal. In 2011, the Academy of Dover was recognized by the State of Delaware as a, "Superior School."

The Academy of Dover has made phenomenal strides in closing the achievement gap and in invigorating the community. Families that reside in this economically and socially challenged environment are given a sense of hope for their students' future. With the, "Little Train that can" attitude, the Academy of Dover serves as an inspiration for other Charter Schools and Traditional Schools who educate a challenged demographic. By, "Building Futures One Block At A Time," the Academy of Dover strives to give its students a strong foundation and a clear vision of their dreams.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

In 2011 the state launched the Delaware Comprehensive Assessment System (DCAS). This adaptive assessment was administered via computer for all students and replaced the state’s previous paper and pencil exam. Students take the exam in the fall and two opportunities in the spring, giving educators the opportunity to adjust instruction throughout the year to meet student needs.

The DCAS is designed to measure how well a student meets the grade-level expectations as delineated in the Delaware Content Standards. The expectations of the Content Standards increase in complexity and require higher levels of thinking as students’ progress through the grade levels. The role of the DCAS test is to provide evidence that students can take what they learned in the classroom and transfer their knowledge and understanding to problems presented on the test.

The Performance Level Descriptors are aligned to the Content Standards and DCAS. They are designed to identify and define what a student knows and can do at a specific grade and to help parents, educators, and students understand the performance level scores a student receives on DCAS.

Performance Level 4 Advanced- The students demonstrate outstanding performance beyond expectations.

Performance Level 3 Meets Standard- The students demonstrate competency over challenging subject matter and meets the expectations.

Performance Level 2 Below Standard- The students demonstrate limited competency over basic knowledge and skills and partially meets the expectations.

Performance Level 1 Well Below Standard- The students demonstrate minimal competency over basic knowledge and skills and does not meet the expectations.

The tables below show Delaware’s requirement for meeting the standard in ELA and Math.

DCAS Student Performance Cut Scores for Reading

Grade	Meets Standard	Advanced
-------	----------------	----------

3	690-736	737 or more
---	---------	-------------

4	721-771	772 or more
---	---------	-------------

5	739-797	798 or more
---	---------	-------------

DCAS Student Performance Cut Scores for Math

Grade	Meets Standard	Advanced
-------	----------------	----------

3	659-749	750 or more
---	---------	-------------

4	700-792	793 or more
---	---------	-------------

5	732-810	811 or more
---	---------	-------------

Guide to the State Rating System:

Superior: AYP is met while the school or district is not under improvement and additional rigorous state criteria are met.

Commendable: AYP is met while the school or district is not under improvement.

Academic Review: AYP is not met for one year while the school or district is not under improvement.

Academic Progress: AYP is met for one year while the school or district is under improvement.

Academic Watch: AYP is not met for two or more years. School or district goes into or remains under improvement

Higher Proficiency Standards: In September 2010, the State Board of Education adopted a new scoring system that “raises the bar” for what is considered proficient on the exam. The new system recognizes that we must be preparing our children to compete in a global economy by requiring a greater mastery of core

subjects to achieve a rating of “proficient” on the exams. As expected, this depressed student scores, both individually and in group/aggregated scores.

According to the 2012 DCAS results for 3rd Grade, 71% of students met the standard in Reading, as compared to 70% meeting the standard in Math; 80% of 4th grade students met the standard for ELA and 72% met the standard in Math. In the 2012-13 school year, AOD did not have a 5th grade class. There is no data to compare as of now.

Academy of Dover has met the requirements for AYP for the last three years.

Our data tables indicate that we have had a 40 percent increase in 4th grade ELA and a 38 percent increase in Math scores over the last 5 years.

Scores in 3rd grade have been fairly consistent. On average, our ELA scores over the last five years is 69 percent, and we've seen a 20 percent increase in math scores.

Some factors that have had an impact on our student achievement include changes in curriculum, which we now show- positive gains after two years, changes in personnel, which resulted from changes in the economy. Changes in state assessments have also had an impact on the performance level of students. Within the last five years, including the onset of Smarter Balance, students have had to experience three different state assessments.

Beginning in 2014-15, the newly adopted Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) will take the place of the current DCAS. This Smarter Balanced Assessment is still under the planning stages and schools are working to pilot the assessments in both Math and/or Reading.

At the Academy of Dover, our focus is not the state assessment. We focus on providing a well-rounded education that encompasses the knowledge students will need to be successful on the state assessment. The staff makes great efforts in preparing students for each assessment.

In ELA we continue to expand our curriculum in an effort not to overwhelm the students, but to continuously challenge them. Although not currently part of the assessment, we continue to place an emphasis on writing. We also place an emphasis on written communication to teach penmanship. We create small group learning opportunities for students who may need additional assistance and for those students who are advanced using the RTI program.

We have made significant changes to our Math curriculum and method of instruction. We have eliminated the use of text books, and the staff has created a curriculum that encompasses several best practices. By empowering the teachers to write the curriculum, they have vastly improved their instructional method of teaching Math. Staff also received professional development in the instruction of Math. These efforts have had a significant impact on our Math scores.

We have made a conscious effort to study our sub groups and disaggregated data, to best approach student needs. By posting our curriculum maps where they are visible, Related Arts Teachers are able to plan for integration. We continue to place an emphasis on small group instruction and support it by placing a Related Arts Teacher in the classroom as well as a significant number of Para Professionals, allowing for focused small group instruction.

2. Using Assessment Results:

By disaggregating the data provided by testing, we are able to create individual plans for closing any gaps that may exist. This data collaboration takes place during PLC, and grade level meeting with the administration. Once the data is disaggregated, we contact the families of students who are struggling and work with them by providing resources they can use to support their student.

On DCAS reading, scores have consistently gone up (15 per cent in 3rd Grade and 37 per cent in 4th Grade) over the last five years. By year's end, about 71 percent of students in grade 3 and 80 per cent of 4th graders

will meet or exceed the standard in reading. Notably, about one third of students in each grade scored in the advanced level in reading.

Although the mathematics gains appear to be similar to the Reading scores, the gains over the last five years are larger. By years end 70 per cent of 3rd graders and 72 percent of 4th graders will meet or exceed the standard.

Notably, over 30 per cent of students who transferred into the Academy of Dover from other school districts were one to two grade levels behind, and they are now meeting or exceeding the standards by grades three and four.

The state's social studies test also was administered online this year, though only one testing window was available for the social studies exam, there was an 11 per cent increase in scores from the previous year's Spring Assessment.

Within the last five years the Academy of Dover has gone from being under improvement to rating, "Superior" the last two years.

When you take a look at the performance of The Academy of Dover students versus the rest of the state's students with similar demographics, Academy of Dover students perform very well on the state's DCAS test.

3. Sharing Lessons Learned:

The leadership at the Academy of Dover believes in setting a high priority on school climate/culture. To create a sense of ownership, the Administration shares responsibilities with all stakeholders (parents, students, and faculty).

Teachers are also given opportunities to present during any of our in-service days. For example, two faculty members presented on meeting the needs of Special Education Students, including students identified as needing accommodations. We had discussions on the pros and cons, various aspects of pedagogy related to modifying existing curriculum to meet students' needs, yet providing the rigor that is needed.

Our faculty also participates in Positive Learning Communities (PLCs). A professional learning community is characterized by the collaborative work of educators to continuously seek, share, and act on their learning in order to improve their practice for the purpose of improved student outcomes (Astuto, 1993). By modeling collegiality, intellectual inquiry, critical discourse, and continuous improvement, professional learning communities raise the expectation and standard for students' level of engagement, development, and achievement.

Our teachers and faculty participate in outreach programs for parents and guardians providing them instruction in our curriculum, so they are prepared to assist their students. They offer tutoring to parents and guardians to include the instruction of basic computer skills.

The Academy of Dover staff and leadership work closely with other Charter School and Traditional School Districts in providing families of students with Special Needs information on settings and services that will best meet their students' needs.

In collaboration with the parents of students with disabilities, the Academy of Dover has created a support group for parents and guardians of students who are initiating Individual Education Plans in accordance with IDEA.

4. Engaging Families and Community:

Quarterly, after each marking period, parents are invited to, "AOD Night," in which students create a demonstration of what they learned the previous marking period. This platform allows parents to ask questions, and see practical applications of the concepts their students have learned during the marking period.

The Academy of Dover has created a, "Passport Program" in which students are given a passport booklet when they enroll. When parents attend activities, their passports are stamped. At the end of the school year passports are collected, and if the parents have participated in at least 80 per cent of the activities available, their students names are submitted for a raffle of a, "Big Ticket Item." A student name is selected from each grade level and students receive a prize that range from bicycles to electronic items i.e. Wii's, Nintendo DS. This program has yielded a 60 per cent increase in parent participation.

In an effort to contribute to a stable home life for the students, the administration makes itself available to work with families. We work with our partners in helping families get employment, get asses to assistance, and make available our resources.

The Academy of Dover partnered with several community organizations and businesses who assist us in supporting our students. These partnerships provide incentives to Academic Excellence, Meals, Supplies, clothing etc.

The Academy of Dover also partners with an organization that provides mentoring and tutoring for our students. By providing positive role models, our students and families benefit from the positive experiences these organizations offer. At the Academy of Dover over 40 per cent of our students do not have access to both parents and a positive environment.

Prospective parents of the Academy of Dover meet with the Principal for informational orientation and tour which allows prospective parents to understand that they have a voice in the running of the school. This method has opened the door for meaningful dialogue and collaboration with families.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

At the Academy of Dover Charter School (AOD), the curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all students regardless of their ability levels. Teachers establish and communicate clear learning goals for each lesson through the use of Common Core “I Can” statements. These statements are student friendly verbiage for the State’s Common Core Standards (CCSS). Students know that they “can and will” be successful if they put forth the effort and do their best. These “I Can” statements are selected based on the CCSS for each lesson in English Language Arts and Mathematics.

Based on ongoing reflection regarding teacher development needs and the tracking of student performance data, the Academy of Dover has recently made changes to two key areas of their instructional program. These areas include English Language Arts and Mathematics. AOD chose to transition from Open Court to Harcourt Publishers, StoryTown for their ELA curriculum, which includes phonics, spelling, writing, reading, vocabulary and grammar in one program. AOD has worked closely with the Department of Education to align this ELA curriculum to the CCSS over the last three years. With the guidance of the Department of Education’s ELA team, the Academy of Dover’s ELA curriculum is fully aligned to the Common Core. With this transition, AOD has seen significant growth in their reading scores on the DCAS.

The second curricular change stems from a focus on improving math performance, as well as a recognition of a need for greater teacher expertise in the area of mathematics. Previously using Singapore math, AOD recently transitioned to Go Math, which is aligned to the CCSS. With this transition, AOD has recently consulted with Innovative Schools to provide support and training to teachers in the area of math. With this support, teachers have seen an increase in math scores on the DCAS over the last two years.

In the Social Studies Curriculum, students are involved in standards based activities that are geared to all learning levels in grades K-5. This includes traditional teaching methods along with projects, games, mock trials and elections, and geography adventures. AOD uses the state approved units under DOE’s Social Studies Pilot, as well as supplemental activities that meet the Delaware content standards for Social Studies.

Academy of Dover belongs to the Delaware Science Coalition. Teachers use the science kits provided by DOE and attend six hour training on each kit. This curriculum challenges students with inquiry based and hands-on learning experiences. Students in Kindergarten through fifth grade learn about Earth Science and continue with an introduction to Biology, Chemistry, Ecology, and Physics. Teachers are currently planning for the switch from the Delaware Prioritized standards to the Next Generation Science Standards.

Academy of Dover has implemented a comprehensive, integrated K-5 art program. This program, which integrates all areas of the core content areas into its instructional plan, provides students with cross-curricular connections and new ways of thinking about skill-based concepts. Each year this program continues to expand and recently the students had the opportunity to begin learning about pottery with the addition of a Kiln.

Technology is an important part of the learning environment. Therefore, AOD has added a Technology program for the 2013-14 school year. This new related arts program provides students an opportunity to use technology once a week in a controlled setting. With 25 computers in the lab, students have access to different entrepreneurship programs, such as Clay Piggy, and Typing Web. Students begin by learning where the letters are located on a keyboard and how to use home row. Students in grades 3-5 are given opportunities to conduct various types of research, as well as type research papers. This addition of Technology to AOD is preparing students for the new Smarter Balanced Assessment coming in 2014.

The goals for our Physical Education and Health classes are to meet and exceed State standards in each curricular area. It is important to provide our student with a safe, friendly and nurturing learning environment. The students are provided the knowledge, tools, and models to make healthy choices and enjoy lifetime sports/activities. The Physical Education program follows the instructional units provided by

DOE, as well as uses CATCH (Coordinated Approach to Child Health). A Fitness Gram is used to assess students' ability twice a year. AOD uses model units for Risk Watch, which is provided by DOE, as well as lessons from Health Teacher.com. These programs are aligned with the Delaware Standards for Health and Physical Education.

Academy of Dover offers Spanish in grades K-5. It follows a communicative approach where students are active users of the language they are learning. World Language learning at this level emphasizes oral language development and reinforces and enhances content previously introduced in other subject areas. Lessons are teacher created based on the Delaware Recommended Curriculum for World Language.

2. Reading/English:

Academy of Dover's English Language Arts curriculum, is focused on developing our students' reading, writing, thinking, and speaking skills. It is a research-based developmental reading and language arts program for kindergarten through fifth grade.

This school chose this particular approach to reading because it incorporates the five essential components of reading along with writing:

- a. Phonemic Awareness: the ability to hear, focus on, and work with the individual sounds or phonemes in spoken language
- b. Phonics: The relationship of the sounds of spoken language to the letters in written words
- c. Vocabulary: students need to know what the words are in the text to understand what they are reading
- d. Fluency: bridge between word recognition and comprehension
- e. Comprehension: students use many strategies to help them understand what they read
- f. Writing

Students acquire foundational reading skills in the following ways:

- a. Direct Instruction: the teacher tells students about a strategy in a clear and explicit way.
- b. Modeling: the teacher shows students how to use the strategy by "thinking aloud".
- c. Guided Practice: the teacher guides, assists, and provides feedback to students during their reading as they practice using the strategy.
- d. Application: Students practice using the strategy, with support from the teacher, until they can use it independently.

Along with whole-group instruction, small group instruction is also used to target the reading skills of students performing below, on grade level, and above grade level. Using data provided from ELA Benchmark assessments, comprehension, fluency, and the Response to Intervention (RTI) program, students are placed into differentiated groups. These groups provide extra support or challenge opportunities that are aligned with the program and are based on students' needs.

Progress is monitored school wide through the use of weekly comprehension, vocabulary, and skill tests as well as DIBELS testing which is assessed three times a year. These tests determine which students qualify for Response to Intervention (RTI).

3. Mathematics:

Over the past three years, our staff has been working together to shift the focus of our mathematics curriculum from the standards originally set by our state, to those of the Common Core. To help our staff and students with this transition, we have adopted Go Math, which was built for the Common Core. The lessons in Go Math begin with context-based situations and then build to more abstract problems. Students use models, manipulatives, quick pictures, and symbols to build mathematical understanding.

Within every lesson of Go Math, are activities and materials that engage students with focused hands-on activities. Teachers select instructional strategies and resources to specifically align with student's level of

understanding and preferred learning style. Our Math RTI time provides a half hour of small group instruction tiered to the students levels. During this RTI process, students are assessed three times a year.

- a. Beginning of year assessment determines how many of the current year's CCSS students already understand. Lessons can be adjusted for skills that need little coverage and allow more time for skills that students find challenging.
- b. Chapter tests, performance tasks, and the middle of the year assessment monitors students' progress throughout the year. This allows teachers to plan time to reinforce skills that students have not mastered. This is usually done during the math RTI time.
- c. End of the year assessments evaluate students' mastery of this year's CCSS. Teachers reinforce skills that students find challenging in order to provide success.

Our teachers also incorporate a form of daily math into their lessons. In the lower, primary grades, this daily math takes the form of Calendar Math. Here, math problems and concepts are woven into the time devoted to the day on the calendar, and oftentimes, students are involved in the creation of these daily problems. For upper grades, daily math varies from a problem of the day, to mental math, and reviewing previously-learned concepts to provide a foundation for newer concepts.

The key component for our school's success in mathematics instruction lies within the team approach of administration and teachers working together to meet the needs of our students.

4. Additional Curriculum Area:

Academy of Dover has been part of the Delaware Science Coalition since 2007. The Coalition supports science education in grades K-12 and is a collaborative effort between schools, DOE, higher education, business and industry, and community based science organizations. They provide the highest quality science instruction for students in Delaware schools.

The mission behind the Coalition is to build and maintain capacity at the district and school level to ensure that all students meet the Delaware and National Science Standards as part of becoming successful, productive citizens. This is what the Academy of Dover needed.

AOD chose to become members of the Science Coalition because it gave students an opportunity to develop hands on learning. The school would not have been able to fund the amount of resources provided in the kits without the Coalition. Kits are prepared and distributed to schools by the Coalition. Teachers receive three different science kits during the school year based on grade levels taught. They participate in high quality professional development provided by trained teachers before teaching each kit. The table below shows what students in grades K-5 learn over the course of the school year.

Kindergarten:

- Trees- students will learn that trees have identifiable structures, they are resources to people and animals, they are living things, and they change through the seasons.
- Push, Pull, Go- Students will build an understanding of force and motion, understand that motion is predictable, and learn that objects move in different patterns.
- Wood & Paper- Students will learn that wood is a resource that comes from different kinds of trees and has many observable properties.

First Grade:

- Weather and Me- Students will learn about weather patterns, observe different types of weather conditions, and understand the Engineering Process.
- Solids and Liquids- Students will investigate the physical properties of solids and liquids, and observe their similarities and differences.

- Organisms- Students will observe living organisms and learn about different habitats.

Second Grade:

- Insects- Students will learn about insect needs and identify the life cycles of a beetle, butterfly, and silkworm.
- Bridges- Students will understand the Engineering Design Process and use that knowledge to build model bridges.
- Soils- Students will identify the components of soil and learn about clay, sand, and humus.

Third Grade:

- Human Body- Students will learn about the skeletal system, muscular system, and joints.
- Earth Materials- Students will identify the characteristics of rocks, minerals, and crystals.
- Water- Students will learn about evaporation, condensation, and the three states of matter.

Fourth Grade:

- Structures of Life- Students will learn about the structures of land snails, the properties of seeds/fruits, and the life cycle of a bean plant.
- Magnetism & Electricity- Students will identify forms of energy, and learn about the elements of electrical circuits.
- Land & Water- Students will learn about the water cycle, erosion, and landforms.

Fifth Grade:

- Ecosystems- Students will identify the organisms in ecosystems, learn about growth and reproduction, and identify pollutants.
- Mixtures & Solutions- Students will be introduced to the periodic table and learn about chemical reactions.
- Motion & Design- Students will learn about air resistance, force, friction, and energy.

This curriculum challenges students with inquiry based and hands-on learning experiences. Students in Kindergarten through fifth grade learn about Earth Science and continue with an introduction to Biology, Chemistry, Ecology, and Physics. Teachers are currently planning for the switch from the Delaware Prioritized standards to the Next Generation Science Standards, which is still in the planning phase.

5. Instructional Methods:

At Academy of Dover, teachers work collaboratively in their grade levels and Professional Learning Communities. In PLC, teachers in kindergarten through second grade meet together and third through fifth meet together, where they discuss a variety of different things from planning to data within test scores, etc. Teachers meet weekly within grade levels to plan for upcoming lessons and provide ways to differentiate instruction. Collaboration with the Special Needs teachers also occurs frequently. Teachers keep up to date records on student goals and submit a folder weekly to the Special Needs Manager with information on student goals and whether their goals are being met or not. Special needs teachers “push in” with students during ELA or math time. Some students’ IEP require “pull out” where they are taken from the regular education classroom for a brief period and worked with on their goals as described in their IEP.

In the classrooms teachers differentiate instruction by a number of ways. AOD has built into the daily schedule a reading RTI time and a math RTI time, each lasting half an hour. The reading RTI time allows teachers to work in small groups based upon their results from the DIBELS assessment. Math RTI time allows teachers to pull students into a group that needs extra help in math. During ELA, teachers teach the whole group for a half hour and then spend another hour with smaller groups. These groups are based on students’ needs within the classroom. Groups are differentiated by levels. Each class has a Paraprofessional during that ELA time to help provide additional support with small group instruction.

Instructional technology and technology applications are integrated into daily lessons to engage students. Many teachers have an interactive white board with the ability to connect to the Internet. This allows virtual lessons and experiences to be brought into the classroom. Graphing calculators, multimedia projectors, and computers are also used to enhance learning.

6. Professional Development:

Academy of Dover is built upon the ideals of a collaborative learning community. Professional Development at AOD is designed to support the curricular goals for the school community, both vertically and horizontally. This provides the community with a common language around the work that is done with children. With these ideals, AOD utilizes various avenues to support the development of both teachers and staff. Professional Development at AOD focuses on three areas: 1) ongoing teacher collaboration, 2) school wide goals and 3) individual teacher development.

In order to regularly engage staff in this learning process, AOD teachers frequently have the opportunity to meet in grade level teams to plan and discuss student data. Additionally, AOD gives its teachers the opportunity to attend conferences and share with other members of the AOD community what they are doing in their classrooms. Lastly, AOD brings people on site to achieve school wide goals, providing teachers with trainings and ongoing development in areas of need.

Academy of Dover continues to seek to provide its teachers with the necessary resources in order to continue to improve student performance. Ongoing professional development will continue to be conducted regularly during the academic year. This will occur as part of school-wide in service meetings, professional development workshops offered through the Department of Education and as individual/group attendance at regional and national conferences, as well as weekly meetings between teachers.

7. School Leadership

The Academy of Dover's administrative leadership consists of a Principal and Vice Principal who are Delaware State certified Principals. They are complimented by a team consisting of a School Interventionist who also is a Social Worker, Special Education Manager, Human Resources, Cafeteria Manager and Chief Custodian.

Through weekly student services meetings all facets of school life are discussed and areas of concern identified and addressed. Additionally individual students with particular needs are identified and corrective measures debated and implemented. Material/ financial resources, as well as student progress for each discipline, are reviewed bi-weekly in after school meetings chaired by the Principal with the Vice Principal, Office Manager. The Principal communicates with all families and students on a weekly basis through electronic means by newsletter and announcements. Parent, student, and staff input play a key role in the day to day operations of the Academy of Dover.

The Academy of Dover leadership team consists of the following:

The CEO/Principal is the Leader of the school. He answers to the Board of Directors and oversees the development of the school and constantly works to achieve the goals outlined in his strategic plan. He also serves as the Chief Financial Officer, Director of Human Resources and Director of Curriculum.

The Vice Principal manages the day-to-day operations of the classrooms and instruction. She oversees the curriculum, scheduling, in- service training/staff development, oversees assessment programs, responsible for establishing a positive learning environment and the climate/culture at the school.

The School Interventionist is responsible for managing student behavior and teacher write-ups. She also serves as the Director of Transportation and oversees the PBS Program.

The Human Resource Officer/Office Manager assist the CEO in overseeing the schools' budget reporting and monthly financial reports to the board.

Lead Teachers meet with their departments on a regular basis and have mandatory meetings with the Principal and Vice Principal every two weeks. Each department is considered a Positive Learning

Community (PLC) where they are expected to share teaching ideas/strategies, review data, and discuss curriculum ideas/concerns.

It is the leadership philosophy of AOD to:

1. Administer the school in strict compliance with State and Federal Charter School regulations ensuring a free and appropriate public school education for students with a demonstrated interest in Math and Science.
2. Academic rigor, exposure to appropriate social activities, and challenging physical development will be the basic principles guiding our daily routine.
3. Leadership training for students will be paramount in our operations and integrated into the curriculum. Student leadership will be included/ advised on all major operational decisions and will enjoy open door access to AOD Administration.
4. Material and financial resources will be allocated and allotted to the maximum extent in support of our student's education.
5. To maintain an AOD outreach program effectively communicating to members of the community that diversity is a welcome entity and all may apply.
6. Institutions in pursuit of student achievement.
7. To provide professional development opportunities for staff and an ideal workplace.
8. Decisions at AOD are made always with the best interest of the student in mind.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Math

All Students Tested/Grade: 3

Publisher:

Test::

Edition/Publication Year: 2013

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	70	79	38	57	59
% Advanced	9	35	3	10	9
Number of students tested	46	34	37	51	34
Percent of total students tested	100	100	95	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	77	54	58	68	39
% Advanced	27	25	15	11	8
Number of students tested	22	24	33	19	26
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	0	0	33	67
% Advanced	50	0	0	0	33
Number of students tested	2	1	3	6	6
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced		100	50	100	
% Advanced		50	0	100	
Number of students tested		2	2	1	
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced		0	50		
% Advanced		0	0		
Number of students tested		1	2		
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	78	55	53	70	42
% Advanced	30	27	18	15	10
Number of students tested	23	22	34	20	29
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced				100	
% Advanced				100	
Number of students tested				1	
7. American Indian or					

Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	0	0		
% Advanced	0	0	0		
Number of students tested	1	1	1		
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	75	75	100	100
% Advanced	100	25	0	0	0
Number of students tested	1	4	4	1	1
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced				100	
% Advanced				0	
Number of students tested				1	
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Math
All Students Tested/Grade: 4
Publisher: AIR

Test::
Edition/Publication Year: 2013

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	72	52	53	65	34
% Advanced	8	7	0	30	9
Number of students tested	25	29	40	23	32
Percent of total students tested	93	100	98	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	68	54	55	63	25
% Advanced	5	8	0	21	4
Number of students tested	22	26	33	19	28
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	50	0	50	17	50
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	13
Number of students tested	2	3	4	6	8
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	67	100	100	0
% Advanced	0	0	0	0	0
Number of students tested	0	3	2	1	0
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	0	50	0
% Advanced		0	0		
Number of students tested		1	2		
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	74	52	54	60	32
% Advanced	9	9	0	25	10
Number of students tested	23	23	35	20	31
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced				100	
% Advanced				0	
Number of students tested				1	
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	0	0	0		
% Advanced	0	0	0		

Number of students tested	1	1	1		
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	60	50	100	100
% Advanced	0	0	0	100	0
Number of students tested	1	5	4	1	1
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced				100	
% Advanced				100	
Number of students tested				1	
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading/ELA
All Students Tested/Grade: 3
Publisher: AIR

Test::
Edition/Publication Year: 2013

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	71	79	52	75	67
% Advanced	42	47	21	14	30
Number of students tested	45	34	33	51	30
Percent of total students tested	100	100	94	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment					
% of students tested with alternative assessment					
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	71	78	46	71	65
% Advanced	43	44	23	10	26
Number of students tested	44	44	26	42	23
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	50	20	0	50	
% Advanced	38	20	0	0	
Number of students tested	8	5	1	8	
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced			100	100	100
% Advanced			0	0	0
Number of students tested			1	1	1
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	50	100	50	40	100
% Advanced	50	100	0	0	100
Number of students tested	2	1	2	5	1
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	73	74	48	75	65
% Advanced	43	33	24	15	22
Number of students tested	37	27	25	47	23
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced				100	100
% Advanced				0	0
Number of students tested				1	1
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced		100	0		
% Advanced		100	0		

Number of students tested		2	1		
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	63	100	71	67	50
% Advanced	38	100	14	0	50
Number of students tested	8	5	7	3	2
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					75
% Advanced					75
Number of students tested					4
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES:

STATE CRITERION--REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Reading/ELA
All Students Tested/Grade: 4
Publisher: AIR

Test:: DCAS
Edition/Publication Year: 2013

School Year	2012-2013	2011-2012	2010-2011	2009-2010	2008-2009
Testing month	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan	Jan
SCHOOL SCORES*					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	80	56	54	74	43
% Advanced	32	26	15	17	10
Number of students tested	25	27	39	23	30
Percent of total students tested	93	100	98	100	100
Number of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	0	0
% of students tested with alternative assessment	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Free and Reduced-Price Meals/Socio-Economic/Disadvantaged Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	77	54	58	68	39
% Advanced	27	25	15	11	8
Number of students tested	22	24	33	19	26
2. Students receiving Special Education					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	0	0	33	68
% Advanced	50	0	0	0	33
Number of students tested	2	1	3	6	6
3. English Language Learner Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced		100	50	100	
% Advanced		50	0	100	
Number of students tested		2	2	1	
4. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced		0	50		
% Advanced		0	0		
Number of students tested		1	2		
5. African- American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	78	55	53	70	41
% Advanced	30	27	18	15	10
Number of students tested	23	22	34	20	29
6. Asian Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced				100	
% Advanced				100	
Number of students tested				1	
7. American Indian or Alaska Native Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	0	0		
% Advanced	0	0	0		

Number of students tested	1	1	1		
8. Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
9. White Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	100	75	75	100	100
% Advanced	100	25	0	0	0
Number of students tested	1	4	4	1	1
10. Two or More Races identified Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced				100	
% Advanced				0	
Number of students tested				1	
11. Other 1: Other 1					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
12. Other 2: Other 2					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
13. Other 3: Other 3					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

NOTES: