

Abstract

The mission of the Academy for Global Citizenship (AGC) Charter School is to empower all students to positively impact the community and world beyond. In pursuit of this mission, AGC is committed to serving the whole child, modeling academic excellence, developing inquirers, cultivating international awareness, fostering environmental stewardship, and facilitating collaboration within the community. AGC's educational program enables all students to meet and exceed challenging State student academic achievement and Common Core standards and curricular methods have been extensively researched and successfully utilized in other schools serving a similar demographic of students. AGC is an International Baccalaureate candidate school that offers a relevant, engaging, and challenging educational program for all children. Every child is held accountable for achieving rigorous academic expectations.

AGC was founded with a solid commitment to providing all students with accelerated learning opportunities, with an emphasis on strong reading, math and academic skills that will lead to better achievement in high school, resulting in increased graduation rates. All AGC students, including students with disabilities, English Language Learners (ELL) and those with high needs, participate in the academically rigorous International Baccalaureate (IB) Primary Years Program, beginning in Kindergarten and extending through 8th grade with the Middle Years Program, preparing them for continuing their college preparatory IB education in high school. As a high-poverty school (77%), AGC has proactively developed a series of innovative supports, remediation strategies and strong staffing plans to ensure that the needs of students with disabilities, those with high needs, recent immigrants and ELL students are comprehensively addressed to allow for accelerated learning.

AGC's IB Program, extended school day and school year, after school enrichment and remediation programs, extensive family involvement, school autonomy and emphasis on physical education and positive nutrition, have already contributed to strong academic performance. As a result of our approach, AGC's students are currently outperforming neighborhood public school students in math and reading by over 20 percentage points. Our first cohort of students entered with only 11% reading at grade level and has since increased to 80%. A series of robust measurable academic and operational objectives have been established, and are projected to be met, including 85% math and reading proficiency and average student attendance of 95% by the end of the 2011-2012 school year. AGC is committed to sharing best practices, and contributing to research through the evaluation and extension of our innovation.

Although AGC is a non-selective, open-enrollment charter school that complies with all laws pertaining to admissions, students representing various racial and ethnic backgrounds are particularly interested in applying for the lottery due to AGC's IB Program, dual-language approach and emphasis on promoting global citizenship. AGC is also intentional about ensuring that student recruitment and school outreach materials are available in the three languages most represented in our neighboring communities (Spanish, Polish and English). As such, AGC has attracted an ethnically and racially diverse student population, including 80% Hispanic, 13% Caucasian (predominantly Eastern European), 5% African American, and 2% multi-racial. Over eight native languages are spoken among our students. The cultural, racial and ethnic backgrounds represented among our students and families are utilized as a foundation for our integrated curricular approach to fostering cultural awareness and international mindedness.