



Head of School

AIM ACADEMY

LOCATION

Conshohocken, PA

POST DATE

February 10, 2021

APPLICATION DEADLINE

April 10, 2021

SEMIFINAL ROUND

July (On-site half-day visits)

FINAL ROUND

September (On-site two-day visits)

DECISION ANNOUNCED

October 22, 2021

START DATE

July 1, 2022

REPORTS TO

Office of the CEO



12M
RECRUITING

SUMMARY

Students who learn differently deserve to be taught differently. But how can that educational experience be different unless the school in which those students are attending is itself organized in a unique fashion?

This is exactly the premise on which AIM was founded just 15 years ago. From the very beginning, a research-to-practice school (AIM Academy) and a research institute (AIM Institute for Learning & Research) have been coequal partners with the mission to transform the educational model of teaching students with language-based learning differences. AIM's co-founders recognized the need to bring research much closer to the classroom to improve pedagogy, but also vice versa: teaching and learning provides a critical feedback loop to the research. This spirit of educational innovation and commitment to excellence has not only made AIM Academy one of the premier schools in the Greater Philadelphia Region for students with language-based learning differences, but it has put the entire nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization on the international map as it partners with universities, licenses technology platforms, and develops training modules for governmental departments of education.

Now AIM Academy seeks a visionary, inspirational, and talented head of school with a growth mindset and a passion for serving students with language-based learning differences. The next head of school will have the incredible opportunity to work with AIM's co-founders, who currently serve as executive directors of the entire organization, and are working with the board of trustees on a succession plan to install the necessary governance structures to sustain this growing organization into the future. The next head of school will report to the office of CEO and start on July 1, 2022.

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SECTION I

ABOUT AIM

Founded in 2006, AIM has been transforming both the educational industry and the fields of literacy and language-based learning differences by providing a dynamic, innovative, and growing environment where top researchers and teaching practitioners can work side by side.

ABOUT AIM

OVERVIEW

From a conversation between two like-minded parents searching for the best opportunities for their daughters to becoming co-founders of AIM Academy and the AIM Institute for Learning & Research, Pat Roberts and Nancy Blair have been fearlessly determined to develop an educational solution that not only caters to but exceeds the needs of students with language-based learning differences. Beginning in a small rented facility and then later moving to a custom-built campus now home to nearly 400 students, AIM Academy has always been known as a school at the forefront of delivering a high-quality learning experience based on scientifically sound research.

A UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP

Since its very beginning, AIM, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, has been composed of two coequal divisions: AIM Academy and the AIM Institute for Learning & Research. AIM Academy is a research-to-practice school that pioneers technology and techniques proven to benefit children with language-based learning differences. AIM Institute for Learning & Research partners with global researchers and invests in technology to bring evidence-based practices to scale. Both divisions report to the office of the CEO, which in turn reports to a self-perpetuating board of trustees.

GLOBALLY RECOGNIZED

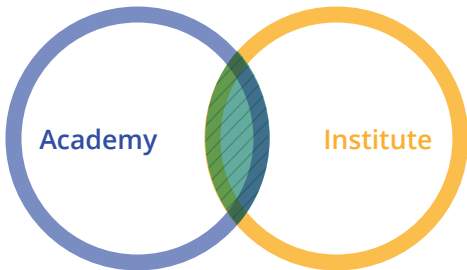
As a leader and convener, AIM brings together scientists, clinicians, administrators and educators to translate the latest advances in neuroscience and research into new educational strategies. To date, many thousands of professionals and parents have enjoyed access to experts and leading literacy researchers through the programming of the AIM Institute for Learning & Research. Just as AIM Academy is committed to quickly translating laboratory research into effective interventions and educational practices for its students, the AIM Institute for Learning & Research seeks to provide those same tools to teachers throughout the Delaware Valley region and around the world.



THE EVOLUTION OF A UNIQUE ORGANIZATION

THE EARLY YEARS

2006 From the first day it opened, the school, which was originally known as the Academy In Manayunk, operated directly alongside the AIM Institute for Learning & Research. This coequal partnership sparked immediate collaborations between educators and researchers and is the hallmark of what separates AIM from other organizations serving students with language-based learning differences.

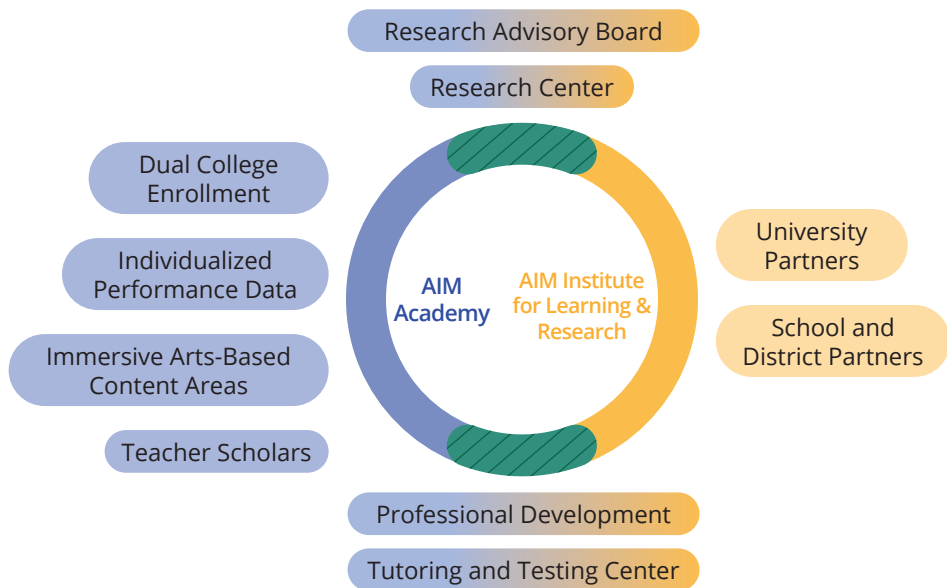


2008 Within two years, AIM had established partnerships and affiliations with universities and other international programs, having become a Wilson® Accredited Partner providing Wilson Language Training® and Certification, a LETRS Affiliate Site, and a RAVE-O Training Site. Modeled after The Lab School of Washington, AIM Academy incorporated visual and performing arts with rigorous academics to support knowledge acquisition, vocabulary expansion, and critical thinking development. AIM Academy’s students have been “living it and learning it” through educational immersion, research-based learning strategies, and assistive technology.

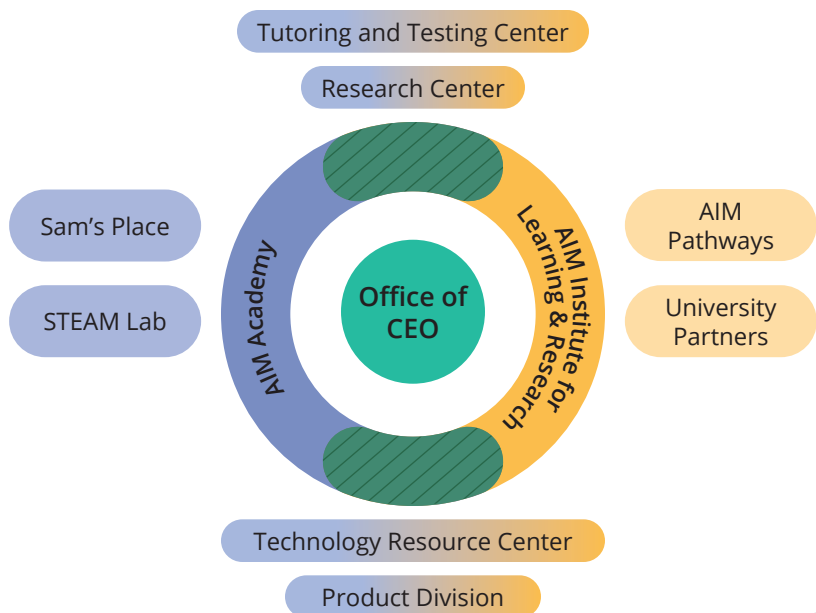


THE PRESENT

2012 2012 was a pivotal year for AIM, which moved to its current campus in Conshohocken. The school was renamed “AIM Academy” and graduated its first class of high school seniors. The new site provided over 60,000 square feet of uniquely designed classrooms, labs, art studios, dining facilities, and athletics fields. A research advisory board was established with world-renowned researchers Ken Pugh, Louisa Moats, Hollis Scarborough, Julie Washington, and others. Beginning in 2012, the school would experience an extended period of growth and eventually more than doubled its student body to nearly 400 students.

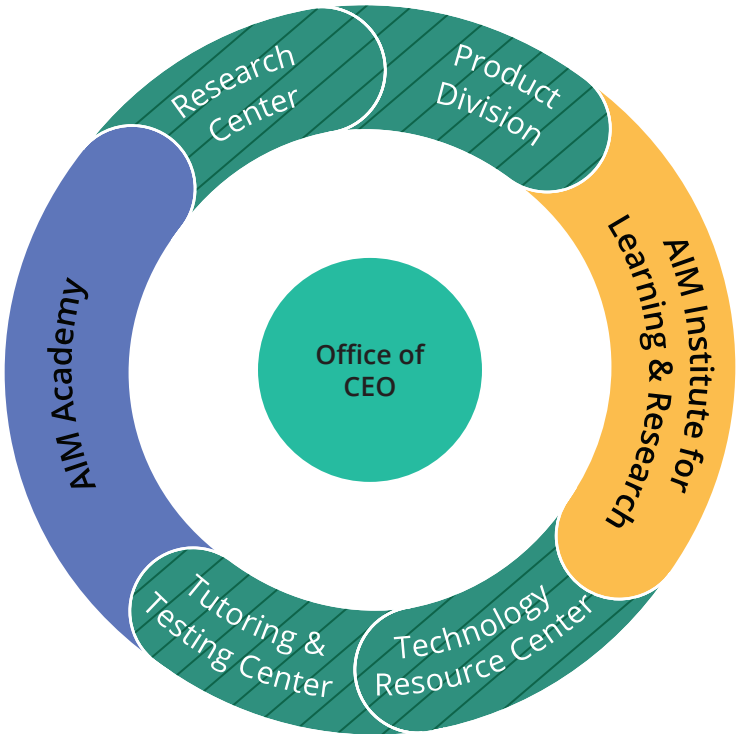


2020 Today, AIM is a thriving and dynamic organization, governed by a talented and dedicated board of trustees. As AIM prepares to enter its next chapter, the board is putting in place an office of the CEO to ensure the organization preserves the dynamic and visionary approach to executive leadership that AIM has enjoyed since its founding. The office of the CEO will oversee the head of school, the director of the institute, and various operational areas that support and partner with both the school and the institute.



AIM FOR THE FUTURE

2025 As AIM visions what’s ahead, the possibilities are many. Signature programs between AIM Academy and the AIM Institute for Learning & Research could remain subdivisions and collaborative partnerships. Or, as some of those programs expand and develop independent revenue streams, they could become their own formal units reporting directly to the office of the CEO. No matter what, the school will always be the flagship of this very innovative, dynamic, and exciting organization.



GOVERNANCE OF AIM

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

AIM is governed by a self-perpetuating board of trustees, which currently comprises approximately 20 talented, dedicated, and outstanding volunteers — many of whom are national thought leaders, business and financial CEOs, and respected educational administrators.

OFFICE OF THE CEO



PAT ROBERTS
Executive Director
and Co-Founder, AIM



NANCY BLAIR
Associate Director and
Co-Founder, AIM

The office of the CEO reports directly to the board of directors and maintains responsibility for executing AIM's bold vision and strategic plan. Currently, the co-founders of AIM are serving as co-executive directors and plan to remain with the organization for the next few years, in part to help onboard the next head of school. When the co-founders do eventually retire, the board is committed to hiring a CEO for AIM, who will assume executive responsibility for the entire organization.

MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE CABINET



**AMANDA
BEELER**
Communications



**DAWN
BROOKHART**
AIM Institute
for Learning &
Research



**MIKE
BROOKS**
Operations



SID GHOSH
Finance



**KEVAN
TURMAN**
Advancement



**A NEW
AMAZING
LEADER**
AIM Academy

AIM has a history of hiring dynamic and talented nonprofit and educational leaders, and then giving them opportunities for career advancement as they make a big impact on the community. Thus, the next head of school will encounter amazing partners in the executive cabinet, along with numerous rising educational leaders within the school. While AIM seeks a head of school with some non-academic operational fluency, the advantage of AIM's governance structure is that the next head will be able to focus on academic strategy, faculty and school leadership, curricular innovation, and research partnerships with the AIM Institute for Learning & Research.



SECTION II

ACADEMY AND INSTITUTE

AIM Academy and the AIM Institute for Learning & Research are together leading the way in evidence-based strategies for student success. AIM empowers not only its teachers, but also teachers at other schools, with evidence-based knowledge and practice, so that students with language-based learning differences can achieve the best learning outcomes possible.



AIM ACADEMY

MISSION

To provide extraordinary educational opportunities to children with language-based-learning disabilities such as dyslexia, dysgraphia, and dyscalculia, utilizing research-based intervention strategies and an arts-based learning environment that is college preparatory in scope and sequence

PHILOSOPHY

AIM was created with the belief that children with language based learning differences can and will thrive in a rigorous academic setting when they are taught by a highly committed, experienced and creative faculty who have ongoing access to the latest research, best practices, technological resources, and experts in their field. We dedicate ourselves to putting research into practice every day. AIM Academy students thrive in classrooms that offer immersive and experiential learning, and our programs are designed to foster self-esteem and social responsibility. Their academic and intellectual development is further enhanced by an array of extracurricular activities and enrichment in the arts, athletics and community service. It is our goal, that upon graduation, our students are prepared for the challenges, complexities and choices available to them in college and career. Curiosity, collaboration, compassion, confidence and critical thinking are their tools for success.



CURRICULUM

AIM Academy's curriculum follows the Four Threads to the Future Curricular Framework, which blends 21st century skills with college and career readiness. Students embark on one or more of the four learning journeys in support of career readiness:

- Arts and Design
- Global Competency and Social Sustainability
- Innovation and Entrepreneurship
- Science and Engineering

The academic programs at AIM Academy are evidence-based and innovative, designed to spark

student curiosity and enthusiasm. At the same time, the curriculum is grounded in the science and research of language-based learning differences. With its commitment to academic excellence, its preparation for life beyond high school, and its belief that each student's strengths should be allowed to flourish, AIM Academy has become a national leader among K-12 schools serving students who learn differently. One example of AIM Academy's unique academic program is its Humanities and Arts curriculum, which develops critical thinking and inspires deep understanding — skills needed for college and career success.

INTERACTIVE HUMANITIES

AIM Academy's unique methodology incorporates the subjects of civics, geography, history and literature in a dynamic and engaging learning environment. Interactive Humanities classes rely heavily on immersive and authentic learning experiences to reenact historical events in order to develop a better understanding of the complex relationships of a particular time period.

- Grade 1: Origins
- Grade 2: River Valley
- Grade 3: Ancient Empires
- Grade 4: The Middle Ages
- Grade 5: Italian Renaissance
- Grade 6: Ancient World
- Grade 7: Democracy Club
- Grade 8: Civil War to Civil Rights

ARTS AND SCIENCES

Through its extensive arts and sciences programs, AIM Academy provides the tools, the stage, the equipment and the means to enrich its students. Individual student interests guide the way as resourcefulness and problem solving skills are developed, providing students with innovative opportunities for self-expression.

SCIENCE OF READING APPROACH

AIM Academy has adopted a structured literacy approach, which is based on the research and aligns to Orton-Gillingham principles. Using evidence-based programs that have been accredited by the Center for Effective Reading Instruction, AIM follows the science of reading to maximize literacy achievement for its students. This approach directly and systematically teaches the structure of the English language. Through this approach, students learn fluent decoding and encoding skills to a level of mastery. Students receive instruction in:

- Phonemic awareness
- Decoding and word study
- Sight word recognition
- Spelling
- Fluency
- Vocabulary
- Oral expressive language development
- Comprehension



SIGNATURE SCHOOL PROGRAMS

RIDING FOR FOCUS

This Program started back in 2016 when AIM Academy was selected by the Specialized Foundation (now Outride) for a Riding for Focus grant. AIM Academy's eighth graders experience the challenges and successes of this hands-on learning program, which includes cycling year round and participating in the Outride curriculum designed to improve attention in the classroom for students with ADHD. In addition, students collect data as part of this research project. Program champion and AIM Academy teacher, Anne Rock, thinks AIM's Research to Practice focus, diverse learner community, and its location along the Schuylkill River Trail made it a perfect match for this partnership with Outride. Cycling is now part of both the Middle and Upper School Programs.

ROBOTICS & ENGINEERING

AIM Academy prepares students to be skilled problem solvers, to think creatively and to work well as a team. The Robotics and Engineering Program promotes these goals while expanding students' concepts of technology, design theory, invention and construction. Every day the Lower School Makerspace is full of experimentation, testing, prototyping, and quite simply, hands-on fun. Students in Middle and Upper School learn about engineering and robotics through project-based, hands-on activities.



b.A.S.H

b.A.S.H. is an annual event intended to showcase student work. The event, which blends (B) work from the Arts (A), STEAM subjects (S) and Humanities (H) is held during a school day and evening in spring. Projects are put on display for students to share with one another as well as with the AIM Community. Lower School students tour Middle and Upper School areas and vice versa. Student work includes written products, digital artifacts of learning, student performances, live debates and discussions, student films, 2D and 3D artwork, robots, 3D printed projects, student prepared food, and much more.

ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Students at all grade levels are encouraged to develop their entrepreneurial mindset across all disciplines. Additionally, through the Four Threads to the Future curriculum, Upper School students are given the opportunity to focus specifically on innovation and entrepreneurship through mentorships, which provide deep dives into the topics of business plan development and financial literacy.

ATHLETICS

The athletic spirit is strong at AIM Academy, with the Wolf Pack shining in a number of sports, including competitive mountain biking, cross country, and golf. Nine interscholastic sports teams, which compete in the Penn-Jersey Athletic League, as well as multiple fitness and wellness programs, enable students to gain self-confidence and augment their emotional and social development.



CENTER FOR GLOBAL LEADERSHIP

AIM Academy's Center for Global Leadership is the school's hub for student travel and cultural learning. The Center seeks to develop and enhance AIM Academy's curriculum through integrating global citizenship across all divisions. A few recent examples include:

- Costa Rica Travel Study
- e-Nable Prosthetic Hand Partnership to send 3D printed prosthetics to refugees in Jordan & Lebanon
- AIM Shared Studio Portal

COLLEGE PREPAREDNESS

One hundred percent of AIM Academy's students that apply to college receive an acceptance. AIM Academy graduates head to higher educational institutions both in the US and abroad. AIM Academy gives students the tools they need to succeed in their new environments, including extensive understanding of how to navigate college resources to support their unique learning styles.

DUAL ENROLLMENT

AIM Academy students enroll in college classes during their senior year allowing them to both earn college credit and better prepare for learning beyond AIM.



SAM'S PLACE

Sam's Place is a tribute to the legacy of Samuel Ozer '20, who was an avid cyclist. Sam's Place will allow AIM Academy students and members of the surrounding community to learn from mentor teachers and students about the skills of bike repair, technology, and entrepreneurship. Sam's Place will create a sense of community for anyone with an interest in biking and a passion for learning.

TETON SCIENCE SCHOOL

AIM Academy's eighth grade students have the unique opportunity to travel to the Teton Science School in Kelly, Wyoming for one week as an adjunct component of their science course. Students visit a glacier to observe the forces that shape the land; participate in field studies to learn first-hand how living things adapt to the winter climate; and explore the area by cross-country skiing and snowshoeing. Opportunities to visit the Murie Museum, Teton Raptor Center, Wildlife Museum, and Caribou Refuge provide students with additional time to reinforce scientific concepts and integrate them with an element of creativity and writing. The culminating project of this experience is a group research experiment that is designed and tested by students.





AIM INSTITUTE

MISSION

To develop a center for educational excellence and professional development to disseminate best practices to educators by providing access to the latest research-based curriculum, technology, and training

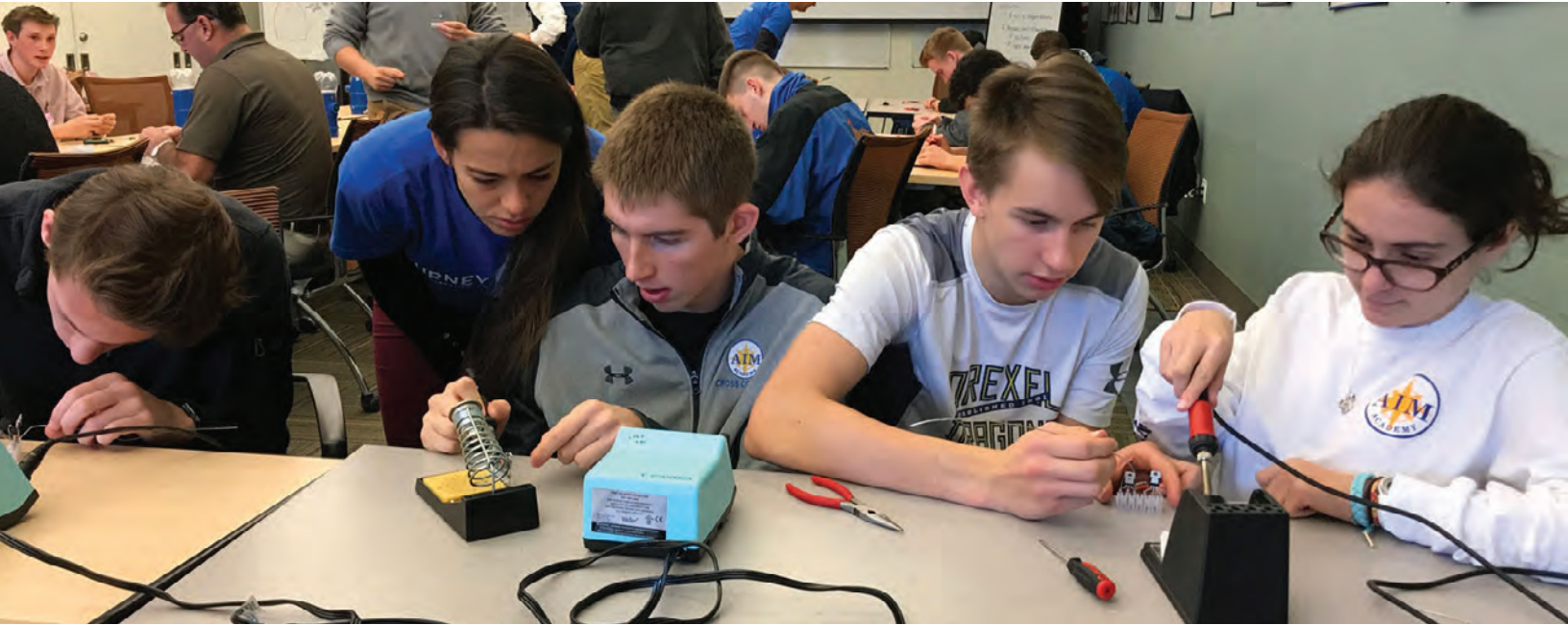
PHILOSOPHY

The AIM Institute for Learning & Research is a center for educational excellence and professional development providing teachers and professionals who work with children who learn differently with specialized training programs and access to the latest research and best practices for the classroom. The Institute is committed to quickly translating laboratory research into effective interventions and educational practices for all students.



ACADEMY AND INSTITUTE: A UNIQUE PARTNERSHIP

AIM Academy and the AIM Institute for Learning & Research could not exist without each other. The vision from the inception of AIM was that the school would be informed by the research, and in turn the research would be informed by what was occurring in 1st-12th classrooms. The AIM Institute for Learning & Research partners directly with researchers and shares its knowledge of best practices with other educators. As a result, AIM's original focus on research continues to be its focus fifteen years later, serving not only the teachers of AIM Academy, but also the international community of educators working in both special and regular education settings.



SIGNATURE PROGRAMS

IGNITE CENTER

The goal of the I.G.N.I.T.E. Center at AIM (Implementing Global Neuroscience in Technology and Education) is to help accelerate learning through deeper understanding of what works for different students by engaging AIM Academy's teachers and students in applied neuroscience research. The Center also provides Upper School students with the opportunity to be involved as I.G.N.I.T.E. Center Student Research Fellows, allowing them to work side-by-side with top researchers from around the world.

PARTNERSHIP WITH HASKINS GLOBAL LITERACY HUB

AIM was the first educational partner of the Haskins Global Literacy Hub to improve language and literacy outcomes for children at risk of reading difficulties across languages and cultures. This international and interdisciplinary collaborative brings together

researchers, practitioners, educators and educational technology specialists to use new approaches to: 1) improve the sensitivity of early language assessment and intervention; 2) deliver on the promise of neuroscience-guided reading instruction and remediation; 3) scale the solutions to global challenges using educational technology; and 4) train a new generation of educators and clinicians.

AIM PATHWAYS™

AIM Pathways™ is a unique, interactive digital teacher training platform designed to deliver research and evidence-based content in the science of reading. AIM Pathways provides easy-to-access, evidence-based learning opportunities for teachers to benefit struggling readers. AIM Pathways received a Gold Award in the Science of Learning category at the 2020 Reimagine Education conference.



KEY STATISTICS

FOUNDED

2006

LOCATION AND CAMPUS

**Nine-acre campus
in Conshohocken,
Pennsylvania**

STUDENTS

384 students from
grades **1** through **12**;

24% students of color

STUDENT LIFE

100% college acceptance
for students who apply

9 interscholastic sports teams

4-week summer enrichment
program for grades 1-12

FACULTY AND STAFF

132 full and part time employees

85% with advanced degrees

6,560 professional development
hours earned annually

100% of lower school teachers
are Wilson Reading® certified

ADMISSION AND RETENTION

87% retention rate

60% acceptance rate

80% yield rate

RELEVANT ASSOCIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS

National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS); Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools (PAIS); Association of Delaware Valley Independent Schools (ADVIS); PA Branch, International Dyslexia Association (PBIDA); Philadelphia Area Independent School Business Officers Association (PAISBOA); The International Dyslexia Association (IDA); The Dyslexia Foundation; Wilson Accredited Partner

TUITION

Grades 1-5: **\$36,746**

Grades 6-11: **\$39,924**

Grade 12: **\$40,724**

FINANCIALS IN FY20

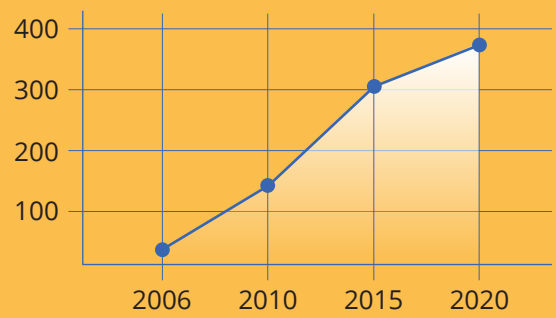
Operating budget for AIM: approximately \$17M; Endowment for AIM approx. \$6M; Donor giving approx. \$2.3M; Financial aid allotment approx. \$1.5M (\$2M for this year in support of COVID relief)

www.aimpa.org

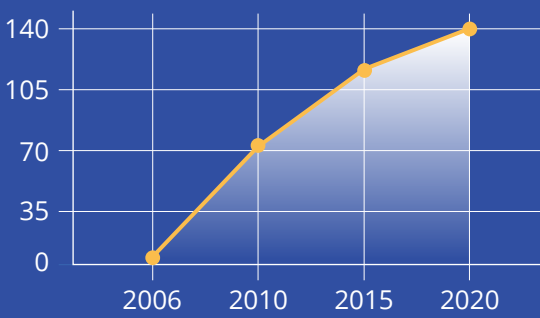


KEY STATISTICS

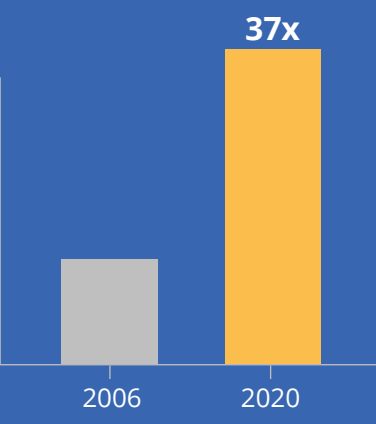
NUMBER OF STUDENTS OVER TIME



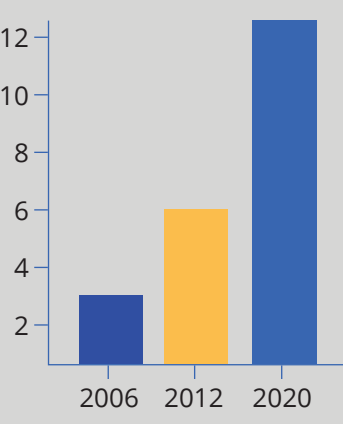
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES OVER TIME



REVENUE GROWTH



NEW PROGRAMS LAUNCHED



KEY STATISTICS

PARTNERSHIPS AND FOUNDATIONS

AIM's community engagement and reach are extensive and include partnerships with:

The Albert M. Greenfield Foundation

The Barra Foundation

The Clayman Foundation

The Dyslexia Foundation

E.E. Ford Foundation

Emily Hall Tremaine Foundation

Florida Center for Reading Research

Haskins Global Literacy Hub, *affiliated with Yale University and University of Connecticut*

International Dyslexia Foundation

The Kingsbury Family Fund

Middle State Tennessee University

National Center of Learning Disabilities

National Council on Teacher Quality

Olitsky Family Foundation

PAIS (*Pennsylvania Association of Independent Schools*)

Philadelphia's Read by 4th Coalition

Philadelphia Insurance Foundation

AIM is the only school in the Delaware Valley region that is licensed as a Wilson Partner School®, a Gold Medal Winner in Science of Learning by Reimagine Education, as well as an exemplar school by The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (P21), the leading organization advocating for 21st century learning for every student.



FUN FACTS

AIM's support dog Kelly has her own Instagram account: [@kellyataim](https://www.instagram.com/kellyataim)

AIM has its own Instagram account too: [@aimacademy](https://www.instagram.com/aimacademy)

AIM has its own hashtags:
#AIMazing #riseupforAIM #AIMstrong

AIM students love to travel, exploring all sorts of amazing places both in the US and abroad.

The AIM for the Stars Gala is AIM's largest fundraising event of the year.



CLASS OF 2020: COLLEGE ACCEPTANCES



AIM Academy's 32 graduates of 2020 were accepted to a total of 69 different colleges and universities and are attending schools across the country to study everything from music to engineering.





SECTION III

AIM COMMUNITY

If you ask members of the AIM community how they would describe AIM Academy, you'd probably hear words like, "immersive," "nurturing," "community," "cheerful," "passionate," "creativity," "love," "home," "unique," "modern," and, "inclusive." AIM Academy is a school that was built around the needs of its students, not the other way around. As everyone at AIM likes to say: "It's simple. Children who learn differently just need to be taught differently."

FACULTY PROFILE



ANNE ROCK

Upper School English teacher,
Riding for Focus instructor, AIM
Mountain Bike coach

When did you start working at AIM Academy?

I joined in 2014 as the Upper School English Language Arts teacher.

What were you doing prior?

I was an upper school English teacher for ten years at SCH Academy, and then I left education to work in the outdoor industry before returning to the classroom at AIM Academy.

Talk about a program you've created.

One big draw to the school is the Schuylkill River, a paved, car-free trail tucked behind campus. I've always commuted to work via bicycle and dreamed of starting a school bike program. The SRT proved pivotal when I applied for an Outride Riding for Focus program grant. The grant provided bikes, helmets, curriculum and training to implement this research-based program that helps students to improve their cognitive, physical, and social-emotional well-being. I leveraged this middle school program to launch our high school NICA (National Interscholastic Cycling Association) mountain bike team. Next, we are embarking upon Sam's Place, a facility and program dedicated to the memory of Samuel Forest Ozer, AIM '20. Sam's Place will be a hub where students,

especially those with learning differences, can develop a passion for cycling and equip themselves with the attitudes and skills needed to go forth into the world as Sam did: confident, prepared, and enthusiastic.

How does AIM Academy support its students?

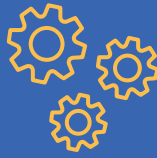
Because we're a small school, we have the opportunity to create something for our kids that is unique and tailored. Teachers at AIM Academy delight in creating independent projects to help students showcase their strengths. We're flexible, and we try to meet every kid where they are because we know they're all at different places in their learning.

What's the best part about working at AIM Academy?

The school has an entrepreneurial spirit and a growth mindset. If teachers have ideas that will support student learning or passions, leadership encourages us to pursue them. AIM Academy allowed me to implement existing and develop novel bike programs — a revolutionary act of administrative faith for which I'm profoundly grateful. Our kids are tinkerers; they like hands-on stuff and getting outside of a traditional classroom setting. The freedom AIM Academy allows is remarkable.



FACULTY PROFILE



ROB ERVIN

Director of Robotics
and Engineering

When did you start working at AIM Academy?

I joined AIM in 2013 as the Director of Robotics and Engineering.

What were you doing prior?

I'm a mechanical engineer by profession. I joined the Marines as a helicopter chief, traveled the world, and then went to college for engineering. I worked in that field for several years but thought that a change was needed. I left engineering to become a teacher at an independent school in Philadelphia. There I taught electives such as woodworking and jewelry making, and I was the director of outdoor education. This was an experiential based program that got students out of the classroom and hiking in the woods, climbing through caves and sailing on the Chesapeake Bay.

Talk about a program you've created.

Before I joined, AIM Academy had strong science and arts programs and an initial start to a STEAM curriculum. Arts is included in almost everything we do here, but at the time the school wanted to include it in a bigger way within STEAM. In essence, AIM hired me to build out the STEAM program. I started with a few Lego kits and some VEX robotic platforms. With the help of many, I have transformed it into something special. Now students are working on creative projects such as home-built drones, electrified bicycles, music-play robots and much more. It is a project-based curriculum, in which the students pick their own project, then research, design, prototype and build their ideas. All the projects are different, and it's wonderful to see students work through their own

projects. I know what I want them to learn, but how they get there is of their own making. I also created the FIRST Robotics Team, where students participate in competitions in high school. Our team name is Wolf Pack Robotics, and we have made it to the national level twice.

How does AIM Academy support its students?

Although students at AIM Academy have language-based learning differences, they are gifted and see things differently. I have a goal for each student, but it's up to them to design their learning paths. We make the learning fun, and we teach students to be resilient. Sometimes things don't work at first, but it's all part of the learning process. When kids try and fail, they find better ways to approach tasks and then try again. AIM Academy is a place where you can fail and have a good time doing it. We encourage this trial and error process so that students can become lifelong learners. I've encountered students who were shy and not interested in STEAM when they first came to AIM, but once they got comfortable in the lab and with my program, they blossomed. Now we have AIM graduates, who just because they learn differently thought at one point in their lives that college would not even be an option, now studying engineering and other technical fields in universities around the country.

What's the best part about working at AIM Academy?

When I joined the school to start the STEAM program, they turned me loose and let me do my thing. The support here has been wonderful. We're a team. At AIM we can build, fly stuff, and break stuff — all the while developing stronger students, one robot at a time. I have the best job.



FACULTY PROFILE



JAY SYNDOR

Class of 2015
Psychologist Assistant at AIM

When did you come to AIM?

I was one of the first students to attend AIM when it was just a summer program in 2006. I had severe dyslexia and struggled with reading. After joining the camp, I remember I was in the car one day with my parents, and I was pointing to a street sign and read the name. My parents were surprised and so overjoyed. From there I applied and became one of the first 24 students to enroll in AIM Academy as soon as it opened. I started in 4th grade and graduated from AIM Academy in 2015.

What are you doing now?

After graduating I went to Penn State University and received my degree in human development family studies with a minor in psychology. I came back to AIM Academy in 2019 as an intern assistant working in the psychology department. I became a staff member in January 2020, and then by August I transitioned into a member of the faculty. I work with kids to help them with their executive function skills. In my role I help them create plans and teach them to be self-advocate for what they need to do to get their homework done. I also support students to develop realistic SMART goals, and then help them develop new habits and behaviors to ensure that they achieve their goals.

What was your experience like at AIM Academy as a student?

When I first started at AIM Academy I was struggling with reading and had self doubt about going to college.

The Wilson Reading Program here taught me how to sound out my words and helped me develop a flow to read. Learning to read gave me confidence to say I'm worthy enough to have a dream, and that I deserve to achieve my dream because I'm a hard worker. AIM Academy didn't give up on me, and it inspired me to not give up on learning to read. We have a strong support system here, and I always felt like my teachers had my back. During my time in college AIM Academy continued to support me. I was part of the AIM Advantage program, which helps students transition to college. Andrew DiPrinzio, AIM Academy teacher and creator of AIM Advantage, helped me throughout college by editing my papers. I was able to write and map out my papers, but I needed assistance with editing. My major involved a lot of writing, and without Andrew reviewing my work I wouldn't have graduated.

What are some exciting changes that have occurred at AIM Academy since the time when you were a student?

There are more honor classes for students to choose, more clubs, and more affinity groups. In regards to diversity, AIM Academy has developed a culture to ensure that members of minority groups feel heard and are comfortable sharing their ideas. We want to make sure that everyone feels AIM Academy can be their second home. Our culture is about ensuring that everyone feels they are in a safe and inclusive environment.





SECTION IV

ABOUT THE ROLE

AIM Academy's head of school must be mission-driven, research-centered, open-minded, and solutions-oriented to support an innovative and exceptional community of teachers and learners.



Looking Ahead

AIM Academy has always been about community, which in 2006 started with the parents, grandparents, educators, and entrepreneurs who came together because they knew that children with language-based learning differences could and would thrive in a rigorous academic setting with direct access to the latest research.

There is so much to the learning experience at AIM Academy. First and foremost, AIM Academy focuses on the well-being of each and every student. Knowing that confidence and competence go hand in hand, faculty members support each child's strengths in order to provide opportunities for students to flourish and thrive. Ideas are explored, projects are developed, and the true joy of learning is unleashed. Understanding the value of knowledge is important at AIM Academy because every student is on a path to college and lifelong success. Finally, AIM Academy promotes an atmosphere of social and community engagement through a diverse array of extracurricular activities, travel opportunities, community events, and service learning projects.

FROM A RECENT AIM ANNUAL REPORT

Imagine...

...where the next decade will lead us as we work to create an education environment where all children who learn differently get early intervention and the education they need.

...the waterfront outside our school doors with AIM Academy rowers on the Schuylkill River, a boathouse on the shore or students working on an environmental studies experiment in a Science Barn.

...making an AIM Academy education affordable to everyone through vibrant scholarship programs.

...that teachers everywhere can receive the preparation they need to work with all children to improve literacy.

...the headlines AIM Academy graduates will make as they head out into the world as confident, fearless leaders in the arts, science, business, academia and more.

Imagine yourself leading AIM Academy into the future.



THE NEXT HEAD OF SCHOOL

The head of school must embody AIM Academy's philosophy of innovative teaching, fearless learning, and research-driven pedagogy. The school's dedicated teachers and administrators have been designing and implementing new programs and initiatives on an annual basis since its inception in 2006. Thus, in many ways the head of school serves as the "supporter-in-chief" to a dynamic, committed, and entrepreneurial community of learners and educators.

When the previous head of school announced about a year ago his departure at the end of the 2019-2020 school year, the school initially planned a nationwide search. However, with the pandemic upending the initial search strategy, AIM quickly pivoted and tapped its middle school division head to serve as its two-year interim head. Together with AIM's co-founders, the interim head has been steadily guiding the school through its pandemic reopening plans and ensuring that AIM Academy's mission and focus remain on-track. With a desire to relocate his growing family closer to relatives who live outside the Delaware Valley Region, the interim head will be departing AIM Academy on June 30, 2022, after eight years of service.

The next head of school will be joining the institution at an exciting time. The co-founders will still be with AIM and are eager to support the next head of school, but at the same time they will be working with the board on a succession plan to ensure long-term stability from the executive seat. In 2022, the institution will be sixteen years old and approaching the end of its "adolescence." But an established AIM does not equate to a complacent AIM. This is an organization that will continue to innovate — that needs to innovate. AIM Academy in particular has hired rockstar teachers and administrators who have given to and gained so much from the institution, and as a result AIM Academy has promoted numerous faculty and staff to senior positions. Thus, the next head of school must be adept at supporting and mentoring a talented staff. But in the end, it's the students and the mission that matter most. On July 1, 2022, AIM Academy will be excited to welcome a mission-aligned head to lead the school and serve in the executive cabinet.



DIVERSITY STATEMENT

At our core, we are dedicated to building and sustaining equity by actively embracing diversity in our community. Our approach to the critical work of equity and inclusion is driven by our values of respect, unity, and empathy. We recognize, reflect upon, and are meaningfully informed by the plurality of experiences that each student, family, and staff/faculty member brings to our community. We embrace all forms of identity including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status and class, faith and belief, age, ability, learning differences, and the broad range of human experiences and perspectives.



DUTIES, QUALIFICATIONS, AND DESIRED EXPERIENCE

JOB DUTIES

- Reporting to the office of the CEO, oversee all daily operations of AIM Academy.
- Guide and lead the school in all core areas, including academics, student affairs, athletics, and admission.
- Work in close collaboration with the director of the AIM Institute for Learning & Research on major initiatives and partnerships involving research-to-practice implementation and evaluation.
- Serve in the executive cabinet and collaborate with other cabinet administrators overseeing operational divisions of AIM.
- Represent AIM Academy at various public functions and events, both locally and nationally.
- Engage in fundraising for AIM Academy.

QUALIFICATIONS AND DESIRED EXPERIENCE

- Possession of a graduate degree from an accredited college or university
- Minimum five years senior administrative leadership in an educational or nonprofit organization
- K-12 classroom experience preferred but not required
- A successful history of mentoring and developing staff internally
- A track record of launching, incubating, and developing major programs and entrepreneurial initiatives
- Financial acumen and fiscal prudence
- Experience working in an organization serving or dedicated to individuals with language-based learning differences preferred but not required



DESIRED QUALITIES OF THE NEXT HEAD OF SCHOOL

Adaptable

Collaborative

Dynamic

**Emotional
Intelligence**

Entrepreneurial

Innovative

Inspiring

Mentoring

Mission-Driven

Research-Aligned

Respectful

Visionary



HOW TO APPLY

12M Recruiting is acting on behalf of AIM Academy to identify exceptional educational leaders to fill this extraordinary opportunity. Please direct any inquiries to:

GABRIEL LUCAS

Principal, 12M Recruiting
jobs@12MRecruiting.com

**APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY
APRIL 10, 2021 WILL RECEIVE
PRIORITY REVIEW.**

All applications must be submitted online:
www.12MRecruiting.com/jobs/AIM.

An application requires submitting four PDFs:

- Cover letter introducing yourself to the AIM Academy head of school search committee
- CV or résumé
- A list of five references (include each person's name, current organization, title, phone number, email, and past connection to you — though we will not contact any references without obtaining your permission first)
- A response to the following prompt:

Why is research important based on the current educational landscape, and what are its future implications?

