

## [ASPIRA of Pennsylvania a Latino Advocacy Group Starts Bilingual Cyber Charter School](#) [1]

By: Edweek.org's

ASPIRA of Pennsylvania, a Latino advocacy group, has launched the first bilingual online charter school in Pennsylvania and possibly in the nation. (Readers, if you know of another one, let us know.)

The ASPIRA Bilingual Cyber Charter School so far has a principal, four teachers, and 31 students in grades 8-12 and was authorized by the Pennsylvania Education Department. I learned about it from Evelyn Nuñez, the superintendent of charter schools managed by ASPIRA of Pennsylvania, an affiliate of the national ASPIRA Association. The national association supports Latino children and youths through clubs in schools and in after-school programs but it doesn't run charter schools. The new bilingual cyber school opened at the end of December.

Nuñez said that since the school opened in the middle of a school year, ASPIRA hasn't yet had an organized marketing effort. The school will spread the word about its mission to develop students' skills in Spanish and English starting this spring and prepare to provide online classes for students in grades kindergarten through 12th grade next September, she said.

Because many of the students who have just enrolled for courses in the upper grades don't have the Spanish skills to take core academic subjects in Spanish, the school is now offering that language only as a second language. But next school year, for students starting in kindergarten, core subjects will be taught half in English and half in Spanish, which is also the case for ASPIRA's brick-and-mortar charter schools in Philadelphia, Nuñez said.

The school provides students with a computer, webcam, printer, and Internet access in their homes. So far, many of the students are high school dropouts who are young parents or working, Nuñez said.

### **ASPIRA News:**

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