# Annual Report

## Charter School
## Review
## Committee

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## City of Milwaukee

## 2007- 2008

# Table of Contents

# Attachments

A.    Education Consultant's report on Academy of Learning & Leadership
B.    Education Consultant's report on Central City Cyberschool
C.    Education Consultant's report on Downtown Montessori
D.    Education Consultant's report on Darrell Lynn Hines Academy
E.    Education Consultant's report on Massai Institute
F.    Management Consultant's report on city-sponsored Charter Schools
G.    Agreement with Academy of Learning and Leadership, detailing probationary status and benchmarks for being removed from probation
H.    Memo on Massai Institute closing

# 1. Introduction

This is the ninth annual report from the Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) to the Common Council. This report will include information on the activities of the CSRC, with a focus on the education and management performance of five of the City's charter schools authorized to operate during the 2007-08 school year.

The five City charter schools** in this report are:

- Academy of Learning & Leadership (2003*)
- Central City Cyberschool (1999*)
- Downtown Montessori (1998*)
- Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence (2002*)
- Maasai Institute (2005*)

*Year school began its Charter with the City of Milwaukee

**Milwaukee Academy of Science, a charter school that had formerly been chartered by UW-Milwaukee, started the 2008-09 school year as a City of Milwaukee charter school. Information about MAS will be in next year's report.

The CSRC employs the services of two consulting firms to provide management and educational oversight to the schools. These consulting firms assist the CSRC in its mission to ensure the schools are meeting their statutory and contractual obligations. The consulting firms are:

- The Children's Research Center, a division of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency, which monitors the educational performance of each charter school.

- M.L. Tharps & Associates, which evaluates the management performance of each charter school.

Additionally, a staff member from the Institute for the Transformation of Learning at Marquette University provides support to the CSRC. In addition to administrative support, the ITL staff conducts the technical review of applications to the CSRC. Finally, members of the DOA staff at the city provide administrative support.

# 2. Applications for the 2009-10 School Year

Two charter school applications were submitted to the Charter School Review Committee on September 5, 2008. Both were found to be technically complete. However, one application was withdrawn.

On October 13, 2008, the CSRC held hearings on the following application:

Certification and Emergency Response Training High School

On December 1, 2008, the CSRC voted not to recommend the application of Certification and Emergency Response Training High School.

# 3. Education Oversight

**Meaningful Academic Accountability**

- Measures the impact or effect schools have on their students.

- Identifies the students who are and are not making expected academic gains.

Since 1998 the CSRC has:

- Adopted high academic standards

- Authorized public schools that:

    < Had no student selection criteria
    < Had potential to be high performing

- Required schools to monitor

    - Attendance and retention
    - Parent/family involvement and licensed teachers
    - Local measures in reading, math, and writing
    - Standardized tests: required for all students, grades 1-8, and high school
    - Academic gain: year-to-year student growth analysis*

    *Year-to-year expectations for reading and math are:

- Students at grade level: average gain of least 1 GLE**
- Students at proficient level or above: maintain this status

- Students below grade level: average gain of more than 1 GLE
- Students at minimal proficiency or below: advance to the next quartile or next level of proficiency

**grade level equivalency

# 2007-2008 Programmatic measures of success

| 2007-2008 Attendance and Retention Rates for City-sponsored charter schools | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Average Attendance Rate | Average Attendance Rate | Average Attendance Rate | Student Return Rate | Student Return Rate | Student Return Rate |
| | 2005–06 | 2006–07 | 2007–08 | Fall 2005 | Fall 2006 | Fall 2007 |
| Academy of Learning and Leadership | 91.3% | 90.7% | 90.0% | 75.8% | 80.1% | 90.0% |
| Central City Cyberschool | 89.1% | 87.4% | 88.0% | 77.6% | 78.2% | 88.0% |
| Darrell Lynn Hines Academy | 95.0% | 93.7% | 93.0% | 90.7% | 85.3% | 90.0% |
| Downtown Montessori | 92.5% | 93.3% | 95.5% | 76.0% | 59.0% | 90.0% |

| 2007-2008 Parent/Family Involvement and Licensed Teachers | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Parent Conference Attendance Rate | Number of Classroom Teachers With Department of Public Instruction License or Permit |
| Academy of Learning and Leadership | 90.1% attended 3 of 4 conferences | 19 of 22 |
| Central City Cyberschool | 90.1% fall; 96.0% spring | All 19 |
| Darrell Lynn Hines Academy | 86.1% fall; 93.3% spring | All 12 |
| Downtown Montessori* | 100.0% both fall and spring | All 4 |

# 2007-2008 Local Measures

All of the elementary schools met local measures, indicating students made satisfactory academic progress or maintained local measures that demonstrated academic progress according to those measures during the 2007-2008 school year.

See Section IV-E or IV-D in each school's report (Attachments A-D).

| Year-to-year Progress on 2007-2008 Standardized Test Measures Downtown Montessori Academy | | |
|---|---|---|
| | All Students Reading Expectation: Average of One Year Progress | Students Below Grade Level Reading Expectation: Average of > One Year Progress |
| 1st to 2nd and 2nd to 3rd grade (Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test) | 2nd and 3rd graders combined: 2.8 grade-level equivalency | No 2nd or 3rd graders tested below grade level the previous year |
| | Students proficient or advanced expectation: for 2006–07, at least 75% maintain proficient or advanced levels | Students below proficient level expectation: increase one quartile or one level |
| 4th- through 8th-grade students with comparison scores in reading and math | Reading and math comparison group sizes < ten | No 4th through 6th graders below proficient level in previous year |

**Focused School Improvement Plan Recommendations for 2007-2008 for Downtown Montessori Academy**

•Integrate new staff*;

•Maintain a stable Montessori culture as the school grows;

•Integrate the members of the parent-teacher organization with the Montessori staff and Montessori philosophy;

•As the elementary programs grow, revisit and restate the academic outcomes for the students at each level; and

•Create a mechanism to extract attendance data from the school's new database, Montessori Records Express, and store data in a spreadsheet to provide to CRC at the end of the year.

*Downtown Montessori has added a grade level for the 2008–09 academic year, and therefore new staff members have joined the academic team.

| Year-to-year Progress on 2007-2008 Standardized Test Measures Central City Cyberschool | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **All Students Reading Expectation: Average of One Year Progress** | **Students Below Grade Level Reading Expectation: Average of > One Year Progress** |
| 1st to 2nd and 2nd to 3rd grade (Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test) | Second graders: 0.8 grade-level equivalency<br>Third graders: 0.7 grade-level equivalency | Group sizes < 10 |
| 1st to 3rd grade (Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test) | Average advancement: 2.1 grade-level equivalency | Average advancement: 2.1 grade-level equivalency |
| | **Students proficient or advanced expectation: at least 75% maintain proficient or advanced levels** | **Students below proficient level expectation: increase one quartile or one level** |
| 4th- through 8th-grade students with comparison scores in reading and math | Reading: 87.1% of 70<br>Math: 89.8% of 59 | Reading: 46.3% of 54<br>Math: 47.7% of 65 |

**Focused School Improvement Plan Recommendations for 2007-08 for Central City Cyberschool**

- Focus on achievement in mathematics, particularly the basic skills necessary to supplement the Everyday Math curriculum. Consider acquiring software programs to increase student practice opportunities.

- Continue to implement strategies to improve reading levels at all grade levels.

- Continue implementation of the Responsive Classroom and Second Step curricula.

| Year-to-year Progress on 2007-2008 Standardized Test Measures: Darrell Lynn Hines Academy | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **All Students Reading Expectation: Average of One Year Progress** | **Students Below Grade Level Reading Expectation: Average of > One Year Progress** |
| 1st to 2nd and 2nd to 3rd grade (Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test) | 2nd graders: 0.6 grade-level equivalency 3rd graders: 0.7 grade-level equivalency | Eleven 2nd and 3rd graders progressed an average of 1.1 grade-level equivalency |
| | **Students proficient or advanced expectation: at least 75% maintain proficient or advanced levels** | **Students below proficient level expectation: increase one quartile or one level** |
| 4th- through 8th-grade students with comparison scores in reading and math | Reading: 83.8% of 80 Math: 76.7% of 43 | Reading: 52.1% of 48 Math: 30.6% of 85 |

**Focused School Improvement Plan Recommendations for 2007-08 for DLHA**

- Continue to focus on math instruction and techniques to improve math performance.

- Examine the reasons for the lack of progress in reading for second and third graders as measured by the year-to-year SDRT;

- Continue to focus on staff development.

| Year-to-year Progress for Standardized Test Measures:  Academy of Learning and Leadership | | |
|---|---|---|
| Academy of Learning and Leadership (K4–8th Grade) | All Students Reading Expectation:  Average of One Year Progress | Students Below Grade Level Reading Expectation: Average of > One Year Progress |
| 1st to 2nd and 2nd to 3rd grade (Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test) | Second graders: 0.6 grade-level equivalency Third graders: 0.4 grade-level equivalency | Average advancement: 0.7 grade-level equivalency |
| | Students proficient or advanced expectation: for 2006–07, at least 75% maintain proficient or advanced levels | Students below proficient level expectation:  increase one quartile or one level |
| 4th- through 8th-grade students with comparison scores in reading and math | Reading:  63.2% of 68 Math:  66.7% 15 | Reading:  42.3% of 71 Math:  29.2% of 96 |

**Focused School Improvement Plan Recommendations for 2007-08 for ALL**
- Continue activities to improve each building's culture.  These activities might include the following:
-
- Reconfiguring the two buildings; one as a K4 through fourth grade elementary, and the other, a fifth through eighth grade middle school.
-
- Developing teacher specialization in the middle school, for example, a math specialist or a language arts specialist.
-
- Considering block scheduling.
-

- Implement a revised and restructured behavioral approach, e.g., discipline policy.
- Develop and implement strategies to improve primary level reading progress.
- 
- Create a plan to use the Measures of Academic Progress and Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination – Criterion-referenced Test (WKCE–CRT) math and reading results more effectively on the classroom level.
- 
- Improve the school's ability to accurately extract analyzable data from the school's PowerSchool program, including a roster of all students enrolled at any time that includes student enrollment date and attendance data. Ideally, this data file would also include student grade, gender, race/ethnicity, and withdrawal date and reason.

Note: The CSRC has placed the Academy of Learning and Leadership on probation. Please see the letter included in your materials.

See Section II-D in each school's report for more detailed information.

# School Accountability
# Wisconsin NCLB Compliance 2007-2008

- Four adequate yearly progress (AYP) objectives

- Require standardized tests developed for Wisconsin

- Annual review of every school's progress

**DPI Status: Adequate Yearly Progress Summary**

| 2007–08 | Academy of Learning and Leadership | Central City Cyberschool | Darrell Lynn Hines | Downtown Montessori |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| I. Test Participation (95.0%) | Yes, satisfactory | Yes, satisfactory | Yes, satisfactory | N/A satisfactory |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| II. Elementary Schools: 85% attendance<br><br>High School: Graduation rate | Yes, satisfactory | Yes, satisfactory | Yes, satisfactory | Yes, satisfactory |
| III. Reading (67.5% proficient) | No, SIFI Level 1 | Yes, satisfactory | Yes, satisfactory | Yes, satisfactory |
| IV. Math (47.5% proficient) | No, SIFI Level 1 | Yes, satisfactory | No, satisfactory | Yes, satisfactory |

## Becoming a High Performing School under the CSRC's Academic Monitoring System

The Charter School Review Committee's Academic Monitoring policies are designed to drive improved student achievement by having schools keep local measures and participate in standardized tests on an annual basis. The data gathered through out the year is the basis for data-drive development of School Improvement Plans. These results are then shared annually with the CSRC and the Common Council.

# 4. Management Oversight

M. L. Tharps & Associates developed procedures for reviewing both Charter Schools' management policies and procedures and their compliance with the City of Milwaukee contract. These procedures were developed based on the review of the contracts between the Charter Schools and the City of Milwaukee, the management oversight requirements outlined in the Request for Proposal, and conferences/discussions with the Charter School Review Committee and various City personnel. The procedures are as follows:

a)     M. L. Tharps & Associates (MLTA) met with financial management personnel to get an understanding of school's operations as well as the accounting, budgeting and financial management functions.

b) For each major system function (cash receipts / accounts receivable, cash disbursements / accounts payable, and payroll), MLTA has obtained an understanding of the schools processes and/or controls over each area.

c) Cash account reconciliations were reviewed and compared to month-end general ledger balances.

d) Revenues were reviewed to verify whether charter students were paying tuition, book and/or registration fees.

e) Liability accounts were reviewed to determine if large or unusual liabilities exist.

f) Obtained a copy of the school's annual audit reports. MLTA reviewed the reports for propriety, noting any findings reported by the auditor, and that the reports were in accordance with reporting standards.

The complete management oversight report is included as an attachment to this report. Following is a summary of the conclusions and recommendations for each of the City's charter schools with respect to management practices:

**Downtown Montessori Academy**

**Conclusion**
Based on our review of management's policies and procedures, it appears the school has in place a solid financial management system. The school appears to be in good financial condition, with a solid cash flow. Other than the late submission of its audit report, the school appears to be in compliance with the financial management provisions of its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

**Recommendations**
Due to the late submission of the audit report for June 30, 2008, we recommend that the school take steps to ensure that future audits are completed on a timely basis, in accordance with the agreement with the City.

**Central City Cyberschool**

**Conclusion**
Based on our review of the management policies and procedures of Central City Cyberschool as of the end of the school's fiscal year, July 31, 2008, it appears that the school has adequate procedures in place to ensure a sufficient financial management system. The school appears to be in good financial condition, with a solid cash flow. The school appears to be in compliance with the financial management provisions of its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

**Recommendations**
During the 2007-08 fiscal year, the school implemented our recommendation for to hire a person with adequate training to perform the accounting functions for the school. As this recommendation has been implemented, we have no further recommendations for improvement at this time.

**Darrel L. Hines Academy**

**Conclusion**
Based on our review of the management policies and procedures of the DLH Academy as of June 30, 2008 it appears that the organization continues to have excellent procedures in place to ensure a sufficient financial management system. The school appears to be in excellent financial position, and has an excellent cash flow position. As of June 30, 2008, the school appears to be

in compliance with the financial management provisions of its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

**Recommendations**

Based on our management review, we believe that the DLH Academy should continue its current management policies and procedures.

**Academy of Learning and Leadership**

**Conclusion**

Based on our review of the management policies and procedures of the Academy of Learning and Leadership as of June 30, 2008, it appears that the organization has procedures in place to ensure an adequate financial management system. Other than the late filing of its annual audit, the school appears to have be in compliance with the financial management provisions of its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

**Recommendations**

Based on our management review, we have recommended that the school continue with its current management policies and procedures. As the school has a very complicated and significant debt issuance that is highly dependent on the school's projected budgets, we recommend that management continue to closely monitor budget to actual results. We also recommend that the school take steps to have its annual audit completed on a timely basis in accordance with its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

# 5. Oversight Fees

In order to pay for the operations of the Charter School Review Committee, schools pay a fee. Over the past year, schools paid $98,238 in fees. Expenses were $128,507.25. The net balance of the fund at the end of the 2007-08 school year was $194,829.

# 6. Conclusion

The CSRC concludes that four city-sponsored charter schools now in operation continue to "operate an education program that has a reasonable prospect of providing Milwaukee children a good education," which is the academic standard set forth in Section 330-15.2 of the Code of Ordinances. These schools are:

♦ Academy of Learning and Leadership
♦ Central City Cyberschool
♦ Darrell L. Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence
♦ Downtown Montessori

The CSRC further concludes that these schools should continue operating for the 2008-2009 school year. Three of the schools, Central City Cyberschool, Darrell L. Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence, and Downtown Montessori, will operate with the standard CSRC monitoring.

However, the CSRC concludes that one of the city-sponsored charter schools now in operation continue to operate on probationary status. The school and the CSRC have to come to an agreement in a letter detailing the measures the school needs to take to be removed from probationary status (See attachment G).

Finally, the CSRC and Maasai Institute mutually agreed to terminate their charter school contract at the end of the 2007-2008 school year.

City of Milwaukee ordinance 330-29(4), provides that, whenever the CSRC recommends termination of a charter contract, it shall "[s]ubmit its findings and recommendations, together with all materials considered by the committee, to the city clerk and request the preparation and introduction of a common council motion to terminate the contract and revoke the charter." The CSRC must also "[t]ransmit its findings and recommendation, together with all materials considered by the committee, to the city attorney." CSRC findings are attached. (See attachment H). The Steering and Rules Committee received the recommendation November 19, 2008.

Respectfully Submitted,

Howard Fuller
Chair
February, 2009

15

# Attachment A

# Academy of Learning and Leadership

## Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance

### 2007-08 School Year

Report Date: September 2008

Prepared by
Janice Brett, Ph.D.
Susan Grambsch
Theresa Heck

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

APPENDICES:

Appendix A: Contract Compliance Chart
Appendix B: Outcome Measure Agreement Memo

Prepared for:

### *Academy of Learning and Leadership*

1530 West Center Street
Milwaukee, WI 53206

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
## for
## Academy of Learning and Leadership
## Fifth Year of Operation as a City of Milwaukee Charter School
## 2007–08

This fifth annual report on the operation of the Academy of Learning and Leadership (the Academy) charter school is a result of the intensive work undertaken by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC), the Academy staff, and the Children's Research Center (CRC). Based on the information gathered and discussed in the attached report, CRC has determined the following findings.

## I.     CONTRACT COMPLIANCE SUMMARY

The Academy has met some of its education-related contract provisions. However, the Academy did not meet year-to-year achievement expectations, specifically the expectations that second and third graders advance an average of one grade-level equivalency (GLE) in reading from the previous year; that at least 75% of fourth through eighth graders who were proficient in reading and math maintain their proficiency; and that second- and third-grade students below grade level would advance more than one GLE in reading. In addition, the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) website indicates that three teachers did not hold a DPI license or permit. Also, attendance and enrollment information provided by the school was not in a usable data file format. See Appendix A for an outline of specific contract provision compliance information.

## II.     PARENT, TEACHER, STUDENT, AND BOARD MEMBER SATISFACTION

- Approximately 90.4% of parents indicated that the school's contribution to their child's academic progress/learning was excellent (53.4%) or good (37.0%); and

- Six (60.0%) of ten teachers rated the school's contribution to students' academic growth as excellent (10.0%) or good (50.0%; see Figure ES1).

Figure ES1

**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**School Contribution to Child Progress/Learning**
**2007–08**

| | |
|---|---|
| Parents (N = 73) | 39 (53.4%) — 27 (37.0%) |
| Teachers (N = 10) | 1 (10.0%) — 5 (50.0%) |

0.0%  20.0%  40.0%  60.0%  80.0%  100.0%

■ Excellent   □ Good

- Students indicated the following:

Figure ES2

**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**Student Interviews**
**2007–08**

| | |
|---|---|
| I Use Computers at School | 100.0% |
| Teachers Help at School | 100.0% |
| Teachers Talk to My Parents | 100.0% |
| I Plan to Go to College | 100.0% |
| I Feel Safe at School | 80.0% |

N = 20

0.0%  20.0%  40.0%  60.0%  80.0%  100.0%
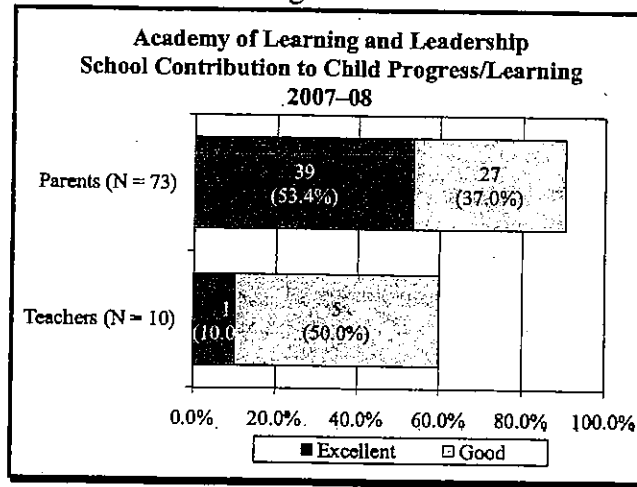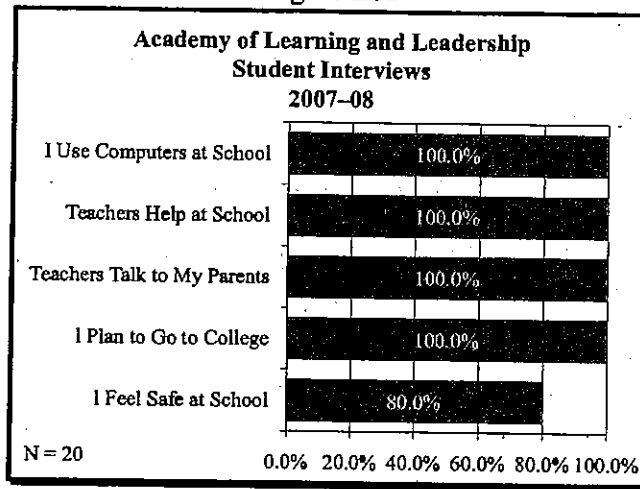
Among other things, teachers suggested that increased consistency related to discipline and policy and procedures would improve the school.

- The three board members interviewed indicated that they were very satisfied with the program of instruction, the enrollment policy/procedures, the student-teacher ratio/class size, the discipline policy, adherence to the discipline policy, the commitment of the school's leadership, and the safety of the educational environment.

- Board members offered the following suggestions to improve the school:

» Improve the ability to recruit, involve, and include leaders and potential leaders in the community;

• Increase the number of staff; and

• Provide for more teacher involvement.

## III. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

### A. Local Measures

### 1. Secondary Measures of Educational Outcomes

To meet City of Milwaukee requirements, the Academy identified measurable education-related outcomes in attendance, special education, and parental involvement. The school met its attendance and special education goals and fell short of its parent conference goal.

### 2. Primary Measures of Educational Progress

The CSRC requires each school to track student progress in reading, writing, and mathematics throughout the year to identify students in need of additional help and to assist teachers in developing strategies to improve the academic performance of all students.

This year, the Academy's local measures of academic progress resulted in the following outcomes:

• Individual learning plans (ILPs) were completed for 98.2% of the students who should have had one, and 90.9% of the ILPs were reviewed after at least three of the four quarters.

• Parents of 317 (90.1%) students attended at least three of four student-led parent conferences.

• A comparison of October 2007 reading assessments with May 2008 reading assessments using the Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading learning continuum, indicated that 70.1% of students met the school's reading progress goal.

• Fall and spring comparisons of results on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) test indicated that:

» Of 243 first- through eighth-grade students, 82.3% improved in reading;

» Of 216 first- through eighth-grade students, 69.9% improved in math; and

» Of 175 third through eighth graders, 81.1% showed improvement in language arts skills.

- Of 284 students in K5 through eighth grade, 79.2% met the math progress expectations as measured by pre- and post-tests administered in fall and again in spring.

- Of 348 students from K4 through eighth grade, 68.4% demonstrated writing skill progress as measured by a school-based writing continuum.

- Portfolios and presentations for all eighth graders were rated proficient.

- Nineteen of 23 classrooms met criteria for successful learning expeditions.

## B.    Year-to-year Academic Achievement on Standardized Tests

The Academy administered all required standardized tests noted in their contract with the City of Milwaukee. Multiple-year student progress is described below.

- Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test multiple-year advancement results indicated that second graders advanced, on average, 0.6 grade-level equivalencies (GLE); and third graders advanced, on average, 0.4 GLE. These data indicate that the CSRC expectation of 1.0 GLE average advancement in reading was not met.

- Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination–Criterion-referenced Test (WKCE–CRT) results indicated that multiple-year advancement results for students who met proficiency level expectations in 2006–07 are as follows. The CSRC expects that 75.0% of these students will maintain proficiency.

Figure ES3



Academy of Learning and Leadership
Percentage of Students Who Maintained Proficiency
From 2006–07 to 2007–08

Reading (N = 38)  63.2%

Math (N = 15)  66.7%
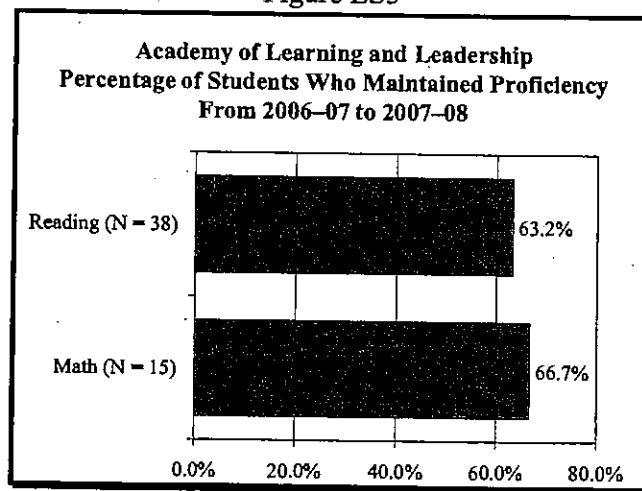
- Multiple-year advancement results for second- and third-grade students below GLE in reading indicated that, on average, 24 second and third graders advanced 0.7 GLE in reading. This falls short of the CSRC expectation that these students would advance more than 1.0 GLE.

- Multiple-year advancement results for students below proficiency level expectations in 2006–07 indicated that the following advanced a proficiency level or improved at least one quartile.

Figure ES4

**Academy of Learning and Leadership
Percentage Improved in 2007–08
for Students Who Did Not Meet
Proficiency Level Expectations in 2006–07**

Reading (N = 71)  42.3%

Math (N = 96)  29.2%

0.0%    20.0%    40.0%    60.0%
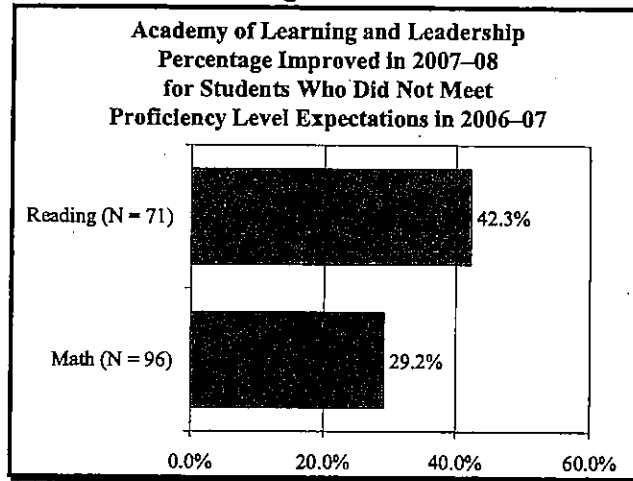
## C.    Adequate Yearly Progress Status

The school has met adequate yearly progress (AYP) in test participation and attendance. For the second year in a row, the school did not meet AYP in reading and math. The schools improvement status is "school identified for improvement (SIFI) Level 1."

## IV.    RECOMMENDATIONS

The school addressed the recommendations in its 2006–07 programmatic profile and educational performance report. At the end of the year interview, the school staff along with CRC staff developed the following recommendations for the 2008-09 academic year:

- Continue activities to improve each building's culture. These activities might include the following:

  » Reconfigure the two buildings as one K4 through fourth grade elementary and the other, a fifth through eighth middle school.

  » Developing teacher specialization in the middle school; for example, a math specialist or a language arts specialist.

  » Considering block scheduling.

- Implement a revised and restructured behavioral approach, e.g., discipline policy.

- Develop and implement strategies to improve primary level reading progress.

- Create a plan to use the MAP and WKCE–CRT math and reading results more effectively on the classroom level.

- Improve the school's ability to accurately extract analyzable data from the school's PowerSchool program, including a roster of all students enrolled at any time that includes student enrollment date and attendance data. Ideally, this data file would also include student grade, gender, race/ethnicity, and withdrawal date and reason.

## I.    INTRODUCTION

This is the fifth program monitoring report to address educational outcomes for the Academy of Learning and Leadership (the Academy), one of five City of Milwaukee charter schools, in the 2007–08 academic year. This report focuses on the educational component of the monitoring program undertaken by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) and was prepared per the contract between the CSRC and the Children's Research Center (CRC). Please see Appendix A for an overview of compliance for educationally related contract provisions.

The process used to gather the information in this report included the following:

1.    CRC staff assisted the school in developing an outcome measures agreement memo. See Appendix B for a copy of the memo.

2.    CRC made an initial site visit to conduct a structured interview with the administrator and other staff members, and to review pertinent documents. Additional site visits were made to observe classroom activities, student-teacher interactions, parent-staff exchanges, and overall school operations. At the end of the academic year, a structured interview was conducted with the administrator and other staff members.

3.    CRC read case files for selected special education students to ensure that individual education programs (IEPs) were up-to-date.

4.    At the end of the school year, CRC conducted face-to-face interviews with a random selection of teachers and students. CRC also interviewed three members of the school's board of directors. Parent surveys were distributed by the school at the spring parent conferences in April, and CRC made two attempts by telephone to gather survey information from parents who did not return a survey.

5.    The Academy provided electronic and paper data. Data were compiled and analyzed at CRC. Some data, e.g., student enrollment dates and attendance data, were submitted in a form requiring CRC to enter the data prior to analysis.

## II.  PROGRAMMATIC PROFILE

The Academy of Learning and Leadership

Address: 1530 West Center Street
Milwaukee, WI 53206

Telephone: 414-372-3942

Executive Director: Camille Mortimore, Ph.D.

### A.  Description and Philosophy of Educational Methodology

### 1.  Mission and Philosophy

The Academy serves the urban education needs of children from K4 through eighth grade. According to information provided in the Academy's *Student–Family Handbook* for 2007–08, and on its website, www.all-milwaukee.org, the mission of the Academy is as follows:

- The Academy is a community of central city Milwaukee families and educators uncompromisingly committed to the learning and development of its children as whole persons.

- Through creative, experiential, problem-based, interdisciplinary teaching and learning opportunities, children, families, and educators develop deep competence as learners.

- Through action, reflection, dialogue, choice, mentoring, and service, children, families, and educators develop deep confidence as learners.

- The Academy is dedicated to consciously creating a generative community in order to develop learner competence and leadership confidence.

- The uniqueness of each individual, the need for caring relationships in learning, the risk-taking and challenge essential to deep learning, and the human calling to make a contribution to the world are principles held sacred by the community at the Academy.

## 2. Description of Educational Program and Curriculum[1]

The goal of the Academy is to empower students to strive toward the qualities of the "Ideal Graduate," which are becoming a conscious learner, a communal person, a confident leader, an effective communicator, a powerful problem solver, and one who cares for himself/herself.

The Academy is an Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound (ELOB) school. ELOB is a framework for planning what and how children will learn and helping teachers design curriculum and deliver instruction. ELOB emphasizes learning by doing, with a special focus on character growth, teamwork, reflection, and literacy. Teachers connect high-quality academic learning to adventure, service, and character development through a variety of interdisciplinary, project-based learning expeditions.

Student progress is measured by the achievement of goals in each student's individual learning plan (ILP), student-led conferences for parents, local measures in reading, writing, and math, student portfolios that will lead toward students becoming The Ideal Graduate, and standardized testing required by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) and the City of Milwaukee.

Curricular areas to prepare the Ideal Graduate are the following:

- Powerful problem solver: Math and science

- Communal person/confident leader: Social studies and social development

- Effective communicator: Reading, writing, speaking/listening, art, music, and technology

- Conscious learner/caring self: Study and work habits, personal development, and physical education

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[1] Information is taken from the 2007–2008 *Student–Family Handbook* and the school's website: www.all-milwaukee.org.

As an independent public charter school, the Academy abides by the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) regarding education for children with special needs. The school's special education program is a full-inclusion model of service delivery. The Academy provides Response to Intervention (RtI)[2] through its early intervention/pre-referral process, which is called Support and Alternatives for Instructors and Learners (SAIL). SAIL is designed to meet teacher and student needs, to respond to parent concerns, and to intervene early in the learning process when it is not functioning well.

This year the school participated in SPARK, a tutoring program for the kindergarten through third-grade students both during the day and after school, in collaboration with the Boys and Girls Club.

B.    **Student Population**[3]

At the beginning of the year 427 students ranging from pre-kindergarten (K4) through eighth grade were enrolled in the Academy.[4] Seventy-seven students enrolled after the school year started, and there were 111 students who withdrew from the school prior to the end of this academic year.[5] Reasons for withdrawing were as follows: 36 students left because of behavior/discipline issues (two of these students were expelled); 25 students moved away; 12 withdrew to attend a school closer to home; ten left due to dissatisfaction with the program or the school; six left due to dissatisfaction with the teachers or staff; five students left because their siblings withdrew from the school; two left due to drug activity; nine left for other reasons, such

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[2] RtI is a change in special education law that requires a number of interventions and documents be provided to a child before they can be formally tested for a disability.

[3] This information is based on a list emailed to CRC and entered into an MS Excel spreadsheet at CRC. It also includes students listed on an Excel spreadsheet provided to CRC that contained student race/ethnicity and gender data. Some students appeared on one list and not on the other. Results include all students from both lists.

[4] Enrolled on or before September 7, 2007. Enrollment date was not provided for two students. CRC assumed these students were enrolled for the year.

[5] Withdrew on or after September 7, 2007. This information is based on a list emailed to CRC and entered into an Excel spreadsheet. A separate spreadsheet provided by the school listed 110 students who withdrew.

as to attend a military school, a year-round school, or high school, or because of safety issues. Six students withdrew with no reason provided.

At the end of the school year, based on information provided by the school, there were 390 students enrolled at the Academy. There were 171 (43.9%) girls and 200 (51.3%) boys (gender was not provided for 19 students); 367 (94.1%) of the students enrolled in the Academy at the end of the year were African American, two (0.5%) students were White, one (0.3%) was Hispanic, and one (0.3%) student was of another race/ethnicity. Race/ethnicity data were not provided for 19 students. There were 59 students with special education needs.[6] Fifteen students had a speech disability, 11 had learning disabilities (LD), eight had speech and LD, three had cognitive disabilities (CD), and one had an emotional/behavioral disability (EBD). Nine students had other health impairments (OHI); five had speech and OHI; two had CD and OHI; two had LD and OHI; one had OHI and EBD; another had CD, OHI, and speech disabilities; and one student was in special education because of LD, OHI, and EBD.

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[6] The school provided CRC staff with a written list at the site visit in May 2008. That list indicated 83 students with special education needs, 15 of whom were "in process." Of the 15, 13 students did not yet have an IEP date indicated and two had IEP review dates in May 2008.

At the end of the year, the largest grade level was sixth grade with 44 students. The smallest grade level was K5 with 31 students. The number of students by grade level is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1



**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**Student Grade Levels***
**2007–08**

1st
38 (9.7%)

K5
31 (7.9%)

2nd
40 (10.3%)

K4
41 (10.5%)

3rd
38 (9.7%)

8th
40 (10.3%)

4th
33 (8.5%)

7th
43 (11.0%)

5th
42 (10.8%)

6th
44 (11.3%)

N = 390
*At the end of the school year.
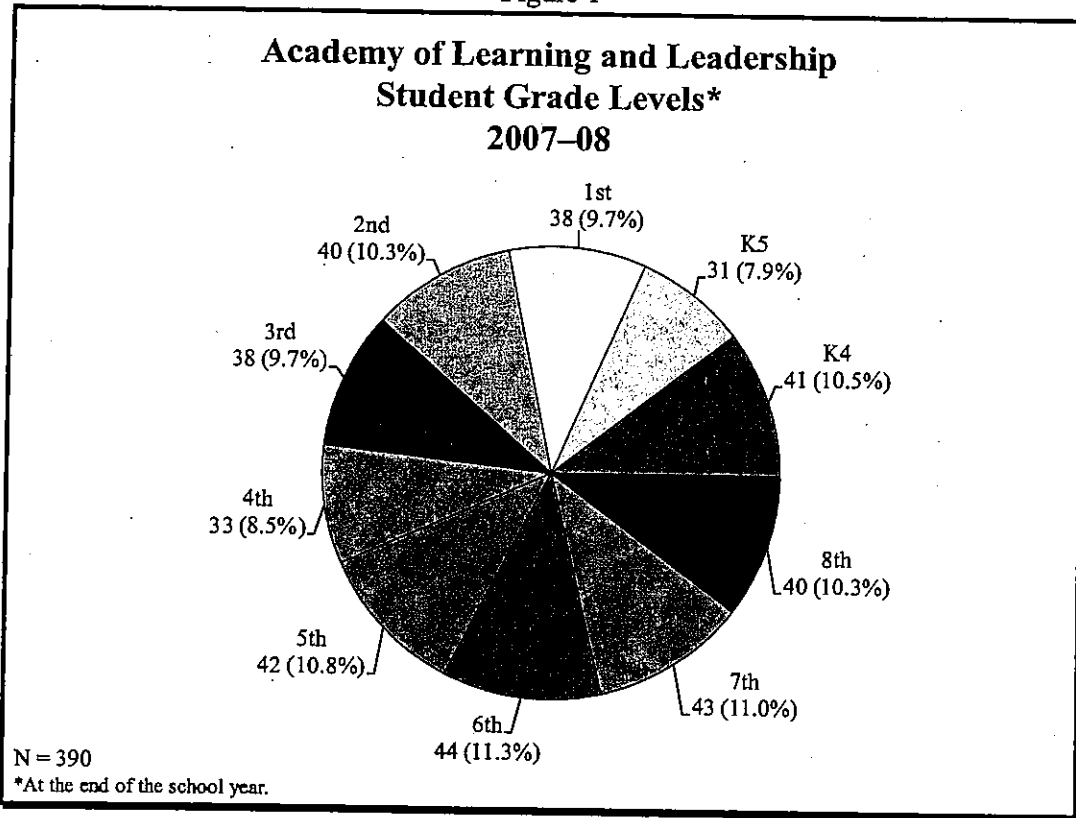
In the fall of 2007, the school opened a second building located on the same site. The buildings are referred to as building #1 and building #2. Building #1 housed two K4, two K5, one first, two second, one third, one fifth, on sixth, one seventh, and one eighth grade classroom. Building #2 had one K4, ½ K5, 1 ½ first, one second, one third, two fourth, one fifth, one sixth, one seventh, and one eighth grade classroom. Each building contained a mixture of returning and new students.

Data regarding the number of students returning to the Academy from the previous year were gathered in the fall of 2007. Of the 238 students attending on the last day of the 2006–07[7] academic year, 215 were enrolled on the third Friday in September 2007, representing a return rate of 90.0%. This compares with a return rate of 80.1% in the fall of 2006.[8]

## C.    School Structure

### 1.    Areas of Instruction

The Academy provides instruction in math, science, social studies, social development, physical education, reading, writing, speaking and listening, art, music, and technology. These subjects are assessed on each student's report card and reported on a quarterly basis. Effort, work habits, and personal development are also assessed on the report card. The school's social studies and science curricula are delivered through two interdisciplinary learning expeditions per year. The key components of a successful expedition are defined and used to assess the expeditions.

### 2.    Teacher Information

During the 2007–08 school year, the Academy employed a total of 25 classroom teachers.[9] Three of the teachers had taught at the school in previous years, 18 began teaching at the Academy in August 2007, one in September, one in November, one in January 2008, and one in April. One teacher left in January and another left in April and a third in June, 2008. All but three of the teachers remaining at the end of the year held a State of Wisconsin DPI license or

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[7] K4 through seventh grade.

[8] Based on information supplied by the school. .

[9] The school hired six "urban fellows" from Alverno College who are bachelor degree graduates with work experience. The fellows were provided with a coach who came to the school one time each week.

permit.[10] The teacher who left in January 2008 did not have a DPI license recorded on the DPI website. The school also employed three partner teachers, two physical education teachers, two art teachers, and a special education team consisting of a special education director and four special education staff. There were two learning facilitators, and a four-member behavior team led by a behavior director. The administrative team consisted of the executive director/head learner, two principals, a facilities director, and administrative support staff.

Prior to the beginning of the academic year, teachers participated in three weeks of professional development which included, among other things ALL (Academy of Learning and Leadership) program orientation topics for new staff, the ALL crew overnight, math training, classroom setup, moving into the new building, creating a classroom culture, grade level planning, and classroom management. During the academic year, teachers participated in professional development activities, some of which occurred on Wednesday afternoons when students were released early. These activities included the following topics:

- Local measure assessments for reading, writing, math, and Measures of Academic Progress (MAPS);

- Balanced literacy: reading and writing;

- Curriculum mapping;

- Expeditionary Learning Master Teacher;

- Culture, character, and community building in the classroom;

- Student progress reports;

- Grade-level meetings;

- Student portfolios, Ideal Graduates, assessment planning, and behavior expectations;

- Expedition Products and Scaffolding;

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[10] According to the DPI the three teachers, all urban fellows, submitted applications with payment in April, May, and June 2008. However, none of these three had a license or permit indicated on the website, www2.dpi.gov/lic-tll.

- Technology training, local measure assessments, MAPS testing, WKCE–CRT testing; and

- Special education and RtI.

Some staff members also attended offsite professional development sessions. For example, two staff members attended a site seminar in Idaho in October; four attended the Midwest Regional Institute's Introduction to Assessment in October; eight staff attended a workshop on Love and Logic; six staff attended a site seminar in Rochester, New York, from January 31 to February 2; four staff attended a behavior seminar on classroom management in February; five staff attended a special education legal update in February; 14 staff attended the Expeditionary Learning National Conference in Colorado in March; ten staff attended a three-meeting series on special education; and two staff attended a middle school site seminar in Maine in May.

The staff evaluation system continues to be based on documents from Wisconsin Teacher Performance Standards and the teacher's own goals for performance. Teachers chose one area of the standards for review and then presented their progress on their goals.

## 3.    Hours of Instruction/School Calendar

The regular school day for students began at 8:00 a.m. and concluded at 3:20 p.m., except on Wednesdays, when students were dismissed at 1:20 p.m.[11] The first day of school was September 4, 2007, and the last day of school was June 12, 2008. The highest possible number of days for student attendance in the academic year was 172 (including the early release Wednesdays). The Academy instructed students for 1074 hours. The school has therefore

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[11] Breakfast was served from 7:30 a.m.–7:50 a.m. At the end of the day, students were released in shifts: 3:10 p.m. for students attending the Boys and Girls club activities, 3:15 p.m. for students who walked home, and 3:20 p.m. for students with rides home.

exceeded the City of Milwaukee's practice of requiring 875 instructional hours in charter schools as well as its contract provision of publishing an annual calendar.

## 4. Parent and Family Involvement

As expressed in the *Student–Family Handbook* provided to each family, the child's family, the faculty and staff of the Academy, and the student all contribute to creating a positive, productive, and orderly culture in the school.

Parents were included in the development of each child's ILP. Parents were also invited to attend the student-led parent conferences scheduled in November, January, April, and June, as well as all-classroom Expedition Celebrations held during the year; the winter program; the Black History program; and finally, the awards day and eighth-grade graduation. Parents were also invited to join the Parent Leadership Council, which met monthly, to learn more about the Academy and offer suggestions, plan events, and help make the school a better place for kids and learning.

Parents were encouraged to contact the school's director of Health and Social Services for counseling, guidance, and support about any health, learning, physical, or social needs of their students.

## 5. Waiting List

The school did not have a waiting list for the 2007–08 school year, as of October 12, 2007. At the end-of-the-year interview on May 28, 2008, the administrator reported that the school did not have a waiting list for the fall of 2008.

6.     **Discipline Policy**

The Academy describes its discipline policy in the *Student–Family Handbook.* The school employs "Discipline...with Love and Logic," an approach by Jim Fay and Foster Cline that focuses on natural and logical consequences. The Academy assists students and adults in naming qualities and goals for individual growth. Older students mentor younger students and learn mediation skills to help problem-solve. Reflection and dialogue are seen as essential skills for all adults and students.

Disciplinary actions, detention, the student behavior contract, and the conditions and steps relating to suspensions and expulsions are described in the school's *Student–Family Handbook.*

**D.     Activities for School Improvement**

The 2006–07 programmatic profile and educational performance report included recommendations for school activities for the 2007–08 school year. Following is a description of the Academy's response to the recommended activities in its programmatic profile and educational performance report for the 2006–07 academic year:

- Recommendation: Focus on integrating the staff and culture of the existing building with the new building, scheduled to open in September 2007.

  Result: During August 2007, the school provided three weeks of professional development, which included an overnight expedition for all staff. The professional development time together was designed to increase the understanding and use of the pedagogy of the expedition model, which is designed to build community. The school used learning facilitators to assist teachers in becoming better teachers, including using the expeditionary learning model. The school also hired an African American consultant to help all teachers become more effective teachers of African American children and to enhance inter-racial, collegial dialogue and understanding. The school also sent integrated groups of teachers for learning experiences/professional development.

- Recommendation: Examine and remediate the reasons for lack of progress in reading for second and third graders as measured by the year-to-year Stanford

Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT). For example, could it be related to test-taking skills?

Results: School staff reported that second and third grade remain the weakest levels in the primary link. The school worked on test-taking skills. Consultants worked with teachers to set up a structure for teaching reading strategies and established reading centers. The school created an assessment team led by teacher leaders.

- Recommendation: Implement the new mathematics curriculum.

  Response: The school implemented new curricula for math, Investigations at the K5 through fifth-grade levels and Connected Math at the sixth- through eighth-grade levels. The programs included initial training from the publishers. The staff, particularly one of the learning facilitators, worked with individual teachers to assist in planning and modeling lessons, as well as to improve the pacing of the math units.

- Recommendation: Develop and implement improvement plans for students at the minimal or basic proficiency level on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination–Criterion-referenced Test (WKCE–CRT) reading and math standardized tests.

  Response: Though the school staff worked at improving reading, writing, and math, the staff did not develop and implement individual improvement plans for students at minimal or basic proficiency levels.

- Recommendation: Provide more professional development, particularly to the new staff, in expeditionary learning as well as the reading and writing and new mathematics curricula.

  Response: The staff participated in a two-day overnight expedition in the school's neighborhood. They participated in activities such as interviewing neighborhood residents and business owners; sharing and discussing the information gathered; and discussing issues such as shared behaviors, customs, and beliefs. The school "crew time," held throughout the year, involved teams or crews of teachers (sometimes using the assistance of consultants) who focused on a variety of topics, including reading, writing, and math professional development. (See the teacher information section for a list of the professional development topics.)

- Recommendation: Work with the CRC analyst regarding the data collection process.

  Results: The administration assistant continued to work with CRC's analyst to improve the submission of data in an electronic form, such as a spreadsheet or a database. This year, however, the data extract containing student enrollment dates and attendance data were not provided in a usable format. The data were provided

in text format in an email message and were subsequently entered by CRC into a spreadsheet.

## III.  PARENT, TEACHER, STUDENT, AND BOARD MEMBER SATISFACTION

### A.  Parent Surveys

Parent opinions are qualitative in nature and provide a valuable external measurement of school performance.  To determine how parents heard about the school, why they elected to send their students to the school, parental involvement with the school, and an overall evaluation of the school, parents were asked to complete a survey that was provided to them during the student-led parent/teacher conferences held on April 16, 17, and 18, 2008.  CRC made two attempts by telephone to gather survey information from parents who did not return a survey.  At the time of this report, 73 surveys (representing parents of 138 students) had been completed and submitted to CRC.[12]

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[12] Surveys submitted as of August 27, 2008. There were 390 students enrolled at the time of the survey. This represents a survey return rate of 35.4%.

Most (61.6%) parents heard about the school from friends or relatives. Others heard about the school at their community centers (5.5%), and 2.8% of parents heard about the school from the news or on television (see Figure 2).

Figure 2

**Academy of Learning and Leadership
How Parents Learned About the School
2007–08**



N = 73
Note: This does not reflect student-led parent conferences held at the school.
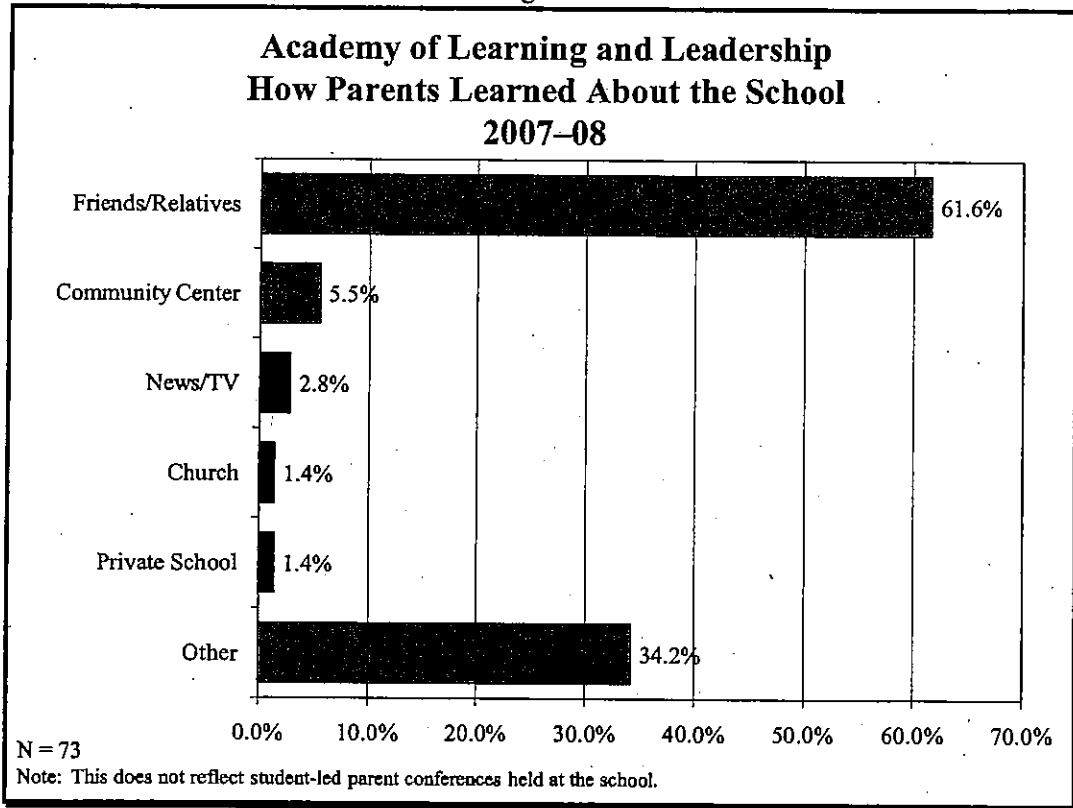
Parents chose to send their child(ren) to the Academy for a variety of reasons. Figure 3 illustrates the reasons parents considered very important when making the decision to send their child(ren) to this school.[13] For example, 79.5% of parents indicated that discipline and/or educational methodology were very important reasons for selecting this school, and 74.0% indicated that class size was very important to them when choosing this school.
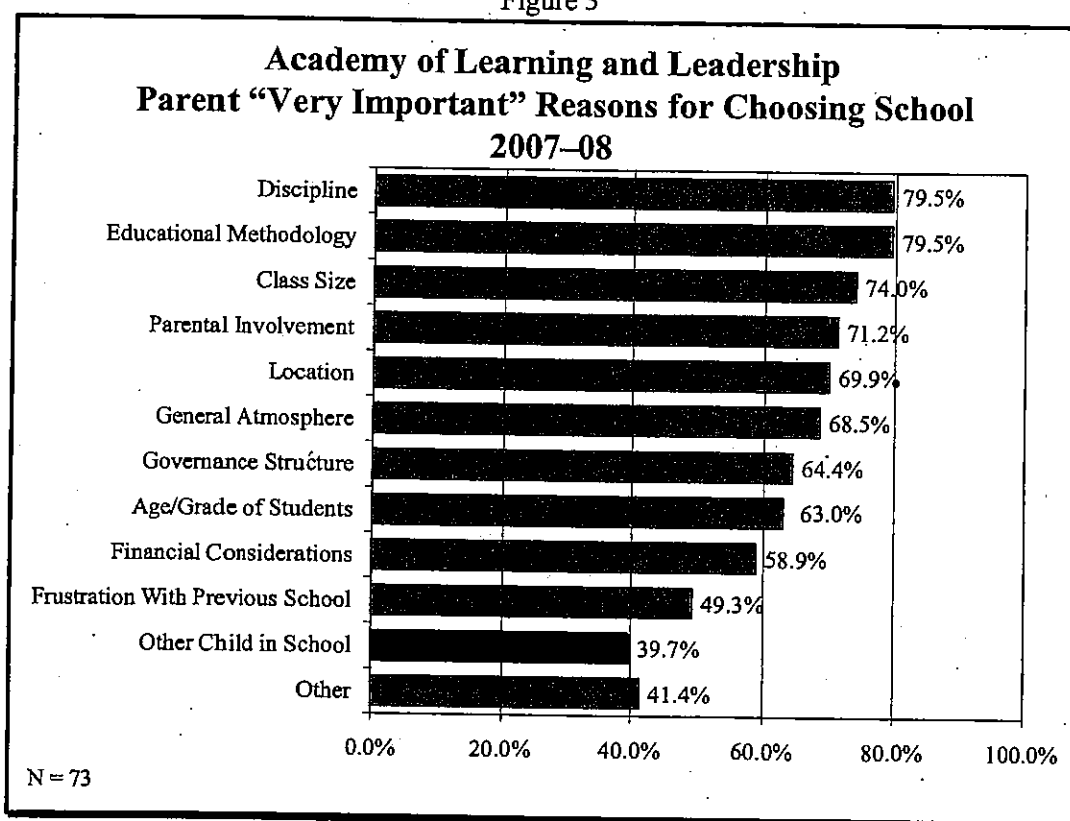
Figure 3



**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**Parent "Very Important" Reasons for Choosing School**
**2007–08**

| Reason | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Discipline | 79.5% |
| Educational Methodology | 79.5% |
| Class Size | 74.0% |
| Parental Involvement | 71.2% |
| Location | 69.9% |
| General Atmosphere | 68.5% |
| Governance Structure | 64.4% |
| Age/Grade of Students | 63.0% |
| Financial Considerations | 58.9% |
| Frustration With Previous School | 49.3% |
| Other Child in School | 39.7% |
| Other | 41.4% |

N = 73

Parental involvement was also used as a measure of satisfaction with the school. Parental involvement was measured by the number of contacts between parents and the school and participation in educational activities at home.

_____

[13] Parents were given the following choices for each reason: very important, somewhat important, somewhat unimportant, and not at all important.

Parents and the school were in contact for a variety of reasons, such as a child's academic performance and behavior, as well as to assist in the classroom or to engage in fundraising activities. This year, 59.0% of 73 parents were in contact with the school at least three times regarding their child's behavior, 57.5% were in contact regarding their child's academic performance, and 38.4% of parents were in contact with the school to discuss classes in which their child was enrolled (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**Parent-School Contacts**
**Three or More Times**
**2007–08**

| Category | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|
| Child's Behavior | 59.0% |
| Academic Performance | 57.5% |
| Classes | 38.4% |
| Assist in Classroom | 37.0% |
| School Records | 30.1% |
| Fundraising | 26.1% |
| Other | 12.3% |

N = 73
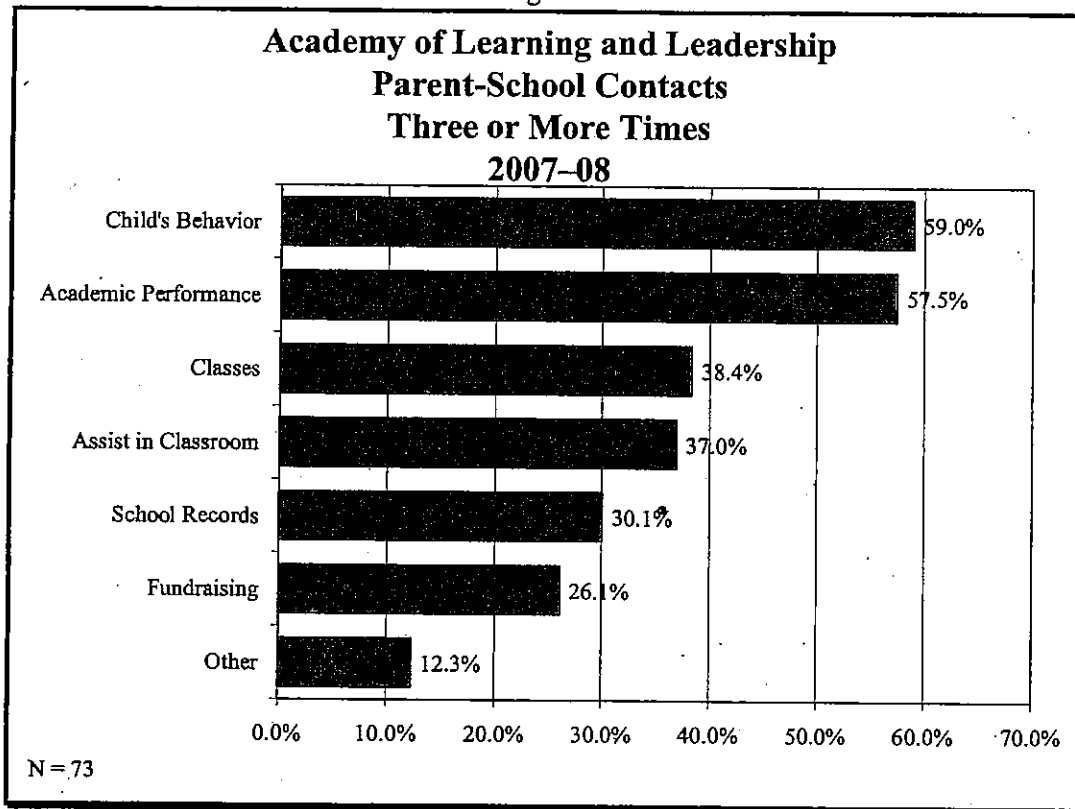
Parental participation can be described in terms of educational activities the family engages in while at home. During a typical week, 95.9% of parents read to their child; 93.1% participated in activities with their child (e.g., sports, library, museum); 91.8% worked with

arithmetic or math; 80.9% watched educational programs on TV; and 97.2% worked on other homework with their children.

When asked an open-ended question about what they most liked about the school, 37.0% of parents indicated an appreciation for the teachers and/or staff; 12.3% liked the school's approach to discipline, including structure and respect; and 11.0% of parents most liked that their child learns more at this school (see Figure 5).[14]

Figure 5



Academy of Learning and Leadership
Most Liked by Parents
2007–08

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Teachers/Staff | 37.0% |
| Discipline/Structure | 12.3% |
| Child Learns More Here | 11.0% |
| Sense of Community | 9.6% |
| Individual Attention | 8.2% |
| Class Size | 6.8% |
| Uniforms | 6.8% |
| Other | 21.9% |

N = 73
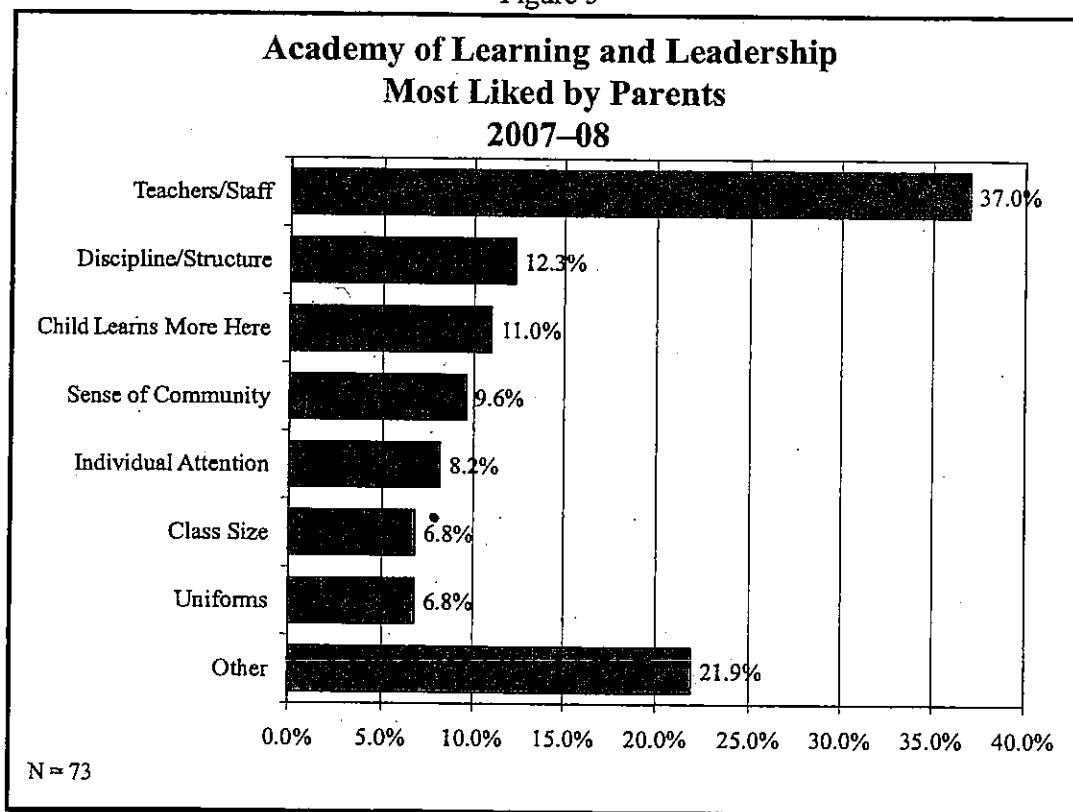
[14] Other included four parents each who mentioned expeditions and/or the communication with their children. Three parents each mentioned the learning approach and/or the location. One parent mentioned that the school is involved with child's academics and his/her life and one parent said that his/her child loves the school.

Parents were also asked their opinion about what needed improvement at the school. Their responses are shown in Figure 6.[15]

Figure 6

**Academy of Learning and Leadership
Least Liked by Parents
2007–08**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Lack of Discipline | 11.0% |
| Lack of Transportation | 6.8% |
| Teachers | 6.8% |
| Lack of Educational Growth | 5.5% |
| Location | 4.1% |
| Other* | 11.0% |

N = 73
*Some parents did not provide a response to the question or indicated that there was nothing they did not like (N = 41).
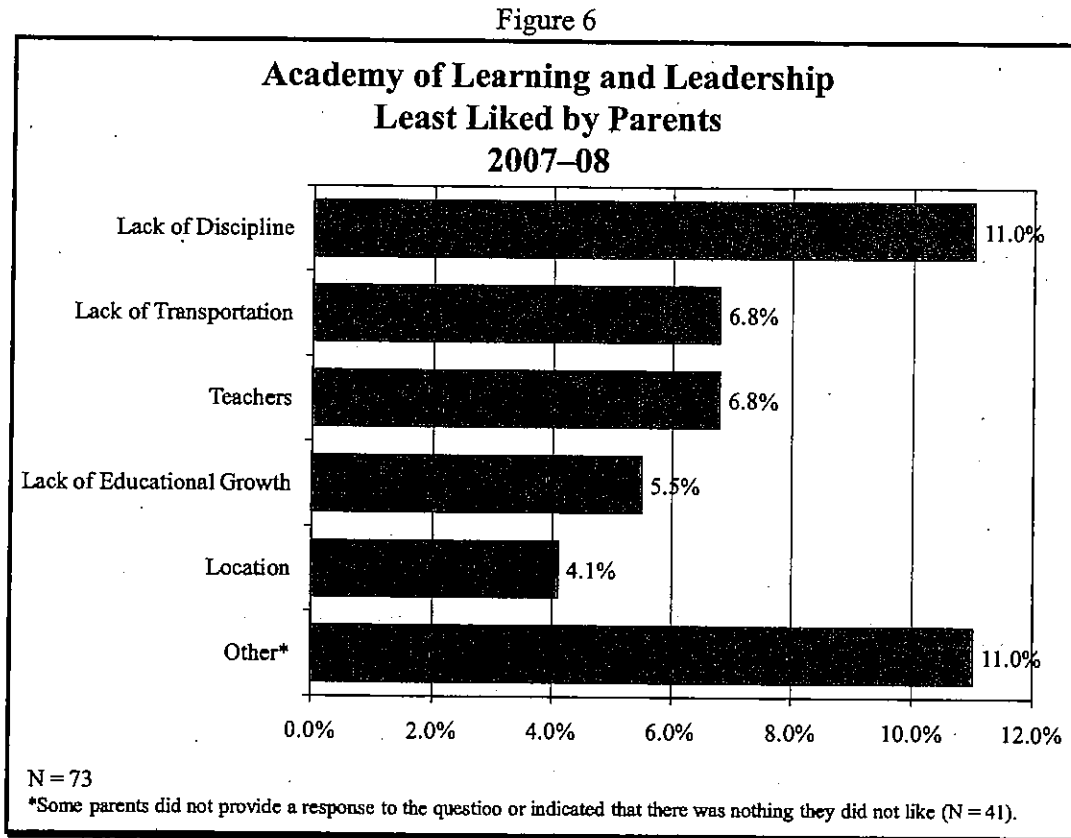
When asked to rate the level of their child's involvement with the school, 38 (52.1%) of 73 parents indicated it was excellent, 26 (35.6%) indicated it was good, eight (11.0%) rated it fair, and no parents indicated that their child had a poor level of involvement with the school. One parent did not respond to the question (not shown).

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[15] "Other" included school is disorganized at the end of the day, not enough parent involvement/encouragement, the school talks about students instead of helping them, favoritism, curriculum, the second building is disorganized, and the principal. These remarks were provided one time each.

Table 1 indicates that parents rated most areas of the academic environment as excellent or good most of the time. For example, 45.2% of parents indicated that the program of instruction was excellent and 50.7% thought that the enrollment policy and procedures were excellent. The area that received the lowest rating was discipline methods. Nine parents indicated discipline methods used at the school were fair (12.3%) and five (6.8%) thought the methods were poor. Where no response was indicated, the parent either had no knowledge or experience with that aspect or had no opinion.

| Table 1 | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| Academy of Learning and Leadership<br>Parent Rating of Academic Areas<br>2007–08<br>(N = 73) | | | | | | | | | |
| Area | Response | | | | | | | | |
| | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | No Response | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Program of instruction | 33 | 45.2% | 29 | 39.7% | 9 | 12.3% | 1 | 1.4% | 1 | 1.4% |
| Enrollment policy and procedures | 37 | 50.7% | 30 | 41.1% | 5 | 6.8% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 1.4% |
| Child's academic progress | 35 | 47.9% | 27 | 37.0% | 7 | 9.5% | 3 | 4.1% | 1 | 1.4% |
| Student/teacher ratio | 38 | 52.1% | 26 | 35.6% | 5 | 6.8% | 3 | 4.1% | 1 | 1.4% |
| Discipline methods | 39 | 53.4% | 18 | 24.7% | 9 | 12.3% | 5 | 6.8% | 2 | 2.7% |
| Parent-teacher relationships | 48 | 65.8% | 16 | 21.9% | 6 | 8.2% | 2 | 2.7% | 1 | 1.4% |
| Communication regarding learning expectations | 42 | 57.5% | 22 | 30.1% | 6 | 8.2% | 1 | 1.4% | 2 | 2.7% |
| Parent involvement in policy and procedures | 44 | 60.3% | 20 | 27.4% | 6 | 8.2% | 2 | 2.7% | 1 | 1.4% |
| Teacher's performance | 43 | 58.9% | 22 | 30.1% | 6 | 8.2% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 2.7% |
| Principal performance | 43 | 58.9% | 21 | 28.8% | 6 | 8.2% | 2 | 2.7% | 1 | 1.4% |
| Teacher/principal accessibility | 39 | 53.4% | 28 | 38.4% | 3 | 4.1% | 1 | 1.4% | 2 | 2.7% |
| Responsiveness to concerns | 43 | 58.9% | 21 | 28.8% | 4 | 5.5% | 4 | 5.5% | 1 | 1.4% |
| Standardized testing | 34 | 46.6% | 29 | 39.7% | 6 | 8.2% | 3 | 4.1% | 1 | 1.4% |
| Progress reports | 50 | 68.5% | 18 | 24.7% | 3 | 4.1% | 1 | 1.4% | 1 | 1.4% |

Parents were then asked their opinions about school staff. Parents rated their feelings about each of the following statements as strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.

| Table 2 | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academy of Learning and Leadership<br>Parent Rating of School Staff<br>2007–08<br>(N = 73) | | | | | | | | | |
| Area | Response | | | | | | | | |
| | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| I am comfortable talking with the staff.* | 45 | 61.6% | 25 | 34.2% | 1 | 1.4% | 1 | 1.4% | 0 | 0.0% |
| The staff welcomes suggestions from parents.* | 37 | 50.7% | 31 | 42.5% | 3 | 4.1% | 1 | 1.4% | 0 | 0.0% |
| The staff keeps me informed about my child's performance.* | 45 | 61.6% | 24 | 32.9% | 1 | 1.4% | 2 | 2.7% | 0 | 0.0% |
| I am comfortable with how the staff handles the discipline.* | 35 | 47.9% | 21 | 28.8% | 11 | 15.1% | 0 | 0.0% | 5 | 6.8% |
| I am satisfied with the number of adult staff available to work with the students.* | 37 | 50.7% | 26 | 35.6% | 4 | 5.5% | 2 | 2.7% | 3 | 4.1% |
| I am satisfied with the overall performance of the staff.** | 36 | 49.3% | 27 | 37.0% | 5 | 6.8% | 2 | 2.7% | 0 | 0.0% |

*One parent did not respond.
**Three parents did not respond.

Last, overall parent satisfaction was evident in the following:

- Of 73 parents, 64 (87.7%) would recommend the Academy to other parents;

- Of 73 parents, 48 (65.8%) will send their child to the Academy next year;[16] and

- When asked to rate the school's overall contribution to their child's learning, most (53.4%, or 39) parents indicated it was excellent and 27 (37.0%) parents rated the school as good. Six (8.2%) parents thought the school was fair and no parents indicated it was poor. Note that one parent did not respond to the question.

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[16] Thirteen parents indicated that their children would not attend: two students are leaving because of other students' behavior; two are leaving because they are looking for more advanced education; two are moving; one is looking for more activities; one is sending his/her child to a public school; and one is going to a school closer to home. Three parents did not provide a reason. Eleven parents did not know if their children would return. One parent did not respond to the question.

**B.  Teacher Interviews**

At the end of the school year, ten teachers representing grades K4 through eight were interviewed regarding their reasons for teaching and their satisfaction with the school.[17] Teachers were responsible for 12 to 24 students at a given time.  One of the teachers used team-teaching techniques and the others did not team teach.  All ten teachers were in their first year at the school.  All teachers indicated that they routinely used data to make decisions in the classroom, and seven indicated that school leadership used data to make schoolwide decisions.  Four teachers' performance reviews occurred at least annually, two teachers' performance had been reviewed twice, one's performance had been reviewed two or three times informally, two were reviewed at least twice per month by external sources (e.g., Alverno coach or Mount Mary coach), and one teacher's performance had not yet been reviewed.  Six teachers were satisfied with the performance review process and three were not.  One teacher did not provide an answer.

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[17] The administrator is not included in the teacher interview section.

Eight teachers indicated that the educational methodology, general atmosphere of the school, and class size were somewhat important or very important reasons for teaching at this school. See Table 3 for more details.

| | Table 3 | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Academy of Learning and Leadership<br>Reasons for Teaching at School Based on Teacher Interviews<br>2007–08<br>(N = 10) | | | | |
| Reason | Importance | | | | |
| | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Somewhat Unimportant | Not At All Important | No Response |
| Location | 2 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Financial | 1 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 2 |
| Educational methodology | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Age/grade of students | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Discipline | 1 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| General atmosphere | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Class size | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Governance structure | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Parental involvement | 1 | 4 | 1 | 2 | 2 |

In terms of overall satisfaction with the school, teachers were asked to rate the school's performance related to class size, materials and equipment, the school's overall student assessment plan, shared leadership, professional support and development activities, and the school's progress toward becoming excellent. Most teachers rated these areas as good or excellent, except for standardized testing. Five teachers rated standardized testing as good or excellent, and five teachers rated standardized testing as fair or poor (see Table 4).

| Table 4 Academy of Learning and Leadership School Performance Rating Based on Teacher Interviews 2007–08 (N = 10) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Area | Rating | | | | |
| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | No Response |
| 1. Class size | 7 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. Materials and equipment | 0 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. Student assessment plan | 2 | 5 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 3a. Local measures | 4 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 3b. Standardized tests | 2 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| 3c. Progress reports | 4 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. Shared leadership, decision making, accountability | 4 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 5. Professional support | 2 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 6. Professional development opportunities | 6 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. Progress toward becoming an excellent school | 2 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 1 |

On a satisfaction rating scale ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied, teachers responded on the satisfied end of the response range in most areas. The area where teachers expressed the most satisfaction included student/teacher ratio, parent-teacher relationships, their own performance as a teacher, and the frequency of staff meetings. Teacher dissatisfaction was most often in the school's adherence to the discipline policy and parent involvement. Table 5 lists all of the teacher responses.

| Table 5<br><br>Academy of Learning and Leadership<br>Teacher Satisfaction<br>2007–08<br>(N = 10) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Performance Measure | Response | | | | |
| | Very Satisfied | Somewhat Satisfied | Somewhat Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | No Opinion/N/A |
| Program of instruction | 2 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Enrollment policy and procedures | 1 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Student's academic progress | 4 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Student/teacher ratio | 8 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Discipline policy | 1 | 6 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Adherence to discipline policy | 0 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 0 |
| Instructional support | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Parent-teacher relationships | 3 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Teacher collaboration to plan learning experiences | 4 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Parent involvement | 1 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 0 |
| Community/business involvement | 1 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Teacher performance | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Principal performance | 3 | 4 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Teacher involvement in policy and procedures decisions | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Board of directors performance | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 10 |
| Opportunity for continuing education | 4 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Frequency of staff meetings | 8 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Effectiveness of staff meetings | 2 | 6 | 0 | 2 | 0 |

When teachers were asked what they most liked about the school, they most often noted the following:

- Staff are cohesive and supportive (n = 8);
- Curriculum offers freedom, flexibility, and autonomy (n = 7);
- Expeditionary learning (n = 4);
- Class size (n = 2);
- Student/faculty relationships (n = 1);
- CEO has drive, passion, and vision (n = 1);
- Integrating African culture (n = 1);
- School's mission (n = 1);
- Positive atmosphere (n = 1);
- Quality facilities (n = 1); and
- The students (n = 1).

Teachers most often mentioned the following as least liked about the school:

- Behavior issues (n = 4);
- Inconsistency with discipline (n = 3);
- Disorganized (n = 3);
- Communication issues between staff (n = 2);
- Inconsistency with policy and procedures (n = 1);
- Lack of parent involvement (n = 1);
- Resources and materials (n = 1);
- Insufficient pay (n = 1);
- Lack of push for academic excellence (n = 1);
- Insufficient special education services (n = 1);
- Lack of collaboration time (n = 1);
- Lack of support staff (n = 1); and
- Lack of breaks (n = 1).

On a scale of poor, fair, good, or excellent, one rated the school's contribution toward academic progress as excellent, five teachers rated it as good, and four indicated it was fair. Nine teachers indicated that they intended to continue teaching at the school and one teacher was not sure if he/she would continue teaching at the school.

When asked for a suggestion to improve the school, teachers responded as follows:

- Consistency for students and staff, e.g., in discipline and in policy and procedures (n = 4);

- Give teachers space to speak freely and honestly and voice concerns (n = 2);

- Build in shared planning time (n = 2);

- Need smaller class size due to challenging behavior (n = 1); and

- Educate parents so they understand school policy and procedures (n = 1).

When asked to provide a suggestion to improve the classroom, one teacher each responded as follows:

- Add a science lab.

- Need better organization systems.

- Need more recess for younger students.

- Need calming techniques and strategies.

- Need more support to meet students' unique academic and behavioral needs.

- Need more time before school starts to set up classroom and establish behavior expectations and culture.

- Hold students accountable.

- Set policy for when to interrupt classroom.

- Establish behavior expectations at the beginning and maintain throughout the year.

- Acknowledge and appreciate teaching staff alone and in the presence of students.

## C. Student Interviews

At the end of the year, CRC staff interviewed twenty students in seventh or eighth grade about their school. All students indicated that they used computers at school, teachers help them at school, teachers talk to their parents, and that they all plan to go to college. Sixteen students indicated that they feel safe in school (see Table 6).

| Table 6 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Academy of Learning and Leadership**<br>**Student Interviews**<br>**2007–08**<br>**(N = 20)** | | | |
| Question | Answer | | |
| | Yes | No | No Response/ Not Applicable |
| 1. Do you like your school? | 17 | 3 | 0 |
| 2. Are you learning enough? | 15 | 5 | 0 |
| 3. Have you improved in reading? | 19 | 1 | 0 |
| 4. Have you improved in math? | 19 | 1 | 0 |
| 5. Do you use computers at school? | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 6. Is your school clean? | 18 | 2 | 0 |
| 7. Do you like the school rules? | 8 | 11 | 1 |
| 8. Do you follow the rules? | 17 | 3 | 0 |
| 9. Does your homework help you learn more? | 16 | 4 | 0 |
| 10. Do your teachers help you at school? | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 11. Do you like being in school? | 17 | 3 | 0 |
| 12. Do you feel safe in school? | 16 | 4 | 0 |
| 13. Do people work together at your school? | 17 | 3 | 0 |
| 14. Do you feel the marks you get on class work, homework, and report cards are fair? | 15 | 5 | 0 |
| 15. Do your teachers talk to your parents? | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 16. Do your teachers talk with you about high school plans? | 14 | 6 | 0 |
| 17. Do your teachers talk with you about college? | 15 | 5 | 0 |
| 18. Are you planning to go to college? | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 19. Do you participate in after school activities? | 13 | 7 | 0 |

Students were then asked what they liked best and least about the school. Students indicated that they liked the following the best:

- Teachers and staff (n = 8);
- Hands-on learning (n = 3);
- Sense of community (n = 3);
- Expeditions (n = 2);
- Basketball (n = 1);
- Cultural aspects (n = 1);
- Dress-down days (n = 1); and
- Special events, e.g., dances (n = 1).

Students indicated the following as least liked about the school:

- Uniforms (n = 6);
- Rules (n = 4);
- Student behavior, e.g., fights, acting up (n = 4);
- Certain classes (n = 3);
- Some teachers (n = 2); and
- The temperature is too cold (n = 1).

## D.    Board of Directors Interviews

Board member opinions are qualitative in nature and provide valuable, although subjective, insight regarding school performance and organizational competency. Three members of the Academy's Board of Directors were interviewed via telephone by CRC staff using a prepared interview guide. One of the board members has served for three years, another for four years, and the third from five to six years. One interviewee is currently the board president; another, the vice president; and the third, the treasurer. These board members represented experience in accounting, for profit and nonprofit finances and administration, political activism, and interest in arts and education.

The interviewees were asked to rate the school's performance in class size, materials and equipment, and the student assessment plan (local measures of achievement, standardized

testing, progress reports to parents) if they had knowledge of these school performance elements. The rating scale was excellent, good, fair, or poor. The interviewees rated these elements as either excellent or good.[18] In addition, the interviewees rated the school's performance regarding shared leadership, decision making and accountability, professional support, and professional development opportunities as either excellent or good, with one exception. One board member rated professional development opportunities as fair.

Two of the interviewees indicated that the school's progress toward becoming an excellent school was excellent, while the other indicated it was good. Two of the interviewees indicated that, overall, the school was excellent, and the other interviewee rated the school as good overall.

On a satisfaction rating scale ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied, all three interviewees indicated that they were very satisfied with the program of instruction, the enrollment policy/procedures, the student-teacher ratio/class size, the discipline policy, adherence to the discipline policy, the commitment of the school's leadership, and the safety of the educational environment. The interviewees were either very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the students' academic progress, instructional support, parent involvement, community/business involvement, the teachers' performance, the performance of the principals and the head learner, opportunities for teacher involvement in policy/procedure decisions, the board of directors' performance, opportunities for continuing education, and the human resources to fulfill the school's mission. One board member was somewhat dissatisfied with the administrative resources to fulfill the school's mission, citing the need for more administrative support positions. Two of the interviewees expressed being somewhat dissatisfied with the financial resources to fulfill the school's mission, citing the need for a higher per-student reimbursement rate and more timely disbursements of the payments to the school.

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[18] One interviewee did not have enough information to form an opinion regarding materials and equipment; another did not have enough information to form an opinion regarding the local school measures of student achievement.

When asked what they liked best about the Academy, board members indicated the following:

- The dedication of the head learner to improve the education and lives of the students, which filters down throughout the staff;

- The learning model encompassing the students, teachers, and community;

- The involvement and commitment of the board and staff;

- The students;

- The school's stabilizing effect and economic development impact on the neighborhood;

- The appearance and neatness of the school, including the fact that students are engaged in the classrooms; and

- The student/teacher ratio.

Regarding dislikes, the interviewees mentioned the need to pay teachers more, the need for more administrative support, the insufficiency of per-pupil allocations, the constant challenge of student turnover, the lack of sufficient parking, and the mixture of all grades in each building.

When asked for one suggestion for improving the school, the board members mentioned the following:

- Improve the ability to recruit, involve, and include leaders and potential leaders in the community;

- Increase the number of staff; and

- Provide for more teacher involvement.

## IV.  EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

To monitor the Academy's activities as described in its contract with the City of Milwaukee, a variety of qualitative and quantitative information was collected at specified intervals during the past several academic years.  At the start of the year, the school established secondary goals regarding attendance, parent conferences, and special education students.  The school also identified the primary measures of student academic progress in terms of local and standardized measures of academic performance.  The local assessment measures included ILPs and progress in reading, mathematics, writing, and language arts; portfolio assessments; and learning expeditions.  The standardized assessment measures, required by the CSRC, were the SDRT and the WKCE–CRT.

### A.  Attendance

At the beginning of the academic year, the school established a goal to maintain an average attendance rate of 90.0%.  Attendance rates for each student were provided by the school. Based on these data, the attendance rate was 90.0%.[19]  The school has, therefore, met its attendance goal.

### B.  Special Education Students

The Academy established a goal to maintain records of all special education students, including assessment dates and outcomes and individual education program (IEP) completion and review dates.  This year, the school submitted a document indicating there were 60 students

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[19] Attendance rates were based on 472 students.  The school provided a text list, over email, of student name, enrollment dates and attendance.  CRC entered these data into a spreadsheet.  The school also provided an electronic list of student gender and race/ethnicity.  These lists were combined to create a list of 499 students enrolled in the school at any time during the year. Attendance data were missing for 27 students.

with special education needs.[20] IEPs appeared to have been completed for 58 of the 60 students. IEPs appeared to be reviewed in a timely manner.[21]

In addition, in May 2008 CRC conducted a review of a random selection of special education files. At the time of the review, the school provided a hard copy of a list of 83 students with special needs. Fifteen of the students on this list were "in progress," without a current IEP date indicated. A review of a selection of the student files for students who had IEPs in place indicated that the IEPs were current, were reviewed in a timely manner, and that parents were invited to attend the most recent IEP meeting. The school has met its goal related to special education students.

## C.     Student-led Parent Conferences

At the beginning of the year, the school set a goal that 95.0% of parents would attend at least three of four scheduled student-led parent conferences. This year, there were 352 students enrolled at the time of all four conferences. Parents of 317 (90.1%) students attended at least three of four conferences. Therefore, the school fell short of meeting its goal related to parent conferences.

## D.     Individual Learning Plan

Each year, Academy students and teachers create ILPs. Parent participation is actively encouraged in these joint efforts to identify and define learning goals. At the beginning of the school year, the Academy set a goal that an ILP be developed for 100.0% of students. For students enrolled for all four quarters, 95.0% would be reviewed and revised by the student and the teacher after three of the four student-led parent teacher conferences.

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[20] One student withdrew prior to the end of the year. CRC was also provided a list of special education students in May 2008. That list contained 83 students, 15 of whom were listed as "in progress."

[21] Based on a document supplied by the school that listed annual IEP expiration dates and reevaluation expiration dates.

Based on data provided by the school, ILPs should have been completed for 440 students. ILPs were created for 432 (98.2%) of these students.[22] There were 352 students enrolled for all four quarters. ILPs were reviewed at least three times for 320 (90.9%) of these students.[23] Therefore, the school has not met its goal to review 95.0% of ILPs at least three times during the year (see Figure 7).

Figure 7
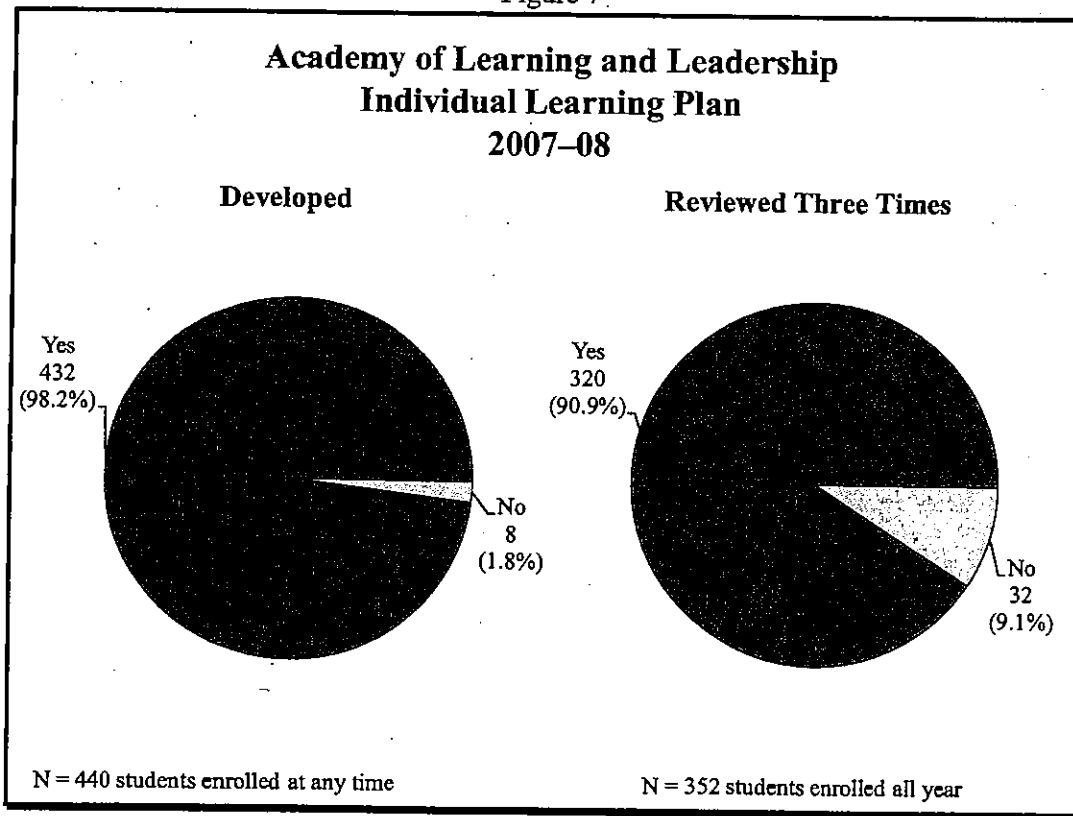


**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**Individual Learning Plan**
**2007–08**

**Developed**          **Reviewed Three Times**

Yes 432 (98.2%) — No 8 (1.8%)

Yes 320 (90.9%) — No 32 (9.1%)

N = 440 students enrolled at any time      N = 352 students enrolled all year

## E. Local Measures of Educational Performance

Charter schools, by their definition and nature, are autonomous schools with curricula that reflect each school's individual philosophy, mission, and goals. In addition to standardized

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[22] It was not clear why ILPs were not expected for the other approximately 59 students enrolled in the school at some time during the year.

[23] ILPs were reviewed two out of four times for 22 students, one time for eight students, and not reviewed at all for two students.

testing, each charter school has the responsibility to describe the goals and expectations of its students in language that is meaningful in light of that school's unique approach to education. These goals and expectations are established by each City of Milwaukee charter school at the beginning of the academic year to measure the educational performance of its students. These local measures are useful for monitoring and reporting progress, guiding and improving instruction, clearly expressing the expected quality of student work, and providing evidence that students are meeting local benchmarks.

Following is a description of the local measures developed by the Academy and a discussion of the outcomes.

## 1. Reading

### a. Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading

At the beginning of the school year, the Academy set a goal that student progress in reading would be assessed using the Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading learning continuum. The goal was that students assessed prior to November 9, 2007, and again after May 1, 2008, would progress as expected based on the Fountas and Pinnell reading levels. Possible levels are A through Z.

This year, the school decided to assign a measure of monthly academic growth to each step in the reading levels. This would allow the school to track student progress using a standardized assessment method. The school developed a conversion chart to show how much growth each level represented. The school then summed the monthly growth for each level that a student progressed. The expectation was that each student would exhibit 0.7 units of growth, representing the seven months between the two assessments (November to May), or that the student would end the school year reading at or above grade level.

This year, the school provided a beginning-of-year reading level, an end-of-year reading level, the number of levels moved, and the number of months each student progressed for 354 students in kindergarten through eighth grades. Students who reached seven months or higher or who were reading at the expected grade level met the expectation.

Results shown in Figure 8 show that 248 (70.1%) students met the reading goal, i.e., improved at least seven months in reading growth or were reading at or above grade level by the end of the year. Note that, overall, students advanced an average of nine and one half months (not shown).

Figure 8



**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**Reading Performance Based on**
**Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading**
**K4 Through 8th Grade**
**2007–08**

Met
248 (70.1%)

Not Met
106 (29.9%)

N = 354
Note: Average advancement was 9.5 months of growth.
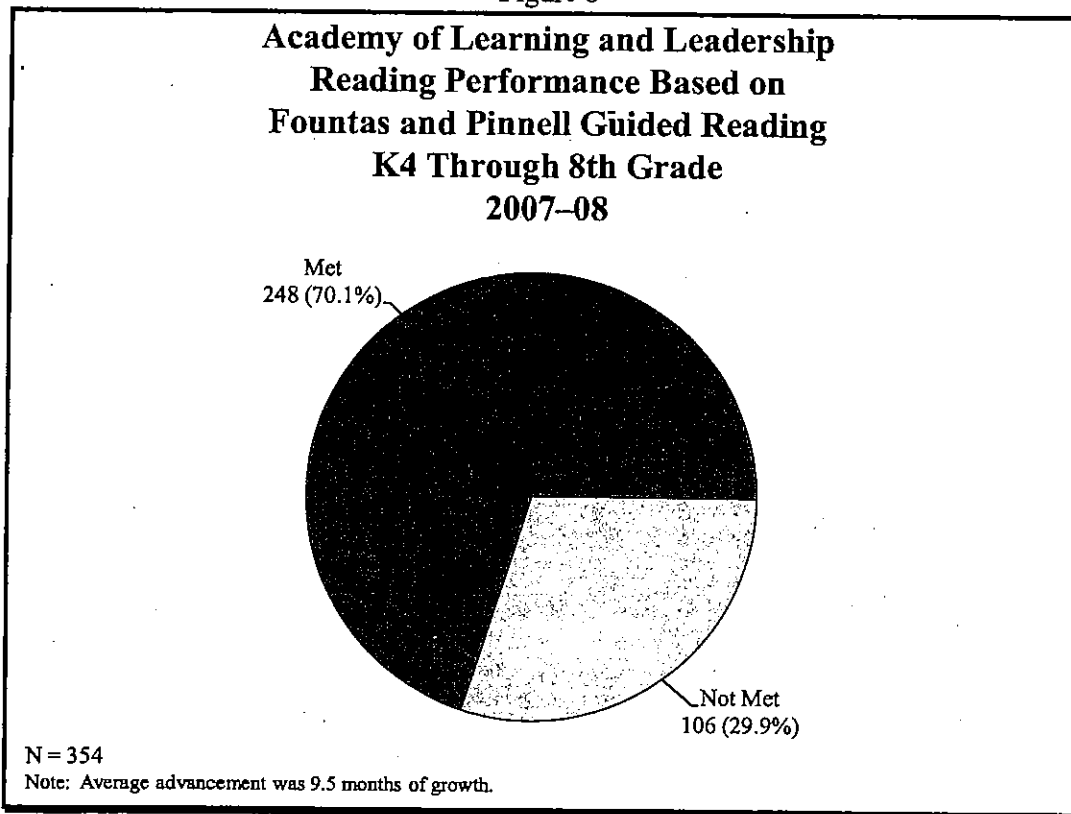
**b.     MAP**

In addition to the Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading test results, the school elected to use the computer-based MAP to assess student reading skills and progress. Students in third through eighth grades were administered the MAP, and students in first and second grade were given the Primary MAP assessments in the fall and again in the spring. Pre- and post-test scores were used to estimate student progress in reading.

The school provided a summary MAP reading score for third through eighth graders. The score reflected student performance in vocabulary, comprehension, and literary response. First and second graders were tested in two reading areas: phonics and comprehension. For purposes of this report, if a first or second grader improved his/her score in either area, it was counted as improved. As illustrated in Figure 9, 200 (82.3%) students improved their scores from the first to the second test administration.

Figure 9



Academy of Learning and Leadership
MAP Reading Scores
1st Through 8th Grade
2007–08

Improved
200 (82.3%)

Did Not
Improve
43 (17.7%)

N = 243
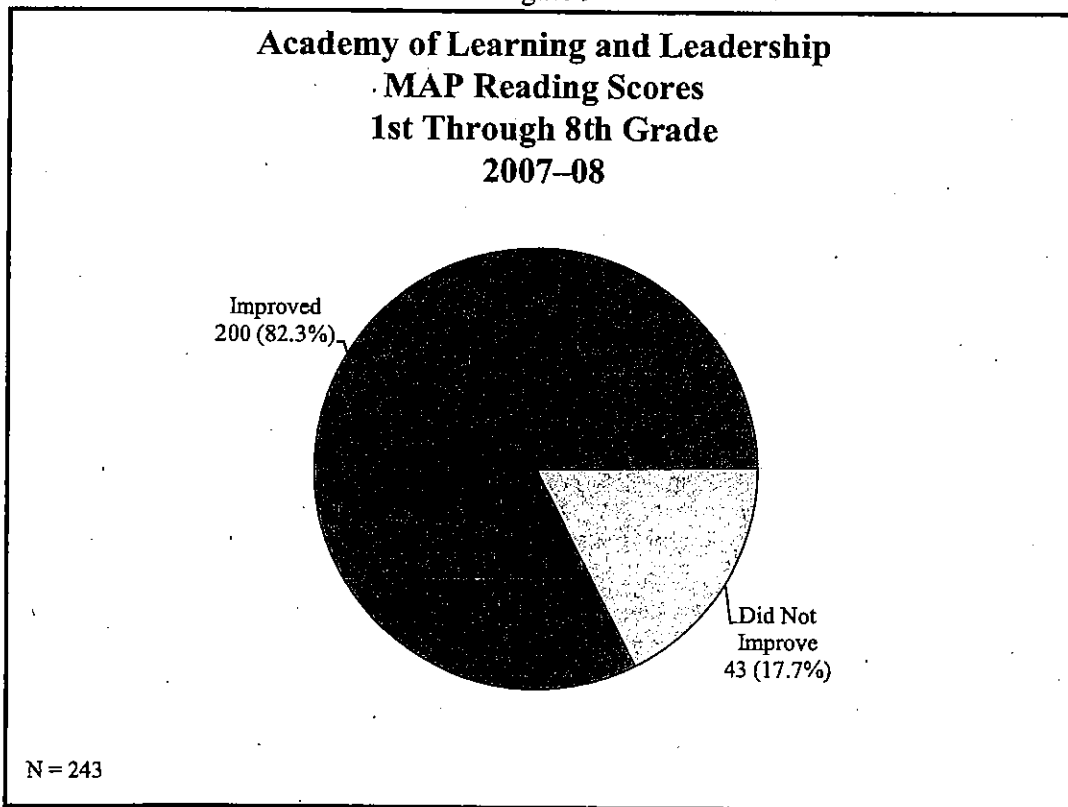
Progress for each grade is illustrated in Table 7.

| Table 7 Academy of Learning and Leadership Reading Progress Based on MAP in Fall and Spring 2007–08 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Grade | N | Showed Improvement | |
| | | N | % |
| 1st* | 25 | 24 | 96.0% |
| 2nd* | 35 | 32 | 91.4% |
| 3rd | 26 | 23 | 88.5% |
| 4th | 24 | 16 | 66.7% |
| 5th | 31 | 25 | 80.6% |
| 6th | 36 | 28 | 77.8% |
| 7th | 29 | 19 | 65.5% |
| 8th | 37 | 33 | 89.2% |
| Total | 243 | 200 | 82.3% |

*1st and 2nd graders were assessed in two areas (phonics and comprehension) on the Primary MAP. If a student improved in either area, it was counted as improved.

## 2. Math

### a. School-based Assessment

To measure progress in math, the school designed grade-level pre- and post-tests based on the math curriculum for each grade. The K5 through fifth-grade tests were based on the 2008 edition of "Investigations in Number, Data, and Space." The sixth- through eighth-grade tests were based on the 2006 edition of Connected Math Project 2. All students in each grade took the applicable grade-level tests. Teachers used results of the first test to inform instructional design. The goal was that students would show improvement from the first to the second test. Test results were provided for 284 students in K5 through eighth grades along with an indication of whether the student met the goal.

Results provided by the school indicate that 225 (79.2%) students met and 59 (20.8%) students did not meet the goal related to math progress (see Figure 10).[24]

Figure 10



Academy of Learning and Leadership
Math Expectations Based on Pre- and Post-tests
K5 Through 8th Grade
2007–08

Met
225 (79.2%)

Not Met
59 (20.8%)

N = 284
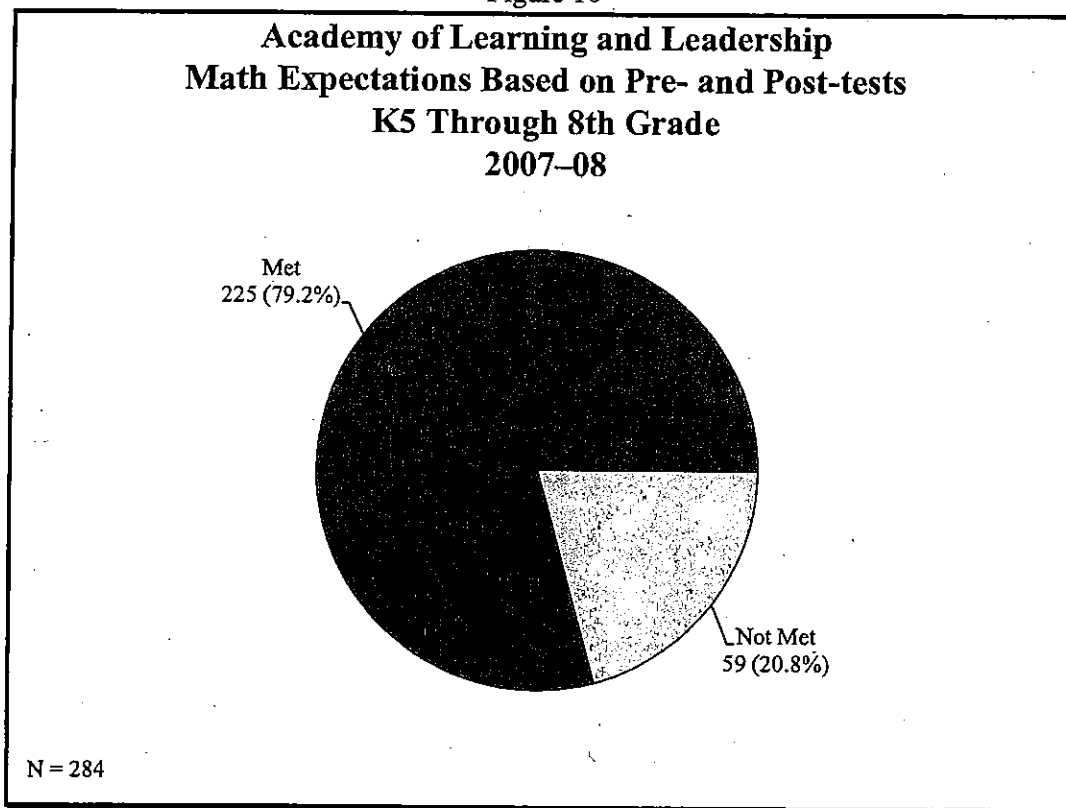
b. **MAP**

In addition to the school-based measure of math progress, the school administered the MAP assessments to first through eighth graders. Scores from the spring test were compared to the fall test scores to estimate student progress in math. Students in third through eighth grade were tested using MAP. Students in first and second grade were tested using the Primary MAP. First and second graders were tested in two areas in math: number sense and

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[24] The school provided the beginning-of-year percent correct, the end-of-year percent correct, and a check mark to indicate if the student met the math goal.

algebra/geometry/statistics. For purposes of this report, an improvement in either area was counted as improved.

Scores were submitted for 55 first and second graders and 161 third through eighth graders who were tested at both times. Results indicate that 151 (69.9%) students improved their score from the fall to the spring test (see Figure 11).

Figure 11

**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**MAP Math Scores**
**1st Through 8th Grade**
**2007–08**

Improved
151 (69.9%)

Did Not
Improve
65 (30.1%)

N = 216
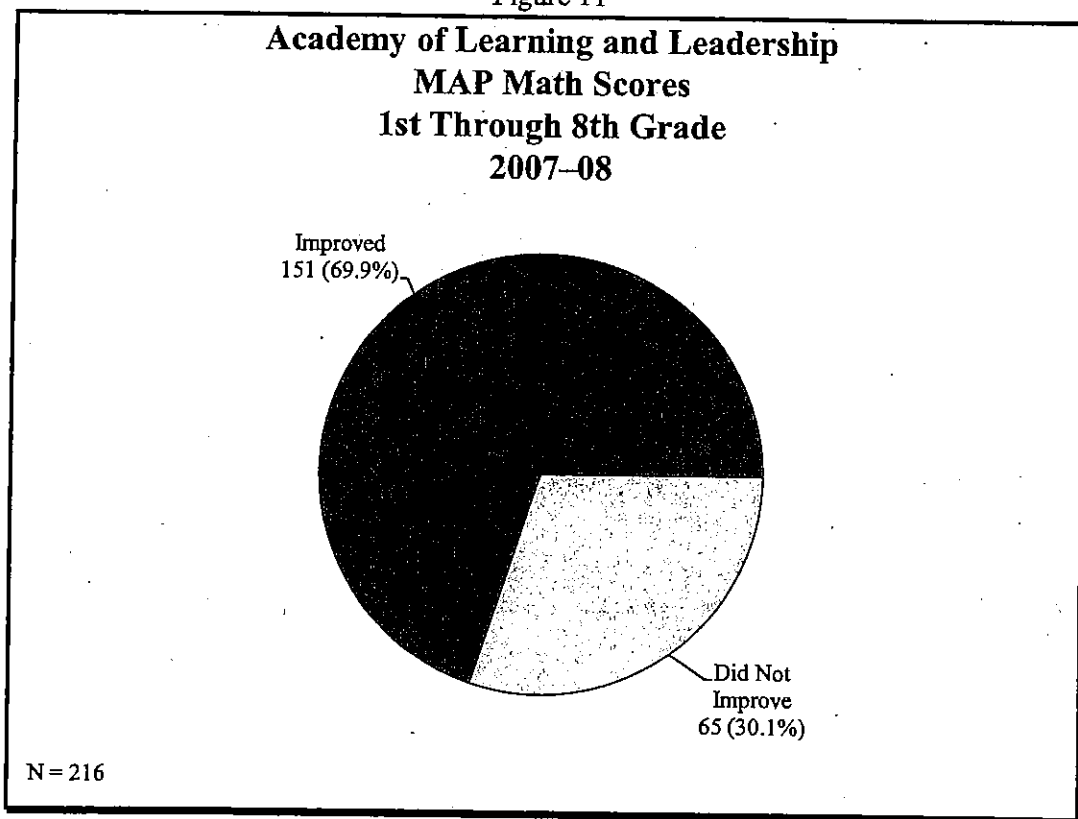
Progress for each grade is illustrated in Table 8.

| Table 8 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Academy of Learning and Leadership<br>Math Progress<br>Based on MAP in Fall and Spring<br>2007–08 | | | |
| Grade | N | Showed Improvement | |
| | | N | % |
| 1st* | 23 | 23 | 100.0% |
| 2nd* | 32 | 26 | 81.3% |
| 3rd | 23 | 16 | 69.6% |
| 4th | 23 | 12 | 52.2% |
| 5th | 26 | 13 | 50.0% |
| 6th | 33 | 22 | 66.7% |
| 7th | 23 | 19 | 82.6% |
| 8th | 33 | 20 | 60.6% |
| Total | 216 | 151 | 69.9% |

*1st and 2nd graders are assessed in two areas on the Primary MAP. If a student improved in either area, it was counted as "improved."

## 3. Writing

To measure student progress in writing, the school employed a school-based writing continuum combining elements of the McREL standards; Literacy Profiles; Wauwatosa Developmental Writing Continuum; Wisconsin State Standards; Reid, Schultze, and Petersen Writing Continuum; and Six-Traits Writing Characteristics. The continuum consisted of ten stages, A–J, approximating K3 through eighth grades. The stages are Pre-emergent, Emergent, Transitional, Novice, Expanding, Intermediate, Independent, Fluent, Proficient, and Advanced. The school used a series of 26 developmental "scaffolding steps," which corresponded to each stage. For example, a typical second grader at stage D, Novice, may be working on the prior stage C or in an advanced stage E, depending on that student's skill level. The goal was that students would move a minimum of one stage during the academic year. The school submitted

results for 348 students in K4 through eighth grade.[25]  Based on an indicator provided by the

school, 238 (68.4%) students met writing goals, and 110 (31.6%) did not (see Figure 12).

Figure 12

**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**Writing Expectations Based on Writing Continuum**
**K4 Through 8th Grade**
**2007–08**

Met
238 (68.4%)

Not Met
110 (31.6%)

N = 348

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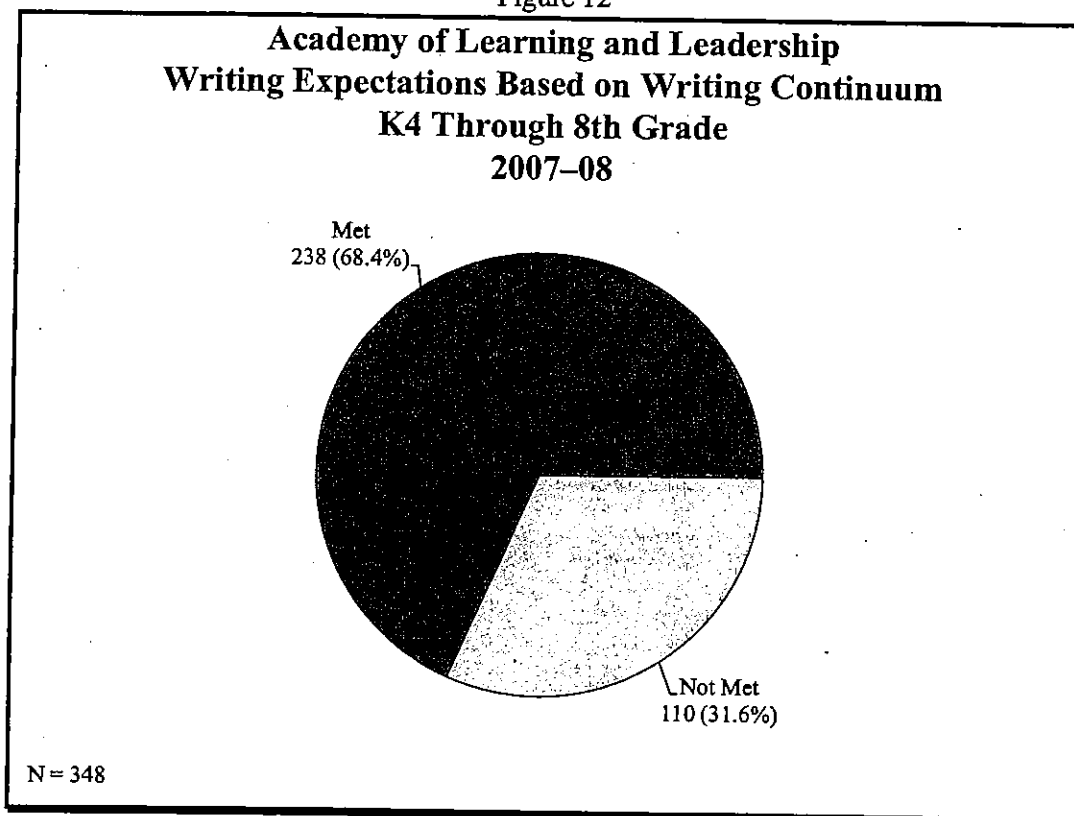
[25] The school provided a beginning-of-year writing stage-step, an end-of-year writing stage-step, the number of steps moved, and a check mark to indicate if the student met the writing goal.

## 4.    Language Arts

This year, the school identified language arts progress as a local measure of student academic achievement. To assess student progress, the school administered the MAP test to third through eighth graders.[26] The pre-test was given in the fall and the post-test occurred in the spring. Scores for 175 third through eighth graders who took the test both times were compared. Results indicate that 142 (81.1%) students improved their score from the first to the second test (see Figure 13).

Figure 13

**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**MAP Language Arts Scores**
**3rd Through 8th Grade**
**2007–08**

Improved
142 (81.1%)

Did Not
Improve
33 (18.9%)

N = 175

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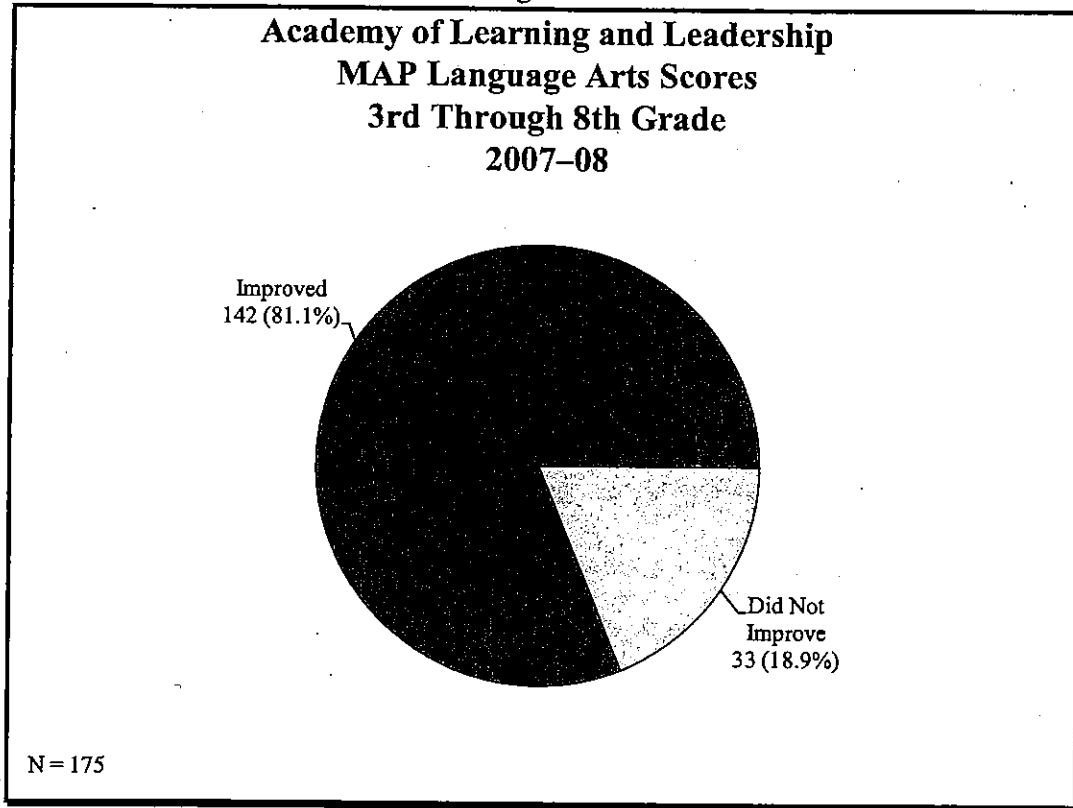
[26] First and second graders were not tested in language arts.

Results for each grade are illustrated in Table 9.

| Table 9 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Academy of Learning and Leadership<br>Language Arts Progress<br>Based on MAP in Fall and Spring | | | |
| Grade | N | Showed Improvement | |
| | | N | Improvement % |
| 3rd | 19 | 17 | 89.5% |
| 4th | 30 | 26 | 86.7% |
| 5th | 29 | 21 | 72.4% |
| 6th | 33 | 31 | 93.9% |
| 7th | 28 | 19 | 67.9% |
| 8th | 36 | 28 | 77.8% |
| Total | 175 | 142 | 81.1% |

Note: 1st and 2nd graders were not tested in language arts.

5. **Final Portfolio Assessment for Eighth Graders**

Students at the Academy are required to create, maintain, and, as eighth graders, present a portfolio that documents that student's progress toward becoming an Ideal Graduate. This year, the school developed a rubric to rate eighth-grade student proficiency in terms of growth toward the Ideal Graduate criteria. Eighth-grade Ideal Graduate portfolios were graded on overall writing ability as well as on a written piece describing the student's high school plans. Writing was judged on ideas and content, organization, fluency, conventions, word choice, and voice. The high school piece was assessed on descriptions of high school choice, qualities of a successful high school student, challenges and fears, and the student's action plan. Each area was given a rating of excellent, proficient, developing, or beginning. For example, in writing ideas and content, a student's work was rated excellent if the writing had clear purpose and remained focused; proficient meant that the writing had a sense of purpose and was fairly

focused; developing reflected that the purpose was understood but not fully developed; and beginning meant that the purpose was not understood.

All ratings in all areas were combined to reach an overall rating of the student's ideal graduate portfolio. This year, portfolios and presentations for all eighth graders were rated as proficient.[27]
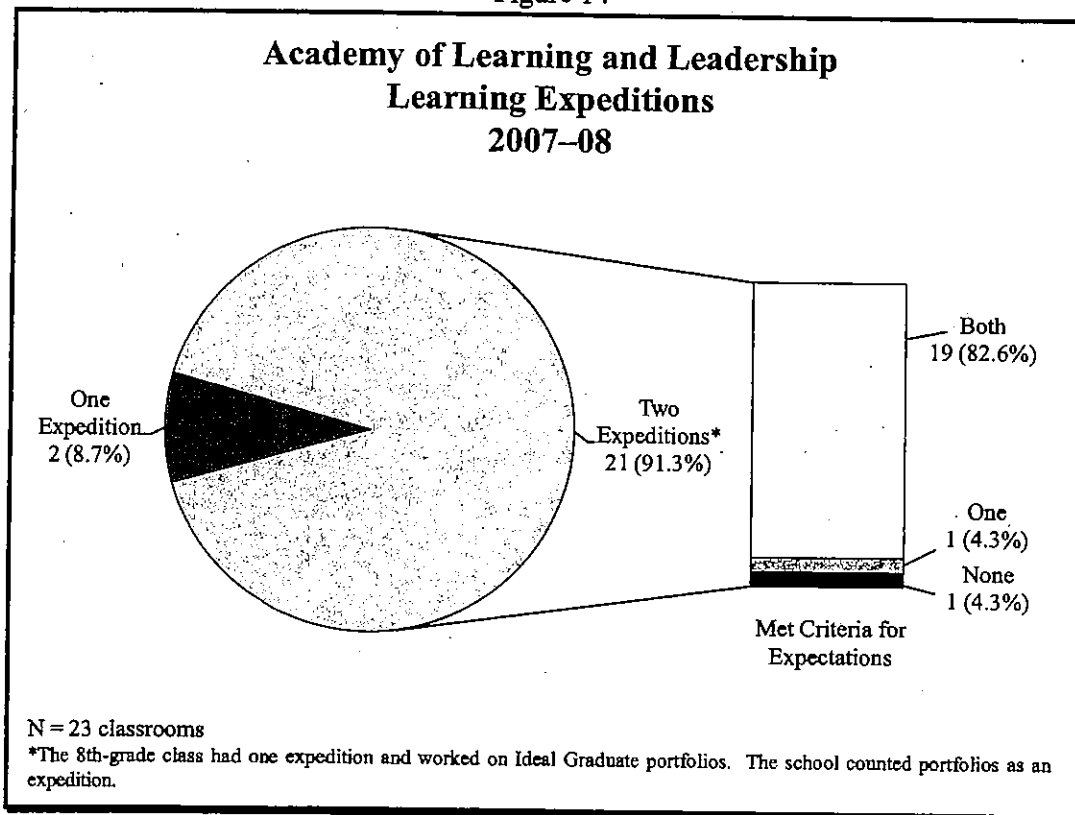
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[27] Based on an email from Camille Mortimore, July 30, 2008.

## 6.    Learning Expeditions

This year, the school set a goal that each classroom would meet at least eight out of ten key criteria for each of the two expeditions held by each classroom during the school year.[28]

The school submitted data for 23 classrooms ranging from K4 through eighth grade. Twenty-one classrooms held two expeditions, two held one expedition, and eighth graders participated in one expedition. Instead of a second expedition, eighth-grade students were graded on their Ideal Graduate portfolios. This counted as an expedition for the eighth graders. Results provided by the school indicate that all 19 of the 21 classrooms that held two expeditions met the criteria for both expeditions (see Figure 14).

Figure 14



**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**Learning Expeditions**
**2007–08**

One Expedition 2 (8.7%)

Two Expeditions* 21 (91.3%)

Both 19 (82.6%)

One 1 (4.3%)

None 1 (4.3%)

Met Criteria for Expectations

N = 23 classrooms
*The 8th-grade class had one expedition and worked on Ideal Graduate portfolios. The school counted portfolios as an expedition.

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[28] The ten key criteria are listed in the school's student learning memo in Appendix B.

## F. External Standardized Measures of Educational Performance

The SDRT is the standardized reading test required by the CSRC for administration to all first, second, and third graders enrolled in charter schools. Student performance is reported in phonetic analysis, vocabulary, comprehension, and a total SDRT score.

The CSRC also required that the school administer the WKCE–CRT to students in third through eighth grades. The WKCE–CRT reading and math tests are directly aligned with the State of Wisconsin model academic standards and meet federal No Child Left Behind requirements to test student reading and math skills. Students in third through eighth grades are tested in reading and math. Students in fourth and eighth grades are also tested in language arts, science, and social studies.[29] Based on results, students are categorized as having minimal, basic, proficient, or advanced skills.

### 1. SDRT for First Graders

In April 2008, the SDRT was administered to 33 first graders. Results show that, on average, students were reading at grade level in each of the areas tested (see Figure 15 and Table 10).

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[29] The science subtest is CRT. The language arts and social studies subtests are nationally normed and are not CRT.

Figure 15

**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**SDRT**
**Average Grade-level Equivalent for 1st Graders**
**2007–08**



N = 33
Note: Pre-K scores were set to zero.
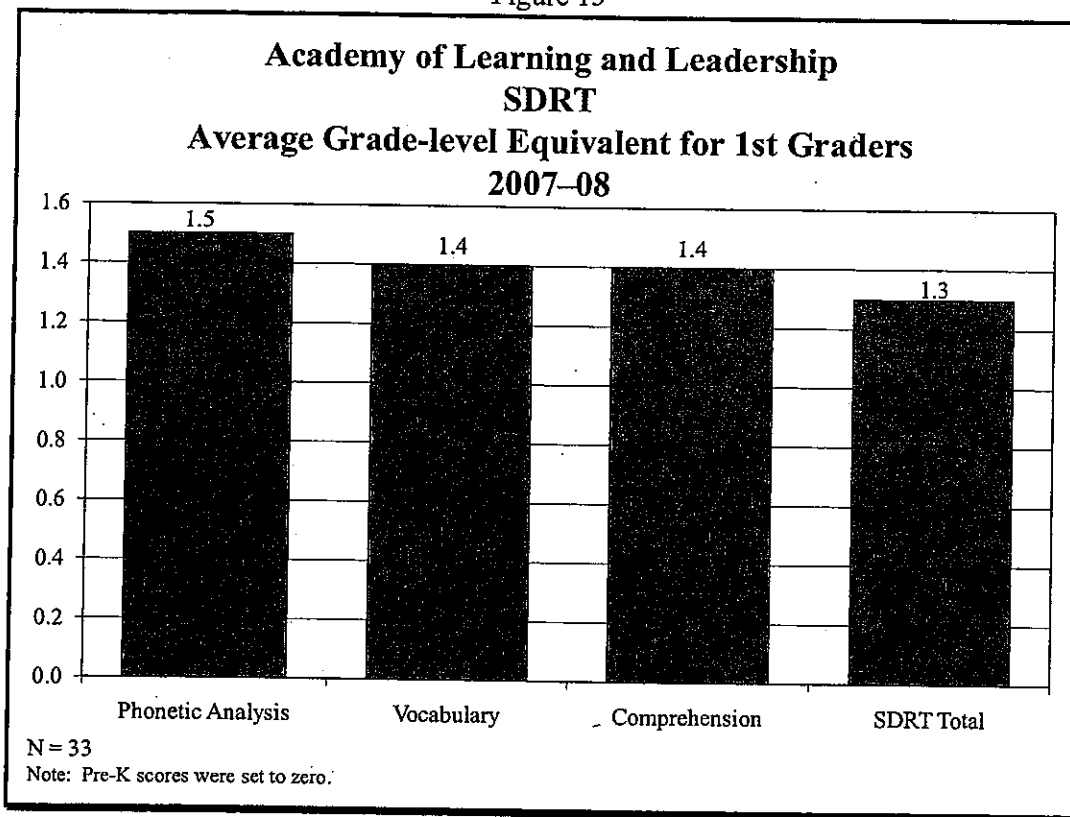
| Table 10 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Academy of Learning and Leadership**<br>**SDRT**<br>**Grade-level Equivalent Ranges for 1st Graders**<br>**2007–08**<br>**(N = 33)** | | | |
| **Area Tested** | **Grade-level Equivalent** | | |
| | **Lowest** | **Highest** | **Median** |
| Phonetic Analysis | PK* | 5.2 | 1.0 |
| Vocabulary | K.2 | 2.8 | 1.0 |
| Comprehension | K.4 | 5.3 | 1.0 |
| SDRT Total | K.2 | 3.0 | 1.0 |

*Pre-K scores were set to zero.

## 2.   SDRT for Second Graders

The SDRT was administered to second graders in April 2008.  Results indicated that second graders were reading at 1.5 grade-level equivalencies (GLE) to 2.2 GLE, depending on the area tested (see Figure 16 and Table 11).

Figure 16

**Academy of Learning and Leadership
SDRT
Average GLE for 2nd Graders
2007–08**



N = 37
Note: Parts of the test were given to two students.  Scores for three students are not included.
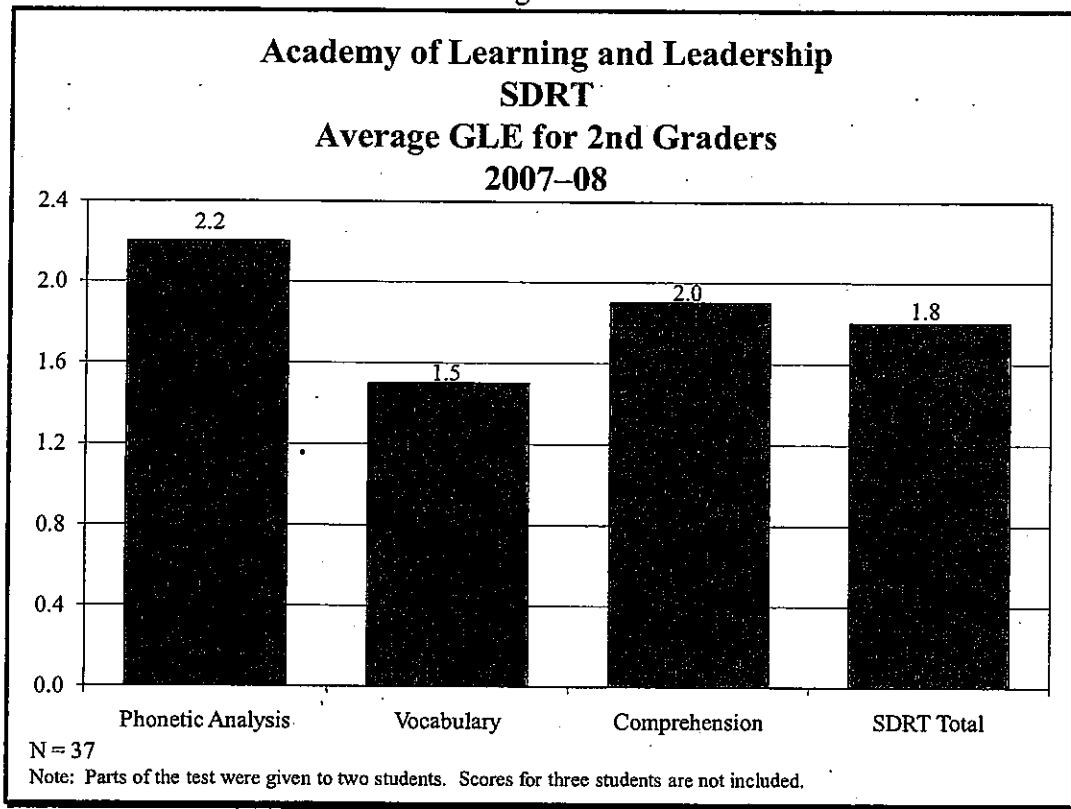
| Table 11 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Academy of Learning and Leadership**<br>**SDRT**<br>**GLE Ranges for 2nd Graders**<br>**2007–08**<br>**(N = 37)** | | | |
| **Area Tested** | **GLE** | | |
| | **Lowest** | **Highest** | **Median** |
| Phonetic Analysis | 1.0 | 7.9 | 2.1 |
| Vocabulary | K.4 | 3.3 | 1.2 |
| Comprehension | PK* | 3.6 | 1.6 |
| **SDRT Total** | **K.9** | **3.9** | **1.4** |

Note: Parts of the test were given to two students. Scores for these students are not included.
*Pre-K scores were set to zero.

### 3. Standardized Tests for Third Graders

#### a. SDRT for Third Graders

The school administered the SDRT to 34 third graders in April 2008. Results indicate that students were reading below grade level in each of the areas tested (see Figure 17 and Table 12).

Figure 17



**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**SDRT**
**Average GLE for 3rd Graders**
**2007–08**

N = 34
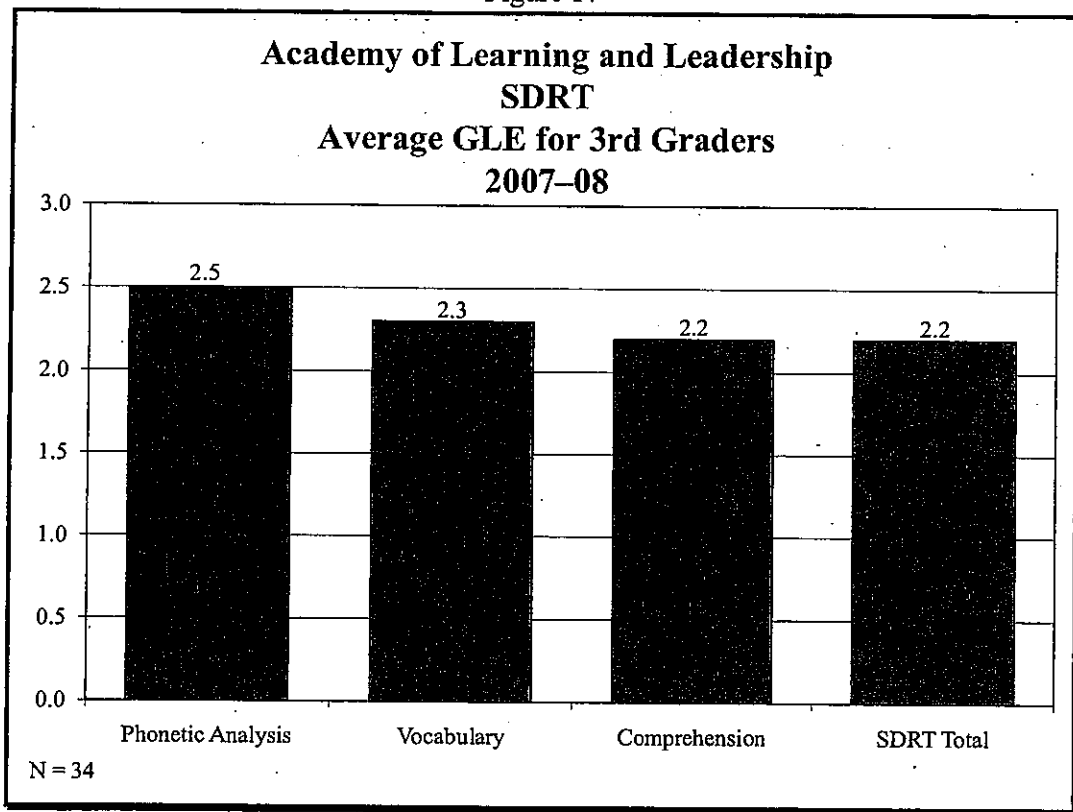
| Table 12 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Academy of Learning and Leadership**<br>**SDRT**<br>**GLE Ranges for 3rd Graders**<br>**2007–08**<br>**(N = 34)** | | | |
| **Area Tested** | **GLE** | | |
| | **Lowest** | **Highest** | **Median** |
| Phonetic Analysis | 1.1 | 10.8 | 2.2 |
| Vocabulary | K.9 | 4.5 | 2.1 |
| Comprehension | 1.0 | 3.7 | 2.2 |
| SDRT Total | 1.1 | 4.0 | 2.1 |

**b.    WKCE–CRT for Third Graders**

The WKCE–CRT was administered in October 2007 to 36 third graders. Results on this measure, illustrated in Figure 18, indicate that 12 (33.3%) third graders scored at the minimal level of reading, 18 (50.0%) scored basic, six (16.7%) scored proficient, and no third graders demonstrated advanced reading skills. In mathematics, 30 (83.3%) third graders scored in the minimal math proficiency level, one (2.8%) scored basic, five (13.9%) were proficient, and no students were advanced in mathematics.

Figure 18



Academy of Learning and Leadership
WKCE–CRT
Proficiency Levels for 3rd Graders
2007–08

N = 36
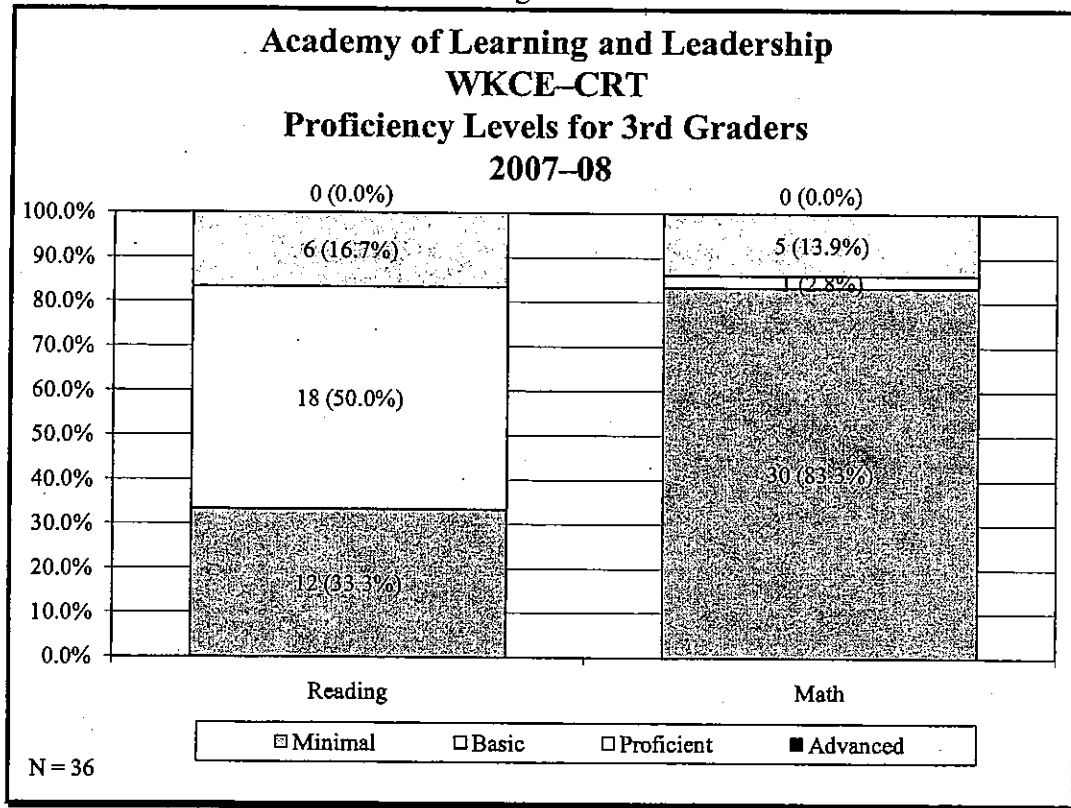
## 4. WKCE–CRT for Fourth Graders

In the fall of 2007, all fourth-grade students in Wisconsin public schools took the WKCE–CRT. The WKCE–CRT is similar to the WKCE used in past years. As in past years, students in fourth, eighth, and tenth grades were assessed in language arts, science, and social studies, in addition to reading and math.[30] Like the WKCE–CRT in other grades, students are placed in one of four proficiency categories: advanced, proficient, basic, and minimal performance, based on test scores. The CSRC requires that results for reading, math, and language arts be reported.

The WKCE–CRT was administered in October 2007 to fourth-grade students at the Academy.[31] Fifteen (37.5%) fourth graders scored minimal reading proficiency, 20 (50.0%) scored basic, five (12.5%) were proficient readers, and no fourth graders scored in the advanced reader category. In language arts ability, 18 (45.0%) students demonstrated minimal performance, 17 (42.5%) scored basic, five (12.5%) students scored proficient, and no students achieved advanced scores in language arts. Thirty-three (82.5%) students exhibited minimal math skills, three (7.5%) scored basic, and four (10.0%) students scored at the proficient level. No students scored in the advanced level in math (see Figure 19).

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[30] The reading, math, and science portions of WKCE–CRT are criterion-referenced tests that align with the State of Wisconsin Model Academic Standards. The language arts and social studies portions are nationally normed.

[31] Four more fourth graders took part(s) of the test. Their scores were not included in the analysis.

Figure 19

## Academy of Learning and Leadership
## WKCE–CRT
## Proficiency Levels for 4th Graders
## 2007–08
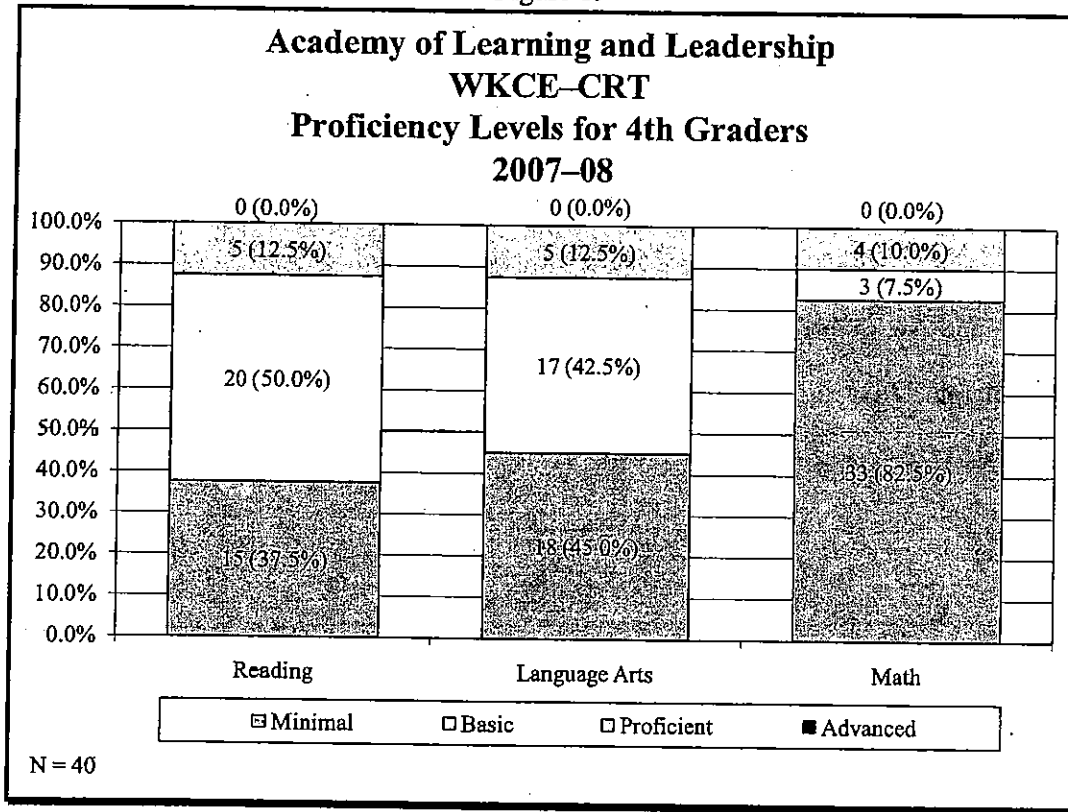


The final score from the WKCE–CRT is a writing score. The extended writing sample is assessed using two scores. A six-point composing score evaluates students' ability to control purpose/focus, organization/coherence, development of content, sentence fluency, and word choice. A three-point conventions score evaluates students' ability to control punctuation, grammar, capitalization, and spelling. Points are combined to produce a single score, the maximum possible score being 9.0.

This year, fourth graders' scores ranged from 1.0 to 6.0.[32] The median score was 3.0, meaning half of the students scored 1.0 to 3.0 and the other half scored 3.0 to 6.0.

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[32] One student was not scored on the writing sample.

## 5.    WKCE–CRT for Fifth Graders

Fifth graders were administered the WKCE–CRT examination in October 2007. This examination consists of reading and math subtests.

The examinations were administered to 41 fifth-grade students.[33]   Results show that 17 (41.5%) fifth graders scored minimal, 18 (43.9%) scored basic, five (12.2%) scored proficient, and one (2.4%) scored in the advanced reading level.  In math, 30 (73.2%) students scored minimal, five (12.2%) scored basic, five (12.2%) scored proficient, and one student scored at the advanced level (see Figure 20).

Figure 20



Academy of Learning and Leadership
WKCE–CRT
Proficiency Levels for 5th Graders
2007–08

N = 41

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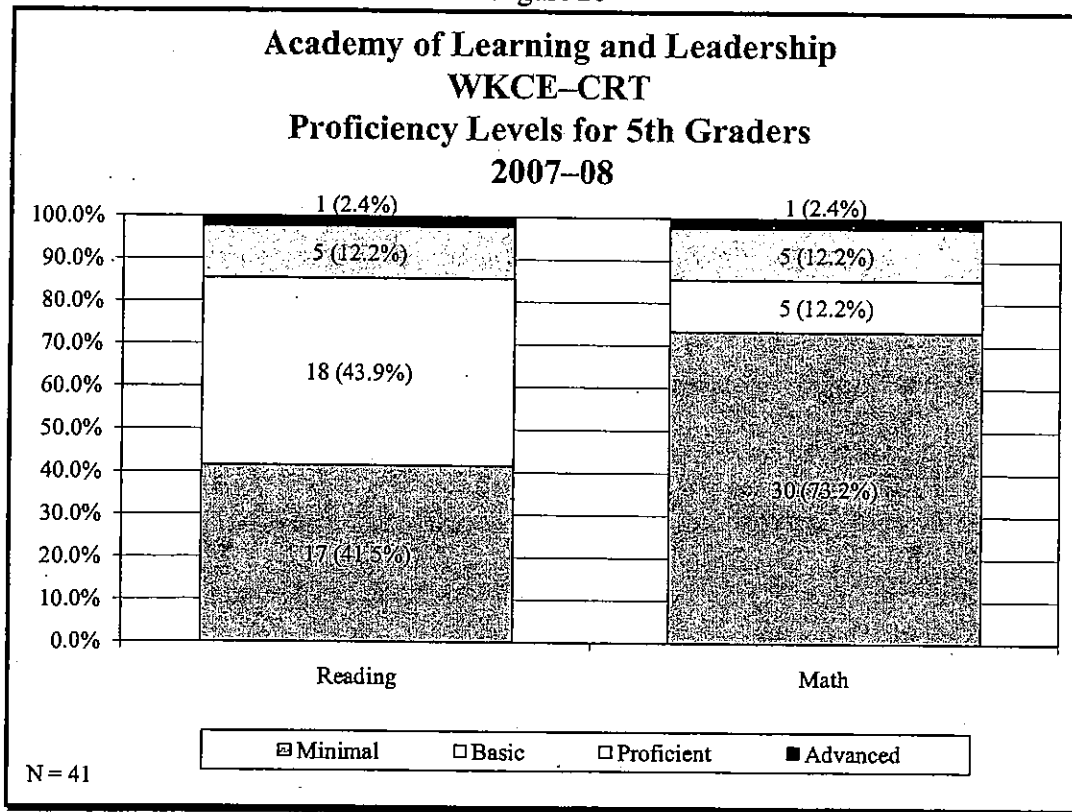
[33] Two additional students were not tested on the WKCE–CRT.

O:\508W]_Milw\2007-08\ALL\ALLYear5_2007-08_FINAL.docx                56

## 6. WKCE–CRT for Sixth Graders

Sixth graders were also given the WKCE–CRT in October 2007. Results indicate that 13 (28.9%) students scored proficient and two (4.4%) scored advanced in reading. In math, six (13.3%) scored proficient and no students scored in the advanced category (see Figure 21).

Figure 21



**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**WKCE–CRT**
**Proficiency Levels for 6th Graders**
**2007–08**

N = 45
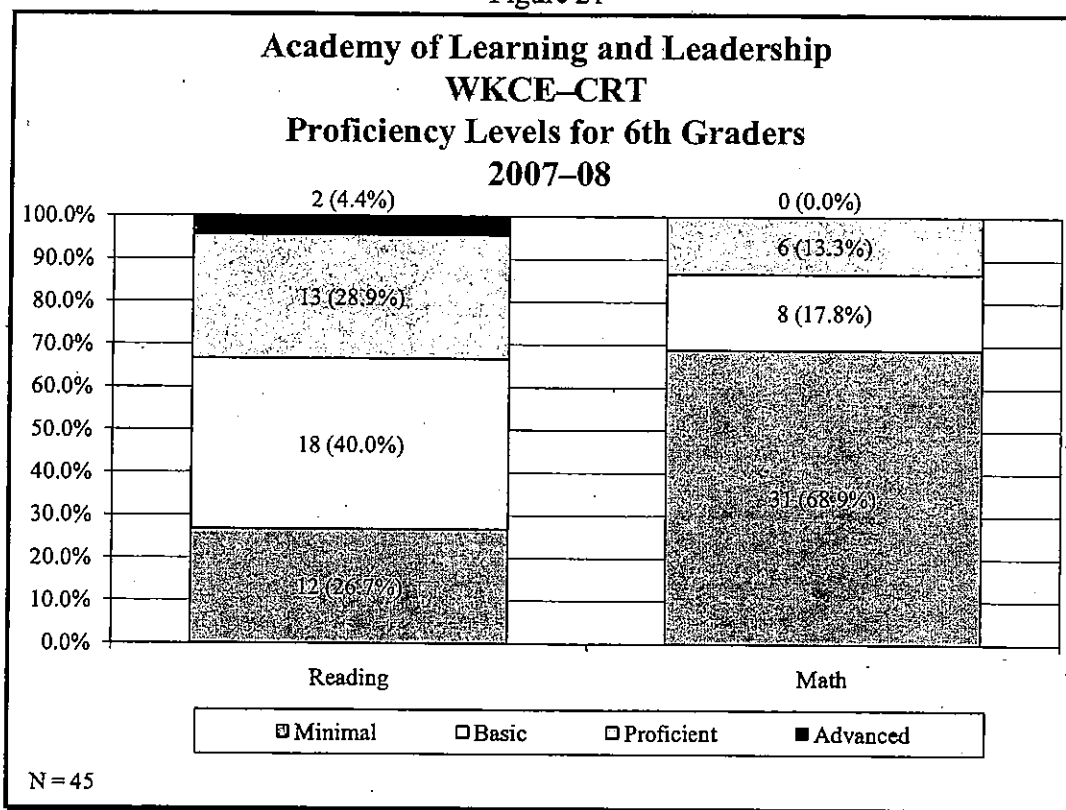
## 7. WKCE–CRT for Seventh Graders

Seventh-grade students were administered the WKCE–CRT in October 2007. In reading, 11 (26.8%) reached proficient and five (12.2%) were in the advanced category. Five (12.2%) seventh graders scored in the proficient and one (2.4%) scored in the advanced range in math.[34]

Figure 22



Academy of Learning and Leadership
WKCE–CRT
Proficiency Levels for 7th Graders
2007–08

N = 41
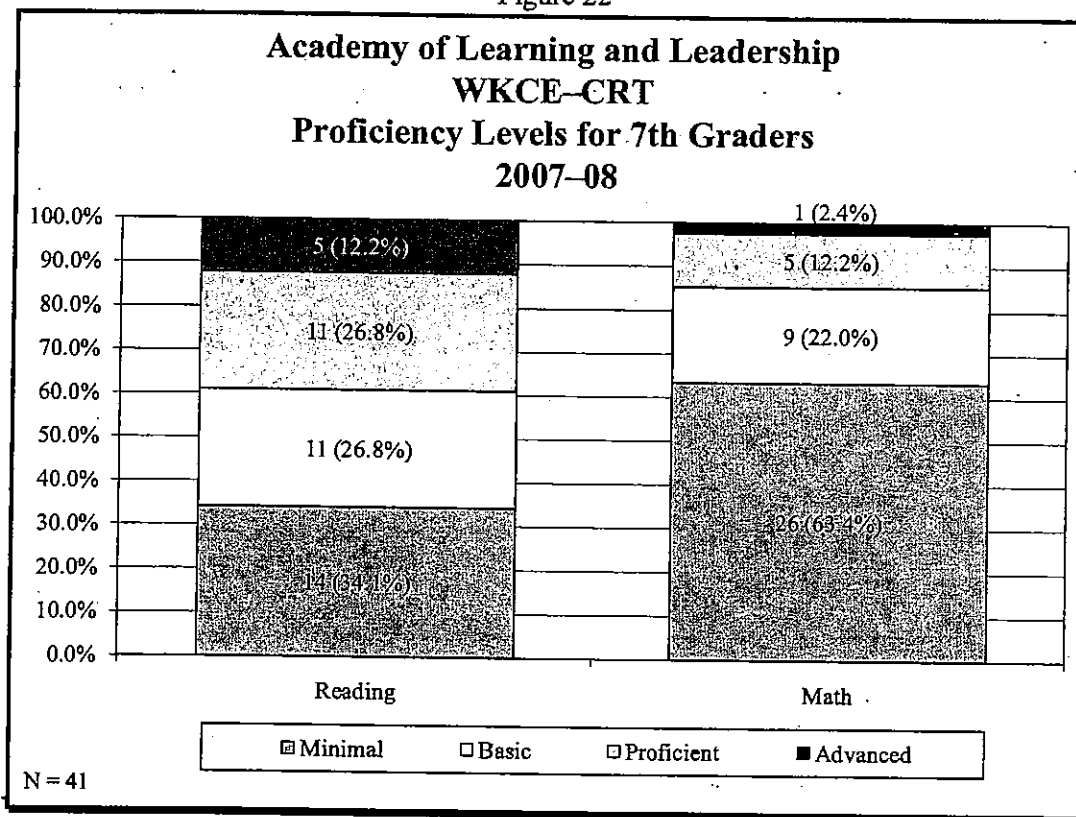
## 8. WKCE–CRT for Eighth Graders

In October 2007, the WKCE–CRT was administered to eighth-grade students. The test consists of assessments in reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The reading, math, and science subtests are aligned with State of Wisconsin standards. The language

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[34] Five additional students did not take the examination. Two of these students were tested with WAA-SwD, an alternative to the WKCE–CRT.

arts and social studies subtests are nationally normed. The CSRC requires that schools report student performance in reading, language arts, and mathematics.
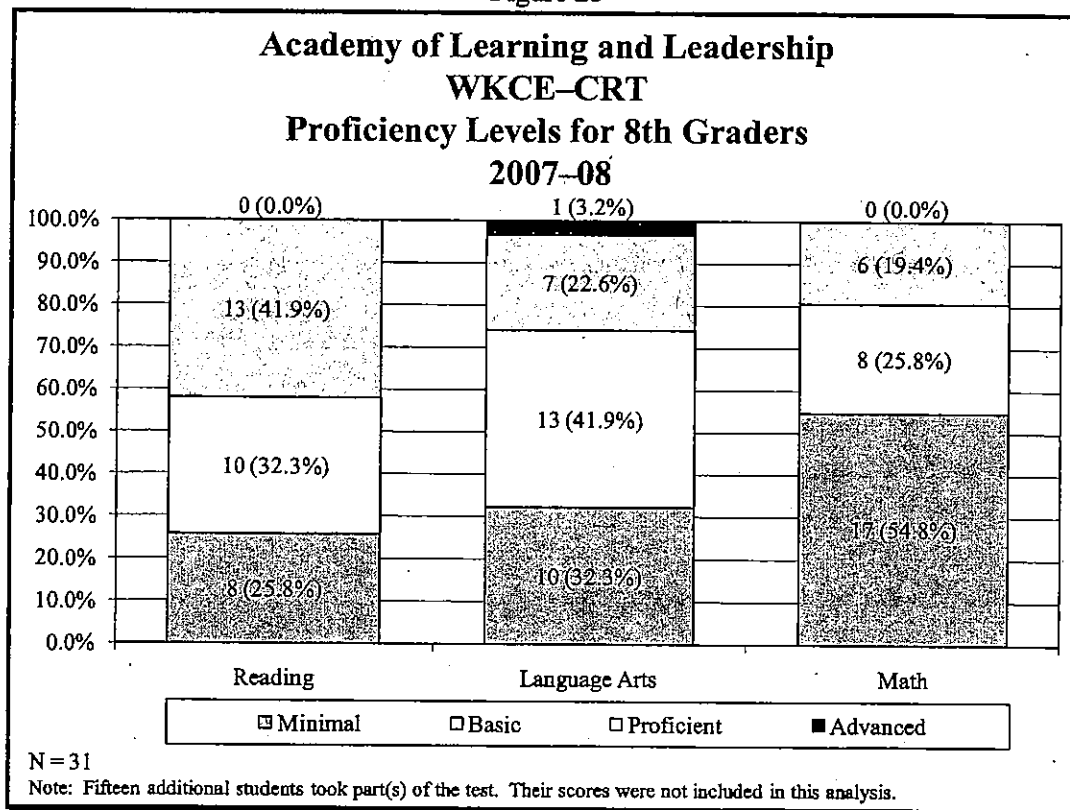
Proficiency indicators for the eighth graders are illustrated in Figure 23. Eight (25.8%) eighth graders scored in the minimal reading proficiency range, ten (32.3%) scored basic, 13 (41.9%) scored proficient, and no eighth graders scored advanced. Ten (32.3%) eighth graders scored in the minimal language arts proficiency range, 13 (41.9%) eighth graders scored basic, seven (22.6%) were proficient, and one (3.2%) eighth grader scored advanced. Seventeen (54.8%) students exhibited minimal performance in mathematics, eight (25.8%) students scored basic, six (19.4%) students scored proficient, and no eight graders scored at the advanced level in math.

Figure 23



Academy of Learning and Leadership
WKCE–CRT
Proficiency Levels for 8th Graders
2007–08

N = 31
Note: Fifteen additional students took part(s) of the test. Their scores were not included in this analysis.

The final score from the WKCE–CRT is a writing score. The extended writing sample is scored with two holistic rubrics. A six-point composing rubric evaluates students' ability to control purpose/focus, organization/coherence, development of content, sentence fluency, and word choice. A three-point conventions rubric evaluates students' ability to control punctuation, grammar, capitalization, and spelling. Points received on these two rubrics are combined to produce a single score, the maximum possible score being 9.0. The writing scores for the eighth graders ranged from 4.0 to 5.5. The median score was 5.0, meaning half of the students scored 4.0 to 5.0 and the other half scored 5.0 to 5.5.[35]

## G. Multiple-year Student Progress

Year-to-year progress is measured by comparing scores on standardized tests from one year to the next. The tests used to examine progress are the SDRT (for reading) and the WKCE–CRT. This is the third year that the WKCE–CRT has been used in Wisconsin public schools to assess reading and math skills.

The CSRC requires that progress for students who met proficiency level requirements in the previous school year be reported separately from those who did not meet proficiency level expectations. This report reflects scores for second and third graders for whom multiple-year test data were available and fourth- through eighth-grade students who were enrolled for a full academic year (FAY), i.e., since September 15, 2006.

## 1. SDRT Results for First Through Third Graders

The standardized test used by the CSRC to track reading progress from first through third grade is the SDRT. Note that GLEs from this test do not translate into proficiency levels;

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[35] Note that three students who took the other subtests were not scored on the writing sample.

therefore, results are described in GLE. Progress for all students who took tests in the last two consecutive years was examined.

There were 25 students enrolled in the Academy as first graders in 2006–07 who took the test in 2007–08 as second graders, and 15 students enrolled in 2006–07 as second graders who took the test in 2007–08 as third graders. The CSRC expects that these students will advance, on average, 1.0 GLE. As illustrated in Table 13, the average advancement from first to second grade was 0.6 GLE. Second to third graders advanced an average of 0.4 GLE. Overall, these students advanced, on average, 0.5 GLE from 2006–07 to 2007–08. These data indicate that students did not meet the CSRC expectation of 1.0 GLE average advancement.

| Table 13 |||
|----------|||
| Academy of Learning and Leadership Average GLE Advancement in Reading Based on SDRT Total |||
| Grade | Average GLE |||
|  | 2006–07 | 2007–08 | Advancement |
| 1st to 2nd (n = 25) | 1.1 | 1.7 | 0.6 |
| 2nd to 3rd (n = 15) | 1.8 | 2.2 | 0.4 |
| Total (N = 40) | -- | -- | 0.5 |

Examination of students who were enrolled for three consecutive years, i.e., tested as first graders in 2005–06, as second graders in 2006–07, and as third graders in 2007–08, shows that these students advanced, on average, 0.7 GLE from first to third grade (see Table 14).

| Table 14 |||
|----------|||
| Academy of Learning and Leadership Average GLE Advancement in Reading Based on SDRT Total |||
| Grade | Average GLE |||
|  | 2005–06 | 2007–08 | Advancement |
| 1st to 3rd (n = 10) | 1.6 | 2.3 | 0.7 |

## 2. Multiple-year Progress for Students Who Met Proficiency Level Expectations

The CSRC expects that 75.0% of students who were proficient or advanced in 2006–07 maintain proficiency or better in 2007–08. This expectation applies to students enrolled for an FAY. This year, there were 38 students in fourth through eighth grades who met proficiency level expectations in reading, i.e., scored proficient or advanced in 2006–07, and who were tested again in 2007–08. Twenty-four (63.2%) students were able to again reach proficient or advanced levels in reading (see Table 15). Note that to protect student identity, the CSRC requires that group sizes include ten or more students.

| Table 15 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Academy of Learning and Leadership Reading Progress for FAY Students Who Met Proficiency Level Expectations Based on WKCE–CRT | | | |
| Grade (2006–07 to 2007–08) | # Students Proficient or Advanced 2006–07 | # Students Who Maintained Proficient or Advanced in 2007–08 | |
| | | N | % |
| 3rd to 4th | 5 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 4th to 5th | 7 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 5th to 6th | 10 | 7 | 70.0% |
| 6th to 7th | 5 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 7th to 8th | 11 | 9 | 81.8% |
| Total | 38 | 24 | 63.2% |

There were 15 students who were proficient or above in mathematics when tested in 2006–07 who were again tested in 2007–08. Ten (66.7%) of these students were able to maintain proficiency in math (see Table 16).

| Table 16 Academy of Learning and Leadership Math Progress for FAY Students Who Met Proficiency Level Expectations Based on WKCE–CRT | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Grade (2005-06 to 2007–08) | # Students Proficient or Advanced 2006–07 | # Students Who Maintained Proficient or Advanced in 2007–08 | |
| | | N | % |
| 3rd to 4th | 1 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 4th to 5th | 4 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 5th to 6th | 2 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 6th to 7th | 3 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 7th to 8th | 5 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| Total | 15 | 10 | 66.7% |

3. **Multiple-year Progress for Students Who Did Not Meet Proficiency Level Expectations**

   a. **GLE Progress**

The test used to examine progress from first to second and second to third grade is the SDRT, which does not translate into proficiency levels. Therefore, CRC selected students who did not meet GLE expectations. The CSRC expects these students to improve more than 1.0 GLE.

There were 14 second and ten third graders who tested below GLE in 2006–07 and were tested again in 2007–08. Results indicate that these students, on average, advanced 0.8 GLE from first to second grade and 0.5 GLE from second to third. Overall, these students advanced, on average, 0.7 GLE (see Table 17).

| Table 17 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Academy of Learning and Leadership<br>Average GLE Advancement for 2nd and 3rd Graders Who Did Not Meet GLE in 2005–06<br>Based on SDRT | | | |
| Grade<br>(2006–07 to 2007–08) | Average GLE<br>2006–07 | Average GLE<br>2007–08 | Advancement |
| 1st to 2nd (n = 14) | 0.5 | 1.3 | 0.8 |
| 2nd to 3rd (n = 10) | 1.5 | 2.0 | 0.5 |
| Total (N = 24) | -- | -- | 0.7 |

## b.    Proficiency Level Progress

The CSRC expects students who test below expectations, i.e., minimal or basic, to improve to the next level or to progress at least one quartile within their level. This expectation applies to FAY students. Reading progress in terms of proficiency level achievement for students who tested below proficiency expectations in 2006–07 is provided in Table 18. Approximately 42.3% of students from fourth through eighth grades either advanced at least one level or showed improvement within their level by advancing at least one quartile in reading.

| Table 18 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Academy of Learning and Leadership<br>Proficiency Level Advancement for FAY Students Who Tested Below<br>Proficiency Level Expectations in Reading<br>Based on WKCE–CRT | | | | | |
| Grades<br>2006–07 to 2007–08 | # Students<br>Minimal/Basic in<br>2006–07 | # Students Who<br>Advanced One<br>Proficiency Level | If Not Advanced,<br># Who Improved<br>Quartile(s)<br>Within the<br>Proficiency Level | Total Proficiency Level<br>Advancement | |
| | | | | N | % |
| 3rd to 4th | 14 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 21.4% |
| 4th to 5th | 12 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 41.7% |
| 5th to 6th | 15 | 5 | 6 | 11 | 73.3% |
| 6th to 7th | 18 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 33.3% |
| 7th to 8th | 12 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 41.7% |
| Total | 71 | 16 | 14 | 30 | 42.3% |

Math progress by grade level for fourth- through eighth-grade students who tested below proficiency expectations in 2006–07 is illustrated in Table 19. As a group, 29.2% of these students either advanced at least one proficiency level or at least one quartile within their proficiency level in mathematics.

| Table 19 | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Academy of Learning and Leadership<br>Proficiency Level Advancement for FAY Students Who Tested Below<br>Proficiency Level Expectations in Math<br>Based on WKCE–CRT | | | | | |
| Grade<br>2006–07 to 2007–08 | # Students<br>Minimal/Basic in<br>2006–07 | # Students Who<br>Advanced One<br>Proficiency Level | If Not Advanced,<br># Who Improved<br>Quartile(s)<br>Within the<br>Proficiency Level | Total Proficiency Level<br>Advancement | |
| | | | | N | % |
| 3rd to 4th | 19 | 1 | 3 | 4 | 22.1% |
| 4th to 5th | 15 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 26.7% |
| 5th to 6th | 23 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 26.1% |
| 6th to 7th | 20 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 40.0% |
| 7th to 8th | 19 | 3 | 3 | 6 | 31.6% |
| Total | 96 | 13 | 15 | 28 | 29.2% |

### H.  Annual Review of the School's Adequate Yearly Progress

### 1.  Background Information[36]

State and federal laws require the annual review of school performance to determine student academic achievement and progress. In Wisconsin, the annual review of performance required by the federal No Child Left Behind act is based on each school's performance on four objectives:

- The test participation of all students enrolled.
- A required academic indicator (either graduation or attendance rate).
- The proficiency rate in reading.
- The proficiency rate in mathematics.

In Wisconsin, the DPI releases an annual review of school performance for each public school, including charter schools, with information about whether that school has met the criteria for each of the four required adequate yearly progress (AYP) objectives. If a school fails to meet the criteria in the same AYP objective for two consecutive years, the school is designated as "identified for improvement." Once designated as "identified for improvement," the school must meet the annual review criteria for two consecutive years in the same AYP objective to be removed from this status designation.

The possible school status designations are as follows:

- "Satisfactory," which means the school is not in improvement status.

- "School Identified for Improvement" (SIFI), which means the school does not meet AYP for two consecutive years in the same objective.

- SIFI Levels 1–5, which means the school missed at least one of the AYP objectives and is subject to state requirements and additional Title I sanctions assigned to that level.

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[36] This information is taken from the DPI website: www.dpi.state.wi.us/oea/annrvw05.html.

- SIFI Levels 1–4 Improved, which means the school met the AYP in the year tested but remains subject to sanctions due to the prior year. AYP must be met for two consecutive years in that objective to be removed from "improvement" status and returned to "satisfactory" status.

- Title I Status, which identifies if Title I funds are directed to the school. If so, the school is subject to federal sanctions.[37]

## 2. Adequate Yearly Progress Review Summary: 2007–08[38]

According to the Academy's Adequate Yearly Progress Review Summary published by the DPI in 2007–08, the Academy reached AYP in test participation and attendance. The school's improvement status on these two objectives is "satisfactory." For the second year in a row, the school did not meet the AYP in reading and mathematics, indicating a Level 1 status for each objective. Therefore, the school did not meet adequate yearly progress, and its improvement status rating is SIFI Level 1.

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[37] For complete information about AYP, including sanctions, see dpi.wi.gov/oea/acct/ayp.html, July 2008.

[38] For a copy of the Academy's Adequate Yearly Progress Review see www2.dpi.state.wi.us/sifi.

## V.    CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

This report covers the fifth year of the Academy's operation as a City of Milwaukee charter school. For the 2007–08 academic year, the Academy has met some of its education-related contract provisions. However, the Academy did not meet the year-to-year achievement expectations, specifically the expectations that second and third graders advance an average of one GLE in reading from the previous year; that at least 75% of fourth through eighth graders who were proficient in reading and math would maintain their proficiency; and that second- and third-grade students below grade level would advance more than one GLE in reading. Three teachers did not hold a DPI license or permit, and student enrollment and attendance information provided by the school was not in a usable data file format.

The education-related findings for secondary measures this year were as follows:

- Average student attendance was 90.0%. The school met its goal of 90.0% attendance.

- Approximately 90.1% of parents attended at least three of four student-led parent conferences, short of meeting the school's goal of 95.0%.

Results for the Academy's primary local measures of academic performance indicated the following:

- ILPs were completed for 98.2% of 440 students, and 90.9% of the ILPs were reviewed after at least three of the four quarters.

- Most (70.1%) students met the school's reading progress goal based on the Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading learning continuum.

- Of 243 first- through eighth-grade students, 82.3% improved in reading as demonstrated on fall and spring MAP assessments.

- Of 284 students, 79.2% met the math progress expectations as measured by pre- and post-test improvement from tests administered in fall and again in spring.

- Of 216 first- through eighth-grade students, 69.9% improved in math, as measured on fall and spring MAP assessments.

- Of 238 students, 68.4% demonstrated writing skill progress of at least one stage during the academic year as measured by a school-based writing continuum.

- Portfolios and presentations for all eighth graders were rated proficient.

- Nineteen of 23 classrooms met criteria for successful learning expeditions.

Standardized tests results for the Academy's students were as follows:[39]

- The April 2008 SDRT results indicated the following:

  » First graders were reading, on average, at 1.3 GLE;
  » Second graders were reading, on average, at 1.8 GLE; and
  » Third graders were reading, on average, at 2.2 GLE.

- The WKCE–CRT for third through eighth graders indicated that the following percentage of students were proficient or advanced in reading:

Figure 24

**Academy of Leadership and Learning**
**WKCE–CRT**
**Proficient or Advanced Levels in Reading**
**3rd Through 8th Graders**
**2007–08**



| | 3rd<br>n = 36 | 4th<br>n = 40 | 5th<br>n = 41 | 6th<br>n = 45 | 7th<br>n = 41 | 8th<br>n = 31 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 16.7% | 12.5% | 14.6% | 33.3% | 39.0% | 41.9% |

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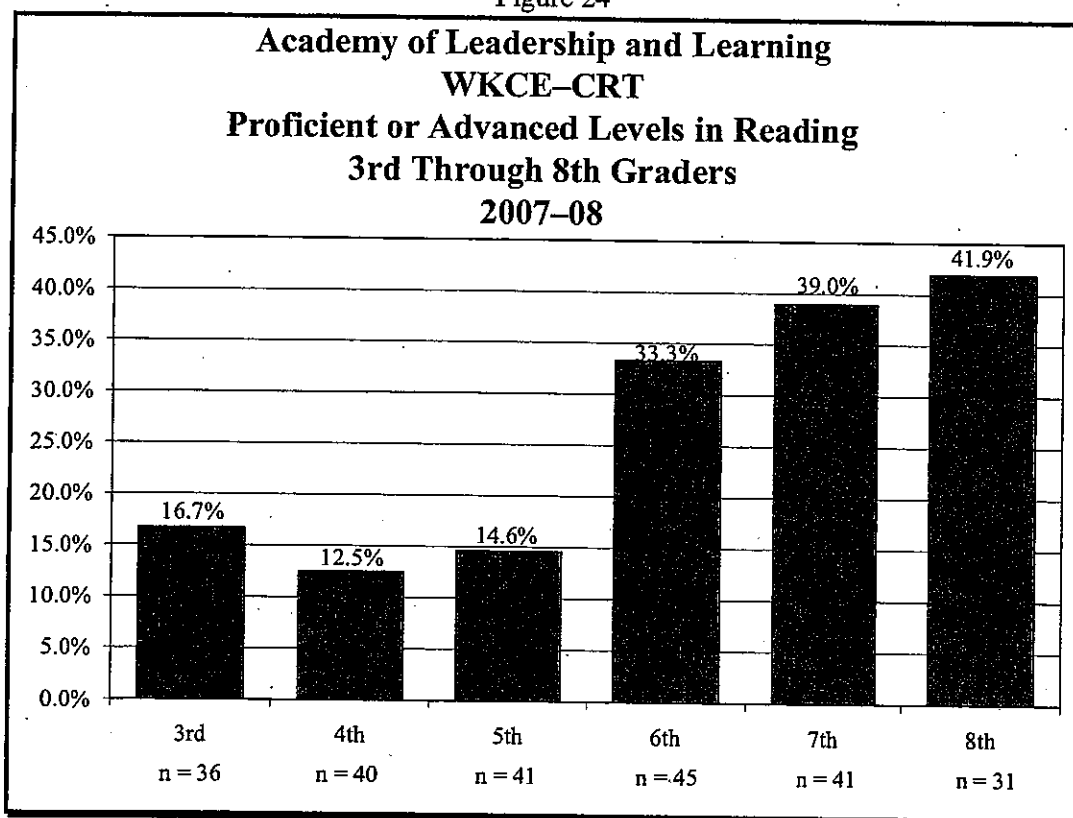
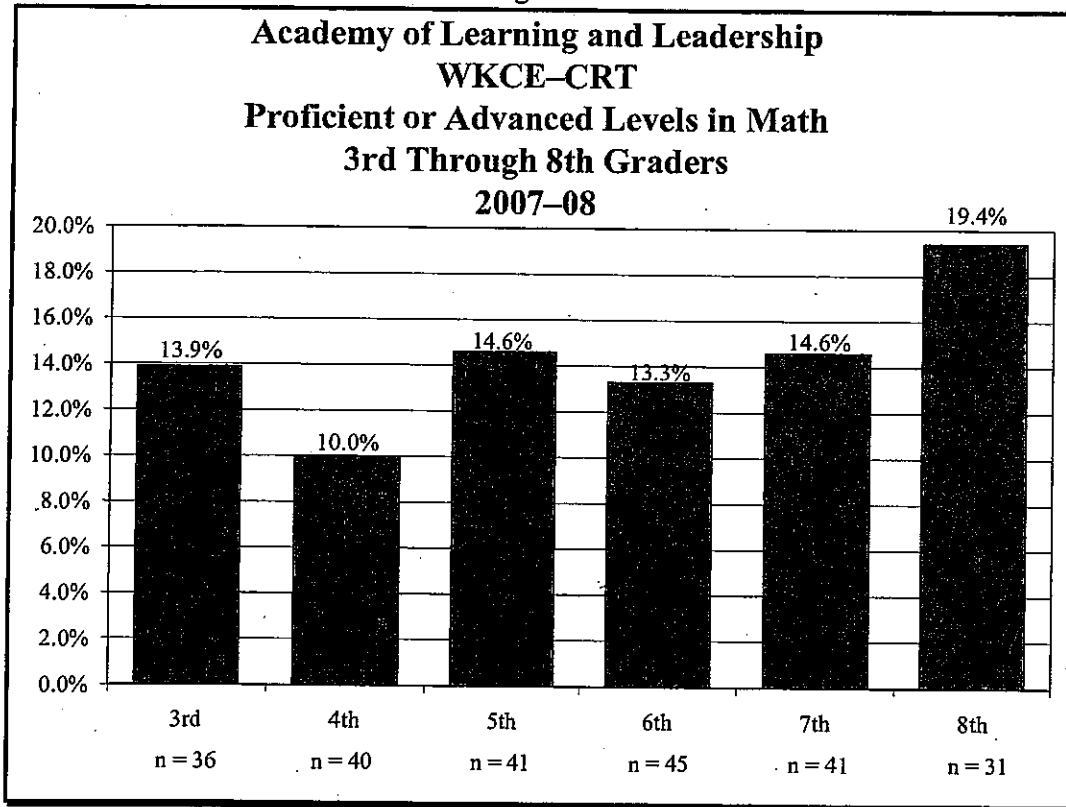[39] Due to rounding, some of the percentages do not total exactly 100.0%.

- The following were proficient or advanced in math:

Figure 25

**Academy of Learning and Leadership**
**WKCE–CRT**
**Proficient or Advanced Levels in Math**
**3rd Through 8th Graders**
**2007–08**

| Grade | Percent | n |
|-------|---------|-----|
| 3rd | 13.9% | n = 36 |
| 4th | 10.0% | n = 40 |
| 5th | 14.6% | n = 41 |
| 6th | 13.3% | n = 45 |
| 7th | 14.6% | n = 41 |
| 8th | 19.4% | n = 31 |

- SDRT multiple-year advancement results indicated that second graders advanced an average of 0.6 GLE in reading and third graders, on average, advanced 0.4 GLE. The CSRC expectation of 1.0 GLE average advancement in reading was not met.

- WKCE–CRT results over multiple years for students who met proficiency level expectations in 2006–07 indicated the following:

  » Of 38 fourth through eighth graders, 63.2% maintained a proficient or advanced level in reading, falling short of CSRC's expectation of at least 75.0%.

  » Of 15 fourth through eighth graders, 66.7% maintained a proficient or advanced level in math, falling short of CSRC's expectations of at least 75.0%.

- Multiple-year advancement results for students below grade-level expectations based on the 2006–07 SDRT indicate that second graders advanced an average of 0.8 GLE and third graders advanced an average of 0.5 GLE. These data indicate that the school did not meet the CSRC's expectation that these students would advance more than 1.0 GLE.

- Multiple-year advancement results for students below proficiency level expectations in 2006–07 indicated the following:

  » Of 71 fourth through eighth graders, 42.3% either advanced one proficiency level or one quartile within the previous year's proficiency level in reading.

  » Of 96 fourth through eighth graders, 29.2% either advanced one proficiency level or one quartile within the previous year's proficiency level in math.

The school improvement plan for the 2008-09 school year includes the following activities:

- Continue activities to improve each building's culture. These activities might include the following:

  » Reconfiguring the two buildings as one kindergarten through fourth grade elementary and the other a fifth through eighth grade middle school

  » Developing teacher specialization in the middle school; for example, a math specialist or a language arts specialist.

  » Considering block scheduling.

- Implement a revised and restructured behavioral approach.

- Develop and implement strategies to improve primary level reading progress.

- Create a plan to use the MAP and WKCE–CRT math and reading results more effectively on the classroom level.

- Improve the school's ability to accurately enter and extract analyzable data from the school's Power School program, including a roster that lists all students enrolled at any time during the year, enrollment date, and attendance data. This list should also include student name, student ID, grade, gender, race/ethnicity, withdrawal date, and withdrawal reason.

# Appendix A

## Contract Compliance Chart

| Academy of Learning and Leadership | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Overview of Compliance for Educationally Related Contract Provisions** <br> **2007–08** | | | |
| **Section of Contract** | **Educational Related Contract Provision** | **Monitoring Report Reference Page** | **Contract Provision Met or Not Met?** |
| Section I, B | Description of educational program; student population served | pp. 2–7 | Met |
| Section I, V | Charter school operation under the days and hours indicated in its calendar | pp. 9–10 | Met |
| Section I, C | Educational methods | pp. 2–4 | Met |
| Section I, D | Administration of required standardized tests | pp. 46–60 | Met |
| Section I, D | Academic criteria #1: Maintain local measures, showing pupil growth in demonstrating curricular goals | pp. 33–45 | Met |
| Section I, D | Academic criteria #2: Year-to-year achievement measure: <br> a. 2nd- and 3rd-grade students: Advance average of one GLE in reading. <br> b. 4th- through 8th-grade students proficient or advanced in reading: At least 75.0% maintain proficiency level. <br> c. 4th- through 8th-grade students proficient or advanced in language arts: At least 75.0% maintain proficiency level. <br> d. 4th- through 8th-grade students proficient or advanced in math: At least 75.0% maintain proficiency level. | a. pp. 60–61 <br><br> b. p. 62 <br><br><br> c. N/A <br><br><br> d. p. 63 | a. Not met* <br><br> b. Not met: 63.2% of 68 students maintained proficiency. <br> c. N/A: not tested in 5th through 7th grade. <br> d. Not met: 66.7% of 15 students maintained proficiency. |
| Section I, D | Academic criteria #3: Year-to-year achievement measure: <br> a. 2nd- and 3rd-grade students below grade level in reading: Advance more than one GLE in reading. <br> b. 4th- through 8th-grade students below proficient level in reading: Advance one level of proficiency or to the next quartile within the proficiency level range. <br> c. 4th- through 8th-grade students below proficient level in language arts: Advance one level of proficiency or to the next quartile within the proficiency level range. <br> d. 4th- through 8th-grade students below proficient level in math: Advance one level of proficiency or to the next quartile within the proficiency level range. | a. p. 64 <br><br> b. p. 65 <br><br><br> c. N/A <br><br><br> d. p. 66 | a. Not met** <br><br> b. Met for 42.3% of 71 4th through 8th graders. <br> c. N/A: not tested in 5th through 7th grade. <br> d. Met for 29.2% of 96 4th through 8th graders. |
| Section I, E | Parental involvement | p. 10 | Met*** |
| Section I, F | Instructional staff hold a DPI license or permit to teach | pp. 7–9 | Not met (for three teachers.) |
| Section I, I | Pupil database information, including special education needs students | pp. 4–7 | Not met**** |
| Section I, K | Discipline procedures | p. 11 | Met |

*Second and third graders advanced an average of 0.6 and 0.4 GLE respectively.

**Twenty-four second and third graders who were below grade level in 2006–07 advanced an average of 0.7 GLE.

***Among other activities, parents are encouraged to participate in the student-led parent conferences. Parents of 90.0% of students attended at least three of four scheduled conferences, falling just short of the school's goal of 95.0%.

****This year, the data extract that listed student names, student ID, enrollment date, and attendance was provided in a text file in an email message. This required that CRC enter these data to use for analysis. These data need to be exported and provided to CRC in a spreadsheet.

# Appendix B

## Outcome Measure Agreement Memo

# Academy of Learning and Leadership
## Student Learning Memo
## 2007–08 School Year

The following procedures and outcomes will be measures of the success of Academy of Learning and Leadership students and programs for the 2007–08 school year. The resulting data will be provided to Children's Research Center, the monitoring agent contracted by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee. Student data will include all students enrolled at any time during the school year.

**Attendance:**
The school will maintain an average daily attendance rate of ninety percent (90%). Attendance rates will be reported as present, excused, unexcused.

**Enrollment:**
Upon admission, individual student information will be added to the school database. The school will also record grade, race/ethnicity, and gender.

**Termination:**
The date and reason for every student leaving the school will be recorded in the school database.

**Special Education Needs Students:**
The school will maintain updated records on all special education students including date of assessment, assessment eligibility or non-eligibility, disability, IEP completion date, IEP review date, and any reassessment results.

**Student-led Parent Conferences:**
On average, ninety-five percent (95%) of parents will attend at least three (3) of the four (4) scheduled student-led parent teacher conferences during the school year. Dates for the events and whether or not a parent/guardian attended will be provided for each student.

**Individual Learning Plan:**
An Individual Learning Plan will be developed by one hundred percent (100%) of the students with their teacher. Ninety-five percent (95%) will be reviewed/revised after three out of the four student-led parent teacher conferences.

**<u>Academic Achievement - Local Measures</u>:**
Students' progress will be measured in relation to **developmental learning continuum in reading and writing.**

1.  The **learning continuum for reading** will consist of developmental levels defined by Fountas and Pinnell Guided Reading. Students whose initial reading running record assessment occurs by first quarter conferences (November 9th) and whose last running record assessment is after May 1 will progress at their expected pace based upon Fountas and Pinnell's Guided Reading levels as measured by beginning of the year reading level (preA-Z) compared with end of the year reading level (preA-Z). The following information will be provided to the Children's Research Center in June: student ID, student name and grade, beginning of the year reading level and date assessed, end of the

year reading level and date assessed, number of levels moved, and whether they met the minimal, medium or highest expectation.

2. The **developmental learning continuum for writing** will consist of stages A-J defined by Academy of Learning and Leadership faculty using: MCREL Standards; Literacy Profiles; Wauwatosa Developmental Writing Continuum; Wisconsin State Standards; Reid, Schultze, and Petersen Writing Continuum; and Six-trait Writing Characteristics. Students will move a minimum of one stage during an academic year. The following information will be provided to the Children's Research Center in June: student ID, student name and grade, beginning of the year writing stage, end of the year writing stage, number of stages moved, and whether they met the expectation of one stage growth or not.

3. Students at each grade level will show improvement on a **math pre-test** administered by first quarter conferences (November 9th) and a **math post-test** administered after May 15th. The data from the pre-test will inform instructional decisions allowing teachers to better meet student needs. The student ID, student name and grade, pre-test score and date administered and post-test score and date administered will be provided to the Children's Research Center in June.

4. On average, on the **final portfolio** assessment of the year in fourth quarter, ninety percent (90%) of eighth grade students will demonstrate "developing proficiency" or "proficient" on their portfolio and portfolio presentation. A rubric will be used to rate student proficiency on their demonstration of growth toward the A.L.L. Ideal Graduate criteria.

5. Based upon a team review process examining evidence presented, each classroom will demonstrate a minimum of eight (8) of ten (10) key criteria of **Successful Learning Expeditions** shown through their products and expedition documentation for each of their two annual expeditions. The key criteria of successful expeditions are:

   1. Students demonstrate understanding of content and skills
   2. Students engage with big ideas and guiding questions
   3. Students participate in literacy activities throughout the expedition
   4. Students collect data and generate useful information
   5. Content, skill, and process experts inform student learning
   6. Students engage in meaningful fieldwork related to the learning expedition
   7. Technical drawing demonstrates student observations
   8. Technology tools support student learning in meaningful ways
   9. Performance assessment related to the guiding questions/big ideas occurs
   10. Students give service in their community that is related to their expedition

   The school will report to CRC in June how often each key criteria was met.

5. In Grades 3–8, student academic progress will be documented using the computer-based **MAP (Measures of Academic Progress)** assessment of student learning in reading, language arts, and mathematics. Student progress (Grades 3–8) will be reported in the fall and spring demonstrating progress in RIT (Risch) scores. In Grades 1 and 2, students will be assessed in reading and mathematics using the **Primary MAP Assessment.**

Student progress (Grades1-2) will be reported in the fall and spring demonstrating progress in RIT scores.

## Academic Achievement – Required Standardized Measures:
The following standardized test measures will assess academic achievements in: reading and mathematics.

## Grades 1, 2, and 3 Stanford Diagnostic Reading
Test will be administered each spring between March 15th and April 15th. The first year testing will serve as baseline data. Progress will be assessed based on the results of the testing in reading in the second and subsequent years.

## Grades 3 through 8 Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam
Exam will be administered on an annual basis in the time frame identified by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The WKCE for grades 3 through 8 will provide each student with a proficiency level via a scale score in reading and mathematics. For 4th and 8th graders, it will also include language arts, science, and social studies scale scores.

**Attachment B**

# The Central City Cyberschool of Milwaukee, Inc.

## Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance

2007–08 School Year

Report Date: September 2008

Prepared by:
Janice Ereth, Ph.D.
Susan Gramling
Theresa Healy

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

# TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

APPENDICES.

Appendix A:  Contract Compliance Chart
Appendix B:  Outcome Measure Agreement Memo

Prepared for:

***Central City Cyberschool of Milwaukee, Inc.***
4301 North 44th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53216

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
### for
### the Central City Cyberschool of Milwaukee, Inc.
### Ninth Year of Operation as a City of Milwaukee Charter School
### 2007–08

This ninth annual report on the operation of the Central City Cyberschool of Milwaukee, Inc. (Cyberschool) charter school is a result of the intensive work undertaken by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC), Cyberschool staff, and the Children's Research Center (CRC). Based on the information gathered and discussed in the attached report, CRC has determined the following findings.

## I.    CONTRACT COMPLIANCE SUMMARY[1]

Cyberschool has met all but one of the educational provisions in its contract with the City of Milwaukee and subsequent requirements of the CSRC. See Appendix A for an outline of specific contract provision compliance information.

## II.    PARENT, TEACHER, STUDENT, AND BOARD MEMBER SATISFACTION

On a scale of excellent, good, fair, or poor, 90.8% of parents rated the school's contribution toward their child's learning as good (27.8%) or excellent (63.0%). Eighty percent of teachers rated the school's contribution toward student academic progress as good (40.0%) or excellent (40.0%).

Figure ES1



Central City Cyberschool
School's Contribution to Student/Child Learning
2007–08

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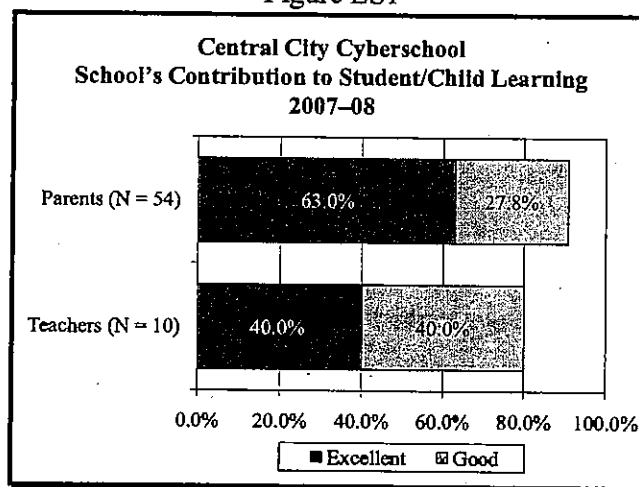
[1] See Appendix A for a list of each educationally related contract provision, page references, and a description of whether or not each provision was met.

All students interviewed indicated the following:

Figure ES2

**Central City Cyberschool**
**Student Interviews**
**2007-08**

| | |
|---|---|
| I Am Learning Enough | 100.0% |
| I Use Computers in School | 100.0% |
| Teachers Help Me at School | 100.0% |
| Teachers Talk to My Parents | 100.0% |
| I Plan to Go to College | 100.0% |

0.0%   25.0%   50.0%   75.0%   100.0%

N = 20
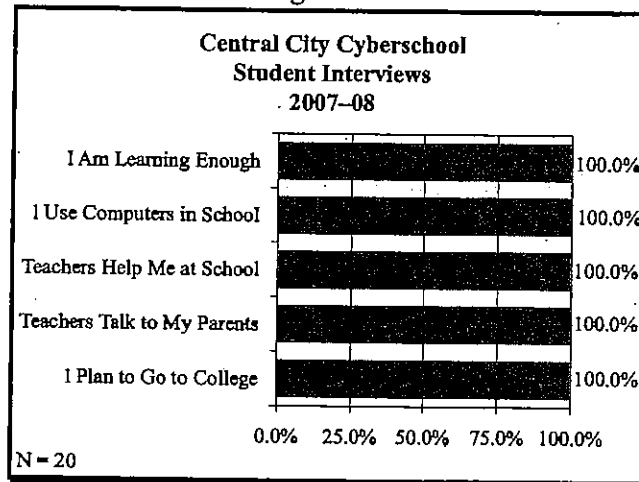
- Two of the three members of the board of directors interviewed indicated that the school's progress toward becoming an excellent school was excellent, while the other indicated the school's progress toward becoming an excellent school was good.

- Five of the ten teachers interviewed indicated that the school was making good progress toward becoming an excellent school and five indicated that they thought the school's progress was fair.

- Both board members and teachers indicated that they valued the dedicated staff at the school.

## III. EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

### A. Local Measures

### 1. Secondary Measures of Academic Progress

To meet City of Milwaukee requirements, Cyberschool identified measurable outcomes in the following secondary areas of academic progress:

- Attendance;
- Student demographics, including return rate and reasons for leaving the school;
- Parent conferences; and
- Special education.

The school achieved its goals in all of these outcomes.

## 2. Primary Educational Measures of Academic Progress

The CSRC requires each school to track student progress in reading, writing, and mathematics throughout the year to identify students in need of additional help and to assist teachers in developing strategies to improve the academic performance of all students.

This year, Cyberschool's local measures of academic progress resulted in the following outcomes:

- Of K5 through sixth-grade students, 96.2% demonstrated improvement on the literacy measure (DIBELS) from the first to second, second to third, and/or first to third assessment;

- Seventh- and eighth-grade corrective reading intervention progress could not be reported as there were only nine students who were tested in the fall and spring;

- Of 62 seventh and eighth graders, 98.4% improved their Read Naturally words-per-minute fluency scores this year;

- Of 281 students, 79.7% met or surpassed the goal of reaching skilled, mastery, or advanced levels in math benchmarks; and

- Of 256 students, 93.8% reached skilled, mastery, or advanced levels in writing skills, based on their progress reports.

## B. Year-to-year Academic Achievement on Standardized Tests

Cyberschool administered all required standardized tests noted in their contract with the City of Milwaukee.

Multiple-year advancement results indicated that second graders advanced an average of 0.8 GLE from first-grade Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT) scores. Third graders advanced, on average, 0.7 GLE over the year. When compared to their first-grade scores, this year's third graders advanced 1.5 GLE, on average.

Multiple-year advancement for fourth- through eighth-grade students who met proficiency expectations in 2006–07 indicated that the school exceeded the CSRC's expectation that at least 75.0% of these students would maintain their proficiency.

## Figure ES3
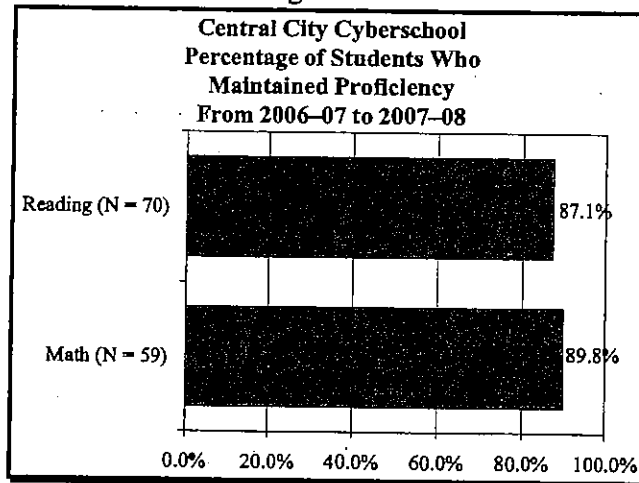
**Central City Cyberschool
Percentage of Students Who
Maintained Proficiency
From 2006–07 to 2007–08**

Reading (N = 70)   87.1%

Math (N = 59)   89.8%

0.0%   20.0%   40.0%   60.0%   80.0%   100.0%

Multiple-year advancement for fourth- through eighth-grade students below proficiency level expectations in 2006–07 indicated that the following students advanced a proficiency level or at least one quartile within their previous proficiency level.

## Figure ES4

**Central City Cyberschool
Percentage Improved
for Students Who Did Not Meet
Proficiency Level Expectations in 2006–07**

Reading (N = 54)   46.3%

Math (N = 65)   47.7%

0.0%   20.0%   40.0%   60.0%   80.0%   100.0%
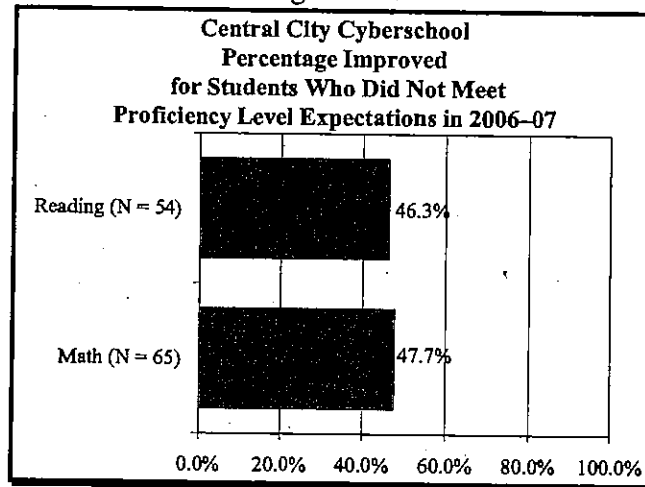
## C. Adequate Yearly Progress

The school reached adequate yearly progress (AYP) in all four AYP objectives: test participation, attendance, reading, and mathematics. For the second year in a row, the school's improvement status was satisfactory.

## III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The school fully addressed the recommendations made in its 2006–07 programmatic profile and educational performance report. To continue a focused school improvement plan, it is recommended that the focus of activities for the 2008–09 year proceed as follows:

- Focus on achievement in mathematics, particularly the basic skills necessary to supplement the Everyday Math curriculum. Consider acquiring software programs to increase student practice opportunities.

- Continue to implement strategies to improve reading levels at all grade levels.

- Continue implementation of the Responsive Classroom and Second Step curricula.

## I.    INTRODUCTION

This is the ninth regular program monitoring report to address educational outcomes for the Central City Cyberschool, Inc. (Cyberschool), a school chartered by the City of Milwaukee.[2] This report focuses on the educational component of the monitoring program undertaken by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) and was prepared as a result of a contract between the CSRC and the Children's Research Center (CRC).[3]

The process used to gather the information in this report included the following:

- An initial site visit, wherein a structured interview was conducted with the school's leadership staff, critical documents were reviewed, and copies obtained for CRC files.

- CRC staff assisted the school in developing its outcome measures agreement memo.

- Additional scheduled and unscheduled site visits were made to observe classroom activities, student-teacher interactions, parent-staff exchanges, and overall school operations, including the clarification of needed data collection. CRC staff also reviewed a representative sample of special education files.

- At the end of the school year, a structured interview was conducted with the administrator.

- At the end of the year, CRC staff interviewed 20 students, ten teachers, and three members of the board of directors. In addition, a satisfaction survey was distributed to parents. CRC made at least two follow-up phone calls to parents who had not completed a survey. All completed interview and survey forms were forwarded to CRC for data entry.

- Cyberschool provided electronic and paper data to CRC, which, along with survey and interview data, were compiled and analyzed by CRC.

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[2] The City of Milwaukee chartered five schools for the 2007–08 school year.

[3] CRC is a nonprofit social research organization and division of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency.

## II.   PROGRAMMATIC PROFILE

The Central City Cyberschool of Milwaukee, Inc.

Address:                    4301 North 44th Street
                            Milwaukee, WI 53216

Phone Number:               414-372-3942

Executive Director
and Founder:                Christine Faltz, Ph.D.


### A.   Description and Philosophy of Educational Methodology

### 1.   The Philosophy[4]

The mission of Cyberschool is "to motivate in each child from Milwaukee's central city the love of learning; the academic, social, and leadership skills necessary to engage in critical thinking; and the ability to demonstrate complete mastery of the academic skills necessary for a successful future."

Cyberschool is not a school of the future, but rather a school for the future. Cyberschool offers a customized curriculum where creativity, teamwork, and goal setting are encouraged for the entire school community. The problem-solving, real-world, interdisciplinary curriculum is presented in a way that is relevant to each student's experiences. Cyberschool uses technology as a tool for learning in new and powerful ways that allow students greater flexibility and independence, preparing students to be full participants in the 21st century.

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[4] Central City Cyberschool *Student Handbook*, 2007–08.

## 2. Instructional Design

Cyberschool's technology-based approach takes full advantage of resources available electronically and incorporates technology for most academic studies. Every student has access to a laptop computer for daily use.

This year, Cyberschool continued the practice of serving students in one grade level per classroom for kindergarten through sixth grade. Seventh and eighth graders remained in combined classrooms with teachers providing specific subject matter to various rotating groups of students. Teachers for grades one through five typically remained with their students for two consecutive years. This structure is referred to as "looping."[5]

The K4 and K5 classrooms continued to be located in a separate preschool facility located across the playground from the main building and leased from the City of Milwaukee's Housing Authority. Four-year-old Head Start was also available in the facility through a partnership with Day Care Services for Children.

## B. School Structure

## 1. Areas of Instruction

Cyberschool's kindergarten (K4–K5) curriculum focuses on social/emotional development; language arts (which includes speaking/listening, reading, and writing); active learning (which includes making choices, following instructions, problem solving, large muscle activities, music, and creative use of materials); math or logical reasoning; and basic concepts related to science, social studies, and health (such as the senses, nature, exploration, environmental concerns, body parts, and colors).

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[5] During the 2007–08 academic year, the school looped most classrooms from first to second, third to fourth, and fifth to sixth grades.

First- through eighth-grade students receive instruction in language and writing, reading, literature, oral language, mathematics, technology, social studies, science, and respect and responsibility.

Grade-level standards and benchmarks have been established for each of these curricular areas; progress is measured against these standards for each grade level. The school continued implementation of "Second Step," which is an anti-violence, anti-drug use curriculum for kindergarten through eighth-grade students. The lessons designed for teachers to implement are culturally aware and sensitive. The curriculum, which includes grade-level material, provides one lesson per week focusing on a specific concept (e.g., integrity).

The school also uses the "Responsive Classroom" program, which has two major elements—morning meeting, and rules and consequences. Morning meeting occurred in every classroom every day. The Second Step program was addressed in morning meeting on certain days. These strategies provided opportunities to build relationships among the students and teachers.

The school also provided the 21st Century Community Learning Center (CLC), an afterschool program, for students to receive academic enrichment, tutoring, and homework help as well as youth development activities.

2. **Teacher Information**

At the beginning of the 2007–08 academic year, Cyberschool had 19 classrooms. These classrooms included one classroom for K4 (two sessions: one morning and one afternoon), two full-day K5 classrooms, and two classrooms each for first through sixth grades. There were four homerooms for combined seventh and eighth graders. The school also included a Health Emotional Academic Resource Team (HEART) room, where special education and other support services not available in the regular classroom were provided.

Classrooms were staffed with 19 teachers. At the beginning of the year, four of the 19 teachers were newly hired, although one of these had taught at the school previously. During the year two teachers left the school, one in September 2007 and the other in December 2007. All teachers held a Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) license or permit to teach. Other educational support staff at the school included four paraeducators, an art teacher, a physical education specialist, a technology director, a cybrary/media specialist, a music teacher, a reading specialist, and a guidance counselor. Five teachers served as lead teachers again this year. Teacher assistants or paraeducators assisted in the classroom. The school also employed a parent coordinator. The HEART room was staffed with a special education teacher, an occupational therapist, a speech pathologist, a reading intervention coordinator, and a reading intervention specialist. There was also a lead paraeducator (who is also the director of the CLC).

In addition to the executive director, the school's administrative staff included a student services manager and a business services manager.

The following is a list of staff development events that occurred throughout the school year:

- July 30, 2007: Reading First fluency workshop (teachers and paraeducators for kindergarten through fourth grade, reading coordinator, HEART staff, librarian, and executive director).

- August 6–7, 2007: Reading First vocabulary workshop (teachers and paraeducators for kindergarten through fourth grade, reading coordinator, HEART staff, librarian, and executive director).

- August 8–9, 2007: Everyday Math Summer Institute, Chicago, IL (teachers for K5 through sixth grade, plus special education staff).

- August 14–15, 2007: Overview of Cyberschool expectations and staff roles, logistics, technology use, teacher/paraeducator team strategies, curriculum overview (Everyday Math/Connected Math and OCR emphasis), benefits, daily procedures, and Powerschool database training (all new staff orientation).

- August 16–28, 2007: Orientation including review of policies and procedures; Reading First planning including in-depth review of "fluency strategies,"

"vocabulary development," and "differentiation"; behavior management system design; book study using "A Framework for Understanding Poverty" by Ruby Payne; school improvement plan (SIP) review; special education intervention strategies; Ambassadors of Peace training; curriculum review in depth (OCR & EdM); Responsive Classroom and Second Step Review; DISCOURSE; CLC organization; Powergrade database training; business services overview; and level meetings and planning (entire staff including teachers, paraeducators, director, student services manager, business services manager, counselor, parent coordinator, HEART team, and Reading First coordinator).

- September 17, 2007: DPI webcast; Pre-test workshop (executive director).

- October 2, 2007: Reading First data workshop, Brookfield (reading coordinator, all five lead teachers, and the executive director).

- October 3, 2007: CLC fall directors' meeting, Wausau (executive director, CLC director, and guidance counselor).

- October 11, 2007: Title 1 Conference, Stevens Point (executive director).

- October 17–18, 2007: DPI special education alternate assessment workshop, Brookfield (reading coordinator, special education teacher, occupational therapist (OT), CLC director, executive director).

- November 28, 2007: DPI CLC grant-writing workshop, Oconomowoc (executive director).

- January 14–18, 2008: Orton Gillingham Training (reading coordinator, OT, executive director).

- January 22, 2008: Reading First staff development with Connie Stewart (all teachers and paraeducators for kindergarten through fourth grade, reading coordinator, and executive director).

- February 21, 2008: DPI CLC sustainability training, Wisconsin Dells (executive director, CLC director, and guidance counselor).

- February 1, 2008: INSIGHT VISIT with Connie Stewart on improving literacy instructional practice (all kindergarten through fourth-grade staff plus HEART staff and executive director).

- February 6, 2008: Reading First principals' meeting, Wisconsin Dells (reading coordinator and executive director).

- March 10, 2008: INSIGHT VISIT with Connie Stewart on improving literacy instructional practice (all kindergarten through fourth-grade staff plus reading coordinator and executive director).

- April 17–18, 2008: Title 1 meeting, Wisconsin Dells (executive director).

- April 29, 2008: CESA 1 Apple workshop on technology integration, Brookfield (executive director).

- June 18–19, 2008: Special education conference, Madison (CLC director, guidance counselor, reading coordinator, and executive director).

Teacher evaluations occur over time—twice during a teacher's first year of employment and once during the year for returning teachers. The process is explained in Cyberschool's *Personnel Guidelines/Handbook*.

## 3. Hours of Instruction/School Calendar

The regular school day began at 8:00 a.m. and ended at 3:30 p.m.[6] The first day of student attendance was August 29, 2007, and the last day was June 12, 2008. The highest possible number of full days for student attendance in the academic year was 180 (including eight early-release days); therefore, the contract provision of at least 875 hours of instruction was met.

Cyberschool's CLC provides additional academic instruction. The CLC is open every school day from 7:30 a.m. to 8:00 a.m. for tutoring and homework help. The afterschool program operated Monday through Thursday from 3:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. The afterschool program offered homework help, tutoring, and technology and academic enrichments in addition to sports and recreation, nutrition and health, and arts and music opportunities to help build students' self-confidence and skills. All activities are designed to promote inclusion and encourage participation for enjoyment, challenge, self-expression, and communication.[7]

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[6] Students could enter the building as early as 7:30 a.m. Breakfast was served to children in their classrooms between 8:00 and 8:30 each morning.

[7] Some of the students at Cyberschool participated in *Safe Place* at the Parklawn YMCA. These students were escorted to the Cyberschool entrance of the tunnel to the Parklawn YMCA at 3:30 p.m. to be picked up by the YMCA staff.

## 4.    Parental Involvement

As stated in the *Student Handbook* (2007–2008), Cyberschool recognizes that parents are the first and foremost teachers of children and play a key role in the effective education of its students. Parents are asked to read and review the student handbook with their child and return a signed form. The parent certification section of the handbook indicates that the parent has read, understood, and discussed the rules and responsibilities with his/her child and that the parent will work with Cyberschool staff to ensure that his/her child achieves high academic and behavioral standards.

Cyberschool employed a full-time parent coordinator who operates out of the school's main office, where she is visible to parents as they come and go. The parent coordinator's responsibilities include the following:

- Increase parent involvement in the school by working closely with all school, parent, and community organizations.

- Serve as a facilitator for parent and school community concerns and issues.

- Provide information to parents about Cyberschool's services, procedures, instructional programs, and names/roles of staff.

- Conduct outreach to engage parents in their children's education.

- Make home visits to parents, if appropriate.

- Convene regular parent meetings and events around topics of key concern to parents.

- Attend parent meetings along with the executive director, when appropriate.

- Work with Cyberschool's parent association to provide assistance in establishing by-laws, holding elections, and conducting association affairs.

- Maintain ongoing contact with community organizations providing services to the school's education program.

- Organize back-to-school and other events to increase parental and community involvement and create a welcoming school environment for parents.

The school has a Parent Action Committee that facilitates the development of partnerships between home and school. This provides Cyberschool parents and family members a voice in the decision-making process of the school.

In addition to parent conferences, parents were invited to participate in school/family events throughout the year. During the 2007–08 year, these events included the following:

- Open house in September;
- Family Karaoke Night in October;
- Family Feasting and Reading Night in November;
- Winter program in December;
- Black history program in February;
- Schoolwide spelling bee in March;
- Family Carnival Night in May;
- Spring program in May;
- Awards program in June; and
- Graduation in June.

Parents were asked to review and sign their children's "Monday Folder." Monday Folders were the vehicle for all written communication from the school. Each child was expected to bring the folder home on the first day of the school week. The left pocket of the folder held items to be kept at home, and the right pocket held items to be returned to the school.

## 5. Waiting List

The school's administrator reported that as of June 3, 2008, the school did not have a waiting list for fall.

## 6. Discipline Policy

The following discipline philosophy is described in the Cyberschool *Student Handbook* (2007–2008), along with a weapons policy, a definition of what constitutes a disruptive student,

the role of parents and staff in disciplining students, the grounds for suspension and expulsion, and the due process rights of the student.

- Each member of the Cyberschool family is valued and appreciated. Therefore, it is expected that all Cyberschool members will treat each other with respect and will act at all times in the best interest of the safety and well-being of themselves and others. Any behaviors that detract from a positive learning environment are not permitted, and all behaviors that enhance and encourage a positive learning environment are appreciated as an example of how we can learn from each other.

- All Cyberschool students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the goals of the school and to work in cooperation with all members of the Cyberschool community to improve the educational atmosphere of the school.

- Student behavior should always reflect a seriousness of purpose and a cooperative attitude, both in and out of the classroom. Any student behavior that detracts from a positive learning environment and experience for all students will lead to appropriate administrative action.

- Students are obligated to show proper respect to their teachers and peers at all times.

- All students are given ample opportunity to take responsibility for their actions and to change unacceptable behaviors.

- All students are entitled to an education free from undue disruption. Students who willfully disrupt the educational program shall be subject to the discipline procedures of the school.

## C.    Student Population

Cyberschool started on August 29, 2007. As of September 21, 2007, there were 334 students enrolled in grades K4 through eight. During the year, 48 students enrolled in the school and 39 students withdrew. Students withdrew for a variety of reasons: 11 students moved away, ten left because of transportation issues, six left for disciplinary reasons, four left due to poor attendance, two left due to dissatisfaction with the program, two left for other reasons, and four students left for unknown reasons.

At the end of the year, there were 343 students enrolled. Student enrollment was as follows:

- There were 165 (48.1%) girls and 178 (51.9%) boys.

- Nearly all (99.4%) students were Black, one (0.3%) student was Hispanic, and one (0.3%) student was White.

- Forty-one (12.0%) students had special education needs. Nine children had learning disabilities (LD); five children had speech and language needs (SPL); three had cognitive disabilities (CD); four had LD/SPL; one had emotional/behavioral disabilities (EBD); one had a significant developmental delay (SDD) and SPL disabilities; 11 children had other health impairments (OHI); two had LD/OHI; one had EBD and OHI; two students had SPL/OHI; one was CD/SDD/SPL; and one student had EBD/LD/OHI.

- The school provided education to students in K4 through eighth grade. The number of students in each grade level is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1



**Central City Cyberschool
Student Grade Levels
2007–08***

1st 41 (12.0%)
K5 31 (9.0%)
2nd 42 (12.2%)
3rd 25 (7.3%)
K4 31 (9.0%)
4th 34 (9.9%)
8th 32 (9.3%)
5th 28 (8.2%)
7th 39 (11.4%)
6th 40 (11.7%)

N = 343
*At the end of the school year.
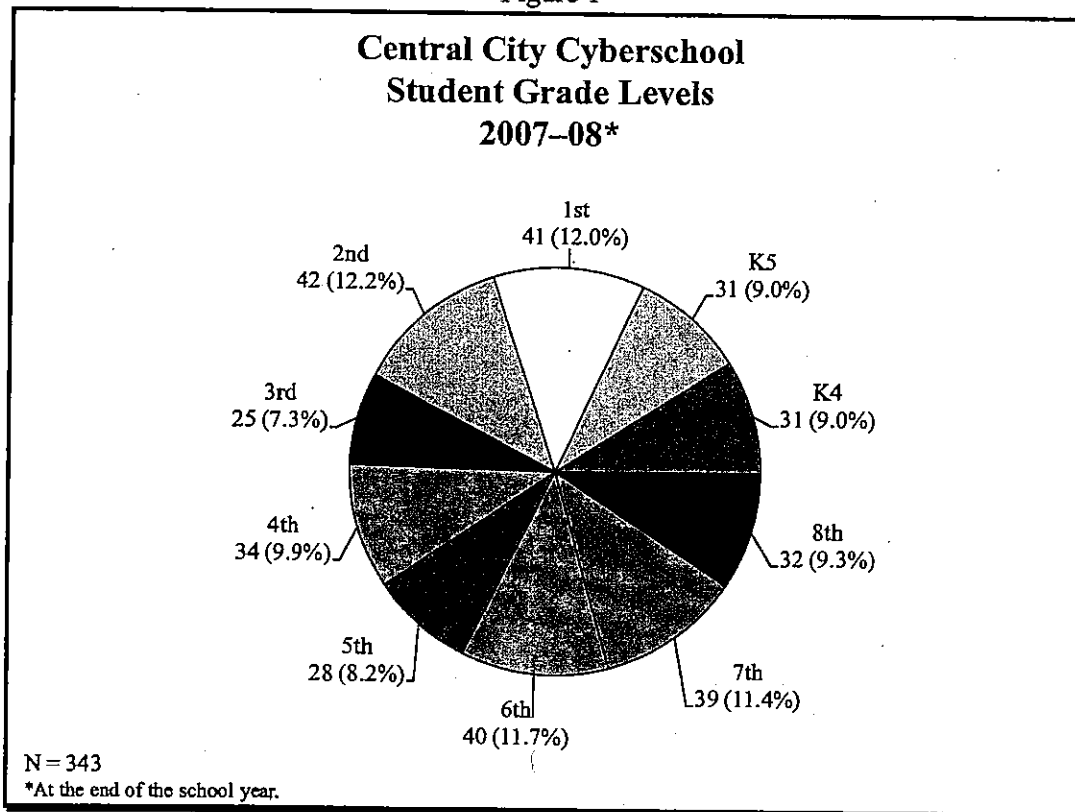
In the fall of 2007, the school provided CRC with the number of students returning to Cyberschool from the previous year. Based on the school's information, there were 273 students who were attending Cyberschool on the last day of the 2006–07 academic year and were eligible for continued enrollment this past academic year. Of those, 239 were enrolled on the third Friday in September 2007, representing a return rate of 88%. This compares to a return rate of 78.2% in the fall of 2006.[8]

## D.     Activities for Continuous School Improvement

Following is a description of Cyberschool's response to the recommended activities in its Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance Report for the 2006–07 academic year:

- Recommendation: Focus on achievement in mathematics, particularly the basic skills necessary to supplement the Everyday Math curriculum. Consider acquiring software programs to increase student practice opportunities.

  Response: The school acquired a software program, the Assessment Assistant, to enable teachers to increase student practice opportunities in math. The program was used by the teachers. The school will update to a newer version that includes fact-fluency work and problem-solving strands. Teachers will attend training for the new program.

- Recommendation: Continue to implement strategies to improve reading levels at all grade levels.

  Response: This year, the sixth-grade students were grouped separately according to skill levels. The staff reviewed basic phonics skills and implemented the Kaleidoscope[9] curriculum, designed as a substitute for the core curriculum for the students who were two or more years behind in reading.

- Recommendation: Continue implementation of the Responsive Classroom and Second Step curricula.

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[8] Data files from the last two years show that there were 276 students enrolled at the end of 2006–07 who were eligible to return in 2007–08. Of these, 235 were enrolled in September 2007. This represents a return rate of 85.1%.

[9] Kaleidoscope is a comprehensive and integrated catch-up program that helps students grow and builds their confidence. It is designed to coordinate with the Open Court reading program at a more basic level by reintroducing skills that have been missed and covering more ground. The content is at the instructional level of the student.

<u>Response</u>:  The school continued these programs and continues to integrate the philosophy into the entire school day.  The school's administrator reported that these curricula have made a difference in the overall culture of the school.

## III. PARENT, TEACHER, STUDENT, AND BOARD MEMBER SATISFACTION

### A. Parent Surveys

Parent opinions are qualitative in nature and provide a valuable external measurement of school performance. To determine how parents heard about the school, why they elected to send their children to the school, parental involvement with the school, and an overall evaluation of the school, parents were provided a survey during the April parent-teacher conferences. Parents were asked to complete the survey, place it in a sealed envelope, and return it to the school. CRC made at least two follow-up phone calls to parents who had not completed a survey. For families who had not submitted a survey, CRC completed the survey over the telephone or sent the parents/guardians a survey in the mail. All completed interview and survey forms were forwarded to CRC for data entry. At the time of this report, 54 surveys (representing parents of 77 children) had been completed[10] and submitted to CRC.[11] Results are presented below.

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[10] As of August 27, 2008.

[11] There were 343 students enrolled in the school at the time of the survey. This represents a survey return rate of 22.4%.

Most (53.7%) parents heard about the school from friends or relatives. Others heard about the school through their community center (9.3%), the newspaper (3.7%), television or radio (1.9%), and/or their church (1.9%). Some (33.3%) parents heard about the school from other sources (see Figure 2).

Figure 2



**Central City Cyberschool**
**How Parents Learned About the School**
**2007–08**

N = 54
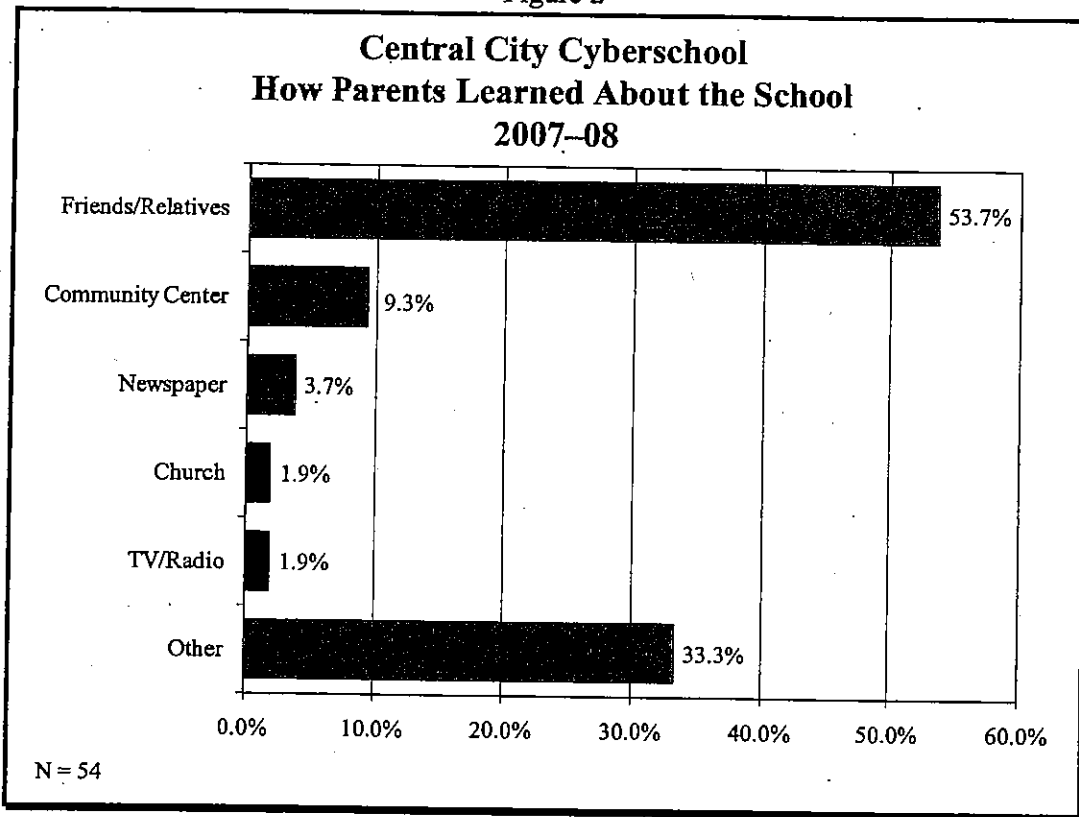
Parents chose to send their child(ren) to Cyberschool for a variety of reasons. Figure 3 illustrates the reasons parents considered "very important" when making the decision to send their child(ren) to the school.[12] For example, 88.9% of parents stated that educational methodology was a very important reason for selecting this school, and 87.0% of parents indicated that class size was very important to them when choosing this school.

Figure 3

**Central City Cyberschool**
**Parent "Very Important" Reasons for Choosing the School**
**2007–08**

| Reason | Percentage |
|--------|-----------|
| Educational Methodology | 88.9% |
| Class Size | 87.0% |
| General Atmosphere | 85.2% |
| Discipline | 77.8% |
| Parental Involvement | 77.8% |
| Age/Grade of Students | 68.5% |
| Financial Considerations | 68.5% |
| Location | 68.5% |
| Governance Structure | 66.7% |
| Frustration w/ Previous School | 44.4% |
| Other Child in School | 40.7% |
| Other | 35.2% |

N = 54

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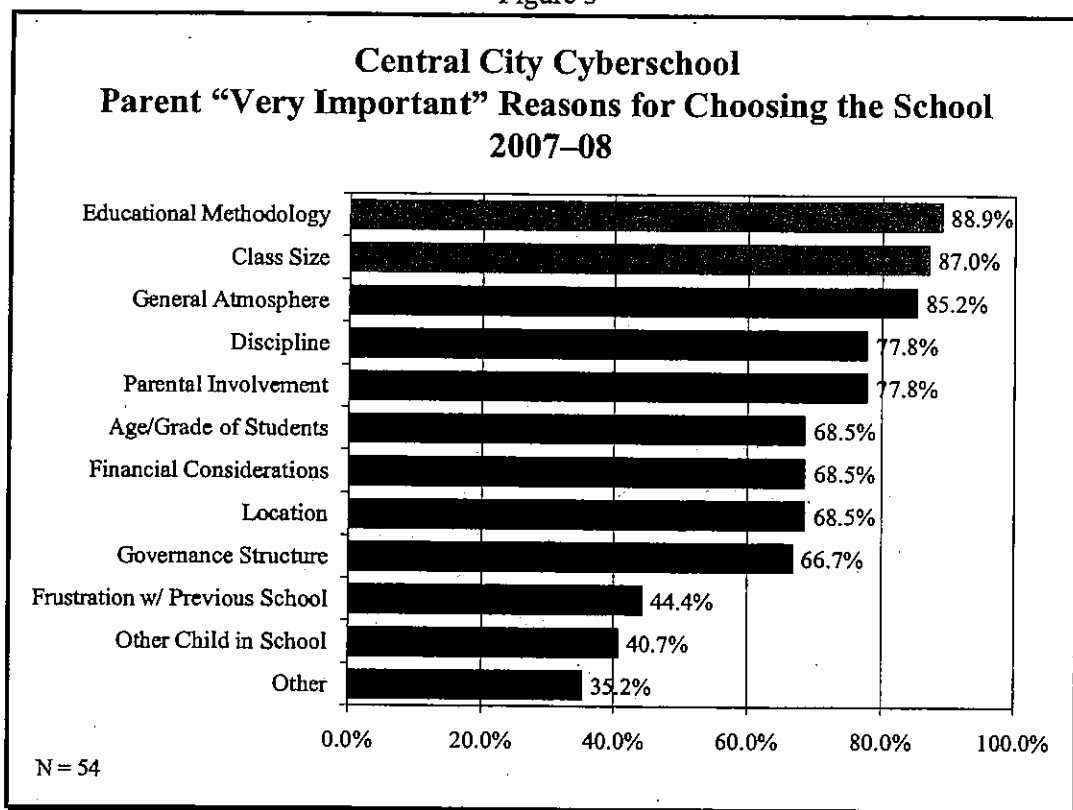
[12] Parents could choose very important, somewhat important, somewhat unimportant, or not at all important.

Parental involvement was also used as a measure of satisfaction with the school. Parental involvement was measured by number of contacts between the school and the parent(s) and parents' participation in educational activities at home.

Parents and the school were in contact for a variety of reasons, including a child's academic performance and behavior, assisting in the classroom, or engaging in fundraising activities. For example, 59.2% of the parents reported contact with the school at least three times regarding the student's academic performance; 40.8% of parents were in contact with the school regarding their child's behavior; and 27.8% of parents were in contact with the school to discuss fundraising (see Figure 4).

Figure 4



**Central City Cyberschool**
**Parent-School Contacts**
**Three or More Times**
**2007–08**

| Category | Percent |
|---|---|
| Academic Performance | 59.2% |
| Child's Behavior | 40.8% |
| Fundraising | 27.8% |
| Classes | 25.9% |
| School Records | 22.3% |
| Assist in Classroom | 18.6% |
| Other | 5.6% |

N = 54
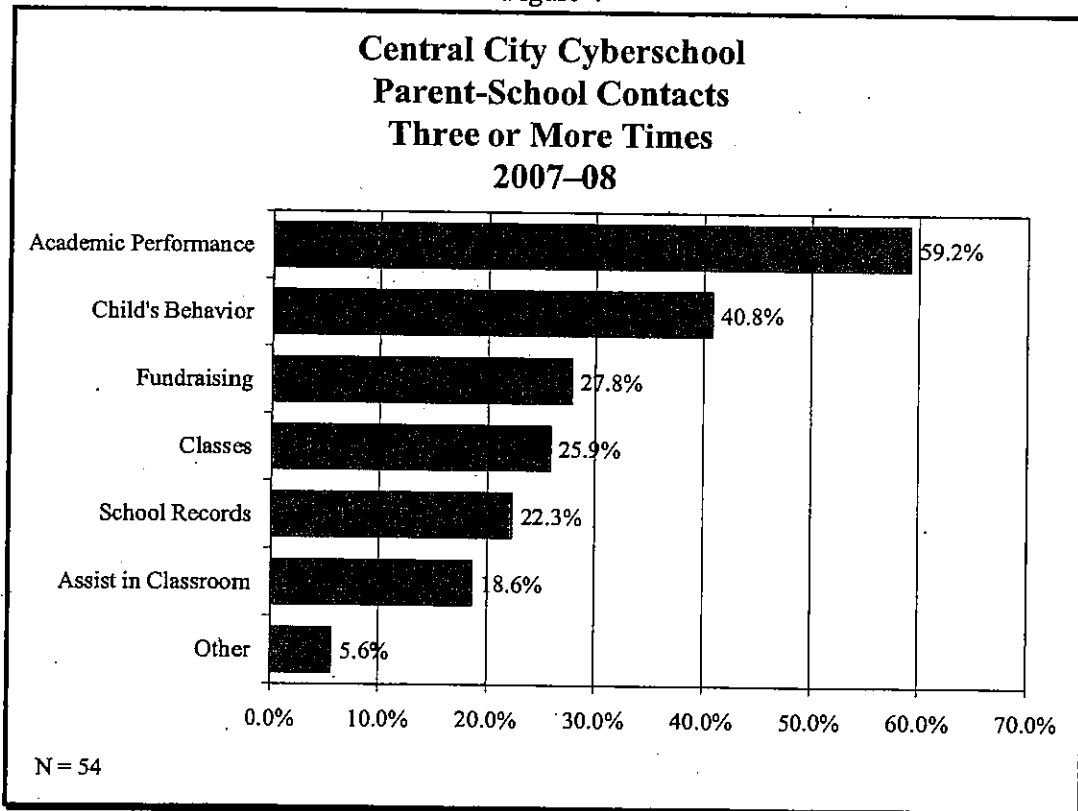
The second measure of parental participation was the extent to which parents engaged in the following educational activities while at home. During a typical week, 87.0% of parents worked on arithmetic or math with their child; 87.0% watched educational programs on TV; 83.4% of parents read to or with their child; 77.8% participated in activities such as sports, library visits, or museum visits with their child; and 92.6% worked on other homework with their children.

When asked what they most liked about the school, 26.0% of parents indicated an appreciation for the teachers and/or staff, 26.0% indicated that they like the school and/or class size, and 14.87% of parents liked the location (see Figure 5).[13]

Figure 5



**Central City Cyberschool
Most Liked by Parents About the School
2007–08**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Teachers/Staff | 26.0% |
| School and/or Class Size | 26.0% |
| Location | 14.8% |
| Curriculum/Program | 13.0% |
| Uniforms | 13.0% |
| Student-teacher Relationships | 11.1% |
| Discipline | 7.4% |
| Learning Progress | 7.4% |
| Parent-teacher Communication | 7.4% |
| Other | 16.7% |

N = 54

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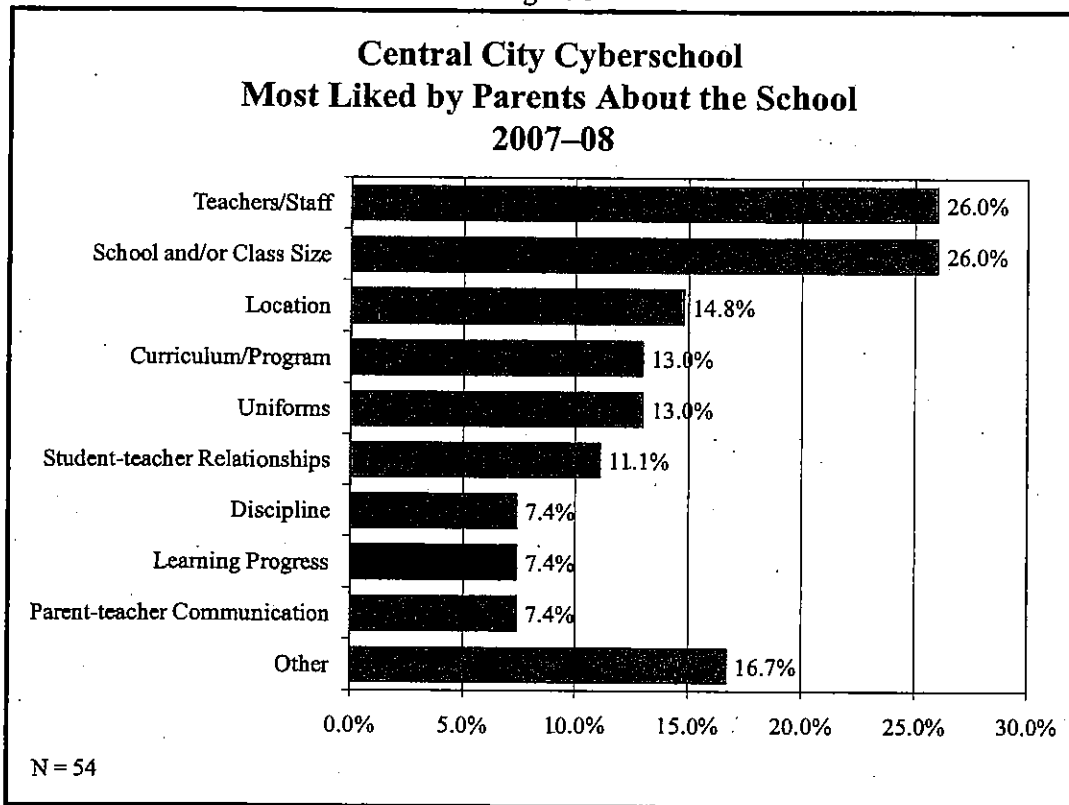
[13] Other responses included three parents who indicated that the school values the children; three parents who said the school was organized, friendly, and clean; two parents who appreciated the extra help the school provides to children who need it; and one parent who simply stated, "everything."

Parents were then asked what they least liked about the school. Responses included the lack of transportation (9.3%); the need for more help for children with special education needs (7.4%); early dismissal on the first Friday of every month (5.6%); and the food served for lunch is terrible (5.6%);. See Figure 6 for additional responses.

Figure 6

**Central City Cyberschool
Least Liked by Parents About the School
2007–08**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Lack of Transportation | 9.3% |
| Need for More Special Education Services | 7.4% |
| Early Dismissal Fridays | 5.6% |
| Lunch Is Terrible | 5.6% |
| Prinicpal | 3.7% |
| Uniforms | 3.7% |
| Other* | 22.2% |

N = 54
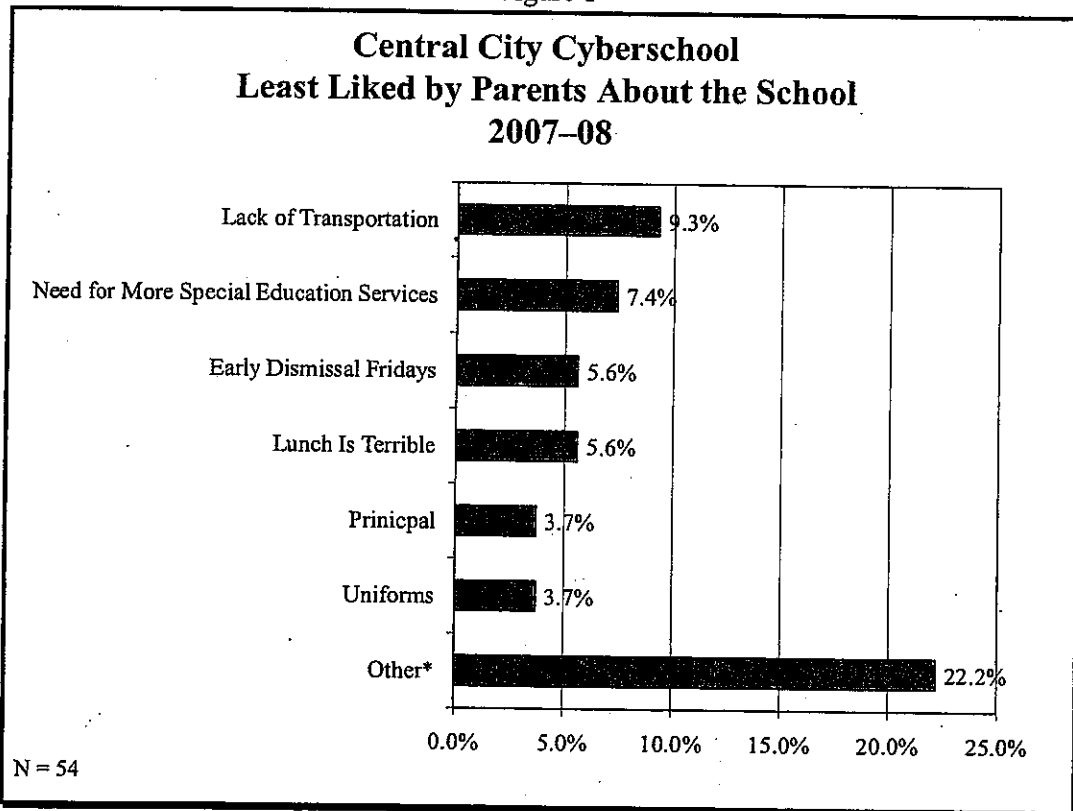
*Other responses included discipline, inability to access school records via web, lack of social studies and science, no afterschool athletics for younger children, not enough activities for older boys, lack of parking makes drop-offs dangerous, children should be allowed to phone home upon arrival at school, snow and ice removal issues, field trip rules, student-teacher ratio, too many conferences, and unprofessional communication occurs in front of children.

Parents were then asked to rate their child's overall involvement with the school. Of the 54 parents surveyed, 24 (44.4%) indicated excellent, 24 (44.4%) indicated good, and four (7.4%) rated their child's involvement as fair. No parents rated their child's involvement as poor. Two parents did not respond to the question.

Parents were also asked to rate the school on various aspects including the program of instruction, the school's responsiveness, and progress reports provided to parents/guardians. Table 1 indicates that parents rated the school as good or excellent in most of the aspects of the academic environment. For example, most parents indicated that the program of instruction was excellent (38.9%) or good (57.4%). Parents indicated that the enrollment policies and procedures were excellent (42.6%) or good (50.0%) and that their child's academic progress at the school was excellent (53.7%) or good (31.5%). Where "no response" was indicated, the parent either had no knowledge or experience with that aspect or had no opinion.

| Table 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Central City Cyberschool<br>Parental Satisfaction<br>2007–08<br>(N = 54) | | | | | | | | | |
| Area | Response | | | | | | | | |
| | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | No Response | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Program of instruction | 21 | 38.9% | 31 | 57.4% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 3.7% |
| Enrollment policy and procedures | 23 | 42.6% | 27 | 50.0% | 2 | 3.7% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 3.7% |
| Child's academic progress | 29 | 53.7% | 17 | 31.5% | 6 | 11.1% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 3.7% |
| Student-teacher ratio | 26 | 48.1% | 18 | 33.3% | 6 | 11.1% | 2 | 3.7% | 2 | 3.7% |
| Discipline policy methods | 17 | 31.5% | 23 | 42.6% | 9 | 16.7% | 1 | 1.9% | 4 | 7.4% |
| Parent-teacher relations | 35 | 64.8% | 11 | 20.4% | 3 | 5.6% | 2 | 3.7% | 3 | 5.6% |
| Communication regarding learning expectations | 29 | 53.7% | 20 | 37.0% | 3 | 5.6% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 3.7% |
| Parent involvement in policy and procedures | 27 | 50.0% | 16 | 29.6% | 8 | 14.8% | 1 | 1.9% | 2 | 3.7% |
| Teacher performance | 31 | 57.4% | 18 | 33.3% | 3 | 5.6% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 3.7% |
| Principal performance | 24 | 44.4% | 18 | 31.4% | 8 | 14.8% | 1 | 1.9% | 3 | 5.6% |
| Teacher/principal accessibility | 24 | 44.4% | 22 | 40.7% | 5 | 9.3% | 0 | 0.0% | 3 | 5.6% |
| Responsiveness to concerns | 22 | 40.7% | 24 | 44.4% | 5 | 9.3% | 1 | 1.9% | 2 | 3.7% |
| Standardized testing | 23 | 42.6% | 24 | 44.4% | 4 | 7.4% | 0 | 0.0% | 3 | 5.6% |
| Progress reports | 26 | 48.1% | 21 | 38.9% | 3 | 5.6% | 1 | 1.9% | 3 | 5.6% |

Parents were then asked to indicate their level of agreement with several statements about school staff. Results are summarized below (see Table 2).

| Table 2 Central City Cyberschool Parental Rating of School Staff 2007–08 (N = 54) | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Response | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Statement | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | | No Response | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| I am comfortable talking with the staff | 34 | 63.0% | 16 | 29.6% | 1 | 1.9% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 3 | 5.6% |
| The staff welcomes suggestions from parents | 23 | 42.6% | 15 | 27.8% | 12 | 22.6% | 1 | 1.9% | 0 | 0.0% | 3 | 5.6% |
| The staff keeps me informed about my child's performance | 33 | 61.6% | 12 | 22.2% | 6 | 11.1% | 1 | 1.9% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 3.7% |
| I am comfortable with how the staff handles discipline | 19 | 35.2% | 20 | 37.0% | 10 | 18.5% | 1 | 1.9% | 0 | 0.0% | 4 | 7.4% |
| I am satisfied with the number of adult staff available to work with the students | 22 | 40.7% | 25 | 46.3% | 3 | 5.6% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 4 | 7.4% |
| I am satisfied with the overall performance of the staff | 25 | 46.3% | 20 | 37.0% | 4 | 7.4% | 1 | 1.9% | 0 | 0.0% | 4 | 7.4% |

Finally, parental satisfaction was evident in the following results:

- Nearly all (50, or 92.6%) parents would recommend this school to other parents;

- Of 54 surveyed parents, 36 (66.7%) will send their child to the school next year;[14] and

- When asked to rate the school's overall contribution to their child's learning, most (63.0%, or 34) parents indicated "excellent" and 15 (27.8%) parents rated the school "good." Four (7.4%) parents thought the school was "fair" and no parents rated the school as poor. One parent did not respond to the question.

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[14] Thirteen parents did not know if their child(ren) would return to the school and five indicated "no." Three students were graduating, three families were moving away, one parent mentioned transportation was an issue, one is investigating private school options, one would like to find a location closer to home, one has trouble with drop-off and pick-up, and one has issues with the principal. Seven parents did not provide an explanation.

**B.     Teacher Interviews**

In the spring of 2008, CRC interviewed ten teachers regarding their reasons for teaching and overall satisfaction with the school. At least one teacher from each grade from K4 through eighth grade was interviewed. Teachers were responsible for 13 to 23 students at a given time. Five of the ten teachers used team-teaching techniques, and the other five did not team teach. Three teachers had been teaching at this school for eight years, one teacher for six years, two teachers for four years, one teacher for two years, and three teachers had been at the school for one year.[15] All teachers indicated that they routinely used data to make decisions in the classroom, and eight of the ten indicated that school leadership used data to make schoolwide decisions. Nine teachers' performance reviews occurred at least annually and one teacher's performance was reviewed two times this year. Seven of the ten teachers were satisfied with the process and three were not.

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[15] The executive director and founder is not included in the teacher interview section.

Teachers were asked to rate how important various reasons were for teaching at the school. Ten teachers rated financial reasons as an important or very important reason for teaching at this school. They also rated age/grade of students and class size as important or very important. See Table 3 for more details.

| Table 3 | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|---|
| Reasons for Teaching at Central City Cyberschool<br>2007–08<br>(N = 10) | | | | |
| Reason | Importance | | | |
|  | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Somewhat Unimportant | Not At All Important |
| Location | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Financial | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Educational methodology | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Age/grade of students | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Discipline | 5 | 2 | 0 | 3 |
| General atmosphere | 6 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Class size | 6 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Governance structure | 4 | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| Parental involvement | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 |

Other reasons for teaching at the school included the culture of the school, the environment and support from teachers and administrators, "staff is strong and professional," "staff is very supportive/wonderful," and the facility.

In terms of overall evaluation of the school, teachers were asked to rate the school's performance related to class size, materials and equipment, and student assessment plan, as well as shared leadership, professional support and development, and the school's progress toward becoming an excellent school. Teachers most often rated class size and materials and equipment as "excellent." Five of the ten teachers rated the school's progress toward becoming an excellent school as good and five indicated that they thought the school's progress was fair.

| Table 4 Central City Cyberschool School Performance Rating 2007–08 (N = 10) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Area** | **Rating** | | | |
| | **Excellent** | **Good** | **Fair** | **Poor** |
| 1. Class size | 6 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. Materials and equipment | 4 | 3 | 3 | 0 |
| 3. Student assessment plan | 1 | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| 3a. Local measures | 3 | 5 | 2 | 0 |
| 3b. Standardized tests* | 3 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| 3c. Progress reports | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| 4. Shared leadership, decision making, and accountability | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| 5. Professional support | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| 6. Professional development opportunities | 2 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| 7. Progress toward becoming an excellent school | 0 | 5 | 5 | 0 |

*Three teachers did not respond.

On a satisfaction rating scale ranging from "very satisfied" to "very dissatisfied," teachers responded on the "satisfied" end of the response range in most areas. Areas where the teachers expressed the most dissatisfaction were with the principal's performance[16] and the frequency and effectiveness of staff meetings (six of 10). Table 5 lists all of the teacher responses.

| Table 5 Central City Cyberschool Teacher Satisfaction 2007–08 (N = 10) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Performance Measure** | **Response** | | | | |
| | **Very Satisfied** | **Somewhat Satisfied** | **Somewhat Dissatisfied** | **Very Dissatisfied** | **No Opinion/N/A** |
| Program of instruction | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Enrollment policy and procedures | 3 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Students' academic progress | 1 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Student-teacher ratio | 6 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Discipline policy | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Adherence to discipline policy | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Instructional support | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| Parent-teacher relationships | 2 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Teacher collaboration to plan learning experiences | 0 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 1 |
| Parent involvement | 0 | 8 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Community/business involvement | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 7 |
| Performance as a teacher | 8 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Principal performance | 3 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| Teacher involvement in policy and procedures decisions | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Board of directors performance | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 9 |
| Opportunity for continuing education | 1 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| Frequency of staff meetings | 4 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| Effectiveness of staff meetings | 2 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 0 |

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[16] In this case "principal" was the executive director/founder.

When teachers were asked to name the three things they most liked about the school, teachers noted the following:

- The staff at the school (ten teachers);
- Curriculum (six teachers);
- Technology (two teachers);
- Independence (two teachers);
- Professional development (two teachers);
- The facility (one teacher);
- Student diversity (one teacher);
- Students (one teacher);
- Class size (one teacher);
- Culture (one teacher); and
- Attempts to engage parents (one teacher).

Teachers most often mentioned the following as least liked about the school:

- Discipline issues/student behavior (four teachers);
- Lack of support/respect from the administration (three teachers);
- Lack of parental involvement (two teachers);
- Lack of security (two teachers);
- Lack of lunch hour (two teachers);
- Teacher evaluation process (two teachers);
- Report cards are confusing/not parent-friendly (two teachers);
- Lack of professionalism (one teacher);
- Lack of leadership (one teacher);
- Lack of emphasis on science and social studies (one teacher);
- Lack of para-professional support (one teacher);
- Lack of prep time (one teacher);
- Class size too large (one teacher); and
- Curriculum does not meet student needs (one teacher).

Teachers were also asked to rate the school's contribution to students' academic progress. On a scale of poor, fair, good, or excellent, four of the teachers rated the school's contribution as excellent, four rated the school's contribution as good, and two teachers rated it as fair. Seven of the ten teachers stated that they intended to continue teaching at the school. One teacher is having licensing issues, another is relocating, and the third teacher was not invited back to the school for next year.

When asked for a suggestion to improve the school, teachers responded as follows:

- Hire someone to establish and support a consistent discipline system (two teachers);

- Ensure teachers are properly trained (two teachers);

- Hire more support staff (one teachers);

- Improve parent-teacher contacts; be present in the community (one teacher);

- Improve communication between administrator and staff (one teacher);

- Provide team-building training (one teacher);

- Offer science and social studies in lower grades (one teacher); and

- Raise the standards for excellence (one teacher).

When asked to provide a suggestion to improve the classroom, teachers indicated the following:

- Need better curriculum for K4/K5 (two teachers);

- Need better equipment, e.g., updated technology, additional science equipment (two teachers);

- Need additional support with fewer students (one teacher);

- Need additional para-professional help (one teacher);

- Need enough materials for all students (one teacher);

- Need a strategy to engage parents (one teacher);

- Temperatures in the classroom are uncontrollable (one teacher); and

- Raise the standards for excellence (one teacher).

## C. Student Interviews

At the end of the school year, twenty students in seventh or eighth grade were asked several questions about their school. All children indicated that they use computers at school, that their teachers help them, and that they are learning enough. Eighteen of the 20 students indicated that they feel safe in school (see Table 6).

| Table 6 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Central City Cyberschool<br>Student Interview<br>2007–08<br>(N = 20) | | | |
| Question | Answer | | |
| | Yes | No | No Response/<br>Not Applicable |
| 1.  Do you like your school? | 19 | 1 | 0 |
| 2.  Are you learning enough? | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 3.  Have you improved in reading? | 19 | 1 | 0 |
| 4.  Have you improved in math? | 17 | 3 | 0 |
| 5.  Do you use computers at school? | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 6.  Is your school clean? | 18 | 2 | 0 |
| 7.  Do you like the school rules? | 8 | 12 | 0 |
| 8.  Do you follow the rules? | 16 | 4 | 0 |
| 9.  Does your homework help you learn more? | 15 | 4 | 1 |
| 10.  Do your teachers help you at school? | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 11.  Do you like being in school? | 13 | 7 | 0 |
| 12.  Do you feel safe in school? | 18 | 2 | 0 |
| 13.  Do people work together in school? | 19 | 1 | 0 |
| 14.  Do you feel the marks you get on class work, homework, and report cards are fair? | 15 | 5 | 0 |
| 15.  Do your teachers talk to your parents? | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 16.  Do your teachers talk with you about high school plans? | 14 | 6 | 0 |
| 17.  Do your teachers talk with you about college? | 11 | 9 | 0 |
| 18.  Are you planning to go to college? | 20 | 0 | 0 |
| 19.  Do you participate in afterschool activities? | 8 | 12 | 0 |

Students were then asked what they liked best and least about the school. Students liked the following aspects best:

- Teachers (four students);
- A lot of technology/computers/laptops (three students);
- Other students (three students);
- Gym (three students);
- School prepares us for high school (two students);
- The work we do in class (two students);
- Learn quickly (one student);
- Specials and study hall (one students); and
- It is quiet (one student).

When asked what they liked least, students responded as follows:

- Uniforms/tucking in shirt (six students);
- Too small (two students);
- Rules (two students);
- Food (one student);
- Need more help from staff when students argue (one student);
- Not enough free time (one student);
- Lack of foreign language (one student);
- Students waste class time (one student);
- Broken desks (one student);
- Classes (one student); and
- New start time (one student).

Two students indicated that there was nothing they disliked about their school.

### D.  Board Member Interviews

Board member opinions are qualitative in nature and provide valuable, although subjective, insight regarding school performance and organizational competency. Three members of Cyberschool's Board of Directors were interviewed via telephone by CRC staff using a prepared interview guide. One of the board members has served since the school started in 1999 and the other two have served for three to four years. One interviewee is currently the

board president, another is the vice president, and the third is the treasurer of the board of directors. These board members represented experience in educational psychology, urban education, low-income family issues, and nonprofit and for-profit business administration.

The interviewees were asked to rate the school's performance in class size, materials and equipment, and the student assessment plan (local measures of achievement, standardized testing, progress reports to parents) if they had knowledge of these school performance elements. The rating scale was excellent, good, fair, or poor. The interviewees rated these elements as either excellent or good. In addition, the interviewees rated the school's performance regarding shared leadership, decision making and accountability, professional support, and professional development opportunities as either excellent or good.

Two of the interviewees indicated the school's progress toward becoming an excellent school was excellent, while the other indicated the school's progress toward becoming an excellent school was good. Two of the interviewees indicated that, overall, the school was excellent, and the other interviewee rated the school as good overall. These board members reported that the board of directors uses data to make decisions and cited several examples.

On a satisfaction rating scale ranging from "very satisfied" to "very dissatisfied," all three interviewees indicated that they were very satisfied with the discipline policy, the executive director's performance, opportunities for teacher involvement in policy and procedure decisions, the commitment of the school's leadership, and the safety of the educational environment. The interviewees were either very satisfied; somewhat satisfied; or, in a few instances, did not have the knowledge base regarding the program of instruction, enrollment policy/procedures, student academic progress, student-teacher ratio/class size, adherence to the discipline policy, instructional support, parent involvement, community/business involvement, teachers' performance, the board of directors' performance, opportunities for continuing education, human

resources to fulfill the school's mission, and administrative resources to fulfill the school's mission.[17]

· The only area of dissatisfaction was the financial resources to fulfill the school's mission. Two of the three board members were somewhat dissatisfied, citing lack of sufficient funding to retire the construction debt and the low per-pupil reimbursement.

· When asked what they liked best about the school, the board members liked the following about Cyberschool:

- The leadership;

- The commitment, dedication, and talent of the staff, including the executive director;

- The environment, including the warmth; high expectations; and the integration of technology;

- The positive response of the students; and

- The philosophy, including the staff's dedication to the mission of the school.

Regarding dislikes, the need to expand resources (e.g., diversify the funding streams) and the lack of funding for transportation were the main areas identified.

When asked for one suggestion for improving the school, the board members mentioned diversifying and increasing the funding streams to supplement the per-pupil costs and expanding the size, expertise, and succession planning for the board of directors.

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[17] One board member said he/she did not have enough knowledge to express satisfaction with parent involvement and opportunities for continuing education; another said he/she did not have enough knowledge to express satisfaction regarding adherence to the discipline policy, instructional support, and parent involvement.

## IV.   EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

To monitor the performance of Cyberschool as it relates to the CSRC contract, a variety of qualitative and quantitative information has been collected at specified intervals during the past several academic years. This year, the school established goals for attendance, parent conferences, and special education students. In addition, the school identified local and standardized measures of academic performance to monitor student progress.

This year, the local assessment measures included student progress in literacy, reading, mathematics, and writing skills. The standardized assessment measures used were the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT) and the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination – Criterion-referenced Test (WKCE–CRT).[18]

### A.   Attendance

At the beginning of the 2007–08 academic year, the school established a goal to maintain an average attendance rate of 85.0%. This year, students attended school an average of 88.0% of the time, exceeding the school's goal.[19]

### B.   Parent-teacher Conferences

At the beginning of the school year, the school set a goal that 80.0% of parents would attend scheduled parent-teacher conferences. Conferences were scheduled for all children in the fall and spring. There were 344 children enrolled at the time of the fall and 345 students enrolled at the time of the spring conference.[20] Parents of 91.0% of children attended the fall conference

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[18] The WKCE–CRT is a standardized test aligned with Wisconsin model academic standards. It is similar to the old WKCE and *TerraNova* examinations administered in the past.

[19] Attendance data were provided by Cyberschool for 382 children enrolled at any point during the school year. Attendance was calculated for each student by dividing the number of days attended by the number of days expected, then averaging all of the students' attendance rates.

[20] Based on aggregate data supplied by the school for 19 classrooms.

and parents of 96.0% of children attended the spring conference. Cyberschool has exceeded its goal related to parent-teacher conferences.

## C.  Special Education Needs

Cyberschool established a goal to maintain up-to-date records for all special education needs students. This year, there were 51 special education students enrolled during the year. Seven special education students withdrew during the year and three were dismissed from the program. An individual education program (IEP) had been completed for the other 41 students.[21] Parents of 40 (97.6%) of the 41 students attended an IEP meeting and parents of one special education student were invited but did not participate. The school has therefore met its goal to maintain records on all students with special needs.

## D.  Local Measures of Educational Performance

Charter schools, by their definition and nature, are autonomous schools with curricula that reflect each school's individual philosophy, mission, and goals. In addition to standardized testing, each charter school has the responsibility to describe the goals and expectations of its students in language that is meaningful in light of that school's unique approach to education. These goals and expectations are established by each City of Milwaukee charter school at the beginning of the academic year to measure the educational performance of its students. These local measures are useful for monitoring and reporting progress, guiding and improving instruction, expressing clearly the quality of student work that is expected, and providing evidence that students are meeting local benchmarks.

At the beginning of the school year, Cyberschool designated four different areas in which students' competencies would be measured: literacy, reading, mathematics, and writing.

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[21] A random review of special education files indicated that IEPs were routinely completed.

## 1. Literacy

The school set a goal that all students in grades K5 through six would be administered the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) assessment three times during the academic year (September, January, and April). At least 90.0% of students would improve their score on the subsequent assessment.

First through sixth graders were assessed for oral reading fluency at the beginning, middle, and/or end of the school year.[22] Results for K5 students reflect progress on the initial sound fluency tests given at the beginning and middle of the school year.[23] All students who took the test more than one time were included in the analysis.

Results indicate that 96.2% of students were able to improve their DIBELS score from one test administration to another (i.e., first to second, second to third, and/or first to third; see Table 7).

| Table 7 Central City Cyberschool Literacy Progress Measured by DIBELS 2007–08 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grade | Time of Year Administered | N | Number Improved | Percent Improved |
| K5 | Beginning and middle | 29 | 24 | 82.8% |
| 1st | Middle and end | 40 | 38 | 95.0% |
| 2nd | Beginning, middle, and end | 43 | 43 | 100.0% |
| 3rd | Beginning, middle, and end | 24 | 23 | 95.8% |
| 4th | Beginning, middle, and end | 35 | 35 | 100.0% |
| 5th | Beginning, middle, and end | 27 | 27 | 100.0% |
| 6th | Beginning, middle, and end | 40 | 39 | 97.5% |
| Total | -- | 238 | 229 | 96.2% |

---

[22] First graders were also tested in letter-naming fluency, phoneme segmentation, and nonsense word fluency. Oral reading fluency was tested in the middle and the end of the year.

[23] K5 students were also tested on letter naming, phoneme segmentation, and nonsense word fluency.

## 2. Reading

### a. Corrective Reading

The school's goal for reading was that all seventh- and eighth-grade students who were below grade level on the reading portion of the WKCE–CRT or referred by a teacher would participate in corrective reading intervention on a daily basis. At least 90.0% of those who participated in the intervention would improve their fluency and comprehension skills as measured by the September and April corrective reading assessment.

The reading test consisted of three parts. The student was required to complete the first part before moving on to the next part. Each student was assessed in terms of number of errors on each part and the time to complete each part. Errors and time were provided for each part completed.

There were 12 students who participate in the corrective reading intervention. Three students withdrew prior to the end of the year; therefore, they had no test scores from the spring test administration. To protect student identity, results for the other nine students were not included in this report.[24]

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[24] CSRC requires group sizes of ten or more students.

**b.** **Read Naturally**

This year, the school set a goal that seventh and eighth graders would be given the Read Naturally assessment three times during the year, in September, January, and April. At least 90% of students would improve their words-per-minute score on subsequent tests.

This year, there were 62 seventh or eighth graders administered the examination on three occasions. Sixty-one (98.4%) of the 62 students improved their score from the first to second, second to third, and/or first to third test (see Figure 7).

Figure 7



**Central City Cyberschool**
**Read Naturally Scores for 7th and 8th Graders**
**2007–08**

Improved 61 (98.4%)

Did Not Improve 1 (1.6%)

N = 62
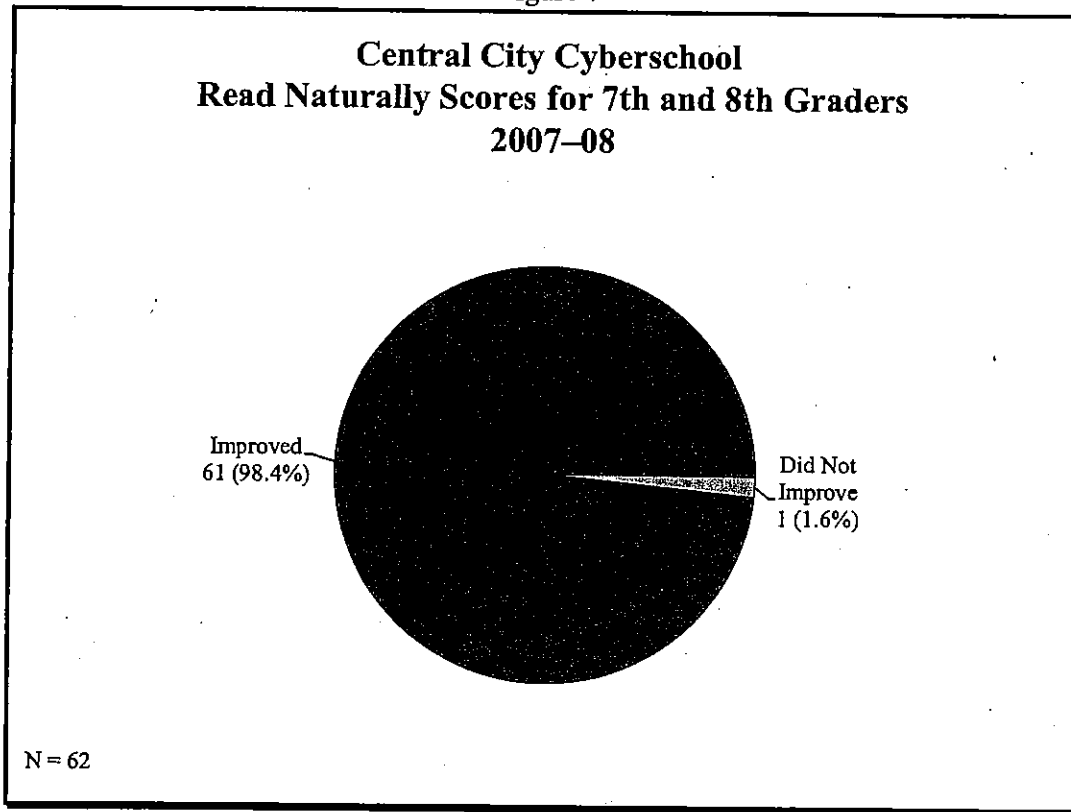
**3.** **Mathematics**

Cyberschool issues quarterly progress reports for each student. Progress reports reflect student progress in a variety of subject areas, including mathematics. Student skills in each area

are assessed as "basic," "emerging," "skilled," "mastery," or "advanced." The goal was that students in first through eighth grades would earn a "skilled" or higher score on 80.0% of math benchmarks for which they were assessed in the fourth quarter.[25]
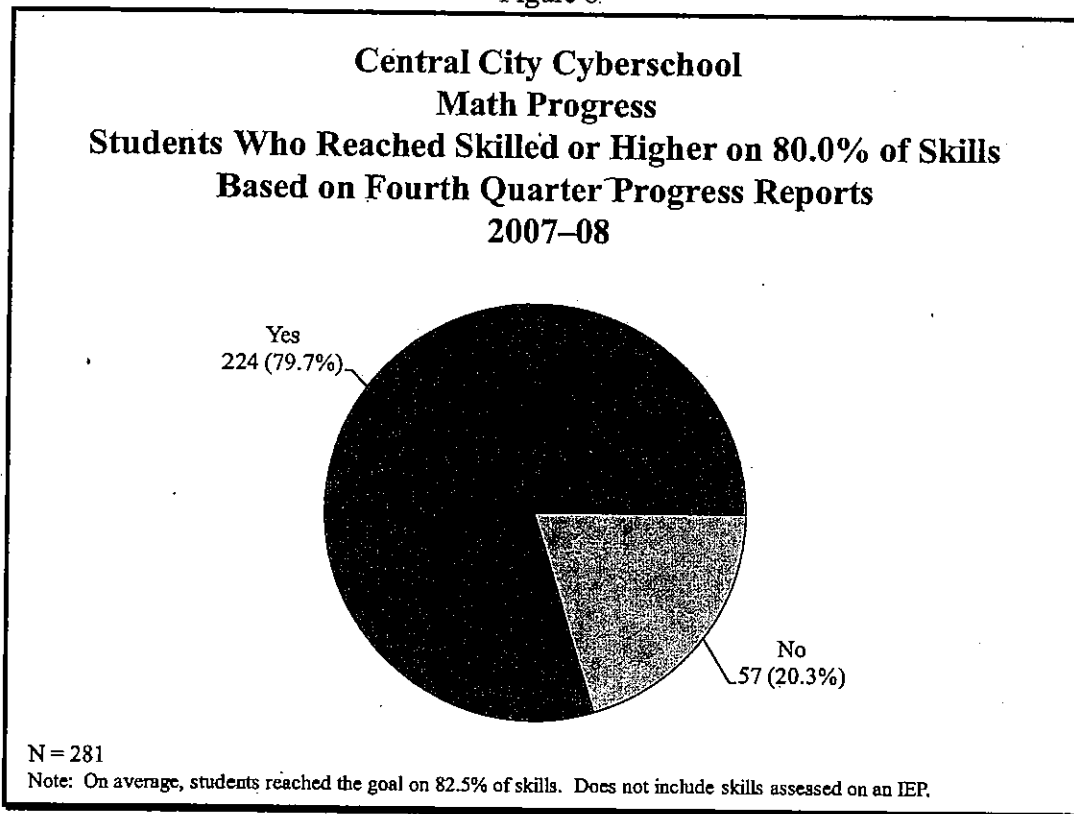
This year, there were 281 students assessed in the fourth quarter in math.[26] Students were assessed on between seven and 52 math skills. On average, students reached skilled or higher on 82.5% of skills for which they were assessed. Overall, 224 (79.7%) of the 281 students met or surpassed the goal of reaching skilled or higher on 80.0% of math benchmarks (see Figure 8).

Figure 8



Central City Cyberschool
Math Progress
Students Who Reached Skilled or Higher on 80.0% of Skills
Based on Fourth Quarter Progress Reports
2007–08

Yes
224 (79.7%)

No
57 (20.3%)

N = 281
Note: On average, students reached the goal on 82.5% of skills. Does not include skills assessed on an IEP.

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[25] The school submitted an Excel spreadsheet that listed each skill for each student. There were 21 students who were rated on the same skill twice. CRC selected the higher of the two ratings.

[26] Does not include skills assessed on an IEP.

## 4. Writing

Like the mathematics benchmarks, student writing skills are recorded on student progress reports. Students' writing skills are rated as "basic," "emerging," "skilled," "mastery," or "advanced." The goal was that students in first through eighth grades would earn a "skilled" or higher score on the writing benchmark in the fourth quarter. There was one writing benchmark for each student.

This year, there were 281 students assessed in the fourth quarter. Twenty-five of these students were assessed on benchmarks on an IEP and were not included in the analysis. Of the remaining 256 students, 45 (17.6%) were rated as having advanced writing skills, 71 (27.7%) had reached mastery, 124 (48.4%) were skilled, 14 (5.5%) had emerging writing skills, and two (0.8%) students exhibited basic writing skills. The school has therefore met its writing progress goal for 93.6% of students (see Figure 9).

Figure 9



**Central City Cyberschool
Writing Skills
Based on Progress Report
2007–08**
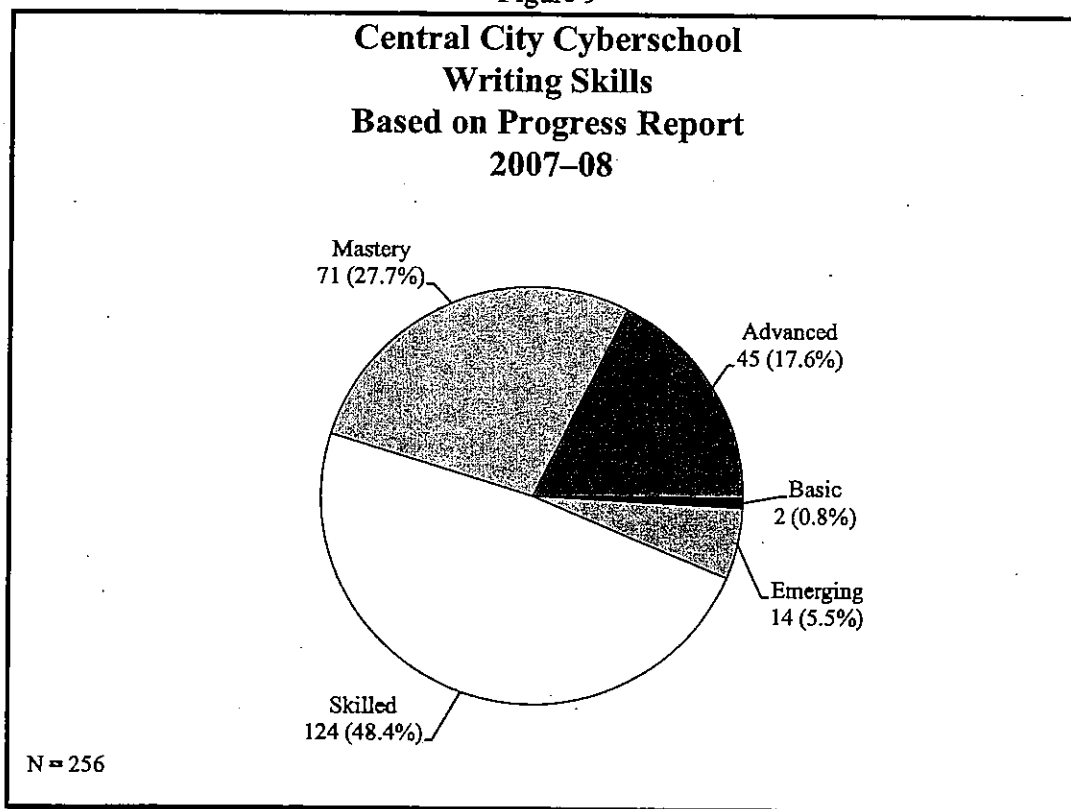
## E.    External Standardized Measures of Educational Performance

The CSRC required the following standardized tests be administered to students attending city chartered elementary schools:

- The SDRT would be administered to all first-, second-, and third-grade students. The test was to be administered between March 15 and April 15, 2008.

- The Wisconsin Student Assessment System tests, including the WKCE–CRT, would be administered to all third- through eighth-grade students.[27]

Results for all students administered the examinations are included in this section.

## 1.    SDRT for First Graders

The SDRT is the standardized test required by the CSRC for administration to all first graders enrolled in charter schools. Student performance is reported in phonetic analysis, vocabulary, and comprehension. These scores are summarized in an overall SDRT total.

In April 2008, Cyberschool administered the SDRT to 41 first-grade students. Results indicate that first graders were functioning, on average, at 1.6 to 2.2 grade-level equivalents (GLE) in reading, depending on the area assessed (see Figure 10 and Table 8).

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[27] Students in fourth, eighth, or tenth grade were also tested in language arts, science, and social studies. The subtests are similar to the WKCE used in previous years. Language arts and social studies and are not CRT tests.

Figure 10

**Central City Cyberschool
Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test
Average\* Grade-level Equivalent for 1st Graders
2007–08**



N = 41
\*Results are rounded to the nearest one tenth.
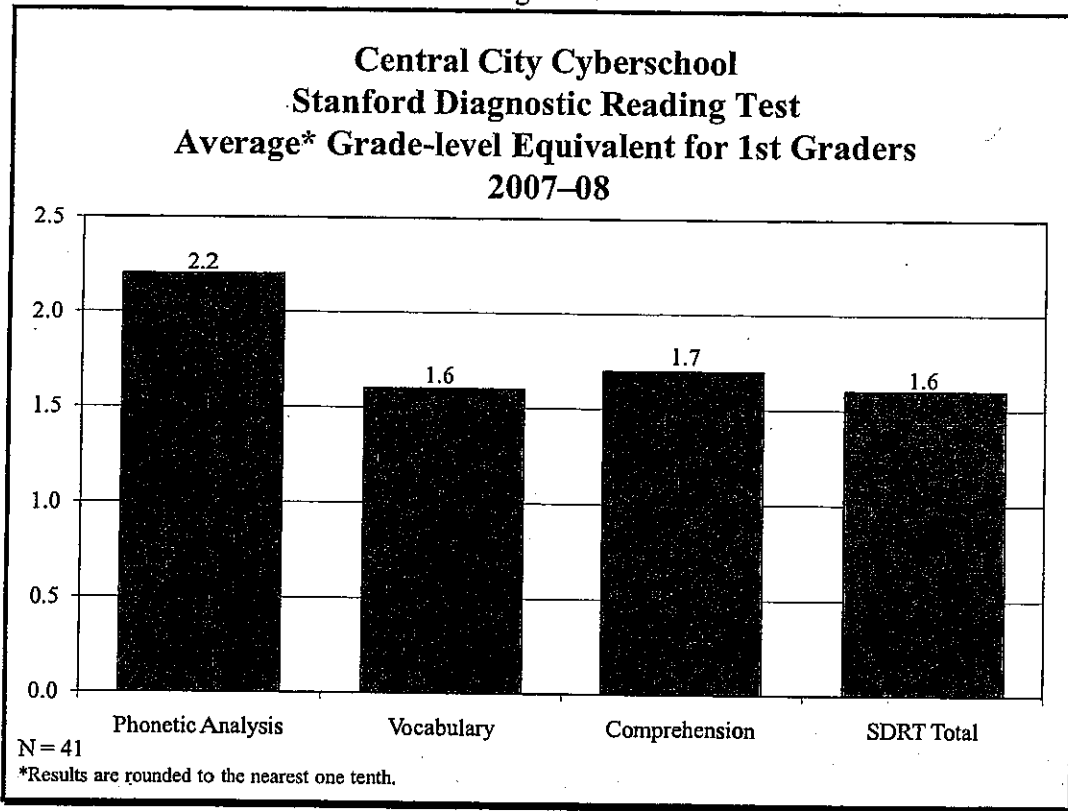
Table 8

**Central City Cyberschool
Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test
Grade-level Equivalent for 1st Graders
2007–08
(N = 41)**

| Area Tested | Lowest GLE Scored | Highest GLE Scored | Median |
|---|---|---|---|
| Phonetic analysis | K.2 | 5.2 | 1.9 |
| Vocabulary | K.6 | 2.6 | 1.5 |
| Comprehension | K.6 | 5.3 | 1.5 |
| SDRT Total | K.5 | 2.6 | 1.6 |

Note: Results are rounded to the nearest one tenth.

## 2. SDRT for Second Graders

In April 2008, the SDRT was administered to 41 second-grade students. Results are presented in Figure 11 and Table 9. Second graders were functioning, on average, from 2.0 to 3.0 GLEs depending on the areas tested.

Figure 11

**Central City Cyberschool**
**Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test**
**Average* Grade-level Equivalent for 2nd Graders**
**2007–08**



N = 41
*Results are rounded to the nearest one tenth.

| Table 9 |
|---|
| **Central City Cyberschool**<br>**Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test**<br>**Grade-level Equivalent for 2nd Graders**<br>**2007–08**<br>**(N = 41)** |

| Area Tested | Lowest GLE Scored | Highest GLE Scored | Median |
|---|---|---|---|
| Phonetic analysis | 1.0 | 10.9 | 2.4 |
| Vocabulary | K.7 | 4.7 | 2.1 |
| Comprehension | 1.3 | 5.7 | 2.2 |
| **SDRT Total** | **1.0** | **5.6** | **2.1** |

Note: Results are rounded to the nearest one tenth.

3. **Standardized Tests for Third Graders**

    a. **SDRT for Third Graders**

In April 2008, Cyberschool administered the SDRT to third graders. Results indicated that the 25 third graders were, on average, reading at second- or third-grade levels, depending on the area tested (see Figure 12 and Table 10).

Figure 12



**Central City Cyberschool
Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test
Average\* Grade-level Equivalent for 3rd Graders
2007–08**

N = 25
\*Results are rounded to the nearest one tenth.
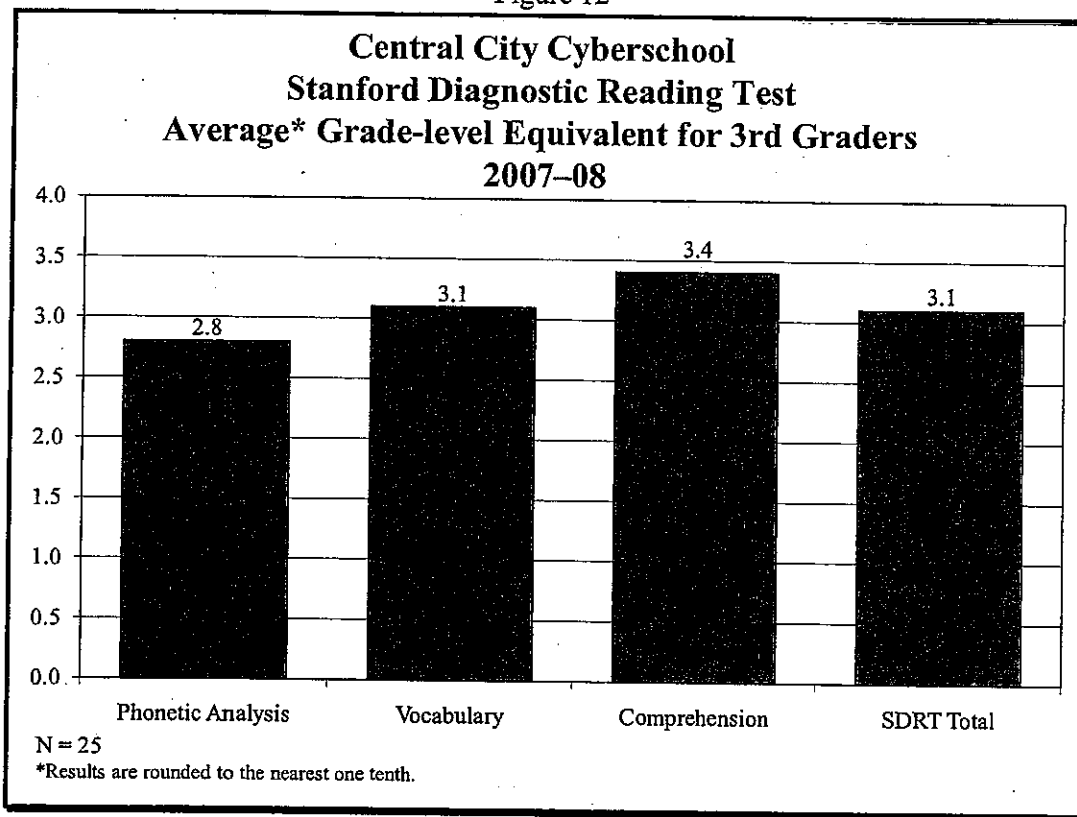
| Table 10 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Central City Cyberschool**<br>**Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test**<br>**Grade Level Equivalent for 3rd Graders**<br>**2007–08**<br>**(N = 25)** | | | |
| **Area Tested** | **Lowest GLE Scored** | **Highest GLE Scored** | **Median** |
| Phonetic analysis | K.8 | 7.7 | 2.5 |
| Vocabulary | 2.0 | 4.3 | 3.2 |
| Comprehension | 1.7 | 8.1 | 3.0 |
| **SDRT Total** | 1.8 | 5.6 | 2.9 |

Note: Results are rounded to the nearest one tenth.

### b.  WKCE–CRT for Third Graders

In October 2007, third graders were administered the WKCE–CRT reading and math tests.[28] The WKCE–CRT was developed by CTB McGraw-Hill to directly align with Wisconsin model academic standards. Results can be used to describe how students performed relative to these standards. Results are reported as minimal, basic, proficient, or advanced proficiency levels.

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[28] This examination is similar to the WKCE and *Terra Nova* examinations used in the State of Wisconsin until 2004–05.

This year, 22 Cyberschool third graders were administered the exam. Results show that two (9.1%) third graders reached the advanced level, ten (45.5%) scored at the proficient level, nine (40.9%) scored at the basic level, and one (4.5%) student exhibited minimal reading skills.

In math, one (4.5%) student scored advanced, seven (31.8%) scored proficient, two (9.1%) scored basic, and twelve (54.5%) students scored at the minimal level (see Figure 13).

Figure 13



Central City Cyberschool
WKCE–CRT Proficiency Levels for 3rd Graders
2007–08

N = 22
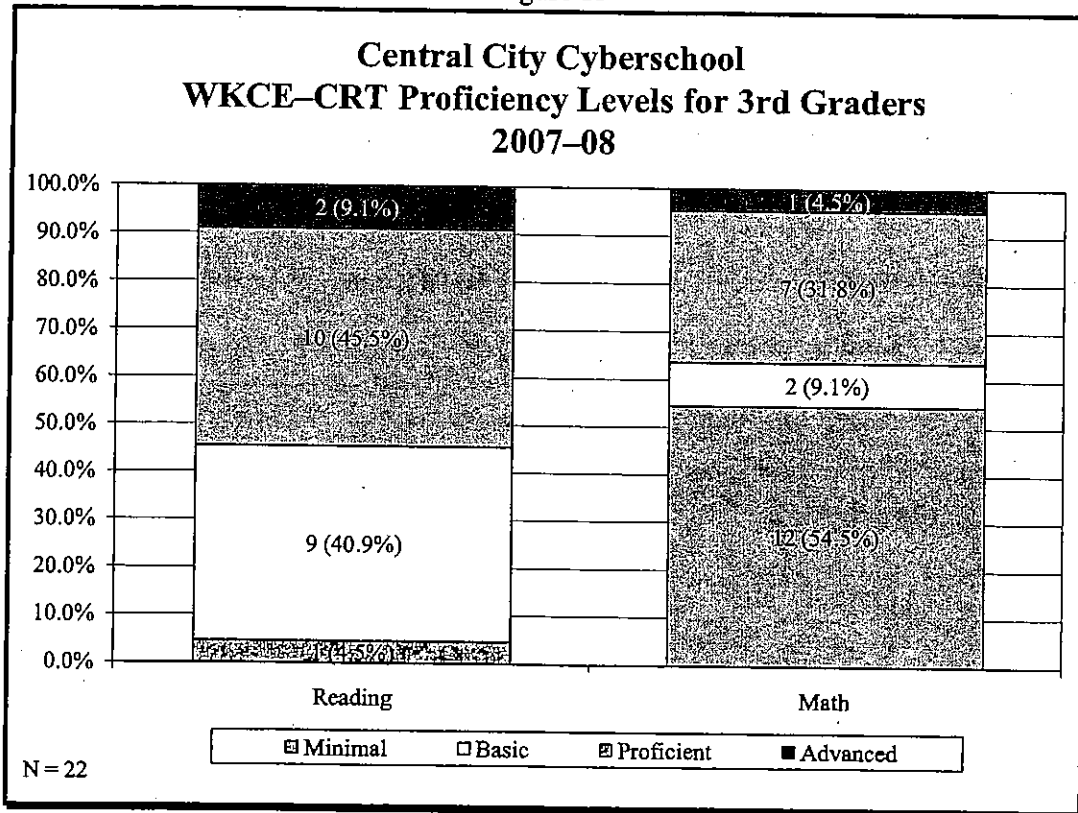
## 4. WKCE–CRT for Fourth Graders

In October 2007, Wisconsin fourth graders were administered the WKCE–CRT. In addition to reading and math, fourth graders were tested in language arts, science, and social studies.[29] Student scores on the reading and math parts are not nationally normed. Instead, they reflect student performance relative to Wisconsin's standards. Student scores in language arts are based on national norms.

WKCE–CRT scores were provided for 36 fourth-grade students. Proficiency indicators in reading, language arts, and math are illustrated in Figure 14. Four (11.1%) fourth graders had minimal reading proficiency, 13 (36.1%) had a basic level of understanding, 11 (30.6%) were proficient readers, and eight (22.2%) fourth graders scored at the advanced level. In language arts, six (16.7%) students had minimal skills, 15 (41.7%) had basic skills, 14 (38.9%) had proficient skills, and one (2.8%) student scored in the advanced category. Thirteen (36.1%) students exhibited minimal math skills, five (13.9%) scored in the basic category, 12 (33.3%) were proficient, and six (16.7%) students scored in the advanced category in mathematics.

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[29] See Wisconsin DPI, www.dpi.state.wi.us, for details.

Figure 14
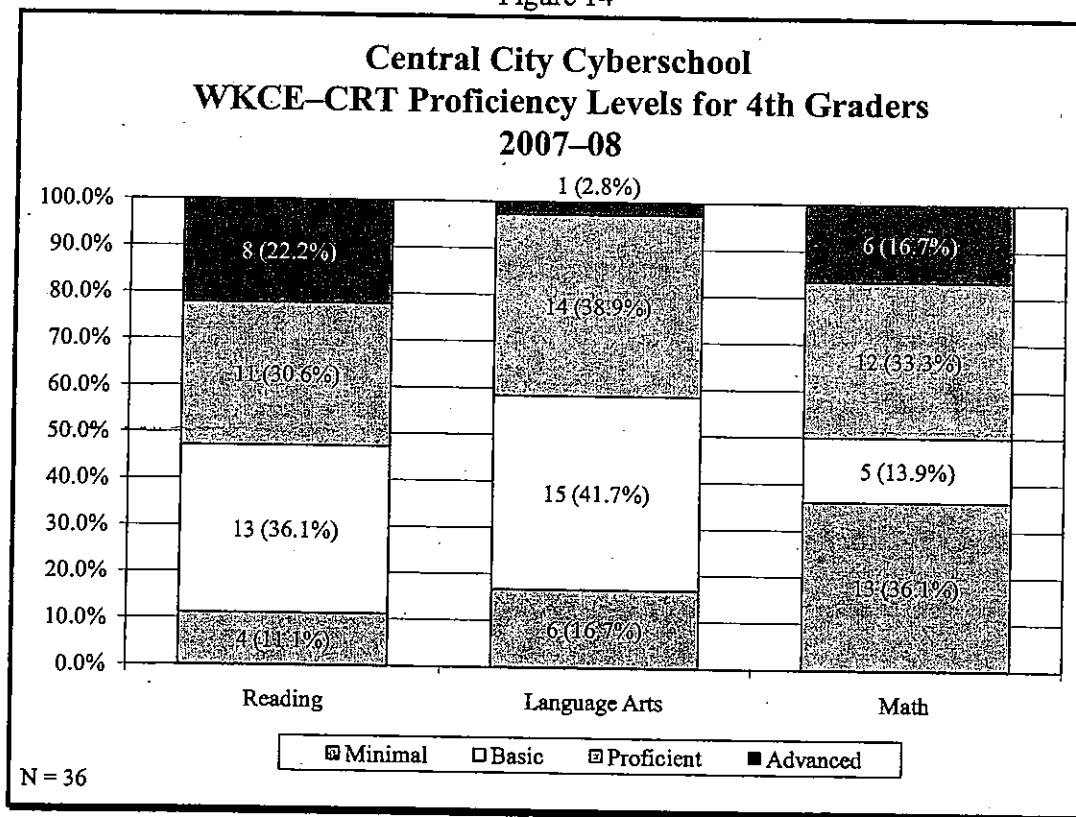
**Central City Cyberschool**
**WKCE–CRT Proficiency Levels for 4th Graders**
**2007–08**



N = 36

The final score from the WKCE–CRT is a writing score. The extended writing sample is scored with two holistic rubrics. A six-point composing rubric evaluates students' ability to control purpose/focus, organization/coherence, development of content, sentence fluency, and word choice. A three-point conventions rubric evaluates students' ability to use punctuation, grammar, capitalization, and spelling. Points received on these two rubrics are combined to produce a single score with a maximum possible score of nine.
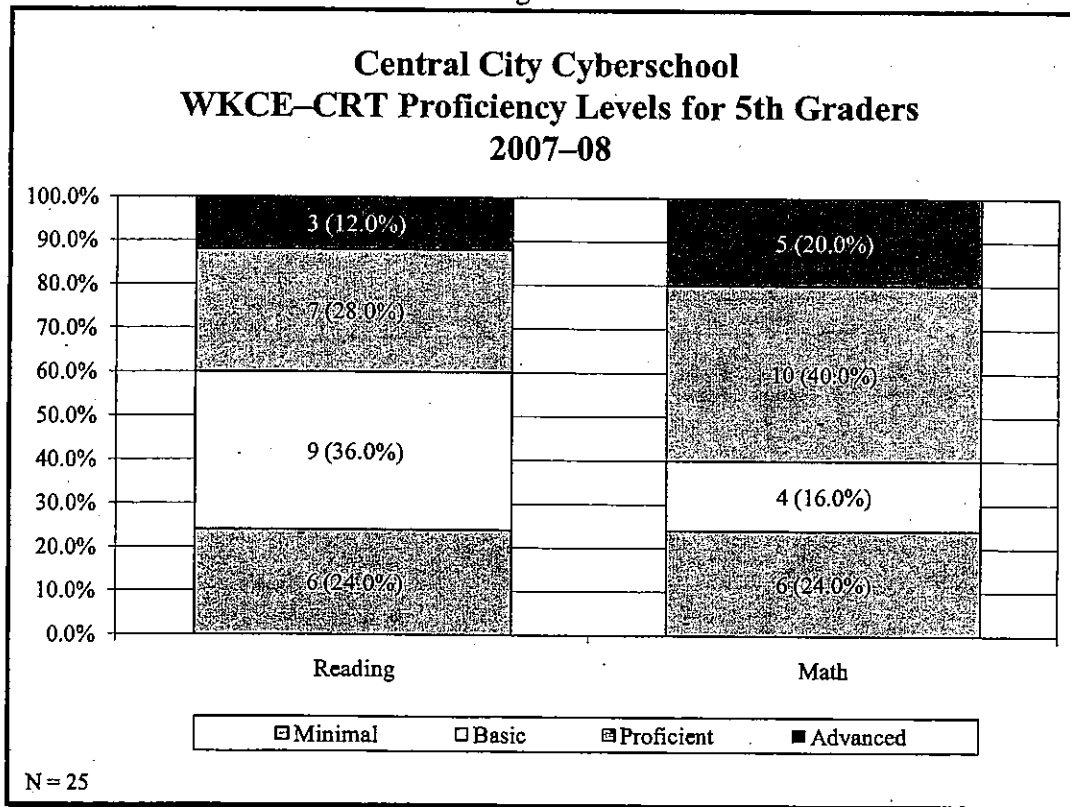
The Cyberschool extended writing scores ranged from 2.0 to 6.0. The median score was 5.0, meaning half of the students scored at or below 5.0, and half scored 5.0 to 6.0 on a scale of zero to nine.

5.    **WKCE–CRT for Fifth Graders**

As required by the CSRC and DPI, the WKCE–CRT reading and math tests were administered to fifth through seventh graders in October 2007. The CSRC requires that these tests be administered to students to provide a basis for multiple-year student progress. The DPI required all students in third through eighth and tenth grades to participate in the WKCE–CRT testing to meet federal No Child Left Behind requirements.

As illustrated, six (24.0%) fifth graders scored at a minimal proficiency level, nine (36.0%) scored basic, seven (28.0%) scored proficient, and three (12.0%) scored at an advanced level in reading. In math, six (24.0%) students scored in the minimal range, four (16.0%) in basic, ten (40.0%) in proficient, and five (20.0%) scored in the advanced range (see Figure 15).

Figure 15

**Central City Cyberschool**
**WKCE–CRT Proficiency Levels for 5th Graders**
**2007–08**

| | Reading | Math |
|---|---|---|
| Advanced | 3 (12.0%) | 5 (20.0%) |
| Proficient | 7 (28.0%) | 10 (40.0%) |
| Basic | 9 (36.0%) | 4 (16.0%) |
| Minimal | 6 (24.0%) | 6 (24.0%) |

☐ Minimal    ☐ Basic    ▣ Proficient    ■ Advanced

N = 25

## 6.    WKCE–CRT for Sixth Graders

Sixth graders were administered the WKCE–CRT in October 2007. As illustrated, two (6.1%) sixth graders scored advanced and 17 (51.5%) students scored proficient in reading. In math, six (18.2%) students scored in the proficient level and six (18.2%) were in the advanced category (see Figure 16).

Figure 16

**Central City Cyberschool**
**WKCE–CRT Proficiency Levels for 6th Graders**
**2007–08**



Reading:
- 2 (6.1%)
- 17 (51.5%)
- 11 (33.3%)
- 3 (9.1%)

Math:
- 6 (18.2%)
- 6 (18.2%)
- 8 (24.2%)
- 13 (39.4%)

Legend: ⊞ Minimal    ☐ Basic    ⊞ Proficient    ■ Advanced

N = 33

Note: Three students took the alternate assessment. Their results were not included above.
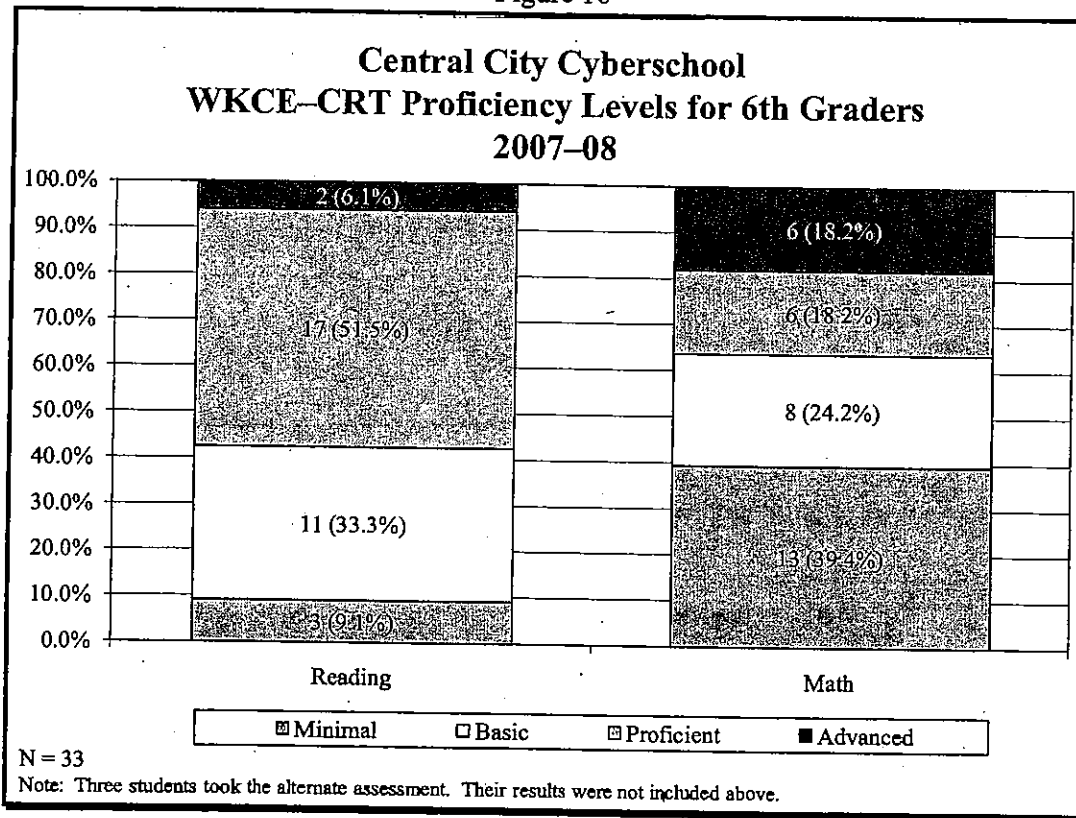
7.    **WKCE–CRT for Seventh Graders**

Proficiency levels from the WKCE–CRT administered in October 2007 for seventh graders are illustrated in Figure 17. In reading, three (7.9%) students scored as advanced and 20 (52.6%) scored as proficient, while six (15.8%) students scored at a basic level and nine (23.7%) scored at a minimal level of proficiency. In math, four (10.5%) seventh graders were advanced, 14 (36.8%) were proficient, six (15,8%) were at a basic skill level, and 14 (36.8%) scored at a minimal skill level.

Figure 17



**Central City Cyberschool**
**WKCE–CRT Proficiency Levels for 7th Graders**
**2007–08**

N = 38
Note: One student took the alternate assessment. His/her results were not included above.
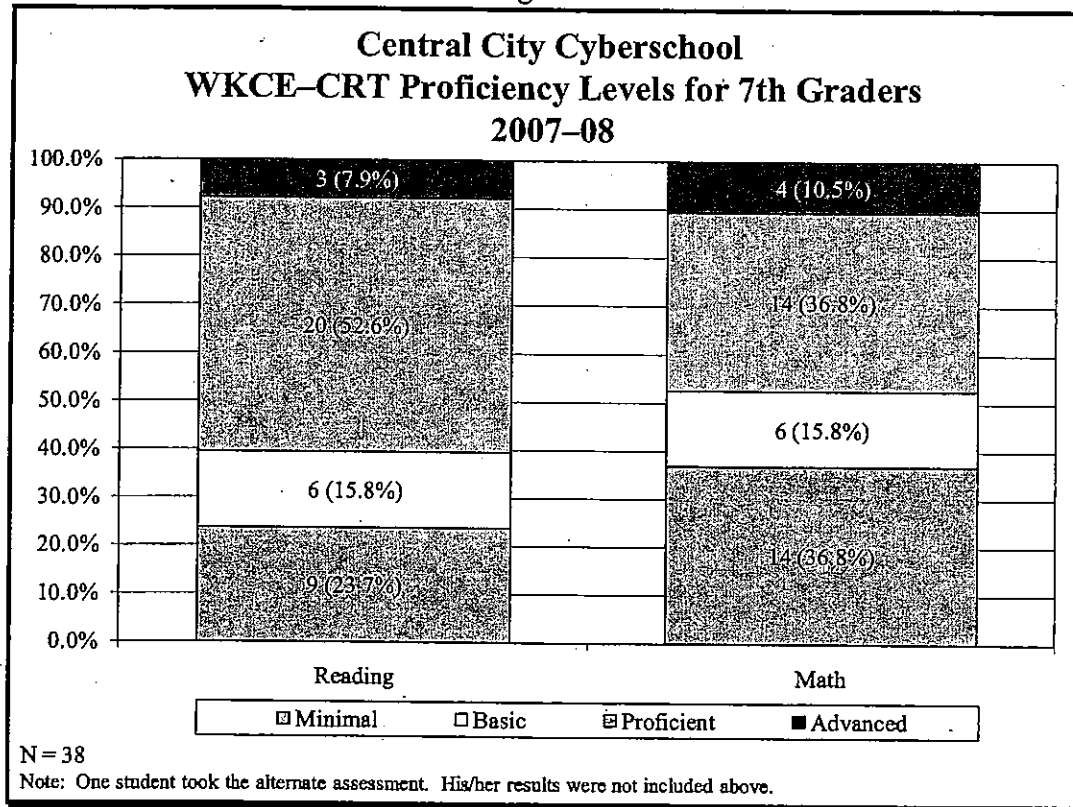
## 8.    WKCE–CRT for Eighth Graders

In October 2007, the WKCE–CRT was administered to Cyberschool eighth-grade students. Like the fourth graders, students were tested in reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The CSRC requires that results be reported for reading, language arts, and math. Student performance in reading and math is relative to Wisconsin academic standards.[30]

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[30] The science subtest is also based on Wisconsin academic standards. Language arts and social studies results are nationally normed.

Proficiency indicators for eighth graders are illustrated in Figure 18. For example, five (15.2%) eighth graders scored in the minimal reading proficiency range, 14 (42.4%) had a basic understanding, 12 (36.4%) scored in the proficient range, and two (6.1%) students were advanced readers. In terms of language arts ability, 13 (39.4%) students demonstrated minimal performance, 15 (45.5%) had a basic understanding, four (12.1%) students had achieved a proficient level, and one (3.0%) student demonstrated an advanced level of language arts skills. In mathematics, 12 (36.4%) students scored minimal, ten (30.3%) were basic, 11 (33.3%) proficient, and no students demonstrated advanced skills.

Figure 18
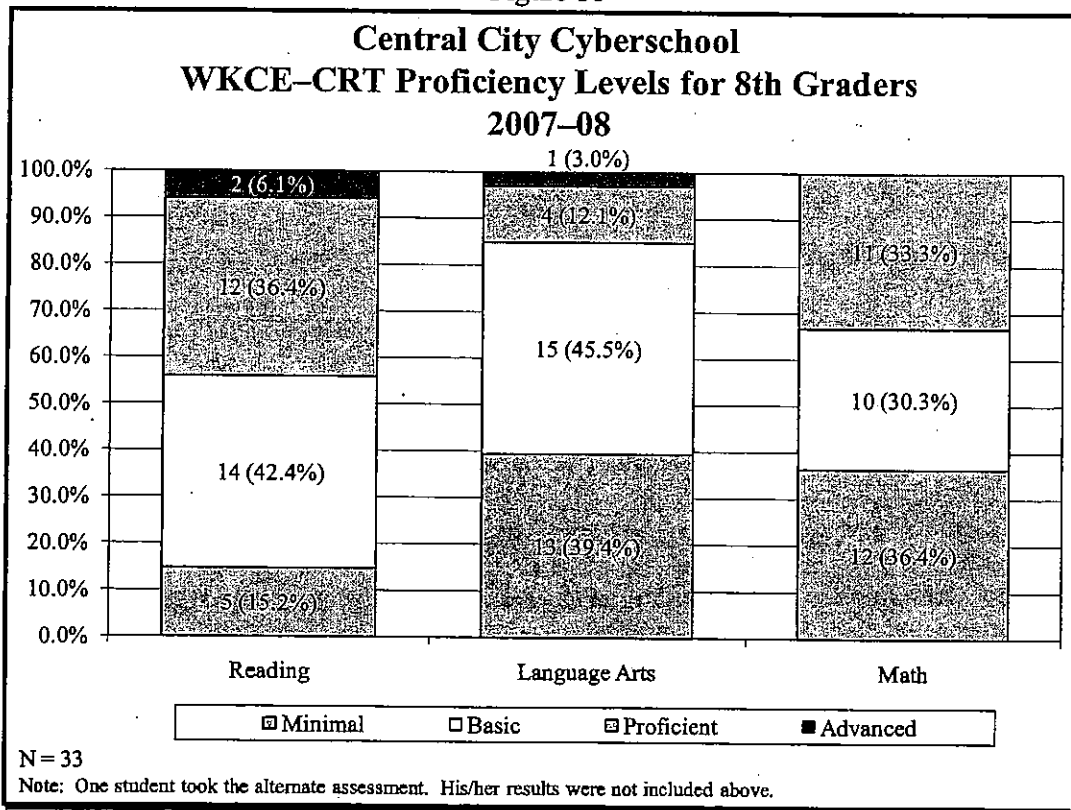


Central City Cyberschool
WKCE–CRT Proficiency Levels for 8th Graders
2007–08

N = 33
Note: One student took the alternate assessment. His/her results were not included above.

The final score from the WKCE–CRT is a writing score. The extended writing sample is scored with two holistic rubrics that are similar to those used on the fourth-grade test. Points received on the two rubrics are combined to produce a single score on the report with a maximum possible score of nine.[31] The Cyberschool eighth-grade writing scores ranged from 2.0 to 6.0. The median score was 5.0, meaning half of students scored at or below 5.0 and half scored 5.0 to 6.0 on a scale of zero to nine.

## F.    Multiple-year Student Progress

Year-to-year progress is measured by comparing scores on standardized tests from one year to the next. The tests used in these comparisons are the SDRT and the WKCE–CRT.

The CSRC requires that multiple-year progress be reported for students who met proficiency level expectations, i.e., scored at proficient or advanced levels, and for those children who did not meet proficiency level expectations, i.e., tested at minimal or basic levels in the 2006–07 school year. The CSRC expectation was that at least 75.0% of the students who were at the proficient or advanced levels on their previous year's WKCE–CRT reading and math subtests, and who met the full academic year (FAY) definition,[32] would maintain their status of proficient or above. The CSRC expectation for those students who scored below expectations, i.e., at the minimal or basic levels on their previous year's WKCE reading and math tests, was that students would either advance to the next proficiency level or advance to the next highest quartile within their previous year's proficiency level.

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[31] See www.dpi.state.wi.us/oea/kc_writg.html for details.

[32] Students had to be enrolled in the school on or before September 21, 2006, to meet the FAY definition.

Student progress for each group is described in terms of progress in proficiency level achievement.

## 1. First Through Third-grade SDRT

Table 11 describes reading progress as measured by SDRT results in two consecutive academic years for students who were administered the exams in 2006–07 and 2007–08.[33] CSRC expects that students advance, on average, 1.0 GLE. Overall SDRT totals indicated an average improvement of 0.8 GLE from first to second and 0.7 GLE from second to third.

| Table 11 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Central City Cyberschool<br>Average GLE Advancement in Reading<br>Based on SDRT Total | | | |
| Grade | Average GLE | | |
| | 2006–07 | 2007–08 | Advancement |
| 1st to 2nd Grade (n = 22) | 1.6 | 2.4 | 0.8 |
| 2nd to 3rd Grade (n = 12) | 2.4 | 3.1 | 0.7 |
| Total (N = 34) | -- | -- | 0.8 |

Note: Results are rounded to the nearest one tenth.

---

[33] FAY requirements did not apply to first through third graders.

Multiple-year student progress can also be examined over two full academic years using the first- to third-grade SDRT. This year, there were ten third graders who had been given the SDRT in 2005–06 as first graders. These students advanced an average GLE of 1.5 (see Table 12).

| Table 12 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Central City Cyberschool<br>Average GLE Advancement From 1st to 3rd Grade<br>Based on SDRT Total<br>(N = 10) | | | |
| Reading | Average GLE | | |
| | 1st Grade<br>(2005–06) | 3rd Grade<br>(2007–08) | Advancement |
| SDRT Total | 1.5 | 3.0 | 1.5 |

Note: Results are rounded to the nearest one tenth.

### 2. Students Who Met Proficiency Level Expectations

Tables 13 and 14 include students who reached expected proficiency levels, i.e., proficient or advanced, in reading and/or math in 2006–07. At least 75.0% of these students were expected to maintain these levels in 2007–08. As illustrated, 87.1% of students maintained their reading levels and 89.8% maintained proficient or advanced levels in math. Therefore, Cyberschool met the expectation for maintaining proficiency levels in reading and math. The school exceeded the expectation at every grade level with comparable, reportable scores[34] and for the total number of students.

---

[34] To protect student identity, the CSRC requires group sizes of ten or more students.

| Table 13 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Central City Cyberschool<br>Reading Proficiency Level Progress for<br>FAY Students Proficient or Advanced in 2006–07<br>Based on WKCE–CRT | | | |
| Grade | Students Proficient/Advanced in 2006–07 | Students Maintained Proficient/Advanced in 2007–08 | |
| | | N | % |
| 3rd to 4th Grade | 17 | 16 | 94.1% |
| 4th to 5th Grade | 9 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 5th to 6th Grade | 14 | 11 | 78.6% |
| 6th to 7th Grade | 16 | 15 | 93.8% |
| 7th to 8th Grade | 14 | 13 | 92.9% |
| Total | 70 | 61 | 87.1% |

| Table 14 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Central City Cyberschool<br>Math Proficiency Level Progress for<br>FAY Students Proficient or Advanced in 2006–07<br>Based on WKCE–CRT | | | |
| Grade | Students Proficient/Advanced in 2006–07 | Students Maintained Proficient/Advanced in 2007–08 | |
| | | N | % |
| 3rd to 4th Grade | 17 | 15 | 88.2% |
| 4th to 5th Grade | 9 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 5th to 6th Grade | 9 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 6th to 7th Grade | 13 | 12 | 92.3% |
| 7th to 8th Grade | 11 | 10 | 90.9% |
| Total | 59 | 53 | 89.8% |

## 3. Students Who Did Not Meet Proficiency Level Expectations

The SDRT is used to examine reading progress for first through third graders. Results of the SDRT are provided as GLEs and do not translate to proficiency levels; therefore, CRC selected student scores that were below GLE. The CSRC expects that students who were more than one year behind on the prior test will advance more than 1.0 GLE.

There was one second-grade student who scored below grade level in the spring of 2007 who also had comparable test scores in 2008. There were two third graders who scored below grade level as second graders in the spring of 2007. Due to the small size of these cohorts, results could not be included in this report.[35]

| Table 15 | | |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Central City Cyberschool Average GLE Advancement for FAY Students Who Tested Below Grade Level Equivalent in Reading in 2006–07 Based on SDRT | | |
| 2006–07 to 2007–08 | N | Average GLE Advancement |
| 1st to 2nd Grade SDRT | 1 | Cannot report due to N size |
| 2nd to 3rd Grade SDRT | 2 | Cannot report due to N size |
| SDRT Total* | 3 | Cannot report due to N size |

*SDRT total does not translate into proficiency levels. Therefore, CRC selected students who scored below GLE.

The CSRC expects students who did not meet proficiency level expectations in 2006–07 to progress one or more levels or, if they scored in the same level, to show progress to a higher quartile within that level. To examine movement within a proficiency level, CRC equally divided the minimal and basic levels into quartiles. The lower threshold for the minimal level was the lowest scale score possible on the examination. The upper threshold reflected the scale score used by DPI to establish proficiency levels.

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[35] CRC also examined progress over two years; however, there were no third graders tested this year who tested below grade level in 2005–06 as first graders.

As illustrated in Table 16, 46.3% of students who were below proficiency expectations in 2006–07 showed improvement by progressing to a higher proficiency level or quartile in reading.

| Table 16 Central City Cyberschool Reading Proficiency Level Progress for FAY Students Minimal or Basic in 2006–07 Based on WKCE–CRT | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grade | # Students Minimal/ Basic 2006–07 | # Students Who Advanced One Proficiency Level 2007–08 | If Not Advanced, # Who Improved Quartile(s) Within Proficiency Level 2007–08 | Total Proficiency Level Advancement |
| | | | | N | % |
| 3rd to 4th Grade | 9 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size | |
| 4th to 5th Grade | 12 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 25.0% |
| 5th to 6th Grade | 14 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 50.0% |
| 6th to 7th Grade | 6 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size | |
| 7th to 8th Grade | 13 | 5 | 3 | 8 | 61.5% |
| Total | 54 | 17 | 8 | 25 | 46.3% |

Proficiency level progress in math is described in Table 17. Overall, 47.7% of students who did not meet proficiency level expectations, i.e., scored minimal or basic, in 2006–07 either advanced one proficiency level (N = 26) or, if they did not advance a level, improved at least one quartile within their level (N = 5).

| Table 17 Central City Cyberschool Math Proficiency Level Progress for FAY Students Minimal or Basic in 2006–07 Based on WKCE–CRT | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grade | # Students Minimal/ Basic 2006–07 | # Students Who Advanced One Proficiency Level 2007–08 | If Not Advanced, # Who Improved Quartile(s) Within Proficiency Level 2007–08 | Total Proficiency Level Advancement | |
| | | | | N | % |
| 3rd to 4th Grade | 9 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size | |
| 4th to 5th Grade | 12 | 7 | 1 | 8 | 66.7% |
| 5th to 6th Grade | 19 | 6 | 1 | 7 | 36.8% |
| 6th to 7th Grade | 9 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size | |
| 7th to 8th Grade | 16 | 4 | 3 | 7 | 43.8% |
| Total | 65 | 26 | 5 | 31 | 47.7% |

These data indicate that Cyberschool met advancement expectations for 46.3% to 47.7% of students who scored at the basic or minimal proficiency levels in the fall of 2006.

G.   **Annual Review of the School's Adequate Yearly Progress**

1.   **Background Information[36]**

State and federal laws require the annual review of school performance to determine student academic achievement and progress. In Wisconsin, the annual review of performance required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act is based on each school's performance on four objectives:

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[36] This information is based on the DPI website: http://dpi.wi.gov/oea/aact/ayp.html, July 2008.

- The test participation of all students enrolled;
- A required academic indicator (either graduation or attendance rate);
- The proficiency rate in reading; and
- The proficiency rate in mathematics.

In Wisconsin, the DPI releases an annual review of school performance for all public schools, including charter schools, with information about whether that school has met the criteria for each of the four required adequate yearly progress (AYP) objectives. If a school fails to meet the criteria in the same AYP objective for two consecutive years, the school is designated as "identified for improvement." Once designated as "identified for improvement," the school must meet the annual review criteria for two consecutive years in the same AYP objective to be removed from the status designation.

The possible school status designations are as follows:

- "Satisfactory," which means the school is not in improvement status.

- "School Identified for Improvement" (SIFI), which means the school does not meet AYP for two consecutive years in the same objective.

- SIFI levels 1–5, which means the school missed at least one of the AYP objectives and is subject to the state requirements and additional Title I sanctions, if applicable, assigned to that level.

- SIFI levels 1–4 Improved, which means the school met the AYP in the year tested but remains subject to sanctions due to the prior year. AYP must be met for two years in a row in that objective to be removed from "improvement" status and returned to "satisfactory" status.

- Title I status identifies whether Title I funds are directed to this school; if so, the school is subject to federal sanctions.

## 2.     Adequate Yearly Progress:  Central City Cyberschool Summary[37]

According to Cyberschool's Adequate Yearly Progress Review Summary for 2007–08, published by DPI, Cyberschool reached adequate yearly progress in all four of the AYP objectives—test participation, attendance, reading, and mathematics—for 2007–08.   The school's status rating for test participation, attendance, reading, and mathematics was "Satisfactory."  The school met the state's requirement for AYP.  Cyberschool's improvement status continued to be "Satisfactory."

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[37] For a copy of Cyberschool's Annual Review of School Performance, see:  http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/sifi/AYP_Summary, July 2008.

## V. CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

This report covers the ninth year of Cyberschool's operation as a City of Milwaukee charter school. For the 2007–08 academic year, Cyberschool has met all but one of its educationally related contract provisions, the provision regarding year-to-year reading improvement for second- and third-grade students. In addition to the information explained in the body of this report, see Appendix A for an outline of specific contract provision compliance information.

The major educational findings for this year were as follows:
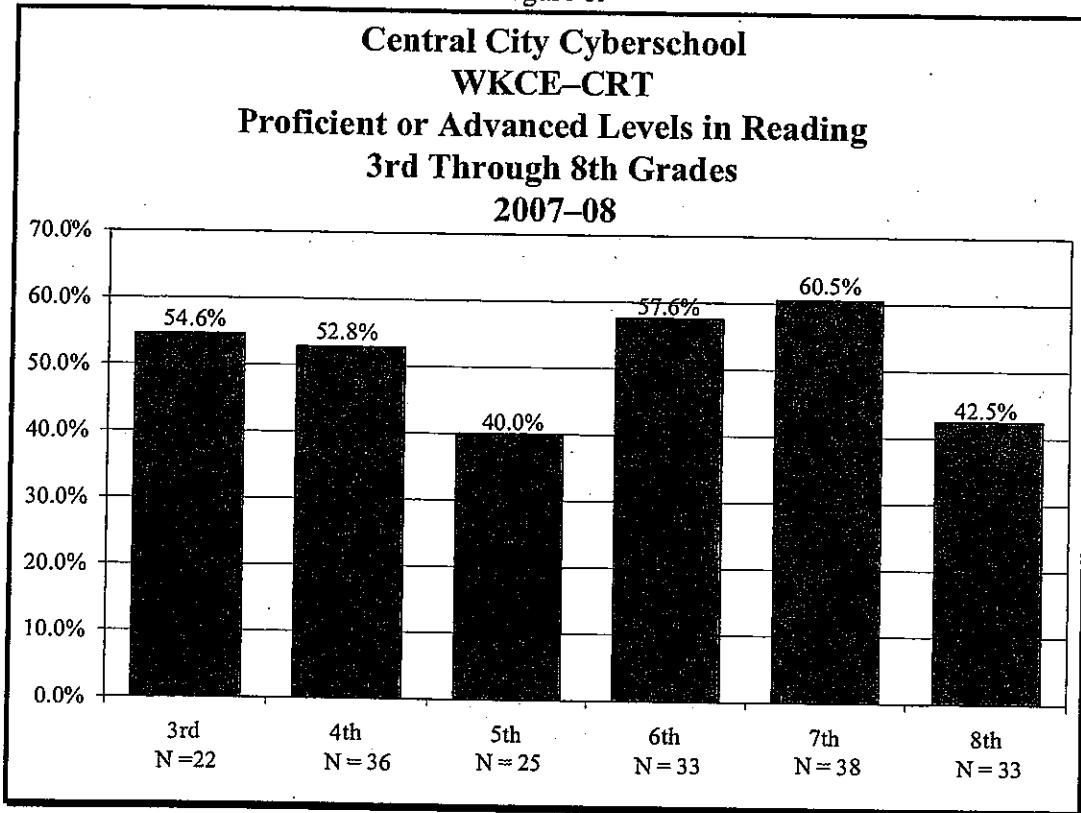
- Average student attendance was 88.0%, exceeding the school's goal of 85.0%.

- Parents of 91% of students attended the fall parent-teacher conferences and parents of 96% of students attended the spring conference, exceeding the school's goal of 80.0%.

- Based on each area measured, Cyberschool's local measures results indicated the following:

  » Of K5 through sixth-grade students, 96.2% demonstrated improvement on the literacy measure (DIBELS) from the first to second, second to third, and/or first to third assessment;

  » Sixty-one (98.4%) of the 62 students tested with *Read Naturally* improved their words-per-minute fluency score from one test to another;

  » Of 281 students, 79.7% met or surpassed the goal of reaching skilled, mastery, or advanced levels in math benchmarks; and

  » Of 256 students, 93.6% reached skilled, mastery, or advanced levels in writing skills, as noted on their progress reports.

Standardized tests results for Cyberschool students were as follows.

- The April 2008 SDRT results indicated the following:

  » First graders were reading, on average, at 1.6 GLE;
  » Second graders were at 2.3 GLE; and
  » Third graders were at 3.1 GLE.

• The WKCE–CRT for third through eighth graders indicated that the following percentage of students were proficient or advanced in reading (see Figure 19).

Figure 19

**Central City Cyberschool**
**WKCE–CRT**
**Proficient or Advanced Levels in Reading**
**3rd Through 8th Grades**
**2007–08**

| Grade | N | Percentage |
|-------|---|------------|
| 3rd | N = 22 | 54.6% |
| 4th | N = 36 | 52.8% |
| 5th | N = 25 | 40.0% |
| 6th | N = 33 | 57.6% |
| 7th | N = 38 | 60.5% |
| 8th | N = 33 | 42.5% |

The following percentages of students were proficient or advanced in math:
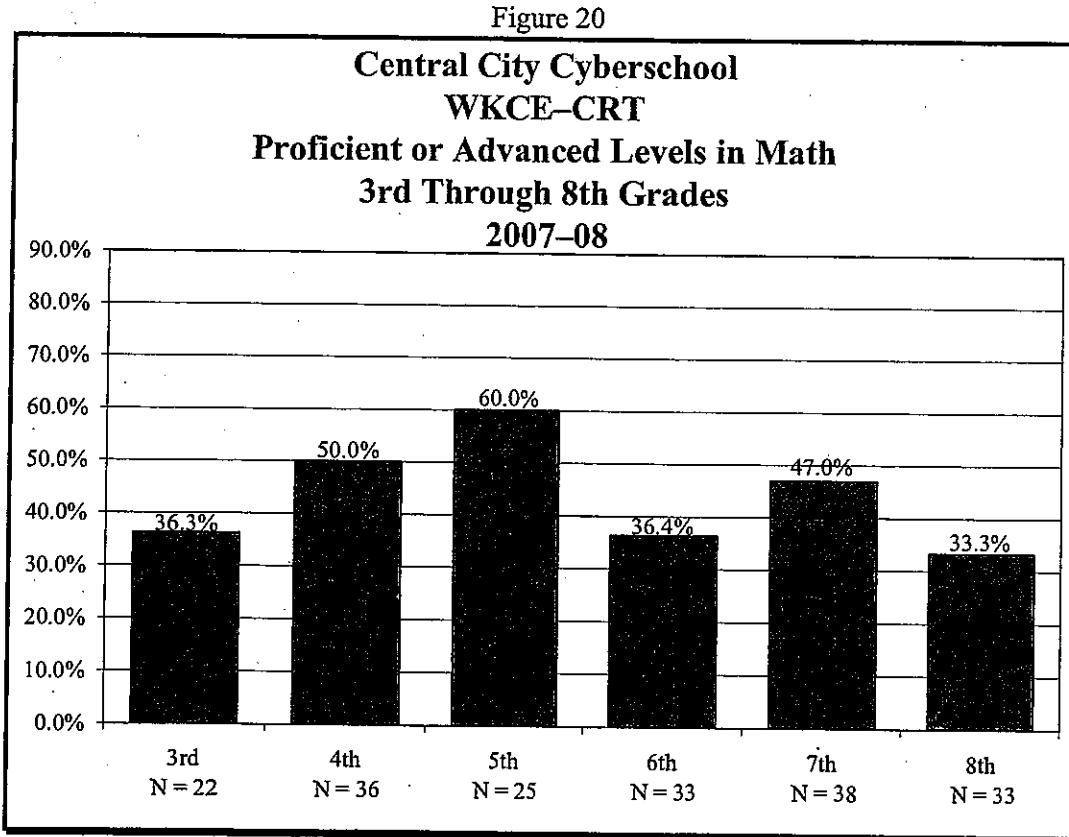
Figure 20

**Central City Cyberschool**
**WKCE–CRT**
**Proficient or Advanced Levels in Math**
**3rd Through 8th Grades**
**2007–08**



- SDRT multiple-year advancement results indicated that in reading, second and third graders advanced an average of 0.8 GLEs and 0.7 GLEs, respectively.

- WKCE–CRT multiple-year advancement results for students who met proficiency level expectations in 2006–07 indicated the following:

  » Of 70 fourth through eighth graders, 87.1% maintained a proficient or advanced level in reading, exceeding the CSRC's expectation of at least 75.0%.

  » Of 59 fourth through eighth graders, 89.8% maintained a proficient or advanced level in math, exceeding the CSRC's expectation of at least 75.0%.

- Multiple-year advancement results for students below grade-level expectations in reading in 2006–07 based on the SDRT could not be reported due to the small size of the group (one second grader and two third graders).

- Multiple-year advancement results for students below proficiency level expectations in 2006–07 indicated the following:

  » Of 54 fourth through eighth graders, 46.3% advanced either one proficiency level or one quartile within the previous year's proficiency level in reading.

  » Of 65 fourth through eighth graders, 47.7% advanced either one proficiency level or one quartile within the previous year's proficiency level in math.

After reviewing the information in this report and considering the information gathered during the administration interview in May 2008, it is recommended that the focus of activities for the 2008–09 school year include the following:

- Continue to focus on achievement in mathematics, particularly the basic skills necessary to supplement the Everyday Math curriculum. Train all teachers in the updated curriculum.

- Continue implementation of appropriate strategies to improve reading levels at all grade levels.

- Focus on writing skill development at all grade levels.

# Appendix A

## Contract Compliance Chart

| Central City Cyberschool of Milwaukee, Inc. | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Overview of Compliance for Educationally Related Contract Provisions 2007–08 | | | |
| Section of Contract | Educationally Related Contract Provision | Monitoring Report Reference Page | Contract Provision Met or not Met |
| Section B | Description of educational program. | pp. 2–4 | Met |
| Section B | Educational program of at least 875 hours of instruction. | p. 7 | Met |
| Section C | Educational methods. | pp. 2–3 | Met |
| Section D | Administration of required standardized tests. | pp. 39–53 | Met |
| Section D | Academic criteria #1: Maintain local measures in reading, math and writing, showing pupil growth in demonstrating curricular goals. | pp. 33–38 | Met |
| Section D and subsequent memos from the CSRC | Academic criteria #2: Year-to-year Achievement Measure:<br><br>a. Second- and 3rd-grade students: advance an average of 1.0 GLE in reading.<br><br>b. Fourth- through 8th-grade students proficient or advanced in reading: at least 75.0% maintain proficiency levels.<br><br>c. Fifth- through 8th-grade students proficient or advanced in language arts: at least 75.0% maintain proficiency levels.<br><br>d. Fourth- through 8th-grade students proficient or advanced in math: at least 75.0% maintain proficiency level. | a. pp. 53–54<br><br>b. pp. 55–56<br><br>c. p. N/A**<br><br>d. pp. 55–56 | a. Not met*<br><br>b. Met for 87.1% of 70 4th-through 8th-grade students.<br><br>c. N/A**<br><br>d. Met for 89.8% of 59 4th-through 8th-grade students. |
| Section D and subsequent memos from the CSRC | Academic criteria #3: Year-to-year Achievement Measure:<br><br>a. Second- and 3rd-grade students with below grade level 2005–06 scores in reading: advance more than 1.0 GLE in reading.<br><br>b. Fourth- through 8th-grade students below proficient level in 2005–06 in reading: advance one level of proficiency or to the next quartile within their proficiency level range.<br><br>c. Fifth- through 8th-grade students below proficient level in 2005–06 in language arts: advance one level of proficiency or to the next quartile within their proficiency level range.<br><br>d. Fourth- through 8th-grade students below proficient level in 2005–06 in math: advance one level of proficiency or to the next quartile within their proficiency level range. | a. p. 57<br><br>b. pp. 57–58<br><br>c. p. N/A**<br><br>d. p. 59 | a. N/A***<br><br>b. Met for 46.3% of 54 4th-through 8th-grade students.<br><br>c. N/A**<br><br>d. Met for 47.7% of 65 4th-through 8th-grade students. |
| Section E | Parental involvement. | pp. 8–9 | Met |
| Section F | Instructional staff hold a DPI license or permit to teach. | pp. 4-6 | Met |
| Section I | Maintain pupil database information for each pupil. | p. 10-12 | Met |
| Section K | Disciplining procedures. | pp. 9–10 | Met |

*On average, second graders advanced 0.8 GLE and third graders advanced 0.7 GLE for an overall average gain of 0.8 GLEs. Note: Ten third graders with two-year comparable scores advanced an average of 1.5 GLEs.

**WKCE–CRT includes language arts for fourth and eighth grades only; therefore, year-to-year change is not measurable.

***Second and third grade group sizes were too small to report individually or combined.

# Appendix B

## Outcome Measure Agreement Memo

# CENTRAL CITY CYBERSCHOOL OF MILWAUKEE (C³)

**4301 North 44th Street**
**Milwaukee, WI 53216**
**(414) 444-2330; (414) 444-2435 Fax**
cfaltz@cyberschool-milwaukee.org

# M E M O R A N D U M

**DATE:** October 23, 2007

**TO:** Susan Gramling, CRC

**FROM:** Christine Faltz, Ph.D., Executive Director/Lead Teachers

**RE:** Outcome Measure Agreement

The following describes the educational outcomes CRC will use to monitor our education programs for the 2007-2008 school year. Beneath each description is a list of data elements we will provide in order for you to write the annual programmatic report. Standardized test score results will be provided on copies of official printouts. All other data will be reported in an electronic format, i.e. a database or spreadsheet. If there are any items that require modifications do not hesitate to call me.

*DATA NEEDED:*

*Student ID#*
*Student name*
*Student grade level*
*Student gender*
*Student ethnicity/race*

**ATTENDANCE:** The school will maintain an average daily attendance rate of 85%.

*DATA NEEDED:*
*Number days expected attendance (should equal to #attend+#absent)*
*Number days attended*
*Number days absent (include excused & unexcused absences)*

**ENROLLMENTS:** Student enrollment data will be regularly updated in the Cyberschool's database.

*DATA NEEDED:*
*Enrollment date*

**TERMINATIONS:** The school will record the date and reasons for the termination of every student leaving the school, if known.

*DATA NEEDED:*
*Withdraw date*
*Withdraw reason*

**STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS:** The school will maintain updated records on all students with special needs including date of IEP assessment, assessment outcome, IEP completion date, IEP review dates, and any reassessment results.

*DATA NEEDED:*

For each student:
Special Education Needs Y/N
  If special education needs, type (e.g., EBD, LD, etc.)
IEP request date
IEP initial completed? Y/N
  If IEP initial completed = Y, date IEP initial completed
Each IEP review date
Parent participation in each review Y/N
  If no parent participation, why not? (mutually exclusive response) 1=parent not
notified, 2=parent notified but unable to attend, 3= parent notified but did not
respond
Parent's of children with special needs Satisfaction Survey results

**PARENT CONFERENCES:** On average, 80% of parents will attend scheduled parent/teacher conferences. Dates for the events and parent(s) participating per classroom will be recorded.

*DATA NEEDED:*
*Number of conferences scheduled*
*Number of parents who participated in each conference*

## ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT:

### LOCAL MEASURES:

**(1)** All students in grades K5 through 6 will be administered the *DIBELS* (*Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills*) assessment three times during the academic year (September, January & April). At least 90% of students will improve their score on the subsequent assessment, September to January, or January to April.

*DATA NEEDED:*
*DIBELS results for each student in September, January and April:*

**(2)** All students in 7th and 8th grades who were below grade level on the WKCE or referred by their teachers will participate in the *Corrective Reading* intervention daily. At least 90% of *Corrective Reading* students will improve their fluency and comprehension skills as measured by the *Corrective Reading* assessment from September to April.

*DATA NEEDED:*
*Corrective Reading assessment results for each 7/8 student in reading intervention, fall and spring.*

**(3)** All students in grades 7 and 8 will be administered the *Read Naturally* assessment three times during the academic year (September, January & April). At least 90% of students will improve their WPM fluency score (Words Per Minute) on the subsequent assessment, September to January, or January to April.

*DATA NEEDED:*
*Read Naturally results for each student in September, January and April:*

**(4)** On average students in Grades 1 through 8 will earn a "Skilled" score or higher on 80% of their Mathematics *Progress Report* benchmarks in quarter 4.

*DATA NEEDED:*
*Progress Report results for each student in grades 1-8 for quarter 4:*

**(5)** Eighty percent of students in Grades 1 through 8 will earn a "Skilled" score or higher on their Writing *Progress Report* benchmark in quarter 4.

*DATA NEEDED:*
*Progress Report results for each student in grades 1-8 for quarter 4:*

**STANDARDIZED MEASURES:**

**Grade Level: 1, 2 & 3**     **Measurement tool: Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test**

The SDRT will be administered on an annual basis in the spring, between March 15 and April 15. First year testing will serve as baseline data. Progress will be assessed based on the results of the testing in reading in the second and subsequent school years.

*DATA NEEDED:*
*SDRT GLEs for First, Second & Third Graders*
  *phonetic analysis*
  *Vocabulary*
  *Comprehension*
  *SDRT total*

**Grade Level: 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, & 8   Measurement tools: Wisconsin Knowledge Concepts Exam**

The WKCE CRT will be administered on an annual basis in the time frame identified by the State Department of Public Instruction. The WKCE will provide each student with a proficiency level based on a scale score in reading and mathematics.

*DATA NEEDED:*
*WKCE for Third through Eighth Graders*
  *Proficiency levels/Scale scores*
    *Reading*
    *Math*

# Attachment C

# Downtown Montessori Academy, Inc.

## Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance

2007–08 School Year

Report Date: September 2008

Prepared by:
Janice Ereth, Ph.D.
Susan Gramling
Theresa Healy

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

APPENDICES

Appendix A:  Contract Compliance Chart
Appendix B:  Outcome Measures Agreement Memo

Prepared for:

**_Downtown Montessori Academy, Inc._**
2705 South Graham Street
Milwaukee, WI  53207

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**
for
**Downtown Montessori Academy, Inc.**
**Tenth Year of Operation as a City of Milwaukee Charter School**
**2007–08**

This tenth annual report on the operation of the Downtown Montessori Academy, Inc., charter school is a result of the intensive work undertaken by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC), school staff, and the Children's Research Center (CRC). Based on the information gathered and discussed in the attached report, CRC has determined the following:

## I. CONTRACT COMPLIANCE SUMMARY

Downtown Montessori has met all of the provisions in its contract with the City of Milwaukee and subsequent requirements of the CSRC. See Appendix A for a list of each education-related contract provision, page references, and a description of whether or not each provision was met.

## II. PARENT, TEACHER, STUDENT, AND BOARD MEMBER SATISFACTION

On a scale of excellent, good, fair, or poor:

- Twenty-eight (77.8%) of 36 parents rated the school's contribution to their child's learning as excellent and seven (19.4%) indicated that it was good.

- Four (80.0%) of five teachers rated the school's contribution towards students' academic progress as excellent and one teacher rated the school as good.

Figure ES1
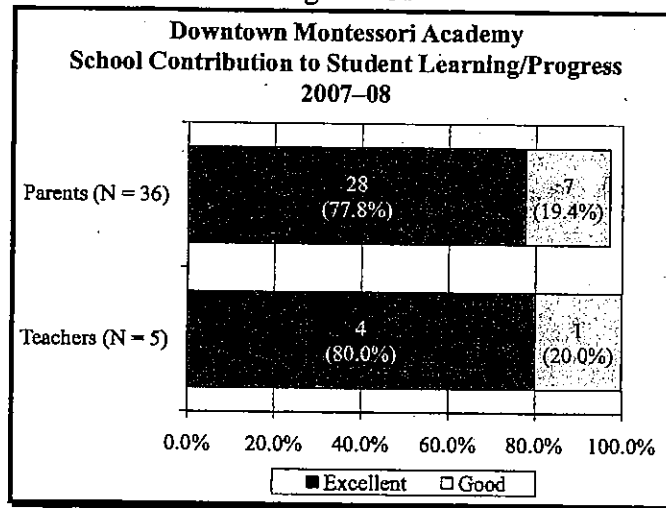


Downtown Montessori Academy
School Contribution to Student Learning/Progress
2007–08

- Eleven students were interviewed. Responses included the following (see Figure ES2).

Figure ES2



Downtown Montessori Academy
Student Interviews
2007–08

I Like My School — 100.0%

I Learn Enough at My School — 100.0%

I Feel Safe in School — 100.0%

N = 11   0.0%   25.0%   50.0%   75.0%   100.0%
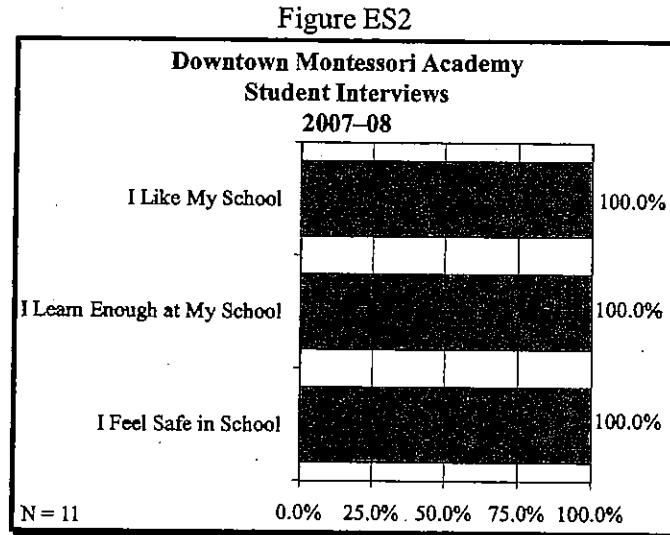
- When teachers were asked what they most liked about the school, each of the following was mentioned at least once: the Montessori method, small class size, small school, the cultural diversity, and flexibility for teachers.

- When asked for suggestions to improve the school, teachers indicated the need for larger physical and storage space, and Montessori inservice time.

- When board members were asked what they liked most about Downtown Montessori, they indicated the following:

  » The staff, including the administrator and the teachers;

  » The existence of a forward-looking board and parents who are focused on developing a secure place for the school;

  » The Montessori mission of grace, courtesy, and respect;

  » The academic rigor and behavioral expectations, including the dress code.

- When asked for one suggestion for improving the school, the board members mentioned the following:

  » Continue to formalize the roles and responsibilities of the staff, parents, and board in light of the relocation and growth of the school; and

  » Expand programming for art, music, and foreign languages.

## III. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

### A. Local Measures

### 1. Secondary Measures of Academic Progress

To meet City of Milwaukee requirements, Downtown Montessori identified measurable education-related outcomes in the following areas:

- Attendance;

- Student demographics, such as student return rate and special education requirements; and

- Parent involvement.

The school achieved its goals in all of these outcomes.

### 2. Primary Educational Measures of Academic Progress

The CSRC requires that the school track student progress in reading, writing, and mathematics throughout the year to identify students in need of additional help and to assist teachers in developing strategies to improve the academic performance of all students.

This year, Downtown Montessori's local measures of academic progress resulted in the following:

- By the end of the school year, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students showed progress or sustained mastery of 94.0% of practical life skills, 91.9% of sensorial discrimination skills, 99.0% of math skills, 84.0% of language skills, and 88.0% of cultural skills.

- By the end of the school year, first through third graders showed progress or maintained an advanced rating in 38.0% of reading skills (reading skills were not measured on fourth- through seventh-grade report cards);

- Fifteen (62.5%) of 24 first through third graders started as proficient or better in writing skills and maintained those levels throughout the year.

- Of 19 fourth through seventh graders, 14 (73.7%) exhibited proficient writing skills throughout the year;

- Forty-four students who were not proficient in at least one grammar skill showed improvement on 52.7% of these skills, on average;

- Forty-four students who were not proficient in at least one math skill improved, on average, in 53.0% of those skills; and

- On average, first- through third-grade students scored 89.3% on the McGraw-Hill reading program unit tests administered throughout the school year. (The McGraw-Hill reading program was not used in the fourth through seventh grades.)

## B. Year-to-year Academic Achievement on Standardized Tests

Downtown Montessori administered all required standardized tests noted in their contract with the City of Milwaukee. Multiple-year student progress is described below.

- SDRT multiple-year advancement results indicated that second and third graders advanced an average of 2.1 grade-level equivalents in reading.

- All (100.0%) 14 students who were proficient in reading in 2006–07 maintained proficiency.

- Eleven (91.7%) of 12 students who were proficient in math in 2006–07 maintained proficiency.

## C. Adequate Yearly Progress

The school reached adequate yearly progress in all four of the adequate yearly progress (AYP) objectives: test participation, attendance, reading and mathematics. For the third year in a row, DPI reported that the school received a satisfactory designation in all four of these objectives.

## III. RECOMMENDATIONS

The school substantially addressed the recommendations made in its 2006–07 Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance report. To continue a focused school improvement plan, it is recommended that the focus of activities for the 2008–09 year include the following:

- Integrate new staff;

- Maintain a stable Montessori culture as the school grows;

- Integrate the members of the parent-teacher organization with the Montessori staff and Montessori philosophy;

- As the elementary programs grow, revisit and restate the academic outcomes for the students at each level; and

- Create a mechanism to extract attendance data from the school's new database, Montessori Records Express, and store data in a spreadsheet to provide to CRC at the end of the year.

# I. INTRODUCTION

This report is the tenth annual program monitoring report to address educational outcomes at Downtown Montessori Academy, Inc., a City of Milwaukee charter school.[1] This report was prepared as a result of a contract between the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) and the Children's Research Center (CRC).[2] It is one component of the monitoring program undertaken by the CSRC.

The process used to gather the information in this report included the following:

- CRC staff visited the school and conducted a structured interview with the program director. Critical documents were reviewed; copies were obtained for CRC files; and classroom instruction was observed, with notes recorded on student-teacher interactions.

- CRC staff read case files for selected special education students to ensure that individual education programs (IEP) were up-to-date.

- CRC staff conducted an end-of-year structured interview with the program director. CRC staff also interviewed 11 students and five teachers. In addition, a satisfaction survey was given to parents. The parent surveys were distributed by the school during the April parent-teacher conferences. CRC made at least two follow-up phone calls to parents who had not completed a survey. All completed interview and survey forms were forwarded to CRC for data entry.

- The school provided a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that contained student demographic data. The school supplied report cards in an Excel spreadsheet and copies of the test publisher's standardized test results were provided on paper. Attendance data were provided in PDF format.

- CRC staff compiled and analyzed results.

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[1] The City of Milwaukee Common Council chartered five schools in the 2007–08 academic year.

[2] CRC is a nonprofit social research organization and division of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency.

## II.     PROGRAMMATIC PROFILE

Downtown Montessori Academy, Inc.

Address:          2705 South Graham Street[3]
                  Milwaukee, WI  53207

Telephone:        (414) 744-6005

Program Director:  Ms. Virginia Flynn

### A.     Philosophy and Description of Educational Methodology

### 1.     Montessori Approach

Downtown Montessori Academy, Inc. (Downtown Montessori) delivers a valid Montessori program as interpreted by the Association Montessori Internationale or the American Montessori Society.  The Montessori approach is a planned academic program based on the educational model developed by Dr. Maria Montessori, in which each child's inborn desire to learn is nurtured through an academic program that follows the natural path of a child's development.  In the Montessori environment, the child is exposed to a wide range of educational opportunities and activities that follow a developmental progression.  Individual learning is emphasized by offering a series of increasingly challenging exercises aimed at allowing students to develop their skills by utilizing a discovery, rather than a didactic, approach.

As described in its 2007–08 *Parent-Student Handbook*, Downtown Montessori is divided into two levels of programming—the Children's House and the Elementary Program.  The Children's House contains the Montessori Primary Program and is open to students ages 2½ through 6 years old.  Children age 5 on or before September 1 may attend full-day Montessori sessions.

The Children's House provides an environment prepared to meet the needs of children, where they work individually and collaboratively with sensorial materials that engage their

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[3] This is the second year the school was located at this site.  The previous site was on the northeast side of Milwaukee at 2319 Kenwood Blvd.

curiosity. Children are free to explore and observe at their own pace. The variety of sensorial experiences enables children to refine and classify their impressions of the world around them. The classroom engages children with numbers and language, writing and reading, the tools for reasoning and communication, and the basis of self-directed learning.

At the elementary level, the school continues to provide multi-age grouping in an environment that encourages cooperative learning and self-discipline for first- through seventh-grade students. The Elementary Program is based on "Great Stories" and explores everything from the microscopic to the cosmic, allowing children to discover the interrelatedness of all things. The program builds on the foundations of the Children's House program, where the children learn through discovery, experimentation, and exploration at an individualized pace. An interdisciplinary approach to learning is also emphasized, as is respect for self and community. Materials and group activities develop individual and collaborative skills in the areas of biology, mathematics, language, history, geography, music, and the visual arts. The environment reinforces children's natural curiosity and community; they learn ways of inquiring, investigating, and resolving questions.

Extensions of classroom study are experienced through community involvement, which gradually enables students to grow from classroom citizens to citizens in society at large. The school is also a member of the Urban Ecology Center. The center, located on the Milwaukee River, provides a coordinated science and environmental program for students.

This year the McGraw-Hill reading curriculum, published by Macmillan, was used only for the first through third grades (lower elementary). The school also began using the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) as a diagnostic reading tool to identify the lower elementary students who might be at risk in reading. Because most upper elementary students were reading at or above their grade level, the reading program was individualized and integrated into all of the student work, including a writers' workshop.

## 2.    Teacher Information

During the 2007–08 academic year, there were four teachers and a lead aide in four classrooms at Downtown Montessori.  The classrooms included two Children's House classrooms for 3- to 6-year-olds (or K3 through K5), as well as one lower elementary and one upper elementary classroom (The lead aide taught in lower elementary grades.)  All four teachers, with the school since 1998, when its charter was granted, held valid Wisconsin Department of Education (DPI) licenses or permits.  In addition, all four DPI-licensed teachers held Montessori certification. The school also employed four classroom assistants to assist in the classrooms as needed.

Montessori teachers serve as student guides, with the students working at their own pace. The areas of discovery are ordered into a sequentially progressive curriculum that is commensurate with the development of the child.

Staff inservices and professional development topics included the following:

- DIBELS Training/Testing Your Students;

- Techniques to use DIBELS indicators evaluated/classroom intervention applications;

- Occupational therapy inservice "The Sensory Issue and Techniques for the Teacher";

- Autism (continued training);

- Writer Craft workshop;

- Reading interventions;

- Biweekly meetings on Response to Intervention (RTI; i.e., how students are responding to particular individualized interventions); and

- Love and logic:  practical applications in the classroom.

## 3. Parental Involvement

Because parents bring their children into the school building each day, they have a unique opportunity for daily communication with the teachers. The *Parent-Student Handbook* states that the school encourages and expects all parents to spend at least three hours per year in school-based service activities and to visit their child's classroom at least once a year. Each teacher is responsible for contributing to the monthly newsletter, which is created and assembled by a parent. In addition, most teachers made their own class newsletter/calendar that they distributed monthly or every other month. Teacher email addresses were shared with parents, and Downtown Montessori held two parent conferences during the academic year, as well as several parent informational meetings and programs. Downtown Montessori also published the annual *Parent-Student Handbook*.

Parents were invited to attend events throughout the year including a September parent breakfast, an October Halloween party, a December family movie night, a February winter sing and a clothing swap, an April dinner demo, the May auction, and a Brewers game and school picnic in June. As part of the enrollment process, parents were asked to complete a parent volunteer information sheet and sign contracts with Downtown Montessori that covered such areas as parental involvement, field trip permission, and emergency medical care.

## 4. Discipline Policy

The school's discipline policy was published in the 2007–08 *Parent-Student Handbook*. It indicated that when dealing with discipline, it is most important to create a consistent environment for the children. Adult reactions to the child are tested daily, and when the actions of a child demand correction, it is most important that all adults who are involved with the child deal with the problem in the same way.

The Montessori method encourages children to make choices and develop responsibility for their own actions. Discipline is used to help, not punish, the child. The method of corrective discipline endorsed by Downtown Montessori has grown out of the Montessori approach. When a child is involved in actions contrary to established rules, the goal is to redirect the child to other activities.

All staff and parents serve as role models for the children, as demonstrated by their conduct with the children, other staff, and other parents. Each child should be dealt with positively; parents and staff should avoid showing anger.

The "time out" procedure is used if redirection of the child does not work. The length of the time out is limited, and the child must sit in full view of staff.

When, in the judgment of the teacher and program director, a child's behavior is disruptive, disrespectful, cruel, or unsafe to the child or others, it cannot and will not be tolerated. All interventions will be formulated on the following principles:

- Respect for the child;

- Knowledge and understanding of the developmental needs and characteristics of the child, as well as the needs of the group; and

- An understanding that appropriate behavior must be taught and modeled.

The discipline policy goes on to describe specific consequences for older children when other interventions have not worked. These steps range from a review of the school rules and a warning for a first offense to possible consequences for fourth offenses, such as in-school suspension; isolation from the group; or temporary suspension from activities, depending on the nature of the offense. For chronic behavior problems that are suspected to be beyond the child's control, a referral is made to support services for evaluation and help. Suspension and/or expulsion of students are considered last resorts and are subject to Board review.

**B.** **Student Population**

Downtown Montessori started the 2007–08 school year with 100 children in K3 through seventh grade.[4] By the end of the year, two children had enrolled and nine withdrew.[5] Six children moved and therefore withdrew from the school, and the reason for withdrawing was not provided for three students. Of the 93 students enrolled at the end of the school year:

- Fifty-nine (63.4%) students were White, 17 (18.3%) were African American, ten (10.8%) were Hispanic, six (6.5%) were Asian, and one (1.1%) was Native American.

- There were 49 (52.7%) girls and 44 (47.3%) boys.

- Six students had special education needs. Four had speech/language impairments, one had a speech/language disability and autism, and one child had a specific learning disability.

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[4] As of September 10, 2007.

[5] Based on an Excel spreadsheet supplied by the school and student report cards.

Grade levels for students enrolled at the end of the school year are illustrated below.

Figure 1

**Downtown Montessori Academy
Student Grade Levels\*
2007–08**

K4
20 (21.5%)

K3
12 (12.9%)

7th
1 (1.1%)

6th
4 (4.3%)

5th
4 (4.3%)

4th
7 (7.5%)

3rd
7 (7.5%)

2nd
7 (7.5%)

1st
13 (14.0%)

K5
18 (19.4%)

N = 93
\*At the end of the school year.
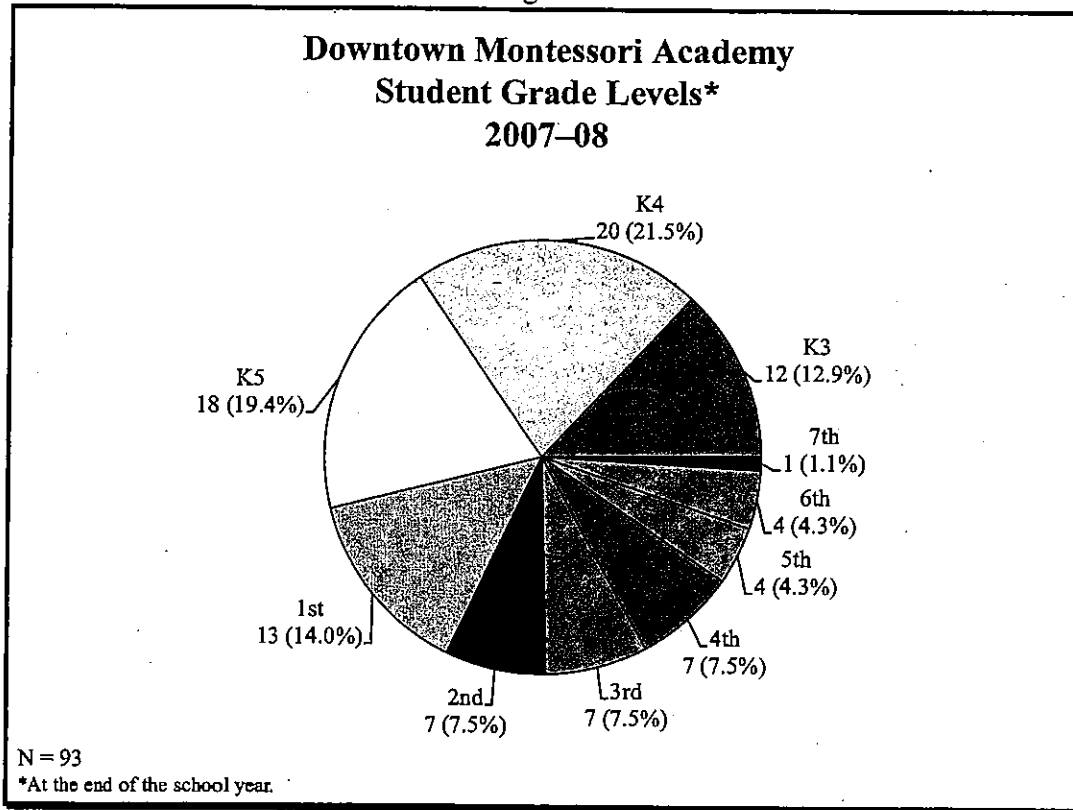
Data regarding the number of students returning to Downtown Montessori from the previous year were gathered in the fall of 2007.[6] Of the 69 students attending Downtown Montessori on the last day of the 2006–07 academic year who were eligible for continued enrollment at the school this past academic year, 62 enrolled and attended Downtown Montessori in September 2006. This represents a return rate of 90% and compares to a return rate of 59% in the fall of 2006.

In September 2007, the school had a waiting list. There was one student waiting for an elementary opening, and thirteen 3- to 6-year-olds waiting for openings in the Children's House.

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[6] Based on information supplied by the school. This information was not verified using data files.

On May 29, 2008, the school administrator reported that there were eighteen students on a waiting list for openings in the Children's House and first grade for September 2008.

## C. Hours of Instruction

The 2007–08 school year consisted of 176 school days. The hours of instruction for K3 and K4 students were 8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. each day. For students in K5 through seventh grade, the school day was 8:30 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. The highest possible number of hours of instruction per day was three hours for K3 and K4 students and 6.5 hours for K5 through seventh-grade students; therefore, the provision of at least 875 hours of instruction for full-day students (K5 through seventh grade) was met. K3 and K4 students attended half-days; therefore, the provision of one half of the required 875 hours of instruction was met.

## D. Computer/Technology Capability

Downtown Montessori has generic personal computers (IBM-compatible). All students have access to computer stations at various times throughout the day. Last year, the school installed Powerschool as its schoolwide database. The school continues to strive for full utilization.

## E.  Activities for Continuous School Improvement

Following is a description of Downtown Montessori's response to the recommended activities in its programmatic profile and educational performance report for the 2006–07 academic year:

- Recommendation:  The Board of Directors should focus on a succession plan for the school's administrator.

  Response:  The board of directors has created a new job description for the program director position.  The position will be an educational administrative position.  One of the staff members is interested in the position and is working toward a school administrator's license.  The board and staff are working toward identifying and institutionalizing roles and responsibilities of all involved with the school.

- Recommendation:  Focus on stabilizing the growth of the school by developing a specific plan for adding eighth grade, such as adding a teacher to work with the higher-level students, and adding an additional lower-level team teacher to accommodate the additional students expected in the fall.

  Response:  The school created and is funding a teaching position for seventh and eighth grades for the fall of 2008.  The school's leadership is currently considering adding a third Children's House class and is evaluating whether and how to reorganize the lower elementary (first through third grade) group.

- Recommendation:  Improve the use of Powerschool in order to supply all data to CRC electronically:  specifically, a student roster listing student's name, identification number, grade, gender, ethnicity, enrollment date, withdrawal date, and reason for withdrawal; an electronic attendance data extract; and a report card data extract.

  Response:  The school has submitted the student roster data electronically as required.  However, attendance data were not provided in a usable format.  CRC entered these data.  The program administrator has reported that Powerschool is not fully utilized.

## III. PARENT, TEACHER, STUDENT, AND BOARD MEMBER SATISFACTION

### A. Parent Surveys

Parent surveys are qualitative in nature and provide a valuable external measure of school performance. To determine how parents heard about the school, why they elected to send their children to the school, parental involvement with the school, and an overall evaluation of the school, parents were asked to complete a survey. CRC prepared the survey form with a cover letter. The parent surveys were distributed by the school during the April parent-teacher conferences. Parents were asked to complete the survey, place it in a sealed envelope, and return it to the school. CRC made at least two follow-up phone calls to parents who had not completed a survey. All completed interview and survey forms were forwarded to CRC for data entry.

At the time of this report, 36 surveys (representing parents of 52 children) had been completed and submitted to CRC.[7] Results are summarized below.

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[7] As of August 27, 2008. There were 93 students enrolled in the school at the time of the survey. This represents a survey return rate of 55.9%.

Parents heard about the school from a variety of places, such as friends or relatives (44.4%), television (16.7%), and/or the newspaper (2.8%). Approximately 41.7% of parents learned about the school from other sources.

Figure 2

**Downtown Montessori Academy**
**How Parents Learned About the School**
**2007–08**



N = 36
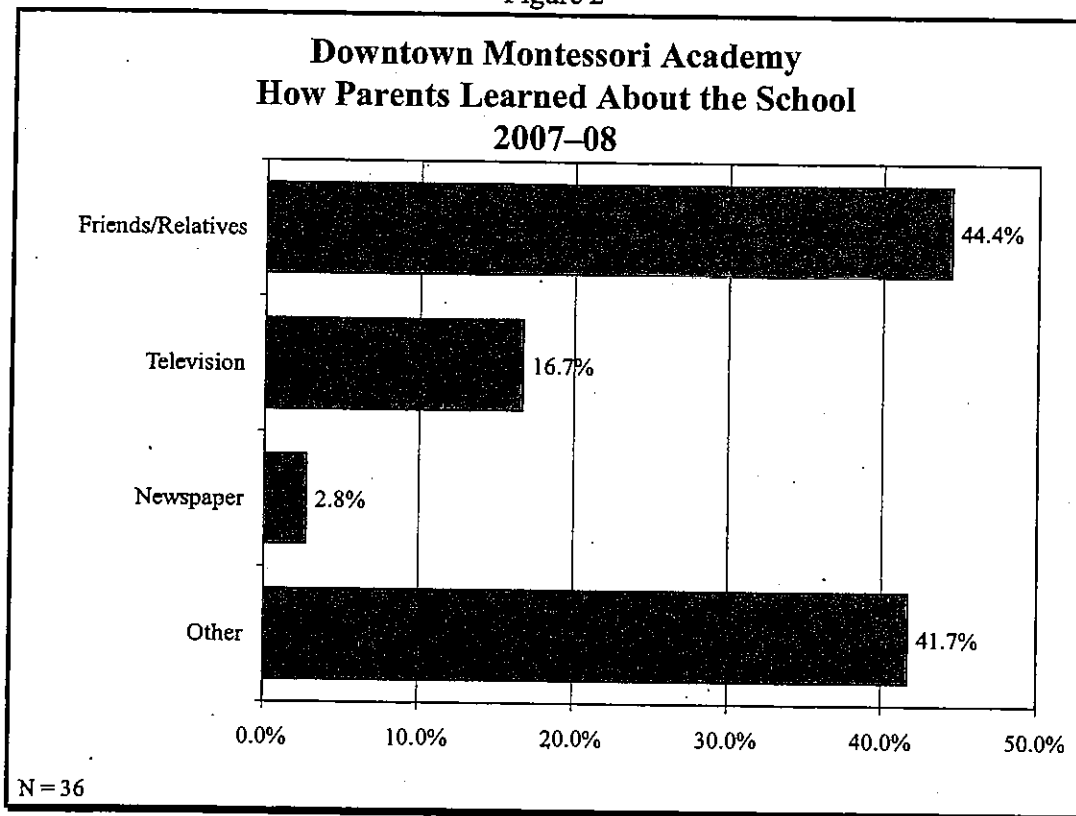
Parents chose to send their child(ren) to Downtown Montessori for a variety of reasons. Figure 3 illustrates the reasons parents considered very important when making the decision to send their child(ren) to this school.[8]  For example, 83.3% (30 of 36) of parents stated that educational methodology and/or the general atmosphere at the school were very important reasons for selecting this school, and 66.7% of parents indicated that the class size was very important to them when choosing this school.

· Figure 3

**Downtown Montessori Academy**
**Parent "Very Important" Reasons for Choosing School**
**2007–08**

| Reason | Percent |
|---|---|
| Educational Methodology | 83.3% |
| General Atmosphere | 83.3% |
| Class Size | 66.7% |
| Parental Involvement | 44.4% |
| Age/Grade of Students | 41.7% |
| Discipline | 38.9% |
| Financial Considerations | 36.1% |
| Governance Structure | 33.3% |
| Location | 30.6% |
| Other Child in School | 13.9% |
| Frustration With Previous School | 5.6% |
| Other | 55.6% |

0.0%    15.0%    30.0%    45.0%    60.0%    75.0%    90.0%

N = 36

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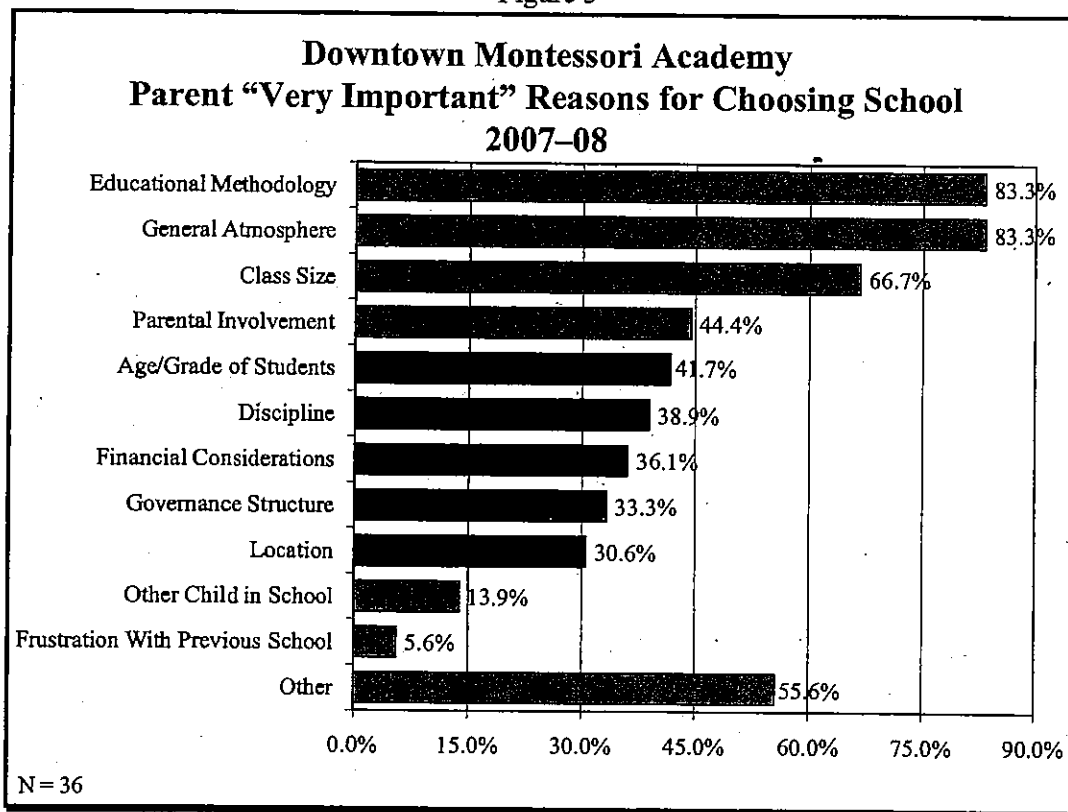
[8] Parents were given the following choices for each reason:  very important, somewhat important, somewhat unimportant, and not at all important.

Parental involvement was also used as a measure of satisfaction with the school. Parental involvement was measured by the number of contacts between the school and parent(s) and participation in educational activities in the home.

As illustrated below, 83.3% of parents were in contact with the school at least three times regarding their child's academic performance and/or fundraising activities. Twenty-three (63.9%) were in contact with the school to discuss their child's behavior, and 55.6% contacted the school to discuss their child(ren)'s classes (see Figure 4).

Figure 4



**Downtown Montessori Academy
Percent of Parents Contacted by School
Three or More Times
2007–08**

| | |
|---|---|
| Academic Performance | 83.3% |
| Fundraising | 83.3% |
| Child's Behavior | 63.9% |
| Classes | 55.6% |
| Assist in Classroom | 50.0% |
| School Records | 16.7% |

0.0%   15.0%   30.0%   45.0%   60.0%   75.0%   90.0%

N = 36
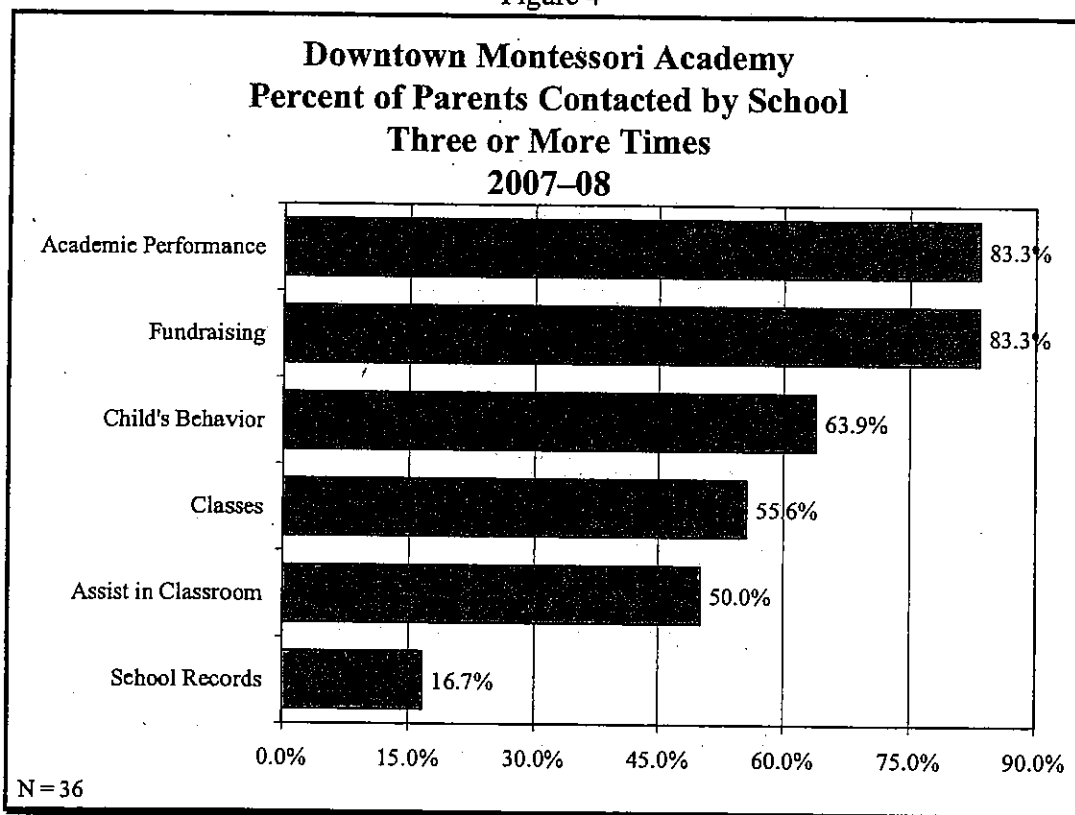
Parental participation can also be described in terms of educational activities the family engages in while at home. During a typical week, 100.0% of parents read to their child, 94.4% participated in activities (e.g., sports, visits to library and/or museums) with their child, 86.1%

watched educational programs on TV, 80.6% worked on arithmetic or math, and 58.3% worked on other homework with their children.

When asked what they most liked about the school, 50.0% of parents indicated an appreciation for the teachers and staff, including the principal;[9] 33.3% liked that the school and/or the class sizes were small, which meant more individualized attention for each student; and 30.6% liked the Montessori program/curriculum (see Figure 5).

Figure 5

**Downtown Montessori Academy**
**Most Liked by Parents About School**
**2007–08**

| | |
|---|---|
| Tearchers/Staff | 50.0% |
| Small School/Classes | 33.3% |
| Montessori Approach | 30.6% |
| Sense of Community | 25.0% |
| General Atmosphere | 8.3% |
| Location | 8.3% |
| Other* | 13.9% |

N = 36
*Other included arts and music (n = 2), diversity (n = 2), and that students are not separated by grade (n = 1).

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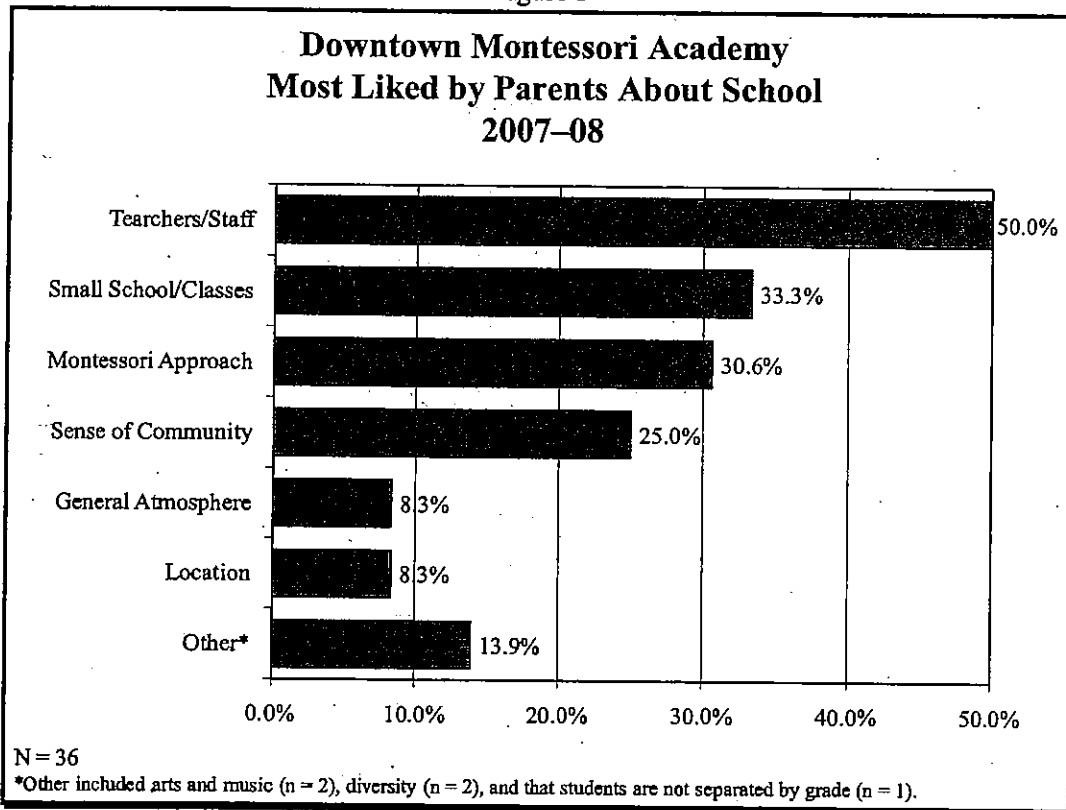
[9] The "program director" at Downtown Montessori.

Parents were then asked what they least liked about the school. Responses included the following:

- Lack of communication from teachers to parents (16.7%);
- No gym (11.1%);
- Class sizes are getting too large (8.3%); and
- Need more music, arts, and/or language programs (8.3%).

See Figure 6 for additional responses.

Figure 6

**Downtown Montessori Academy**
**Least Liked by Parents About School**
**2007–08**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Lack of Communication | 16.7% |
| No Gym | 11.1% |
| Class Size Too Large | 8.3% |
| Need More Music, Arts | 8.3% |
| Location | 5.6% |
| Need More Afterschool/Extracurricular Activities | 5.6% |
| No Male Leadership | 5.6% |
| Other | 25.0% |

N = 36

*"Other" reasons included children are unsupervised (n = 1); director lacks resolution skills (n = 1); the reading program (n = 1); finances (n = 1); growing pains in upper elementary (n = 1); no homework (n = 1); no hot lunch (n = 1); decisions made by PTO and/or board are not shared with parents (n = 1); and one parent had issues with one teacher.

Parents were then asked to rate various aspects of the school, including the program of instruction and progress reports for parents/guardians. Table 1 indicates that parents rated most of the aspects of the academic environment as excellent or good. For example, 66.7% of parents indicated that the program of instruction was excellent. Parents who either had no knowledge or experience with an aspect or had no opinion did not respond.

| Table 1 | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Downtown Montessori Academy<br>Parental Rating of Various Aspects of the School<br>2007–08<br>(N = 36) | | | | | | | | | |
| Area | Response | | | | | | | | |
| | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | No Response | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Program of instruction | 24 | 66.7% | 10 | 27.8% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 5.6% |
| Enrollment policy and procedures | 17 | 47.2% | 18 | 50.0% | 1 | 2.8% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Child's academic progress | 22 | 61.1% | 13 | 36.1% | 1 | 2.8% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Student-teacher ratio | 18 | 50.0% | 15 | 41.7% | 3 | 8.3% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Discipline method | 17 | 47.2% | 16 | 44.4% | 3 | 8.3% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Parent-teacher relationships | 24 | 66.7% | 11 | 30.6% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 2.8% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Communication regarding learning expectations | 15 | 41.7% | 15 | 41.7% | 3 | 8.3% | 3 | 8.3% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Parent involvement in policy and procedures | 21 | 58.3% | 11 | 30.6% | 2 | 5.6% | 2 | 5.6% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Teacher performance | 25 | 69.4% | 10 | 27.8% | 1 | 2.8% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Principal performance | 20 | 55.6% | 12 | 33.3% | 2 | 5.6% | 2 | 5.6% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Teacher/principal accessibility | 30 | 83.3% | 4 | 11.1% | 2 | 5.6% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Responsiveness to concerns | 24 | 66.7% | 10 | 27.8% | 2 | 5.6% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Standardized tests | 17 | 47.2% | 8 | 22.2% | 4 | 11.1% | 2 | 5.6% | 5 | 13.9% |
| Progress reports for parents | 21 | 58.3% | 12 | 33.3% | 3 | 8.3% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |

When asked to indicate the level of their child's involvement with the school, 26 (72.2%) parents indicated excellent, nine (25.0%) said good, and one (2.8%) parent indicated fair (not shown). No parents said that their children had a poor level of involvement with the school.

Parents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with several statements related to school staff. The statements and parent ratings are provided in Table 2.

| Table 2 | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Downtown Montessori Academy<br>Parental Rating of School Staff<br>2007–08<br>(N = 36) | | | | | | | | | |
| Area | Response | | | | | | | | |
| | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| I am comfortable talking with the staff.* | 25 | 69.4% | 9 | 25.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 2.8% | 0 | 0.0% |
| The staff welcomes suggestions from parents.* | 18 | 50.0% | 11 | 30.6% | 4 | 11.1% | 2 | 5.6% | 0 | 0.0% |
| The staff keeps me informed about my child's performance.* | 23 | 63.9% | 11 | 30.6% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 2.8% |
| I am comfortable with how the staff handles discipline.* | 18 | 50.0% | 14 | 38.9% | 2 | 5.6% | 1 | 2.8% | 0 | 0.0% |
| I am satisfied with the number of adults available to work with the students.* | 20 | 55.6% | 11 | 30.6% | 1 | 2.8% | 3 | 8.3% | 0 | 0.0% |
| I am satisfied with the overall performance of the staff.* | 23 | 63.9% | 11 | 30.6% | 1 | 2.8% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |

*One parent did not respond.

Last, parent satisfaction was evident in the following findings:

- Nearly all (94.4%, or 34 of 36) parents would recommend this school to other parents;

- Of 36 parents, 31 (86.1%) will send their child to this school next year;[10] and

- When asked to rate the school's overall contribution to their child's academic progress, most (77.8%) parents indicated "excellent" and seven (19.4%) parents rated the school "good." One (2.8%) parent thought the school was "fair" and no parents indicated "poor" (not shown).

## B.    Teacher Interviews

In the spring of 2008, CRC interviewed the school's four teachers and the lead aide regarding reasons for teaching there and overall satisfaction with the school. Two teachers taught 3- to 6-year-olds; two taught first through third grades (one was the lead aide), and one teacher taught fourth through seventh grades. Teachers were responsible for 13 to 28 students at a given time. Three of the five teachers used team-teaching techniques. One of the teachers was in his/her first year at this school, three had been teaching at the school for eight years, and one teacher was in his/her fifteenth year at the school.[11] Two teachers' performance reviews occurred at least annually, one was reviewed informally, one conducted a self-assessment, and one was reviewed twice a month. All five teachers indicated that they routinely used data to make decisions within the classroom, and four indicated that school leadership used data to make schoolwide decisions.

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[10] Five parents indicated that they did not know if their child would attend next year. One indicated that pre-K tuition is too high; one was concerned that upper elementary will not have enough students for a peer group; one indicated that the director is pushing non-Montessori methods; one is trying to get into a different school; and the other is trying a summer program at another school and will enroll the child in the other school if that is successful.

[11] The principal/administrator, known at Downtown Montessori as the program director, is not included in the teacher interview section.

When asked about their reasons for teaching at this school, all teachers indicated that the educational methodology at the school was a very important reason, and four out of five indicated that the general atmosphere and type of school were very important reasons for teaching at this school. See Table 3 for more details.

| Table 3 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Reasons for Teaching at Downtown Montessori 2007–08 (N = 5) | | | | |
| Reason | Importance | | | |
| | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Somewhat Unimportant | Not At All Important |
| Educational methodology | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| General atmosphere | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Type of school | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Parental involvement | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Discipline | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Age/grade of students | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Class size | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Financial considerations | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Location | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 |

In terms of overall evaluation of the school, teachers were asked to rate the school's performance related to class size, materials and equipment, and overall student assessment plan, as well as shared leadership, professional support and development, and the school's progress toward becoming an excellent school. Most teachers rated these areas as good or excellent (see Table 4).

| Table 4 Downtown Montessori School Performance Rating 2007–08 (N = 5) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Area | Rating | | | |
| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor |
| 1. Class size | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 2. Materials and equipment | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 3. Student assessment plan | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 3a. Local measures | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 3b. Standardized tests | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3c. Progress reports | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| 4. Shared leadership, decision making, and accountability | 1 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| 5. Professional support | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| 6. Professional development opportunities | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 7. Progress toward becoming an excellent school | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 |

Teachers were then asked to rate their satisfaction in a variety of areas related to the school. On a satisfaction rating scale ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied, teachers responded on the satisfied end of the response range in most areas. Areas in which at least two teachers expressed some dissatisfaction were teacher collaboration to plan learning experiences, the opportunity for continuing education, and the frequency and effectiveness of staff meetings. Table 5 lists all of the teacher responses.

| Table 5 Downtown Montessori Teacher Satisfaction 2007–08 (N = 5) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Performance Measure** | **Response** | | | | |
| | **Very Satisfied** | **Somewhat Satisfied** | **Somewhat Dissatisfied** | **Very Dissatisfied** | **No Opinion** |
| Program of instruction | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Enrollment policy and procedures | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Student's academic progress | 1 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Student/teacher ratio | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Discipline policy | 2 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Adherence to discipline policy | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Instructional support | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Parent-teacher relationships | 3 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Teacher collaboration to plan learning experiences | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Parent involvement | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Community/business involvement | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Teacher performance | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Principal performance | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Teacher involvement in policy and procedures decisions | 3 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Board of directors performance | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Opportunity for continuing education | 2 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Frequency of staff meetings | 2 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Effectiveness of staff meetings | 3 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 |

When teachers were asked what they most liked about the school, at least one teacher mentioned the following:

- The Montessori method;
- Small class size;
- Small school;
- Cultural diversity; and
- Teacher flexibility.

When asked what they least liked about the school, teachers mentioned the following:

- The facility needs improvements (three teachers); and
- Lack of downtime from the students (two teachers).

When asked for suggestions to improve the school, teachers indicated the following:

- Need for larger physical and storage space; and
- Montessori inservice time.

When asked to provide suggestions to improve the classroom, teachers indicated the following:

- More resources to organize the classroom;
- More Montessori materials;
- Acquire "Montessori Records Express"; and
- Put shades on windows.

One teacher did not have any suggestions for improving the classroom.

On a scale of poor, fair, good, or excellent, four teachers rated the school's contribution to students' academic progress as excellent and one teacher rated the school as good. Four teachers indicated that they intended to continue teaching at the school and one did not answer.

## C. Student Interviews

Eleven students in fourth, fifth, sixth, or seventh grade were asked several questions about their school. All 11 students indicated that they liked their school, that they are learning enough, that they follow school rules, and that their teachers talk to their parents (see Table 6).

| Table 6<br><br>Downtown Montessori<br>Student Interview<br>2007–08<br>(N = 11) | | |
|---|---|---|
| Question | Yes | No |
| 1. Do you like your school? | 11 | 0 |
| 2. Are you learning enough? | 11 | 0 |
| 3. Have you improved in reading? | 11 | 0 |
| 4. Have you improved in math? | 11 | 0 |
| 5. Do you use computers at school?[12] | 11 | 0 |
| 6. Is your school clean? | 11 | 0 |
| 7. Do you like the school rules? | 11 | 0 |
| 8. Do you follow the rules? | 11 | 0 |
| 9. Does your homework help you learn more? | 11 | 0 |
| 10. Do your teachers help you at school? | 11 | 0 |
| 11. Do you like being in school? | 11 | 0 |
| 12. Do you feel safe in school? | 11 | 0 |
| 13. Do people work together in school? | 11 | 0 |
| 14. Do you feel the marks you get on class work, homework, and report cards are fair? | 11 | 0 |
| 15. Do your teachers talk to your parents? | 11 | 0 |
| 16. Do your teachers talk with you about high school plans? | 9 | 2 |
| 17. Do your teachers talk with you about college? | 5 | 6 |
| 18. Are you planning to go to college? | 11 | 0 |

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[12] Of the 11 students interviewed, four indicated they use the computer once a week, four use the computer more than once a week, one uses it less than once a week, and two students use the computer once a day at school.

Students were then asked what they liked best and least about the school. Students liked the following the most:

- Teachers (n = 6);
- Learning (n = 4); and
- Other students (n = 1).

Students liked the following the least:

- Other students' behavior (n = 3);
- Need more time outside and outside equipment (n = 2);
- Dress code (n = 1);
- Sometimes my teacher yells (n = 1); and
- Sometimes there is too much work (n = 1).

Three students said there was nothing about the school that they did not like.

## D.     Board of Directors Interviews

Board member opinions are qualitative in nature and provide valuable, although subjective, insight regarding school performance and organizational competency. Three members of Downtown Montessori's Board of Directors were interviewed via telephone by CRC staff using a prepared interview guide. One of the board members has served on the board for four to five years, one for three years, and another for two years. One interviewee is currently the board president; another, the vice president; and the third, the treasurer. These board members represented experience in law, fundraising and strategic planning, and accountability measures. All three board members are parents of Downtown Montessori students.

The interviewees were asked to rate the school's performance in class size, materials and equipment, and the student assessment plan (local measures of achievement, standardized testing, and progress reports to parents) if they had knowledge of these school performance elements. The rating scale was excellent, good, fair, or poor. The interviewees rated these

elements as either excellent or good. In addition, the interviewees rated the school's performance regarding shared leadership, decision making and accountability, professional support, and professional development opportunities as either excellent or good.

All three of the interviewees indicated that the school's progress toward becoming an excellent school was excellent and that the school is excellent overall. They also reported that the board of directors uses data to make decisions, and cited several examples.

On a satisfaction rating scale ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied, all three interviewees indicated that they were very satisfied with the program of instruction, the students' academic progress, the student/teacher ratio and/or class size, parent involvement, the teachers' performance, the commitment of the school's leadership, and the safety of the educational environment. All interviewees indicated that they were somewhat satisfied with the administrative resources to fulfill the school's mission and opportunities for teacher involvement in policy/procedure decisions.[13] The board members were either very or somewhat satisfied with the enrollment policy/procedures, the discipline policy, adherence to the discipline policy, community/business involvement, the principal/program director's performance, the board of directors' performance; opportunities for continuing education and the human resources to fulfill the school's mission.[14]

The only area where at least one board member expressed lack of satisfaction was the financial resources to fulfill the school's mission. Two of the three board members were somewhat satisfied and one board member was very dissatisfied, citing the lack of funds for a permanent building and that the school was too dependent upon funding from the state.[15]

When asked what they liked best about the school, the board members liked the

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[13] One board member did not have enough knowledge to express an opinion regarding opportunities for teacher involvement.

[14] One board member did not have enough knowledge to express an opinion regarding opportunities for continuing education.

[15] One board member mentioned that they have targeted 15–25 foundations for financial support.

following about Downtown Montessori:

- The staff, including the administrator and the teachers;

- The existence of a forward-looking board and parents who are focused on developing a secure place for the school;

- The Montessori mission of grace, courtesy, and respect; and

- The academic rigor and behavioral expectations, including the dress code.

Regarding dislikes, each of the following issues was mentioned once:

- The lack of formalization of the unique approach of the program director;

- The lack of publicly funded transportation;

- The lack of consistent parent education and understanding regarding the Montessori approach;

- The location; and

- Staffing allocation is changing as the school grows; would like the staff to become more stable over time and have more general support.

When asked for one suggestion for improving the school, the board members mentioned the following:

- Continue to formalize the roles and responsibilities of the staff, parents, and board in light of the relocation and growth of the school; and

- Expand programming for art, music, and foreign languages.

## IV. EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

To monitor Downtown Montessori school performance, a variety of qualitative and quantitative information has been collected at specified intervals during the past several academic years. This year, the school established attendance, parent conference, and parent contract goals, as well as goals related to special education students. In addition, the school utilized internal and external measures of academic progress. This section of the report describes school success in meeting attendance, conference, parent contract, and special education goals. It also describes student progress as measured internally on student report cards and externally by standardized tests, such as the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT) and the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination–Criterion-referenced Test (WKCE–CRT).

### A. Attendance

At the beginning of the academic year, the school established the goal to maintain an average attendance rate of 80.0%. This year, the school surpassed this goal, as students, on average, attended school 95.5% of the time.[16]

### B. Parent Conferences and Contracts

At the beginning of the academic year, the school established a goal that parents would participate in at least 50.0% of scheduled parent-teacher conferences. This year, the school scheduled two conferences for students in first through seventh grades, one in the fall and one in the spring. Parents of all (100.0%) children enrolled at the time of each conference attended. The school has, therefore, met its goal related to parent conferences.[17]

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[16] Attendance rate is based on 101 students for whom data were submitted (attendance data were missing for one student). Data were submitted on a PDF document. The rate was calculated by dividing the number of days attended by the number of expected days of attendance and averaging across all students.

[17] Based on information recorded on the elementary school report cards for 44 students.

The school also established a goal that 80.0% of parents would fulfill the requirements of the parent contract related to hours of involvement. The parent-teacher organization (PTO) requested that families contribute four hours per person or family this year, referred to as "Power Hours." This year, parents of 100.0% of children fulfilled contract requirements; therefore, the school has met this goal.

## C.     Special Education Students

This year, the school established a goal to develop and maintain records for all special education students. During the year, there were seven students with special education needs. One student was dismissed from special education during the year. Based on information supplied by the school, all children had an IEP. In addition, CRC conducted a review of a representative number of files during the year. This review indicated that IEPs had been completed and reviewed in a timely manner and that parents were invited and participated in the IEP team. The school has met its goal related to special education students.

## D.     Internal Local Measures of Educational Performance

Charter schools, by definition and nature, are autonomous schools with curricula that reflect each school's individual philosophy, mission, and goals. In addition to standardized testing, each charter school has the responsibility to describe the goals and expectations of its students in meaningful language in light of that school's unique approach to education. These goals and expectations are established by each City of Milwaukee charter school at the beginning of the academic year to measure the educational performance of its students. These local measures are useful for monitoring and reporting progress, guiding and improving instruction, clearly expressing the expected quality of student work, and providing evidence that students are meeting local benchmarks.

1. **Progress Reports**

For the seventh consecutive year, Downtown Montessori elected to use the Scholastic Progress Reports in grades K3 through K5 to track children's progress on a variety of skills. The K3 through K5 report cards cover skill areas such as the following:

- Practical life, e.g., care of person, grace and courtesy, and control and coordination;

- Sensorial discrimination, e.g., visual, auditory, tactile, gustatory, and olfactory;

- Mathematical development, e.g., numbers, counting, addition, subtraction, and multiplication;

- Language, e.g., spoken, written, reading, parts of speech, and word study; and

- Cultural areas, e.g., globes, maps, and animals of the world.

Students are rated as "new presentation," "having difficulty," "making steady progress," or "has mastered the skill" on each skill.

Students' report cards in first through third grade tracked skills in goal setting, grammar, reading, arithmetic, geography, great lessons, physical science, biology, zoology, ecosystems, music, and physical education. Fourth- through seventh-grade report cards are similar to those for first through third grades; however, there is no section that specifically tracks student skills in reading. The skills included in fourth- through seventh-grade report cards include goal setting, grammar, writers' workshop, arithmetic, geography, great lessons, physical science, biology, zoology, ecosystems, music, and physical education. Skills in each area are marked to indicate the quarter in which the student was introduced to the skill as well as the quarters in which he/she reached basic, proficient, and/or advanced skill levels. The same report card is used for each child over multiple years.

### a.   Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten

This year, the school established a goal that K3 through K5 students would show

progress in practical life, sensorial discrimination, mathematical development, language, and

cultural areas.  Figures 7 through 11 describe the percentage of skills in which these students

showed progress (i.e., improved at least one level) or reached mastery.[18]  Rates were calculated

for each child and averaged across all children.[19]

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[18] If a student reaches mastery, there is no way to indicate further progress; therefore, CRC counted skills in which students reached mastery in the calculations for achieving this goal. Results reflect skills assessed first and fourth quarter.

[19] Rates were calculated by dividing the number of skills in which the student improved at least one level or had mastered by the number of skills presented for each student.

This year, report cards were submitted for 43 K3 through K5 students who had been assessed in each area.[20] Thirty-eight students showed progress or reached mastery in 76.0% or more of the practical life skills (see Figure 7). In terms of sensorial discrimination skills, 34 of 37 students showed progress or had mastered 76.0% or more of the skills that had been presented to them during the year (see Figure 8). Similar information is provided in Figures 9 through 11.

Figure 7



**Downtown Montessori Academy
Practical Life
Progress or Mastery
K3 to K5
2007–08**

N = 43

Note: Students were graded on an average of 48 skills. On average, students showed progress or reached mastery in 94.0% of these skills.

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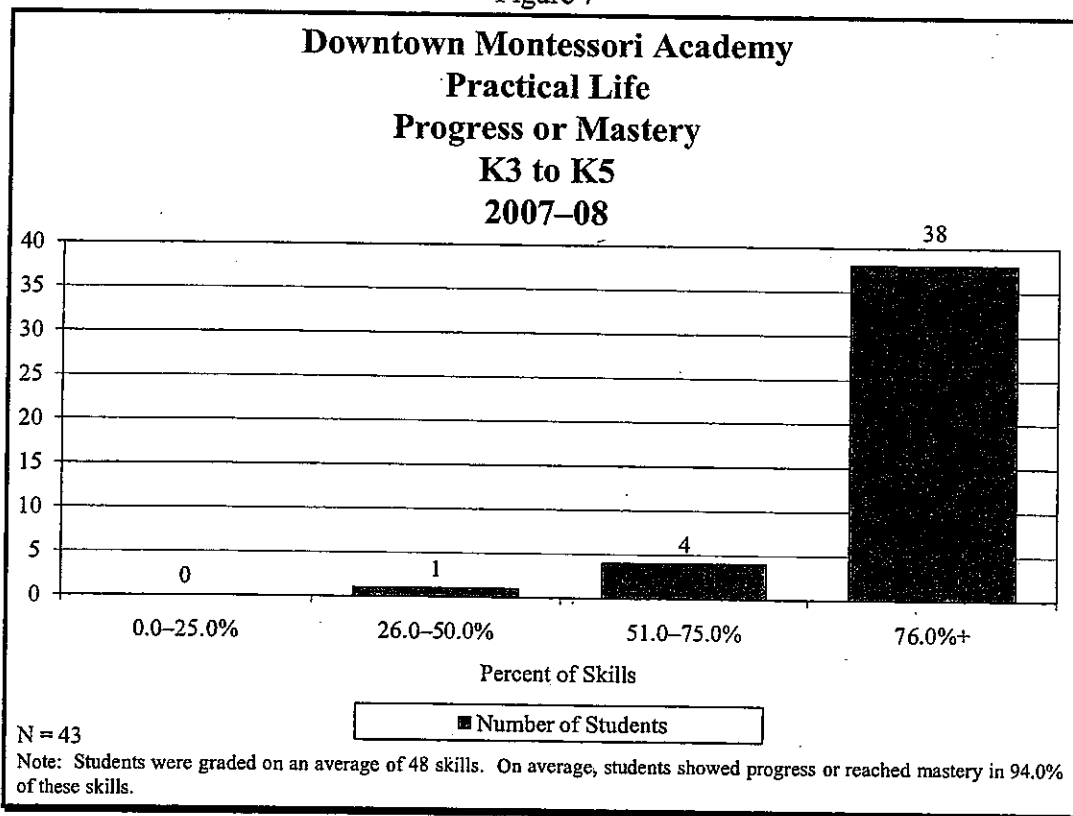
[20] Report cards for six additional students were submitted; however, these students were not rated in one or more areas. These report cards were not included in the analysis.

Figure 8

**Downtown Montessori Academy**
**Sensorial Discrimination**
**Progress or Mastery**
**K3 to K5**
**2007–08**



N = 43

Note: Students were graded on an average of 14 skills. On average, students showed progress or reached mastery in 91.9% of these skills.

Figure 9

**Downtown Montessori Academy**
**Mathematics Development**
**Progress or Mastery**
**K3 to K5**
**2007–08**



N = 43

Note: Students were graded on an average of nine skills. On average, students showed progress or reached mastery in 99.0% of these skills.

Figure 10

**Downtown Montessori Academy**
**Language**
**Progress or Mastery**
**K3 to K5**
**2007–08**



N = 43

Note: Students were graded on an average of 17 skills. On average, students showed progress or reached mastery in 84.0% of these skills.

Figure 11

**Downtown Montessori Academy**
**Cultural Areas**
**Progress or Mastery**
**K3 to K5**
**2007–08**



N = 43

Note: Students were graded on an average of nine skills. On average, students showed progress or reached mastery in 88.0% of these skills.

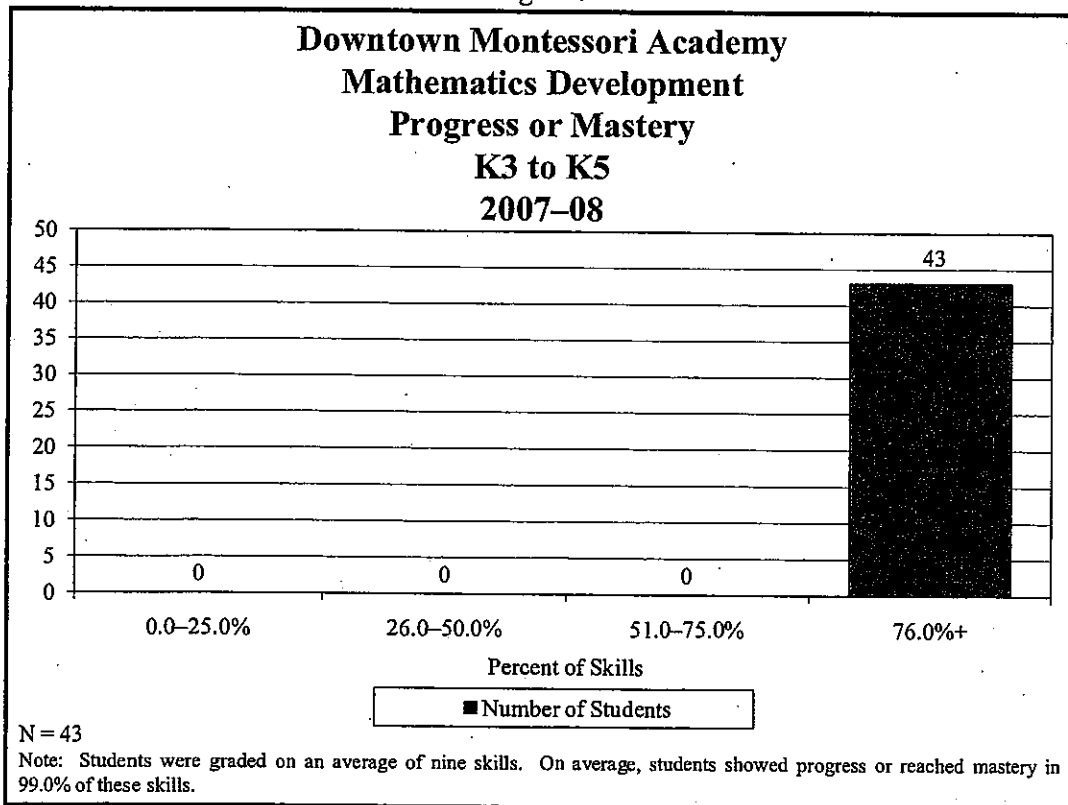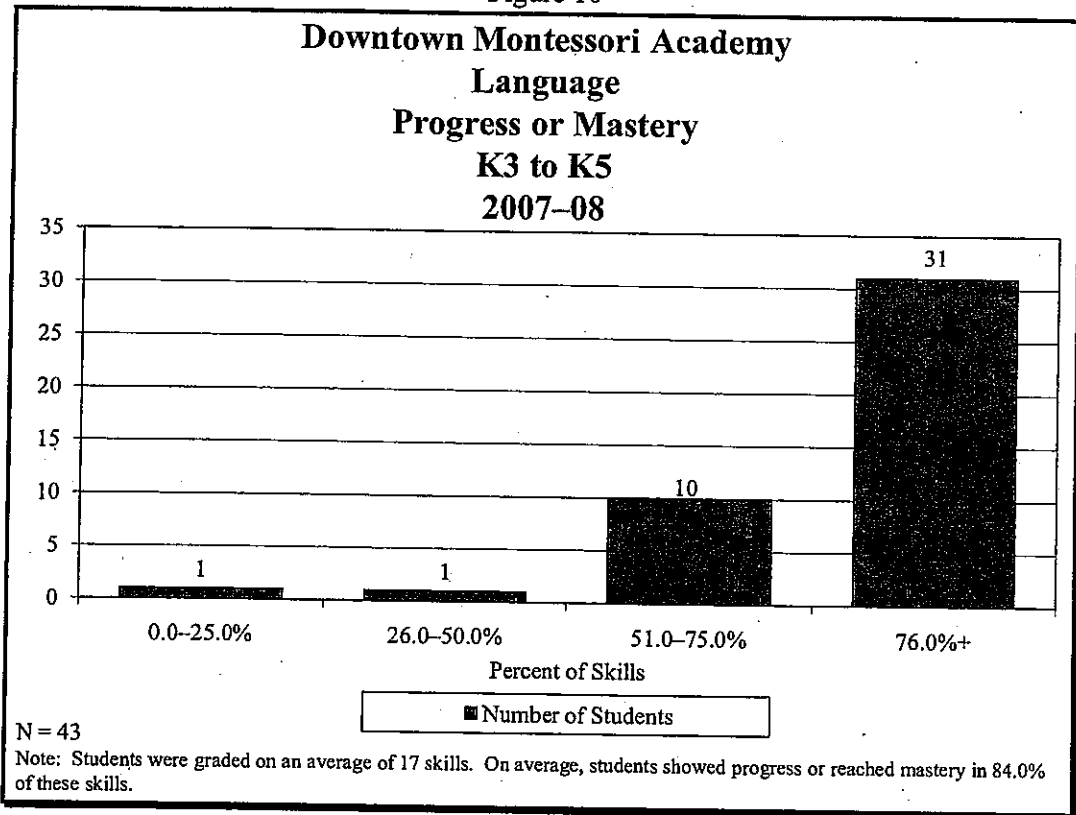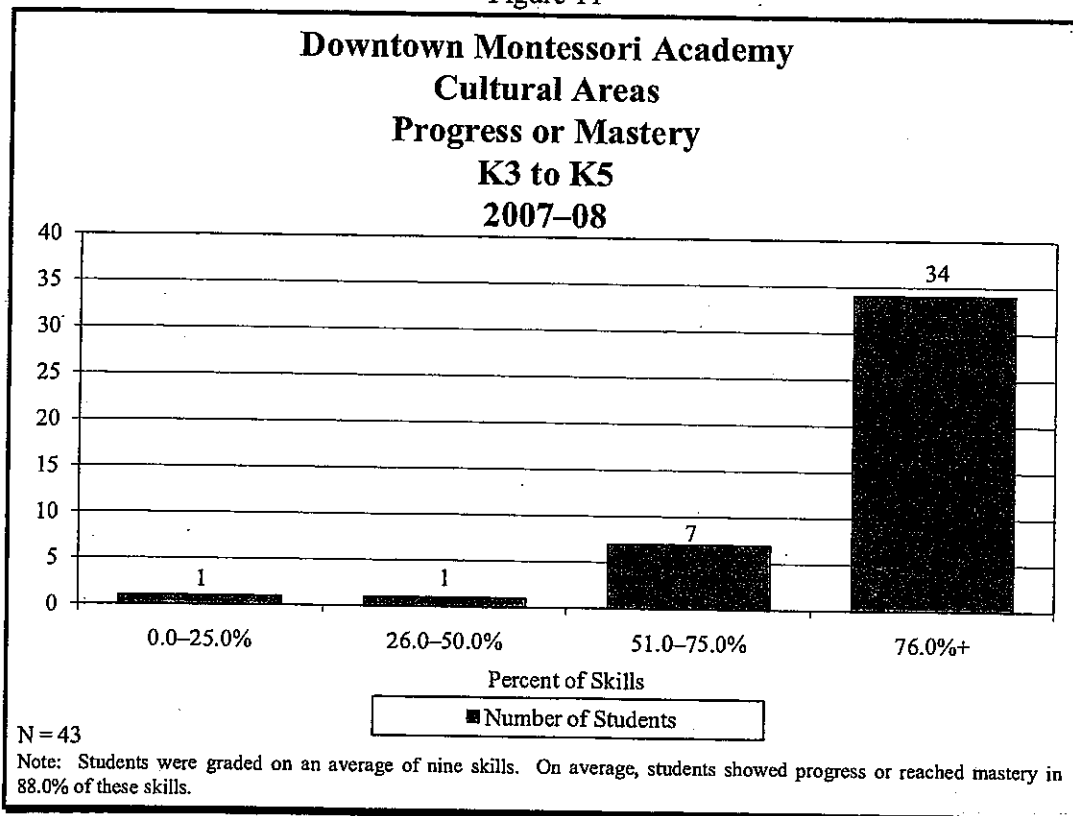By the end of the school year,[21] Downtown Montessori K3 through K5 students, on average, showed progress or reached mastery in 94.0% of practical life skills, 91.9% of sensorial discrimination skills, 99.0% of mathematics skills, 84.0% of language skills, and 88.0% of cultural skills.

### b.     First Through Seventh Graders

Students in first through seventh grades are rated on each skill as introduced (IN), basic (BC), proficient (PT), or advanced (AD).  The school's objective is to help children become proficient in all skills.

This year, the school set a goal that students attending the Elementary Program (first through seventh grades) would show progress in reading, writing, grammar, and mathematics. Part of this goal was to measure reading and writing progress by comparing first- and fourth-quarter proficiency levels.  Grammar and math progress was to be measured for students who earned an IN or BC during first or second quarter.  The goal was that these students would earn a PT or AD level in those skills by the fourth quarter.

Reading was assessed in eight skills and results were provided on the student's report card.[22]  (In addition, the school elected to use the McGraw-Hill Reading Program to monitor and assess students' reading skills throughout the year.  Results from the McGraw-Hill Reading Program are described later in this section.)  Writing skills were measured two ways, depending on grade and/or skill level.  The writing score for first through third graders reflects one item from the student report cards that summarizes writing ability.  Fourth- through seventh-grade scores are based on up to seven graded items that were written during the school's writers'
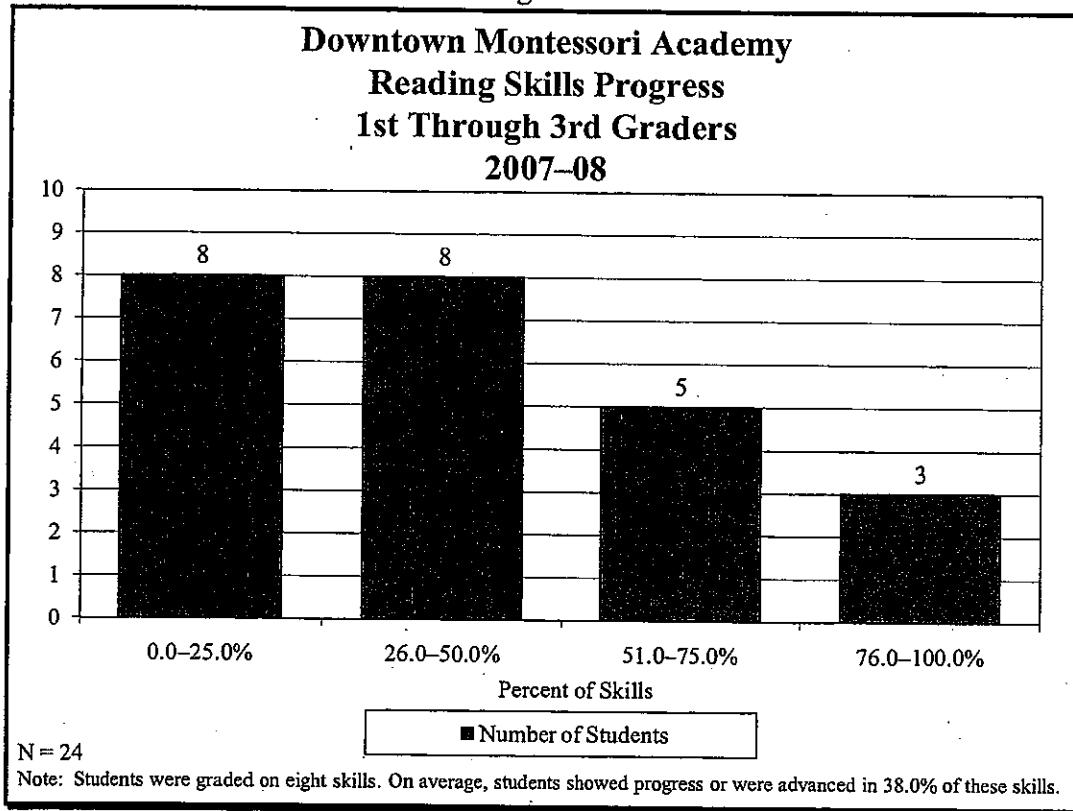
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[21] The end-of-year percentage is an average of the skills in which students showed progress (i.e., improved a level) or maintained mastery during the year.

[22] Results were taken from the reading class section of the report card.  Results do not include the writing skills item.  Writing skills are described separately in this report.

workshop. Grammar and mathematics progress were based on multiple skills in each area. The following results are based on student report cards that rate each student on each skill within each area.[23]

This year, three of 24 students showed progress or maintained mastery for 76.0% or more in reading skills during the year, five of 24 students reached this threshold in 51.0–75.0% of reading skills, eight of 24 progressed on 26 to 50.0% of skills, and eight students showed progress on up to 25.0% of skills (Note that if a student started the first quarter and ended the fourth quarter rated "advanced" on a skill, it was considered progress.)[24] (see Figure 12).

Figure 12



**Downtown Montessori Academy
Reading Skills Progress
1st Through 3rd Graders
2007–08**

N = 24

Note: Students were graded on eight skills. On average, students showed progress or were advanced in 38.0% of these skills.

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[23] CRC recommends that outcomes for next year be revisited, as these outcomes did not reflect results for children who started and ended the year at proficient levels.

[24] Rates were calculated by dividing the number of skills in which the student showed progress or started as advanced by the number of skills for which the student was assessed. Due to advanced skills, three third graders were assessed on the fourth-through seventh-grade report card. There were no reading skills specifically assessed on the fourth- through seventh-grade report cards.

Reading proficiency levels at the end of the year for first through third graders are illustrated in Figure 13.

Figure 13

**Downtown Montessori Academy**
**Average Reading Proficiency Level at End of Year**
**1st Through 3rd Graders**
**2007–08**

Proficient
16 (66.7%)

Advanced
2 (8.3%)

Introductory
0 (0.0%)

Basic
6 (25.0%)

N = 24
Note: Based on the average of the eight reading scores recorded on the student's report card. Reading scores for one additional student were not provided.
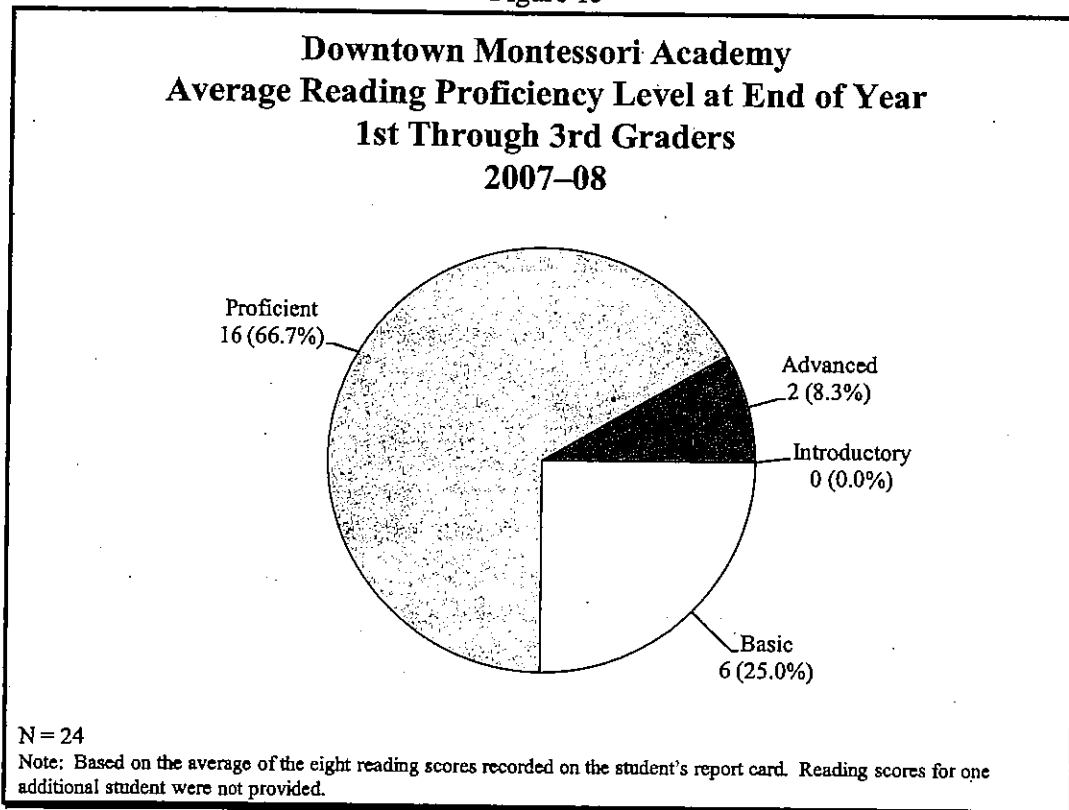
Writing progress for first through third grade was based on one summary writing skill on the student report cards. Results were separated into four categories: students who started as proficient or advanced and maintained those levels; students who started at proficient or advanced and did not maintain those levels; students who started below proficient and were able to improve at least one level; and students who started below proficient and did not show improvement. Based on this information, 15 (62.5%) students started and maintained proficient or better; two (8.3%) student started below proficient and showed at least one level of improvement; two (8.3%) started at proficient or better but did not maintain at least a proficient rating; and five (20.8%) started below proficient and did not show improvement (see Figure 14).

Figure 14



**Downtown Montessori Academy Writing Skills 1st Through 3rd Graders 2007–08**

Started and Maintained Proficiency 15 (62.5%)

Started Below Proficient, Improved 2 (8.3%)

Started Below Proficient, Did Not Improve 5 (20.8%)

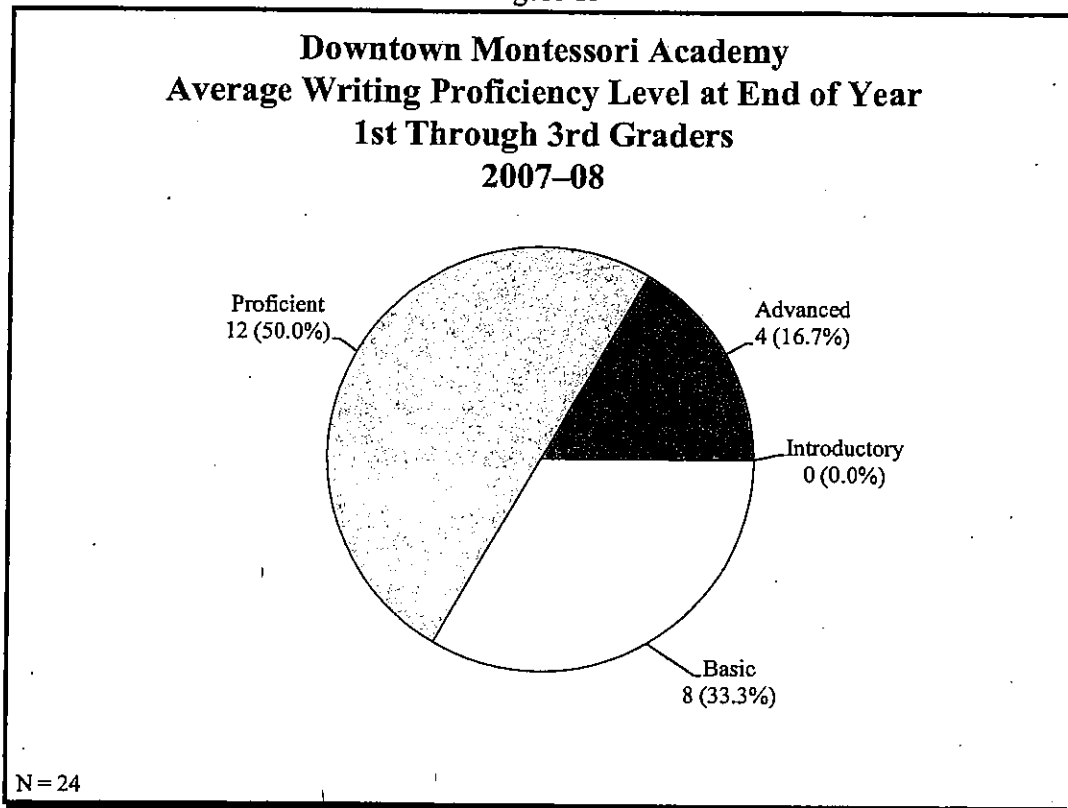Started Proficient, Did Not Maintain Proficiency 2 (8.3%)

N = 24
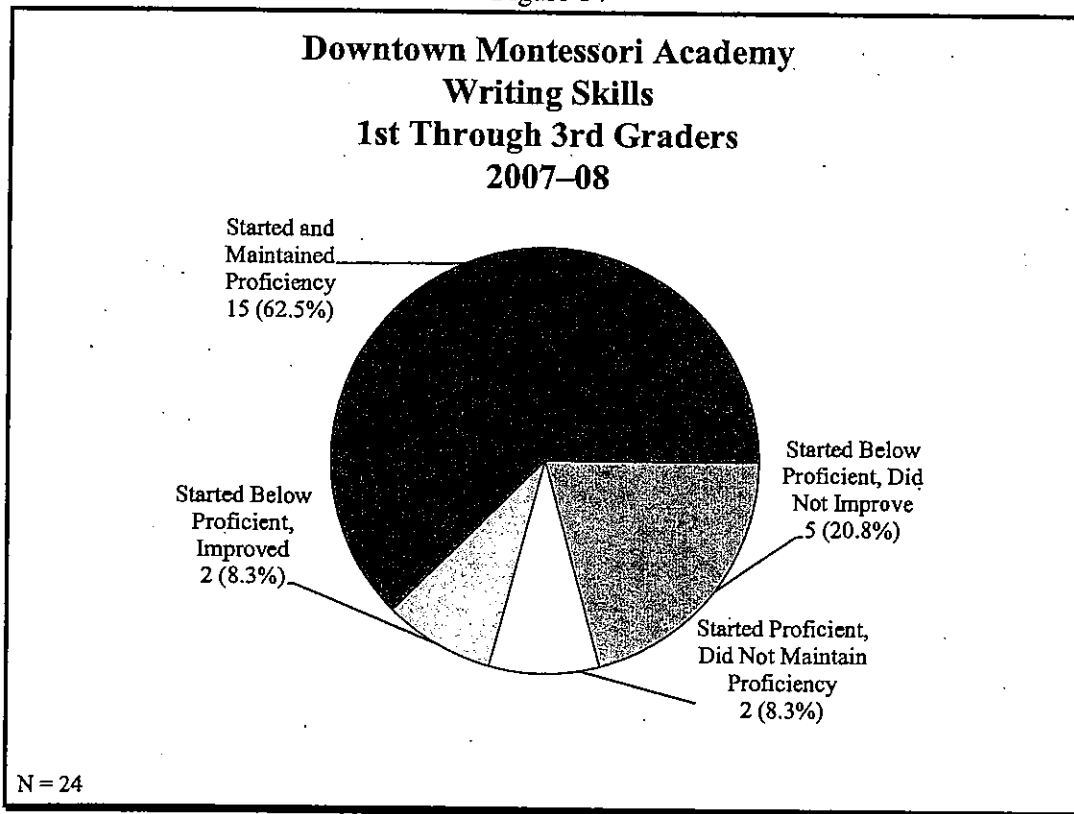
Writing proficiency levels at the end of the school year for first through third graders are illustrated below (see Figure 15).

Figure 15



**Downtown Montessori Academy
Average Writing Proficiency Level at End of Year
1st Through 3rd Graders
2007–08**

Proficient
12 (50.0%)

Advanced
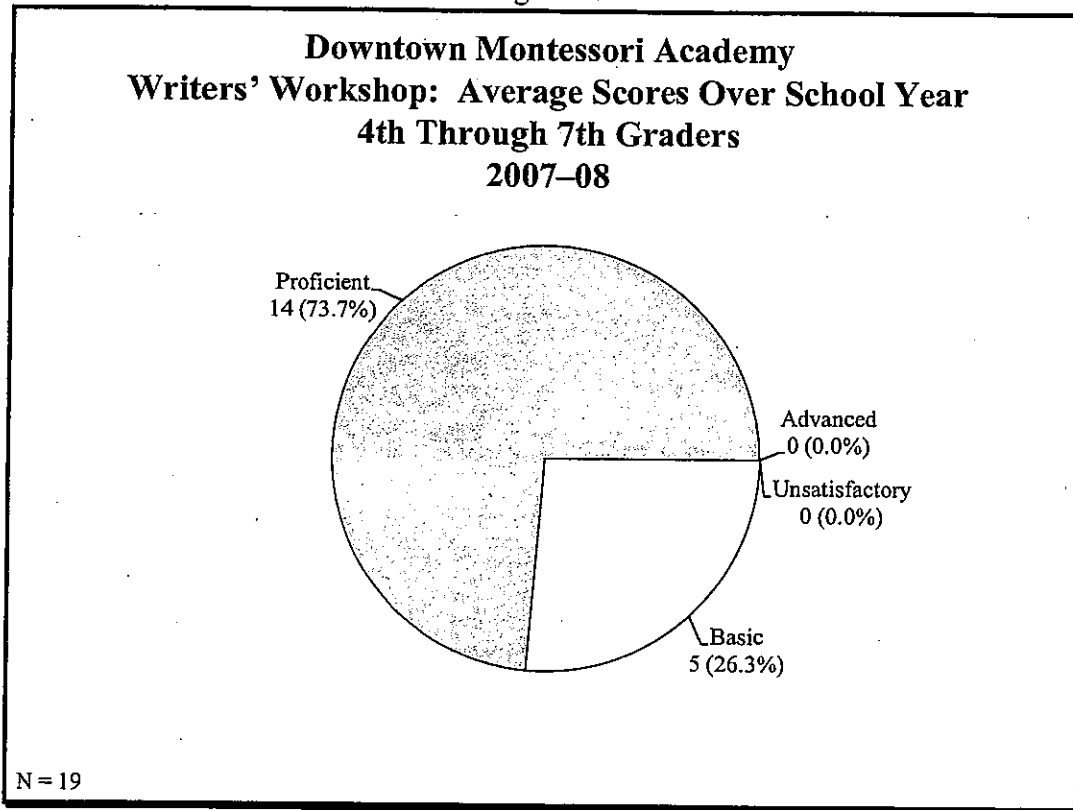4 (16.7%)

Introductory
0 (0.0%)

Basic
8 (33.3%)

N = 24

Writing skills for fourth through seventh graders[25] were not recorded in a way that allowed examination of student progress from first to fourth quarter. Instead, throughout the year, students could choose to be assessed on up to seven areas of writing, including stories, books, and poems. At the end of the year, all students were assessed on the poetry unit. Student skills in each area were rated as unsatisfactory, basic, proficient, or advanced.

The following results are based on the average scores for students throughout the school year and do not necessarily represent progress. As illustrated, five students averaged in the basic

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[25] Includes three third graders who were assessed on fourth- through seventh-grade skills.

and 14 students averaged in the proficient range. No students averaged unsatisfactory or advanced (see Figure 16).
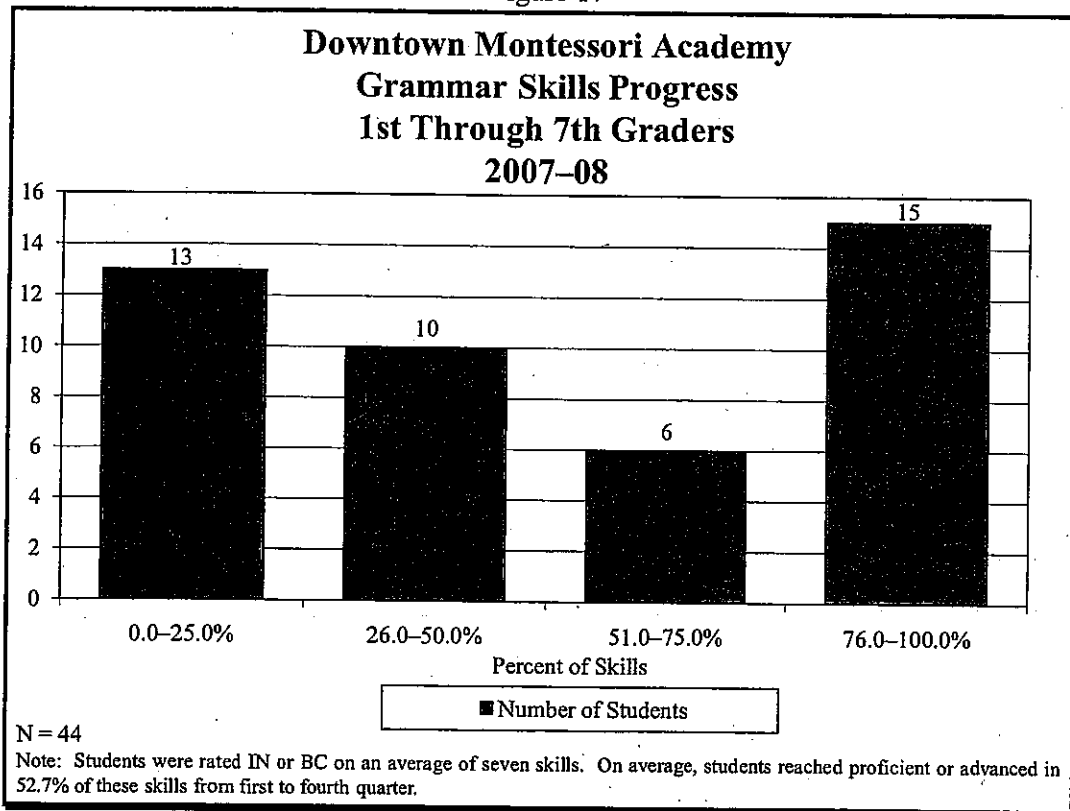
**Downtown Montessori Academy**
**Writers' Workshop: Average Scores Over School Year**
**4th Through 7th Graders**
**2007–08**

Proficient
14 (73.7%)

Advanced
0 (0.0%)

Unsatisfactory
0 (0.0%)

Basic
5 (26.3%)

N = 19

Grammar and math skills for students in grades one through seven were tracked on student report cards. The goal was for the students who received an IN or BC level on a skill during the first or second quarter to achieve a PT or AD level in that skill by the end of the fourth quarter.

The following illustrates that 15 students were able to reach PT or AD on 76.0% to 100.0% of the skills following a rating of IN or BC (see Figure 17).

Figure 17

**Downtown Montessori Academy**
**Grammar Skills Progress**
**1st Through 7th Graders**
**2007–08**



N = 44

Note: Students were rated IN or BC on an average of seven skills. On average, students reached proficient or advanced in 52.7% of these skills from first to fourth quarter.

Math progress was examined in a similar manner. The following describes the percentage of skills in which students scored IN or BC in first quarter and then reached PT or AD in the fourth quarter.
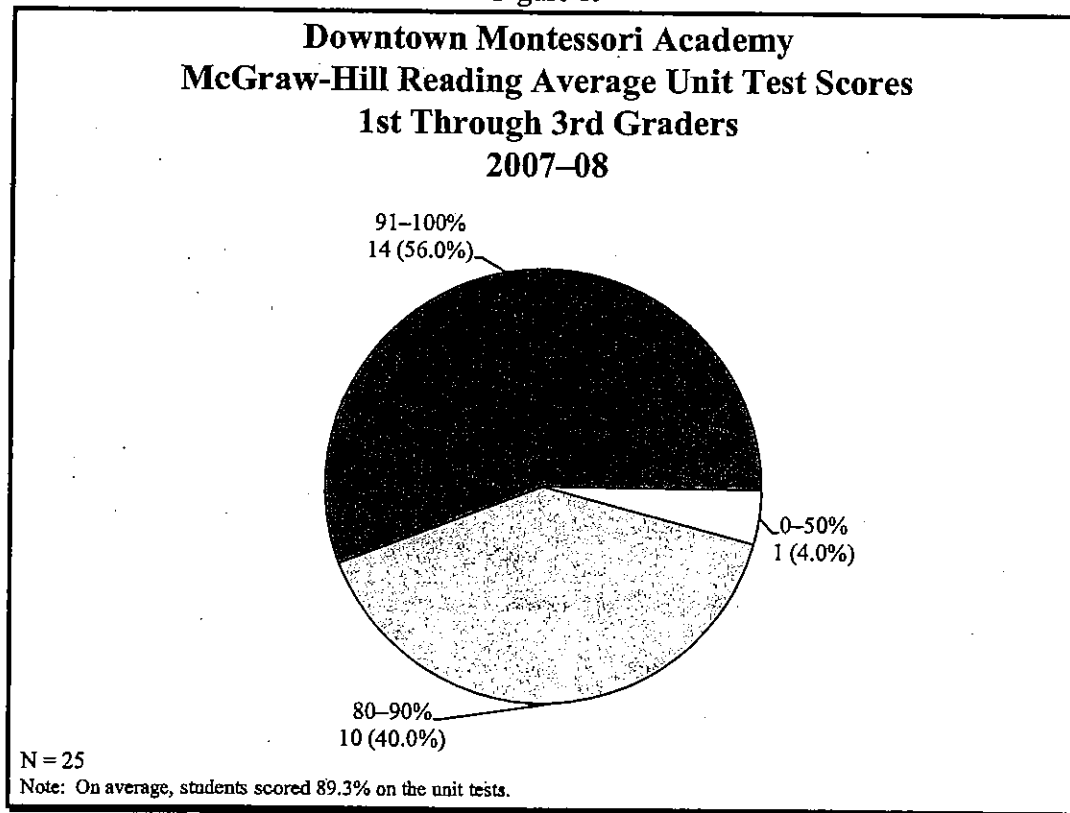
Figure 18

**Downtown Montessori Academy
Mathematics Skills Progress
1st Through 7th Graders
2007–08**



N = 44

Note: Students were rated IN or BC on an average of 14 skills. On average, students, reached proficient or advanced in 53.0% of these skills.
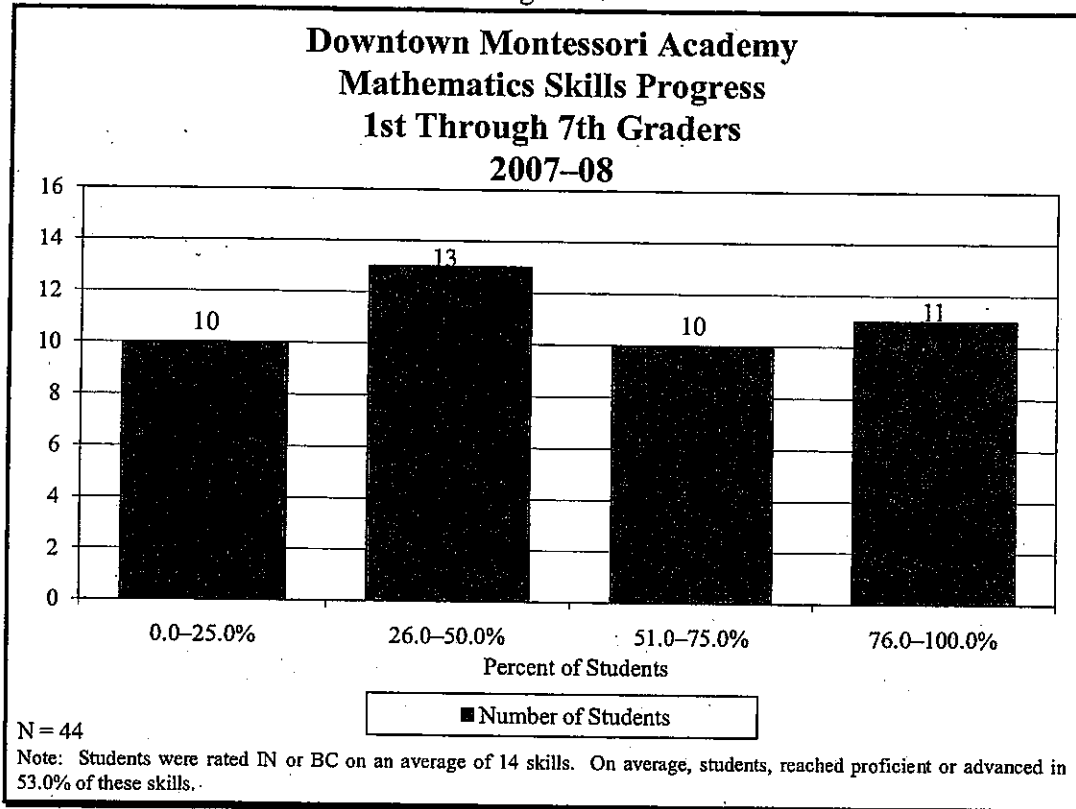
## 2.    McGraw-Hill Reading Program

Since 2004–05, the school has used the McGraw-Hill Reading Program to monitor students' progress in gaining reading skills. During the year, students are taught up to six reading units. Teachers administer a test at the completion of each unit. Reading results were summarized on student report cards as the percentage correct for each unit test. This year the school's goal for first through third grade was to administer the tests throughout the year. The goal for fourth through seventh grade, however, was to use results of the McGraw-Hill tests

given in the spring of 2007 (if the student was enrolled last year) or the fall of 2007 to identify students who were reading below grade level. Students were then to show improvement on subsequent McGraw-Hill unit tests throughout the year.

This year, 25 students in first through third grade were administered at least one unit examination. Students, on average, scored 89.3% on the unit tests. Average test scores ranged from 80.0% to 97.0%. As illustrated, one student's average was in the zero to 50% range; ten (40.0%) students' scores, on average, were in the 80% to 90% range; and 14 (56.0%) students averaged 91% to 100% on their unit tests administered throughout the year (see Figure 19).

Figure 19



**Downtown Montessori Academy
McGraw-Hill Reading Average Unit Test Scores
1st Through 3rd Graders
2007–08**

91–100%
14 (56.0%)

0–50%
1 (4.0%)

80–90%
10 (40.0%)

N = 25
Note: On average, students scored 89.3% on the unit tests.

Results of the McGraw-Hill placement and unit tests for fourth through seventh graders were not provided to CRC (i.e., this information was not recorded on student report cards). Note, however, that there were no fourth through seventh graders who scored below grade level on the spring 2007 McGraw-Hill placement test or on the placement test given to new students in fall 2007.[26]

### 3. Summary of Scholastic Progress

Downtown Montessori's local measure related to report cards for pre-kindergarten and kindergarten was that students would demonstrate progress in acquiring skills in specific areas. Report cards indicate that, on average, K3, K4, and K5 students made steady progress or mastered between 84.0% and 99.0% of the skills presented, depending on the skill area.

The school also set a goal that first- through seventh-grade students would demonstrate progress in acquiring skills. First through third graders improved, on average, in 38.0% of reading skills, as measured on student report cards. Fourth- through seventh-grade reading skills were not recorded on report cards. Fifteen (62.5%) of 24 first through third graders maintained proficient or advance writing skills throughout the year. Fourteen (73.7%) of 19 fourth through seventh graders exhibited proficient writing skills throughout the year.

On average, first through seventh graders who were rated IN or BC in grammar skills improved in 52.7% of these skills. For math skills, first through seventh graders who were rated IN or BC in math skills improved in 53.0% of these skills, on average.

Fourteen (56.0%) first through third graders averaged 91–100% on McGraw-Hill reading unit tests. Scores for fourth through seventh graders were not provided to CRC (i.e., were not recorded on student report cards).

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[26] Based on email from the school's program director.

## E.    Standardized Measures of Educational Performance

The SDRT is the standardized test required by the CSRC for administration to first, second, and third graders enrolled in city charter schools to assess student reading skills. Results are provided as grade-level equivalents (GLE). The test was to be administered between March 15 and April 15, 2008. The school administered the test on April 7, 2008.
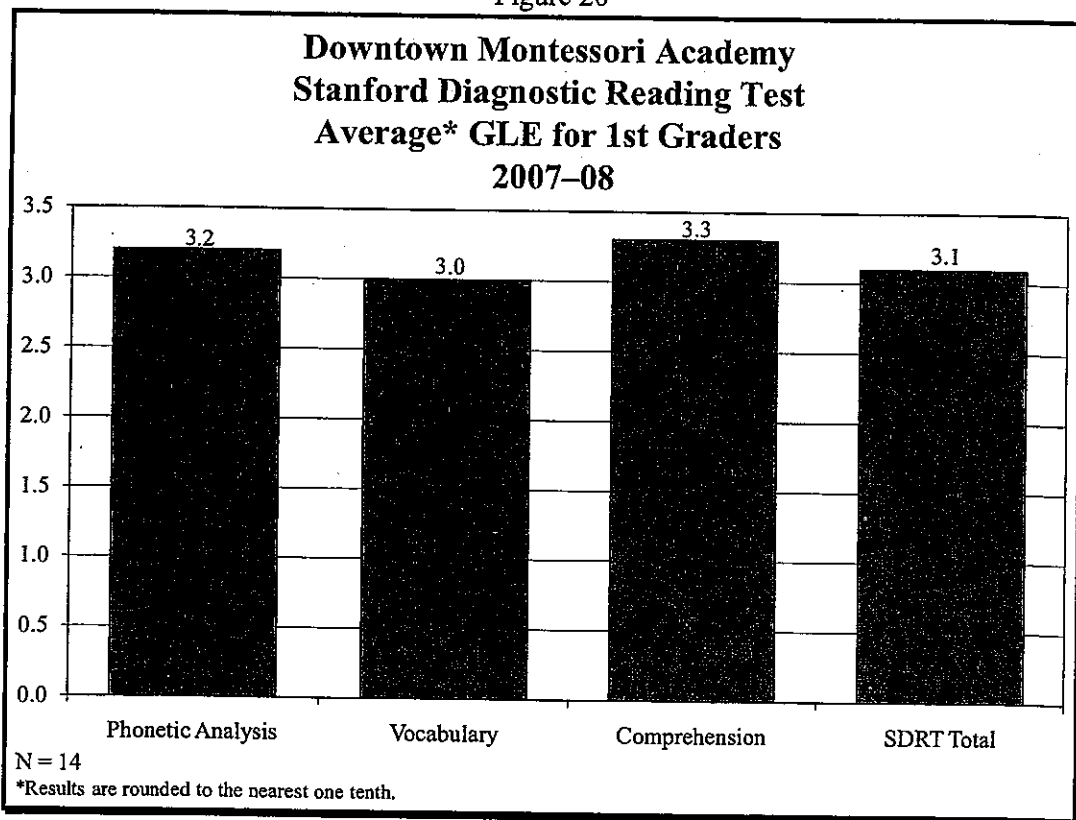
The CSRC also requires that students in third through eighth grade take the WKCE–CRT. This test is required by the State of Wisconsin and is administered to all students in Wisconsin public schools. The WKCE–CRT meets federal No Child Left Behind requirements that students in third through eighth grades be tested in reading and mathematics. Students in fourth and eighth grades are also tested in language arts, science, and social studies. Results are provided as proficiency levels. The following section describes results of the standardized measures of academic performance. (Note: Standardized testing was not an appropriate measure of educational performance for the pre-kindergarten or kindergarten students enrolled at Downtown Montessori during the academic year because of their age and developmental level.)

## 1.    SDRT for First Through Third Grade

In April 2008, the SDRT was administered to 14 first graders, seven second graders, and seven third graders.    Student performance is reported in phonetic analysis, vocabulary, comprehension, and a total SDRT score.  For confidentiality reasons, results for the second and third grades could not be included in this report.[27]   Instead, results from those grades were combined.

SDRT results for first grade indicate that, on average, first graders were functioning in reading at GLEs of 3.0 to 3.3 in the three areas (see Figure 20).

Figure 20

**Downtown Montessori Academy
Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test
Average\* GLE for 1st Graders
2007–08**



N = 14
\*Results are rounded to the nearest one tenth.

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[27] To protect student identity, the CSRC requires group sizes of ten or more.
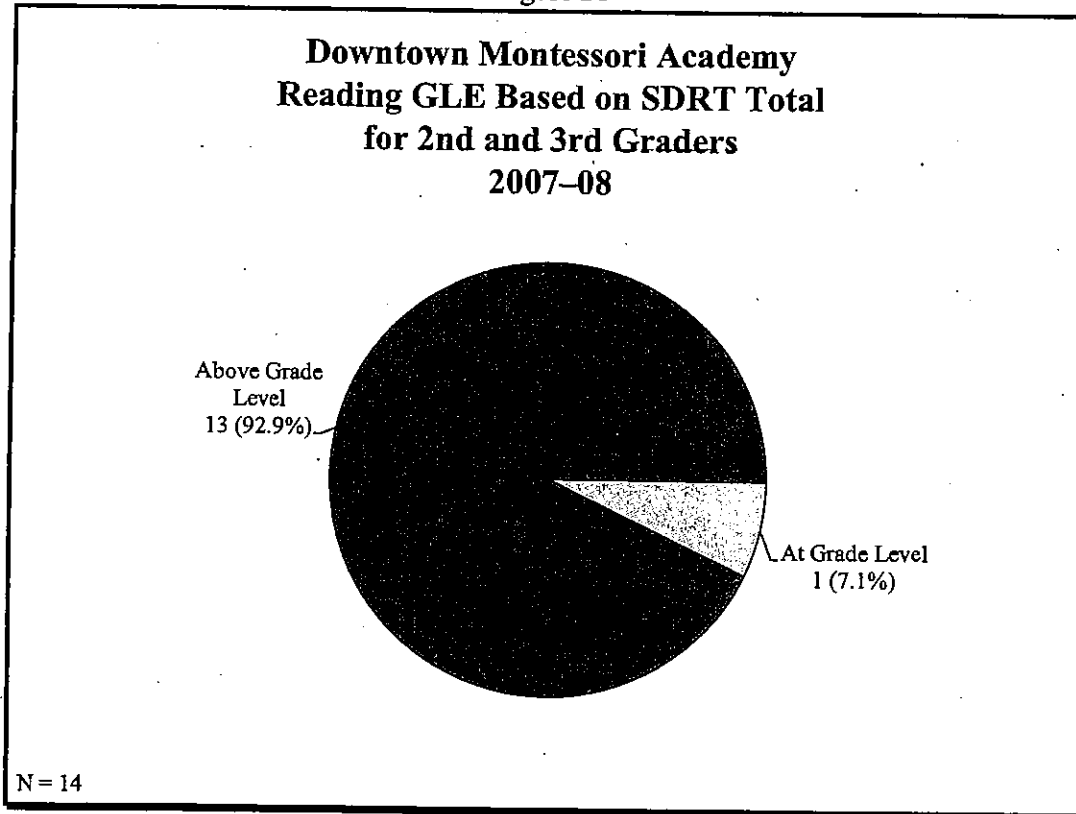
The GLE range and median score for first graders is illustrated in Table 8. The range of levels in each area indicates a fairly wide distribution among the first graders.

| Table 8 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Downtown Montessori Academy** **Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test** **GLE Range for 1st Graders** **2007–08** **(N = 14)** | | | |
| **Area Tested** | **Lowest Grade Level Scored** | **Highest Grade Level Scored** | **Median** |
| Phonetic Analysis | K.9 | 5.2 | 2.5 |
| Vocabulary | 1.3 | 5.3 | 3.1 |
| Comprehension | K.9 | 7.7 | 2.5 |
| **SDRT Total** | **1.2** | **8.9** | **2.6** |

Note: Results are rounded to the nearest one tenth.

As illustrated in Figure 21, 13 (92.9%) of 14 second- through third-grade students were reading above grade level, and there was one (7.1%) child reading at grade level, based on the SDRT total.
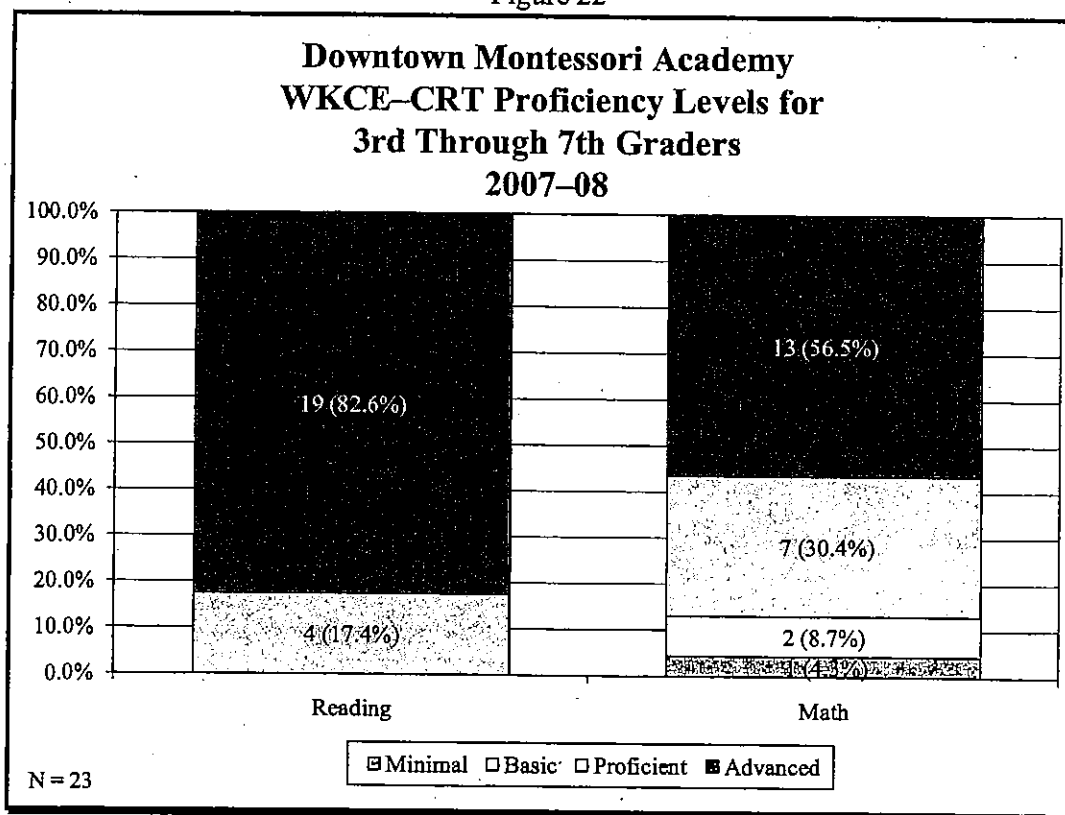
Figure 21

**Downtown Montessori Academy
Reading GLE Based on SDRT Total
for 2nd and 3rd Graders
2007–08**

Above Grade
Level
13 (92.9%)

At Grade Level
1 (7.1%)

N = 14

## 2. WKCE–CRT for Third Through Seventh Grade

In October or November 2007, all public school students in third through eighth grades and tenth grade in Wisconsin participated in the WKCE–CRT assessments.[28] Based on results, students are placed in one of four proficiency categories: advanced, proficient, basic, or minimal. The school administered the test on October 22, 2007.

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[28] This test differs from tests used prior to 2006 in that tests used in the past reflected how students performed compared to a national sample of students. The WKCE–CRT results reflect student performance in reading and math relative to the state of Wisconsin model academic standards. Note that fourth graders are also tested in language arts, social studies, and science. Scores from language arts and social studies subtests are nationally normed. Science results are relative to Wisconsin model academic standards.

This year, there were seven third graders, six fourth graders, four fifth graders, five sixth graders, and one seventh grader who were administered the WKCE–CRT. Due to the small size of these cohorts, results for each grade level could not be included in this report. However, when results for all grades were combined, 19 (82.6%) students were reading at advanced and four (17.4%) scored in the proficient level. No students scored in the basic or minimal reading categories. In math, 13 (56.5%) students exhibited advanced skills, seven (30.4%) scored proficient, two (8.7%) scored in the basic range, and one (4.3%) student scored minimal math proficiency (see Figure 22).

Figure 22



Downtown Montessori Academy
WKCE–CRT Proficiency Levels for
3rd Through 7th Graders
2007–08

N = 23

## F.    Multiple-year Student Progress

Year-to-year student progress is measured by comparing scores on standardized tests from one year to the next. The tests used to examine progress are the SDRT (reading only) and the WKCE–CRT. In addition, the CSRC requires that progress for fourth- through seventh-grade students who met proficiency expectations be reported separately from those who did not.

The following section includes all students for whom standardized test data were available in consecutive years.

### 1.    First- Through Third-grade Students

First- through third-grade reading progress is measured using the SDRT. Results from this test are stated in GLEs. The CSRC expects all students, on average, to advance at least one year from spring to spring testing. The expectation for students with below-grade-level scores in the previous year is more than one year GLE advancement.

Table 7 describes reading progress results, as measured by SDRT, over consecutive academic years for students enrolled as first graders in 2006–07 and as second graders in 2007–08, and for second graders who returned as third graders in 2007–08. Overall, SDRT totals indicate an average improvement of 2.1 GLE from one grade to the next. The median grade level improvement was 1.8 GLE.

| Table 7 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Downtown Montessori<br>Average GLE Advancement in Reading<br>Based on SDRT | | | | |
| Grades | Grade-level Equivalent | | | |
| | Average GLE (2006–07) | Average GLE (2007–08) | Median Advancement | Average Advancement |
| 1st to 2nd (n = 6) | Cannot be reported | Cannot be reported | Cannot be reported | Cannot be reported |
| 2nd to 3rd (n = 6) | Cannot be reported | Cannot be reported | Cannot be reported | Cannot be reported |
| Total (N = 12) | -- | -- | 1.8 | 2.1 |

Note: Data cannot be reported due to small cohort size.

It is possible to compare SDRT results from 2005–06 to 2007–08 using scores from students who took the SDRT in 2005–06 as first graders and again in 2007–08 as third graders. Six of this year's third graders were administered the SDRT as first graders in 2005–06. Due to the small size of this cohort, progress could not be included in this report.

2.      **Multiple-year Progress for Students Who Met Proficiency Expectations**

The CSRC requires that multiple-year standardized test results be reported for students who met proficiency level expectations in the previous school year. The CSRC expects that at least 75% of students who reached proficiency, i.e., proficient or advanced, in 2006–07 will maintain their status in 2007–08. Multiple-year progress for fourth through seventh graders can be examined using the WKCE–CRT test results from 2006–07 and 2007–08.

This year, there were six fourth graders, three fifth graders, four sixth graders, and one seventh grader who had scores from consecutive years. In 2006–07, all met reading proficiency level expectations, and 12 of the 14 met expectations in math. This year, all (100.0%) of the 14 students were able to maintain a proficient or higher level in reading and 11 (91.7%) of 12 were able to do so in math (see Table 8).

| Table 8 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Downtown Montessori Academy<br>Proficiency Level Progress for<br>Students Who Tested at Proficient or Advanced in 2006–07<br>Based on WKCE–CRT<br>4th Through 7th Graders | | | |
| Subject | Students Proficient/Advanced in 2006–07 | Students Maintained Proficient/Advanced in 2007–08 | |
| | | N | % |
| Reading | 14 | 14 | 100.0% |
| Math | 12 | 11 | 91.7% |

Eleven of 12 students in second and third grade met GLE expectations in 2006–07, based on the SDRT. These students progressed an average of 1.8 GLE from 2006–07 to 2006–07 (not shown).

3. **Multiple-year Progress for Students Who Did Not Meet Proficiency Expectations**

In addition to examining progress for students who met expectations, the CSRC requires that the school report advancement for children who did not meet proficiency level expectations in reading and/or math in the previous academic year. Because the SDRT does not translate into proficiency levels, GLE advancement is used to examine progress for first and second graders.

This year, results were as follows:

- No second graders tested below GLE in reading, based on the 2006–07 SDRT;

- One third grader tested below GLE in reading, based on the 2006–07 SDRT;

- No fourth graders tested below proficient in reading; two tested below proficient in math, based on the 2006–07 WKCE–CRT;

- No fifth graders tested at minimal or basic, i.e., did not meet proficiency expectations in reading or math, based on the 2006–07 WKCE–CRT;

- No sixth graders tested below proficient in reading or math based on the WKCE–CRT from 2006–07;

- Because there was only one seventh grader this year, this report does not include references to his/her test results.

Because so few students met the criteria, there are no results included in this report for students who tested below GLE or for those who did not meet proficiency level expectations.

## G. Annual Review of the School's Adequate Yearly Progress

### 1. Background Information[29]

State and federal laws require the annual review of school performance to determine student academic achievement and progress. In Wisconsin, the annual review of performance required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act is based on each school's performance on four objectives:

- The test participation of all students enrolled;
- A required academic indicator (either graduation or attendance rate);
- The proficiency rate in reading; and
- The proficiency rate in mathematics.

In Wisconsin, the DPI releases an annual review of school performance for each chartered school with information about whether the school has met the criteria for each of the four required adequate yearly progress (AYP) objectives. If a school fails to meet the criteria in the same AYP objective for two consecutive years, the school is designated as "identified for improvement." Once designated as identified for improvement, the school must meet the annual review criteria for two consecutive years in the same AYP objective to be removed from this status.

The possible school status designations are as follows:

- "Satisfactory," which means that the school is not in improvement status.

- SIFI, or "School Identified for Improvement," which means that the school did not meet AYP for two consecutive years in the same objective.

- SIFI levels 1–5, which means that the school missed at least one of the AYP objectives and is subject to state requirements and additional Title I sanctions, if applicable, assigned to that level.

- SIFI levels 1–4 Improved, which means that the school met the AYP in the year tested, but remains subject to sanctions due to the prior year. AYP must be met

for two consecutive years in that objective to return to satisfactory status from improvement status.

- Title I status, which identifies whether Title I funds are directed to this school. If so, the schools are subject to the federal sanctions.[30]

## 2. Three-year Adequate Yearly Progress

According to Downtown Montessori's *Adequate Yearly Progress Review Summary School Performance: 2007–08*[31] published by the DPI, the school has demonstrated satisfactory performance on all four objectives: test participation, attendance, reading, and mathematics. In addition, the DPI reported that Downtown Montessori received a satisfactory designation in all four objectives applicable for the past three years. The school has met all requirements for AYP for the 2007–08 academic year in the areas of other academic indicator (attendance), reading, mathematics, and test participation.

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[30] For complete information about sanctions, see www.dpi.state.wi.us/dpi/esea/doc/sanctions-schools.

[31] For a copy of the Downtown Montessori Adequate Yearly Progress Review Summary, see http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/sifi/AYP_Summary, July 2008.

## V. CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

This report covers the tenth year of Downtown Montessori's operation as a City of Milwaukee charter school. For the 2007–08 academic year, Downtown Montessori has met all of its education-related contract provisions. In addition to the information explained in the body of this report, see Appendix A for an outline of specific contract provision compliance information.

The secondary educational outcomes included the following attendance and parental involvement findings:

- Average student attendance was 95.5%, exceeding the school's goal of 80.0%.

- All of the parents of all (100.0%) children enrolled at the time of each of the two scheduled conferences attended.

- All of the parents fulfilled the parent contract requirements related to hours of involvement.

Primary educational outcomes for this year were measured by local measures and standardized tests. Downtown Montessori's local measures of academic progress indicated the following:

- By the end of the school year, pre-kindergarten and kindergarten students reached steady progress in or mastery of 94.0% of practical life skills, 91.9% of sensorial discrimination skills, 99.0% of math skills, 84.0% of language skills, and 88.0% of cultural skills.

- By the end of the school year, first through third graders showed progress or maintained an advanced rating on 38.0% of reading skills (reading skills were not specifically measured on fourth- through seventh-grade report cards).

- Fifteen (62.5%) of 24 first through third graders started at proficient or better in writing skills and maintained those levels throughout the year;

- Fourteen (73.7%) of 19 fourth through seventh graders exhibited proficient writing skills throughout the year;

- The 44 students who were not proficient in at least one grammar skill showed improvement on an average of 52.7% of these skills;

- The 44 students who were not proficient in at least one math skill improved, on average, in 53.0% of those skills; and

- McGraw-Hill Reading Program results indicated that, on average, first- through third-grade students scored 89.3% on the reading program unit tests administered throughout the school year (results for fourth through seventh graders were not provided).

Standardized tests results for Downtown Montessori students were as follows:

- The April 2008 SDRT results indicated that first graders were reading at third-grade levels and all second and third graders were reading at or above grade level;

- The WKCE–CRT for 23 third through seventh graders indicated the following:

  » In reading, 82.6% were at the advanced level of proficiency and 17.4% scored proficient;

  » In math, 56.5% were at the advanced level, 30.4% were proficient, 8.7% of students scored basic, and 4.3% scored at the minimal level.

Multiple-year advancement results were as follows:

- SDRT results indicated that second and third graders advanced an average of 2.1 GLEs in reading.

- WKCE–CRT results over multiple years for fourth through seventh graders indicated that all 14 students who were proficient in reading in 2006–07 maintained proficiency. Eleven (91.7%) of 12 students who were proficient in math in 2006–07 maintained proficiency in 2007–08.

After reviewing the information in this report and considering the information gathered during the administration interview in June 2008, it is recommended that the focus of activities for the 2008–09 school year include the following:

- Integrate new staff;

- Maintain a stable Montessori culture as the school grows;

- Maintain the integration of the members of the PTO with the Montessori staff and Montessori philosophy;

- As the elementary programs grow, revisit and restate the academic outcomes for the students at each level;

- Create a mechanism to extract attendance data from the school's database and store in a spreadsheet to provide to CRC at the end of the year.

# Appendix A

## Contract Compliance Chart

| Downtown Montessori Academy, Inc. Overview of Compliance for Educationally Related Contract Provisions 2007–08 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Section of Contract** | **Educationally Related Contract Provision** | **Monitoring Report Reference Page** | **Contract Provision Met or Not Met** |
| Section B | Description of educational program of the school and curriculum focus | pp. 2–3 | Met |
| Section B | 875 hours of instruction | p. 9 | Met |
| Section C | Educational methods | pp. 2–3 | Met |
| Section D | Montessori Learning Review (see local measures below) | | Met |
| Section E | Parental involvement | p. 5 | Met |
| Section B | Teacher certification: Montessori | p. 4 | Met |
| Section F | DPI license or permit | p. 4 | Met |
| Section I | Student database information, including information regarding special education students | pp. 7–9 | Met |
| Section K | Procedures for disciplining students | pp. 5–6 | Met |
| Memo subsequent to contract | Administration of required standardized tests | pp. 45–49 | Met |
| Memo subsequent to contract | Academic criteria #1: Maintain local measures, showing student growth in demonstrating curricular goals. | pp. 29–44 | Met |
| Memo subsequent to contract | Academic criteria #2: Achievement measure<br><br>a. 2nd- and 3rd-grade students: Advance average of 1.0 GLE in reading.<br><br>b. 4th- through 6th-grade students proficient or advanced in reading: At least 75.0% maintain proficiency level.<br><br>c. 5th- and 6th-grade students proficient or advanced in language arts: At least 75.0% maintain proficiency level.<br><br>d. 4th- through 6th-grade students proficient or advanced in mathematics: At least 75.0% maintain proficiency level. | a. pp. 50–51<br><br>b. pp. 51–52<br><br>c. N/A<br><br>d. p. 51 | a. Met*<br><br>b. Met for 100% of 14.<br><br>c. DPI testing does not include language arts for these grades.<br><br>d. Met for 91.7% of 11. |
| Memo subsequent to contract | Academic criteria #3: Year-to-year achievement measure<br><br>a. 2nd- and 3rd-grade students with below grade-level-scores in reading: Advance more than 1.0 GLE in reading.<br><br>b. 4th- through 6th-grade students below proficient level in reading: Advance one level of proficiency or to the next quartile within the proficiency level range.<br><br>c. 5th- through 6th-grade students below proficient level in language arts: Advance one level of proficiency or to the next quartile within the proficiency level range.<br><br>d. 4th- through 6th-grade students below proficient level in math: Advance one level of proficiency or to the next quartile within the proficiency level range. | a. p. 52<br><br>b. p. 52<br><br>c. N/A<br><br>d. p. 52 | a. N/A**<br><br>b. N/A**<br><br>c. DPI testing does not include language arts for these grades.<br><br>d. N/A** |

*There were fewer than ten second graders and fewer than ten third graders. The average advancement of the second and third graders combined was 2.1 GLE.

**Group size too small: there were very few students below grade level.

# Appendix B

# Outcome Measures Agreement Memo

**Downtown Montessori Academy**
**2507 South Graham Street**
**Milwaukee, WI. 53207**

Student Learning Memorandum
2007-2008 School Year

The following procedures and outcomes will be used for the 2007-2008 school year monitoring of the education programs of Downtown Montessori. The data will be provided to Children's Research Center, the monitoring agent contracted by the City of Milwaukee, Charter School Review Committee.

**Attendance:**
The school will maintain an average daily attendance rate of eighty percent (80%). Attendance rates will be reported as present, excused absence, and unexcused absence.

**Enrollment:**
The school will record the enrollment date for every student. Upon admission, individual student information will be added to the school database, including student race/ethnicity, grade, and gender.

**Termination:**
The date and reason for every student leaving the student will be recorded in the school database.

**Parent Conferences:**
On average, parents will participate in at least fifty percent (50%) of the scheduled parent-teacher conferences. The school will record dates for the events and names of the parent participants for each student.

**Parent Contract:**
Eighty percent (80%) of parents will fulfill the requirements of the parent contract related to hours of involvement.

Special Education Needs Students:
The school will maintain updated records on all special education students including date of team assessment, assessment outcome, IEP completion date, IEP review dates and any reassessment results.

**Academic Achievement: Local Measures:**
**Academic Achievement will be measured through the continuing Montessori skills measurement.**

Students attending the Children's House (K3, K4 and K5 will demonstrate progress in acquiring skills in the area of practical life, sensorial discrimination, mathematical development, language and culture. Each student's development will be reported to his or her parents on report cards and this information will be collected in a database or spreadsheet for submission to CRC. The following scale will be used to track the change in skill acquisition:

1 – New presentation          3 – Making steady progress

2 – Having difficulty          4 – Has mastered the skill

Students attending the Elementary Program (1st through 7th grades) will demonstrate progress in acquiring skills in the areas of reading and, writing using a comparison of first quarter and last quarter proficiency levels.

Students attending the Elementary Program (1st through 7th grades) will demonstrate progress in acquiring skills in the areas of grammar and mathematics in the following way: Students with report card grades at the IN or BC level during the 1st or 2nd quarter will achieve the PT or AD level in those skills by the end of the 4th quarter.

. The following scale will be used to track the change in skill acquisition and be used for each student's quarterly report card:

IN = Introduced (code: 1)          BC = Basic Level (code: 2)
PT = Proficient Level (code 3)
AD = Advanced Level (code 4)

These measures are based on the Montessori approach where the teacher first presents or introduces the skill; and the student then practices the skill until reaching a proficient or advanced level or mastery depending upon the grade level. Teachers will document the semester when a skill is presented or introduced and the student's level at the end of each semester.

**Writing Skills** will continue to be part of our local measures and progress will continue to be measured and reported to parents as a part of each student's report card.

**McGraw Hill Reading Program** – Using the McGraw Hill reading tests throughout the year, each student in the 1st through 3rd grade reading program, progress will be measured and reported. The placement tests will be administered in the fall to 1st grade and all new 1st through 3rd grade students, unit tests will be administered through out the year.

4th through 7th grade students whose reading level is below grade level as measured by the McGraw Hill placement test or by spring 2007 unit tests will demonstrate progress as measured by McGraw Hill reading tests throughout the year.

**Writers Workshop**: (learning and practicing the writers craft of established authors.)
Students grades 4 though 7 who are at or above grade level in reading will participate in *Writers Workshop. These students will demonstrate progress as measured by comparing the average score (using the six traits rubric) of a writing sample from the fall semester compared with a final end of the year writing sample.*

<u>**Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures**</u>
The following standardized test measures will assess academic achievements in reading and mathematics.

**Grades 1, 2 & 3,**     **Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test** will be administered March 15th thru April 15th. The first year testing will serve as baseline

data. Progress will be assessed based on the results of the testing in reading in the second and subsequent years.

**Grade 3, 4, 5, 6 & 7 WKCE** will be administered in the fall on an annual basis as defined by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The areas to be evaluated will be reading and math for all students and the additional subjects of Science Social Studies and Language Arts for 4th Grade.

# Attachment D

# Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence

## Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance

### 2007–08 School Year

Report Date: August 2008

Prepared by:

Janice French, Ph.D.
Susan Grambling
Theresa Healy

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# TABLE OF CONTENTS (cont.)

APPENDICES:

Appendix A:    Contract Compliance Chart
Appendix B:    Student Learning Memorandum

Prepared for:

*__Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence__*
7151 North 86th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53224

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
## for
### Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence
### Sixth Year of Operation as a City of Milwaukee Charter School
### 2007–08

This sixth annual report on the operation of the Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence (DLHA) charter school is a result of the intensive work undertaken by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC), DLHA staff, and the Children's Research Center (CRC). Based on the information gathered and discussed in the attached report, CRC has determined the following findings:

## I.     CONTRACT COMPLIANCE SUMMARY

DLHA has met nearly all of its educationally related contract provisions in its contract with the City of Milwaukee and subsequent requirements of the CSRC. See Appendix A for an outline of specific contract provision compliance information, page references, and a description of whether or not each provision was met.

## II.     PARENT, TEACHER, STUDENT, AND BOARD MEMBER SATISFACTION

On a scale of excellent, good, fair, or poor:

- Of 119 parents, 79 (66.4%) rated the school's contribution to their child's learning as "excellent" and 38 (31.9%) indicated it was "good."

- Eight (88.9%) of nine teachers rated the school's contribution towards students' academic progress as "good."



Figure ES1
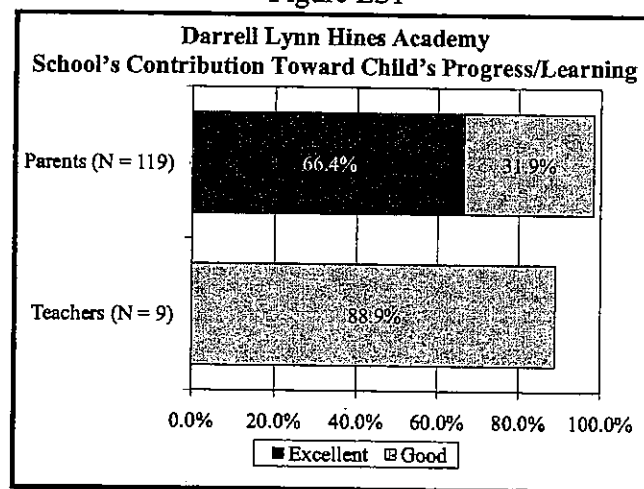
- Twenty students were interviewed. Responses including the following:

Figure ES2

**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**Student Interviews**

| | |
|---|---|
| My Reading Skills Improved | 100.0% |
| I Use Computers in School | 100.0% |
| Teachers Help Me at School | 100.0% |
| I Feel Safe at School | 100.0% |

0.0%  25.0%  50.0%  75.0%  100.0%

N = 20
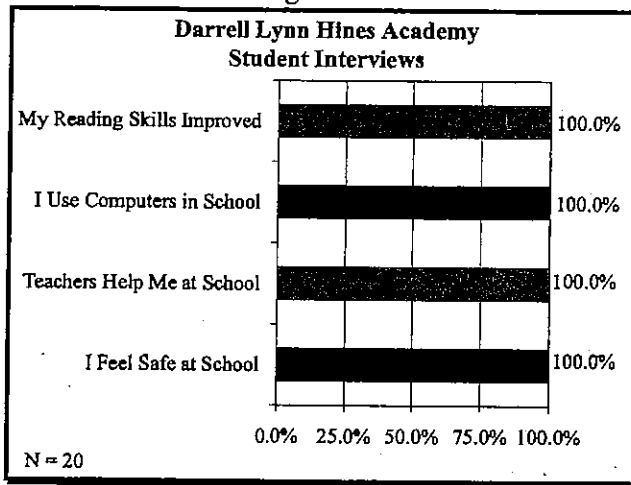
- A majority of the teachers interviewed mentioned liking the supportive, open, and visionary administration/leadership and the comfort level, communication, mentoring, care for students, and cooperation of the staff;

- Among other things, teachers expressed concern regarding sufficient financial resources and the discipline policy.

- Of the three board members interviewed, one indicated that, overall, the school was excellent, and the other two interviewees rated the school as good overall.

- The board members mentioned the need to increase financial resources and obtain 100% support from families as school improvement suggestions.

## III.  PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

### A.  Local Measures

### 1.  Secondary Measures of Academic Progress

To meet City of Milwaukee requirements, DLHA identified measurable education-related outcomes in the following areas:

- Student demographics, such as enrollment, student return rate, and reasons for leaving school;

- Attendance;

- Parent participation; and

- Special education needs students.

The school achieved its goals for all of these outcomes.

## 2. Primary Educational Measures of Academic Progress

The CSRC requires that the school track student progress in reading, writing, and mathematics throughout the year to identify students in need of additional help and to assist teachers in developing strategies to improve the academic performance of all students.

This year, DLHA's local Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) resulted in the following outcomes:

- Of 50 kindergarten and first-grade students, 46 (92.0%) either met or exceeded math expectations from the first to the sixth marking periods.

- Fall to spring MAP scores for second- through eighth-grade students indicated that a majority of students progressed, as shown in Figure ES3.

Figure ES3



Darrell Lynn Hines Academy
2nd Through 8th-Grade
Percent Improved Based on MAP
2007–08

Reading (N = 199) 74.4%
Math (N = 198) 66.7%
Language Arts (N = 198) 68.7%
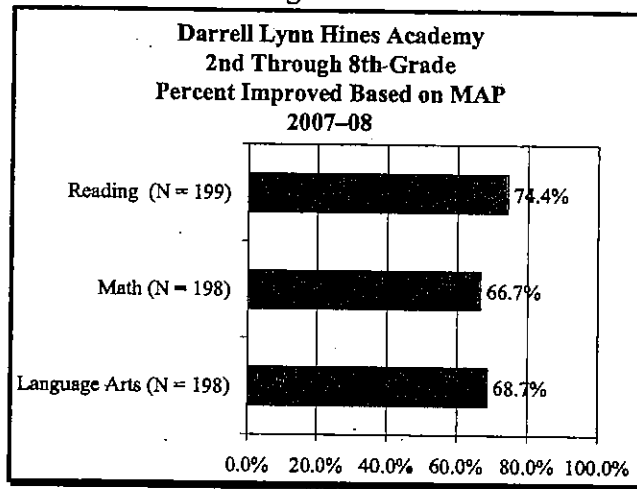
## B. Year-to-year Academic Achievement on Standardized Tests

DLHA administered all required standardized tests noted in its contract with the City of Milwaukee. Multiple-year student progress is described below.

Multiple-year advancement results indicated that second and third graders advanced in reading an average of 0.6 and 0.7 grade-level equivalents (GLE) respectively. The school did not meet the CSRC expectation of at least one year advancement in reading for second and third graders.

Multiple-year advancement results for fourth- through eighth-grade students who met proficiency expectations in 2006–07 indicated that the school exceeded the CSRC's expectation that at least 75.0% of these students would maintain their proficiency in reading and/or math (see Figure ES4).

## Figure ES4
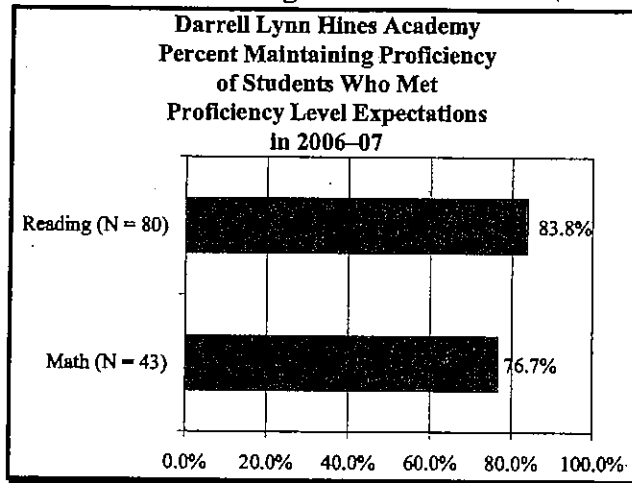
**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**Percent Maintaining Proficiency**
**of Students Who Met**
**Proficiency Level Expectations**
**in 2006–07**

Reading (N = 80): 83.8%
Math (N = 43): 76.7%

(0.0%, 20.0%, 40.0%, 60.0%, 80.0%, 100.0%)

Multiple-year advancement results for fourth- through eighth-grade students who were below proficiency level expectations in 2006–07 indicated that the following percentage of students either advanced a proficiency level or at least one quartile within their previous proficiency level (see Figure ES5).

## Figure ES5

**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**Percent Improved**
**for Students Who Did Not Meet**
**Proficiency Level Expectations**
**in 2006–07**

Reading (N = 25): 52.1%
Math (N = 85): 30.6%

(0.0%, 20.0%, 40.0%, 60.0%, 80.0%, 100.0%)
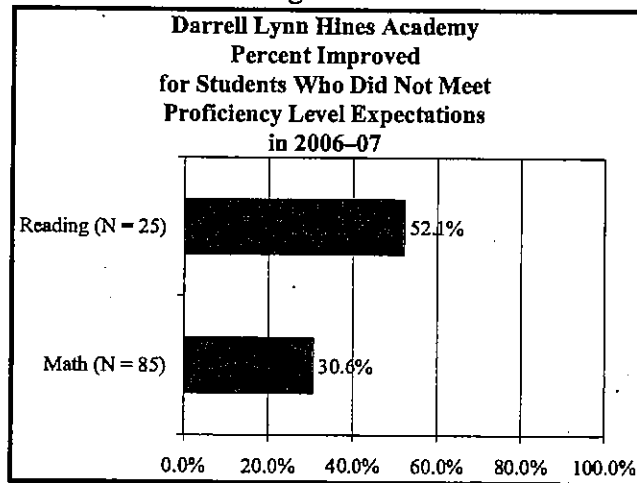
## C.    Adequate Yearly Progress

DLHA met three of four of the adequate yearly progress (AYP) objectives: test participation, attendance, and reading. The school did not meet the AYP expectation that 58% of students would be proficient in mathematics. However, the school received a "satisfactory" status designation in all four objectives for the past three years and the school's improvement status is "satisfactory."

## IV.   RECOMMENDATIONS

The school fully addressed the recommendations made in its 2006–07 programmatic profile and educational performance report.   To continue a focused school improvement plan, it is recommended that the focus of activities for the 2008–09 year include the following:

- Continue to focus on math instruction and techniques to improve math performance.

- Continue to focus on improving the rate of progress in reading for second and third graders as measured by the year-to-year Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT).

- Continue to focus on staff development.

## I.  INTRODUCTION

This is the sixth annual program monitoring report to address educational outcomes for the Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence (DLHA), one of five schools chartered by the City of Milwaukee.  This report focuses on the educational component of the monitoring program undertaken by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) and was prepared as a result of a contract between the CSRC and the Children's Research Center (CRC).[1]

The process used to gather the information in this report was as follows:

1. CRC staff assisted the school in developing its student learning memorandum.

2. CRC staff visited the school, conducted a structured interview with the executive director and the instructional leader, and reviewed pertinent documents. Additional site visits were made to observe classroom activities, student-teacher interactions, parent-staff exchanges, and overall school operations. At the end of the academic year, a structured interview was conducted with the executive director and the assistant principal.

3. CRC read case files for selected special education students to ensure that individual education programs (IEPs) were up-to-date.

4. At the end of the school year, CRC conducted face-to-face interviews with a random selection of teachers and students. CRC also interviewed members of the school's board of directors.  Parent surveys were distributed by the school at spring parent conferences. Parents returned the surveys in sealed envelopes. At least two follow-up phone calls were made by CRC staff to those parents who did not return a survey to the school.

5. DLHA provided electronic data to CRC.  Data were compiled and analyzed at CRC.

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[1] CRC is a nonprofit social research organization and division of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency.

## II. PROGRAMMATIC PROFILE

Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence

Address:                7151 North 86th Street
                         Milwaukee, WI 53224

Telephone:              (414) 358-3542

Executive Director:     Barbara P. Horton

## A. Description and Philosophy of Educational Methodology[2]

## 1. Mission and Philosophy

The mission of DLHA is to accomplish excellence and equity in a kindergarten through eighth grade educational environment. DLHA provides a quality education in a coeducational, safe, nurturing, caring, and academically challenging learning environment.

The school's vision is the following:

- All students will be given a quality education and will model good character and principles.

- All students will be afforded a quality K–8 college preparatory education.

- All students will experience diversity and multiculturalism.

- All students will adhere to high moral and ethical standards.

- All students will grow and develop their gifts, talents, character, and academic potential.

- All students will successfully master high academic standards and will exit the school prepared to continue their education with high expectations for successfully entering a college/university and becoming productive citizens.

- With the support of parents, staff, and community members, all students will develop spiritually, socially, emotionally, intellectually, and physically.

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[2] *2007–2008 Family and Student Handbook: Delivering on the Promise*

## 2. Description of Educational Programs and Curriculum[3]

DLHA provided educational services to children in kindergarten (K4[4] and K5) through eighth grade during the 2007–08 academic year.

DLHA offers a transdisciplinary approach using the Primary Years Programme (PYP) of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO). Through the IB curriculum, the students learn to profile all of the characteristics of educated international persons. They are taught to value diversity and celebrate multiculturalism. Each program of study provides the students with three vital lessons: knowledge about the world in which they live, skills to operate in the world in which they live, and attitudes that encourage being productive members of society. Each grade level includes thematic units, called units of inquiry, which include skill development appropriate for that unit of inquiry. Therefore, the students' academic day is shared between work on the units of inquiry and skill instruction.

In addition to reading/literacy, language arts, and math, DLHA offers instruction in science, social studies, geography, history, Spanish, music, art, physical education, and health. In addition to academic subjects, DLHA provides opportunities for students to learn and be involved in community service projects.[5] This year, the school formed a girls' and a boys' basketball team and a boys' football team.

DLHA uses a variety of methods of instruction, including the following:

- The learning principles promoted by the work of Tuck and Codding (1998). These principles include valuing student effort; providing clear expectations that are the same for all students; utilizing a thinking curriculum; providing opportunities for students to address their own work and teach others; and having students work beside an expert who models, encourages, and guides the students.

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[3] Information is taken from personal interviews, DLHA's 2007–08 *Family and Student Handbook*, its personnel policies manual, and Section II of DLHA's charter application for the 2002–03 academic year, which was subsequently incorporated into its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

[4] DLHA provided an all-day K4 program for the first time this year.

[5] The school will offer a summer program for the summer of 2008. During the 2008–09 academic year, the school is planning on before- and afterschool programming for students.

- The multiple intelligences model developed by Howard Gardner. This model includes eight intelligences characteristic of student learners: logical/mathematical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, linguistic, kinesthetic, spatial, musical, and naturalist. These intelligences are personal, interrelated, and interdependent. Multiple intelligence theory is used at DLHA as a learning style model.

- Transdisciplinary methods to integrate subject matter across themes.

- Promoting cohesiveness in learning by providing a central theme throughout the various subject areas.

- Direct Instruction and the Accelerated Reader program to develop reading, comprehension, and literacy skills.[6]

- Everyday Math to develop math skills for kindergarten through sixth-grade students and Saxon Math for seventh- and eighth-grade students.

- The school began using the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) program in reading and math to monitor student progress and assist teachers with strategies to meet the needs of individual students.


### B. Student Population

At the beginning of the year, there were 298 students ranging from K4 through eighth grade enrolled in DLHA.[7] Nineteen students enrolled after the school year started, and 32 students withdrew from the school prior to the end of the year.[8] Reasons for withdrawing included the following: ten students moved away, seven students left for disciplinary policy reasons, seven students were dissatisfied with the school program, one left because of transportation issues, and seven students left for other unspecified reasons.

Most (314, or 99.1%) of the 317 students enrolled in DLHA at any time during the year were African American; two students were Asian; and one student was Hispanic. Thirty-eight students had special education needs: 12 had special needs in speech/language, 11 had learning

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[6] The school discontinued use of the DIBELS (Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills) this year.

[7] As of September 7, 2007.

[8] Three students withdrew and re-enrolled during the year.

disabilities, five had speech/language and learning disabilities, two had emotional/behavioral issues, and eight students had other health impairments.

Data regarding the number of students returning to DLHA from the previous year were gathered in the fall of 2007. Of the 261 students attending on the last day of the 2006–07 academic year who were eligible for continued enrollment at the school for the 2007–08 academic year, 235 were enrolled on the third Friday in September 2007, representing a return rate of 90%. This compares to a return rate of 85.3% in September of 2006.

At the end of the school year, there were 288 students enrolled at DLHA, 150 (52.1%) girls and 138 (47.9%) boys. The largest grade was eighth with 50 students. The number of students by grade level is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1



**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**Student Grade Levels\***
**2007–08**

2nd
27 (9.4%)

1st
28 (9.7%)

3rd
31 (10.8%)

K5
27 (9.4%)

K4
21 (7.3%)

4th
28 (9.7%)

8th
50 (17.4%)

5th
30 (10.4%)

6th
25 (8.7%)

7th
21 (7.3%)

N = 288
\*At end of the school year.
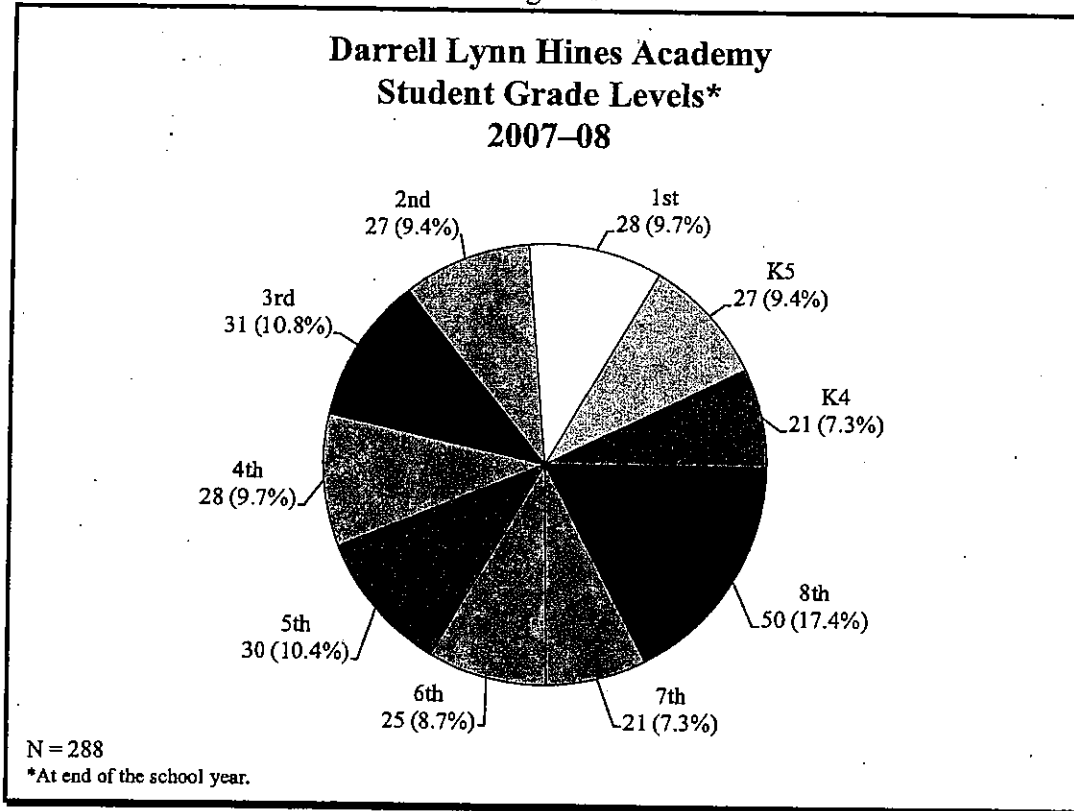
The school had 11 classrooms, each with between 20 and 31 students.[9] There was one classroom each for K4, K5, first, second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh grades. There were two classrooms for the eighth grade.

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[9] Four of the 31 third-grade students were in the special education resource room for at least half the day.

## C.     School Structure

### 1.     Areas of Instruction

DLHA provides instruction in writing, reading, math, language arts and spelling, elementary Spanish, science, social studies, health, art, music, and physical education. These subjects are assessed on each student's report card. Special education programming is provided to students identified as needing an IEP. Each student is rated six times throughout the school year on academic progress and effort. Report cards also reflect the teacher's assessment of the student's work habits.

### 2.     Teacher Information

During the 2007–08 school year, DLHA employed a total of 12 classroom teachers. Of those 12, four teachers left during the school year: one on December 31, 2007; another on February 11, 2008; and the third and fourth on May 2, 2008. Five of the classroom teachers began working for DLHA in August or September 2007, one teacher began in January 2008, and two began in February 2008. All of these professionals held a State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) license or permit.

The K4 through fifth-grade rooms were each staffed by one teacher and one teaching assistant. The sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade classrooms each had one teacher per classroom. In addition to K4 through fifth-grade teachers, and sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade teachers who focus on specific subject areas, the school employed a teacher mentor, a special education teacher, a librarian/media specialist, a school psychologist, a speech/language pathologist, and a physical education/health teacher.

The school staff reported that prior to the beginning of school, staff participated in two days of staff development with a focus on school-year expectations and creating a curriculum

and school improvement plan. Other staff development activities that occurred throughout the year included Wednesday meetings, which covered the following topics:

- Organization of the curricula components for the school year: reading focus, PYP, and math focus.

- Test preparation: what does it look like? How to make connections in class; special education; parent conference expectations; public law 34; and math skills—secure, developing, and beginning.

- Assessments: MAP assessments, PL-34.

- Making world connections/interesting articles in the various curricula areas; reflections.

- Updates: math, special education, and reading.

- Meeting the needs of all students; writing; special education; reading; and PYP.

- Student-led conferences.

- Standard alignment: scope and sequence documents for math curriculum; preparation for IB visit; work on the alignment of the PYP standards and scope and sequence documents.

- Reflection and meeting end-of-the-year expectations; PYP unit letters and units, math, etc.; all-grade reflection meeting.

In addition, elementary teachers received Direct Instruction training during five occasions in August, January and February. The kindergarten teachers attended a kindergarten conference and the first grade teacher attended a first grade conference. The teacher mentor, the special education teacher, and the school's assistant principal, also called the instructional leader, attended a special education conference.

First-year employees' performance was formally reviewed three months after the school year began. The review included a discussion concerning a lesson taught by a teacher that had been observed by the instructional leader, mentor/mentee discussions, and areas in need of improvement. A second review occurred six months after the start of the school year. Returning

employees were reviewed six months after the start of the school year. The instructional leader used observations and lesson plans as a basis for gathering information regarding reviews.

### 3. Hours of Instruction/School Calendar

The regular school day for elementary students began at 7:55 a.m.[10] The middle school students started at 7:40. The school day concluded for all students at 3:10 p.m. The first day of school was September 4, 2007, and the last day of school was June 12, 2008.[11] The highest possible number of days for student attendance in the academic year was 174. Five additional days were "banked" for teacher work days, with three additional organization/record days scheduled for teachers: one before the students attended and one after each semester. DLHA has met the City of Milwaukee's requirement to provide at least 875 instructional hours in charter schools, as well as its contract provision requiring the school to publish an annual calendar.

### 4. Parent and Family Involvement

DLHA's *2007–2008 Family and Student Handbook: Delivering on the Promise* was provided to every family prior to the start of the school year. In this handbook, DLHA invites parents to become active members of the family involvement team, which is comprised of all parents and guardians of DLHA's students. Its purpose is to provide positive communication between parents/guardians/family members and the school administration, to facilitate parental involvement in school governance and educational issues, to organize volunteers, to review and discuss school performance issues, and to assist in fundraising and family education training.

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[10] Students could arrive as early as 7:20 a.m. Breakfast was served daily between 7:20 a.m. and 7:45 a.m.

[11] Based on a calendar for the 2007–08 year provided by the school.

DLHA offers parents/guardians/family members an opportunity to review and sign its family agreement. This agreement is a contract that describes the roles of the school and the family in the partnership to achieve academic and school goals for students.

Parent/guardians of all new students were required to attend a mandatory orientation session with their child prior to the start of school. Parents/guardians of returning students who have not consistently adhered to school policies and guidelines are invited to individual meetings to determine strategies to ensure the child's future success. Family-teacher conferences were scheduled twice during the year in October and March. Telephone conferences were substituted for in-person conferences when parents/guardians were unable to attend.

### 5.    Waiting List

At the end of the academic year, the school leadership indicated that the school was in the process of recruiting students for fall enrollment.

### 6.    Disciplinary Policy

DLHA clearly explains its discipline policy to parents and students in its *Family and Student Handbook*. The student management section of the handbook includes a statement of student expectations, parent and guardian expectations, and an explanation of the family agreement. In addition, an explanation of the school's discipline plan and disciplinary actions is provided. The types of disciplinary referrals include conferences with the student, the teacher, and the parent or guardian; referral to the dean of students; in-house suspension; out-of-school suspension; and expulsion recommendation. Each of these is explained in the handbook, along with appeal rights and procedures. The school also has an explicit weapons and criminal offense policy that prohibits guns and other weapons, alcohol or drugs, and bodily harm to any member of the school community. These types of offenses can result in expulsion.

Students are also referred for awards. These include awards for attendance and the academic honor roll. An annual awards convocation also honors students who have excelled in academic achievement and have demonstrated positive behavior and character traits that exemplify a model student.

## D. Activities for Continuous School Improvement

The following is a description of DLHA's response to the activities that were recommended in its programmatic profile and education performance report for the 2007–08 academic year:

- Recommendation: Continue to focus on math instruction and techniques to improve math performance.

  Response: The school continued its efforts to improve math performance. At the beginning of the year, the staff developed an improved instructional program for math. The staff compared the Everyday Math curriculum with the Wisconsin standards and identified the gaps in the Everyday Math program. Based on results, teachers included more basic skill instruction, including math facts, fractions, and long division. This year, the Everyday Math program was upgraded to include these skills, so DLHA ordered the new Everyday Math curriculum. The school staff will also compare their MAP results to the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts – Criterion-referenced Test (WKCE–CRT) results to see if MAP can be used as an indicator of WKCE–CRT performance. The school is also planning on using the MAP program more in the future and will be training more teachers over the summer of 2008.

- Recommendation: Examine the reasons for the lack of progress in reading for second graders as measured by the year-to-year Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT); for example, could it be related to test-taking skills?

  Response: The school hired a reading coach who provided one-on-one assistance to the primary teachers. The coach examined each student's reading level to help teachers identify which students could move on to the next level. The coach worked in the classroom observing the teacher and modeling strategies, as well as providing feedback coaching and professional development to the teachers outside of the classroom.

- Recommendation: Continue to focus on staff development.

<u>Response</u>:   This year the school had a full-time mentor for all teachers.   The mentor modeled lessons, gave written feedback, and used video observations. The school also provided opportunities for teachers to visit other classrooms.

## III.  PARENT, TEACHER, STUDENT, AND BOARD MEMBER SATISFACTION

### A.  Parent Surveys

Parent opinions are qualitative in nature and provide a valuable external measure of school performance.  To determine how parents heard about the school, why they elected to send their children there, parents' involvement with the school, and an overall evaluation of the school, parents were asked to complete a parent survey.  The survey was distributed by the school to parents at the spring parent conferences.  CRC made two attempts by telephone to gather survey information from parents who did not return a survey.

At the time of this report,[12] 119 surveys (representing parents of 181 children, some who lived in multiple households) had been completed and submitted to CRC.[13] Results are presented in Figure 2.

Parents heard about the school from a variety of places, such as church (54.6%) and/or friends or relatives (44.5%). (Note that parents could indicate multiple answers.)

Figure 2



Darrell Lynn Hines Academy
How Parents Learned About the School
2007–08

N = 119
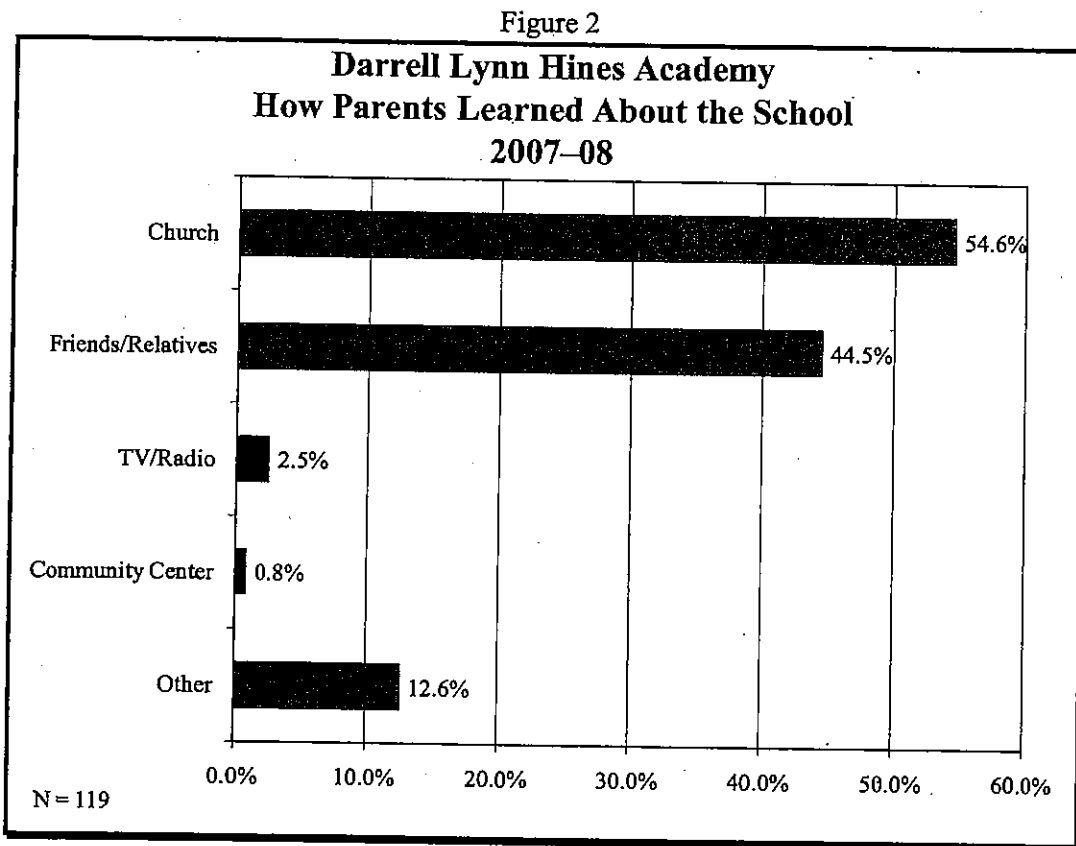
[12] As of August 27, 2008.

[13] There were 287 students enrolled in the school at the time of the survey. This represents a survey return rate of 63.1%.

Parents chose to send their child(ren) to DLHA for a variety of reasons. Figure 3 illustrates the reasons parents considered "very important" when making the decision to send their child(ren) to the school.[14] For example, 95.8% of parents indicated that educational methodology was very important to them when choosing the school, and 90.8% indicated that discipline and/or the school's general atmosphere were very important reasons for choosing this school.

Figure 3



Darrell Lynn Hines Academy
Parent "Very Important" Reasons for Choosing School
2007–08

| Reason | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Educational Methodology | 95.8% |
| Discipline | 90.8% |
| General Atmosphere | 89.9% |
| Class Size | 80.7% |
| Parental Involvement | 79.0% |
| Governance Structure | 75.6% |
| Age/Grade of Students | 65.5% |
| Financial Considerations | 58.8% |
| Location | 56.3% |
| Other Child in School | 42.9% |
| Frustration w/ Previous School | 33.6% |
| Other | 44.5% |

N = 119

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[14] Parents were given the following choices for each reason: very important, somewhat important, somewhat unimportant, and not at all important.

Parental involvement was also used as a measure of satisfaction with the school. Parental involvement was measured by the number of contacts between parents and the school and participation in educational activities at home.

Parents and school staff were in contact for a variety of reasons, including the child's academic performance and behavior as well as assisting in the classroom or engaging in fundraising activities. For example, 58.8% of 119 parents were in contact with the school at least three times regarding their child's academic performance; 44.6% of parent-school contacts occurred because of child behavior; and 30.2% of parents were in contact with the school regarding classes in which their child was enrolled (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**Parent-school Contact Three or More Times**
**2007–08**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Academic Performance | 58.8% |
| Child's Behavior | 44.6% |
| Classes | 30.2% |
| Assist in Classroom | 29.4% |
| School Records | 18.5% |
| Fundraising | 18.5% |
| Other | 2.5% |

N = 119
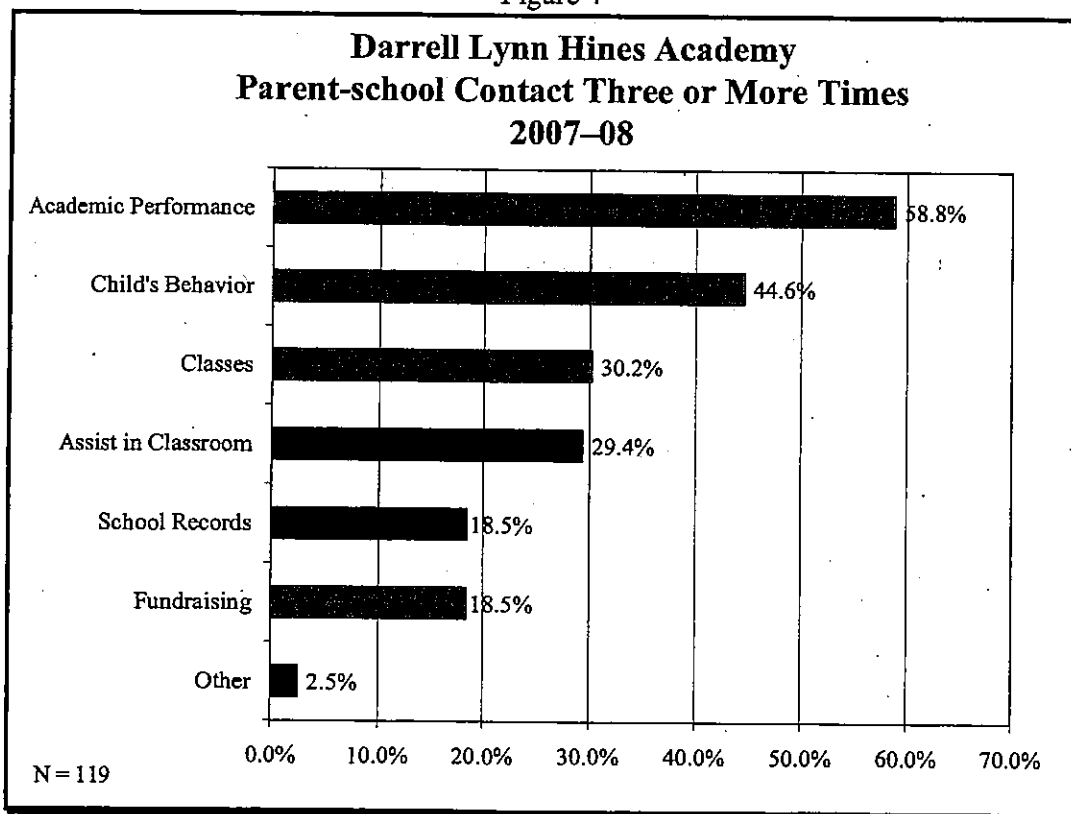
Parent participation was also described in terms of educational activities the family engaged in while at home. During a typical week, 96.6% of parents worked on arithmetic or math with their child; 91.6% of parents read to or with their child; 85.7% watched educational programs on TV; 94.1% participated in activities (e.g., sports, visits to library or museums, etc.) with their child; and 95.8% worked on other homework with their children.

When asked what they most liked about the school, 31.9% of parents indicated the teachers and/or staff; 18.5% indicated the curriculum; and 15.1% cited the high academic standards the school sets.

Figure 5



Darrell Lynn Hines Academy
Most Liked by Parents About School
2007–08

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Teachers/Staff | 31.9% |
| Curriculum | 18.5% |
| Academic Standards | 15.1% |
| Family Involvement | 7.6% |
| Small School/Class Size | 6.7% |
| Caring/Family Environment | 5.9% |
| Discipline | 5.0% |
| Dress Code | 3.4% |
| Communication With Parents | 3.4% |

N = 119
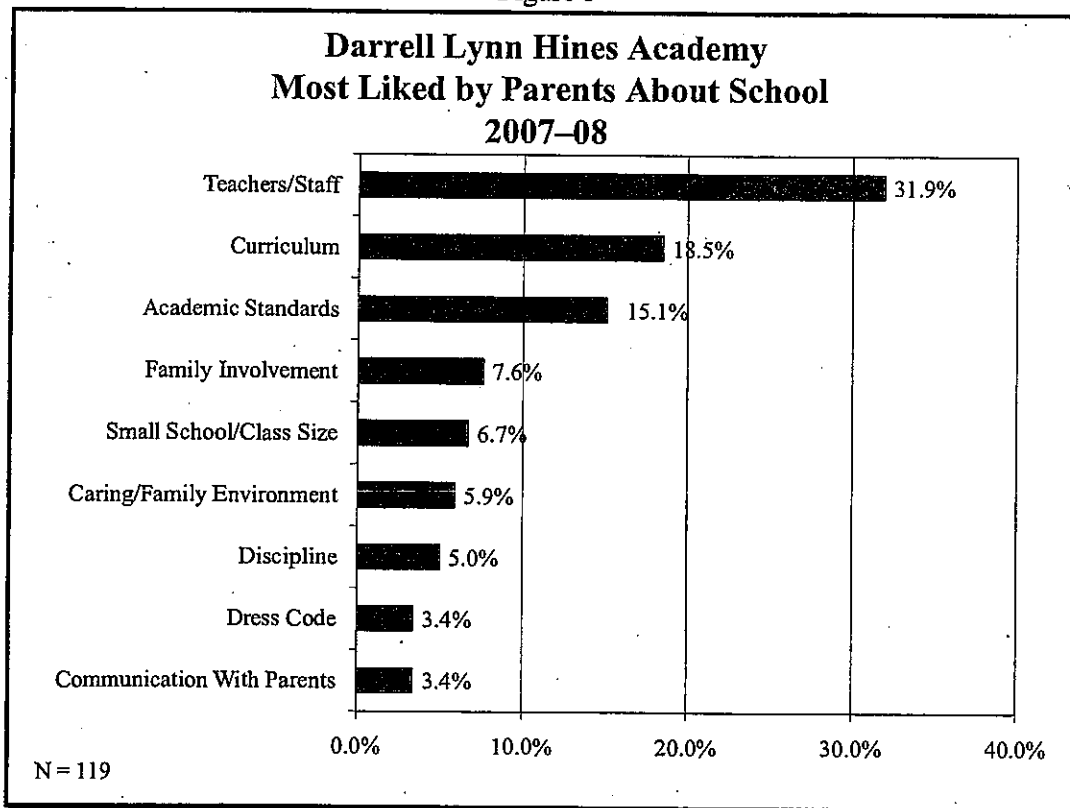
Other areas in which one to three parents mentioned as most liked included the following:

- Child academic growth;
- School philosophy, vision, values;
- Cost;
- High expectations;
- Familiarity;
- Location;
- Named after the pastor;
- High school and college prep;
- Private setting;
- Student involvement; and
- Everything.

Areas noted by parents as needing improvement included student behavior and discipline (20.2%); class sizes were too large, particularly in third grade (5.0%); and high teacher turnover rates (5.0%; see Figure 6).

Figure 6



**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**Least Liked by Parents About School**
**2007–08**

| | |
|---|---|
| Student Behavior/Discipline Issues | 20.2% |
| Class Sizes Too Large | 5.0% |
| Teacher Turnover | 5.0% |
| Bus Company | 4.2% |
| Lack of Afterschool Activities | 3.4% |

0.0%   5.0%   10.0%   15.0%   20.0%   25.0%

N = 119
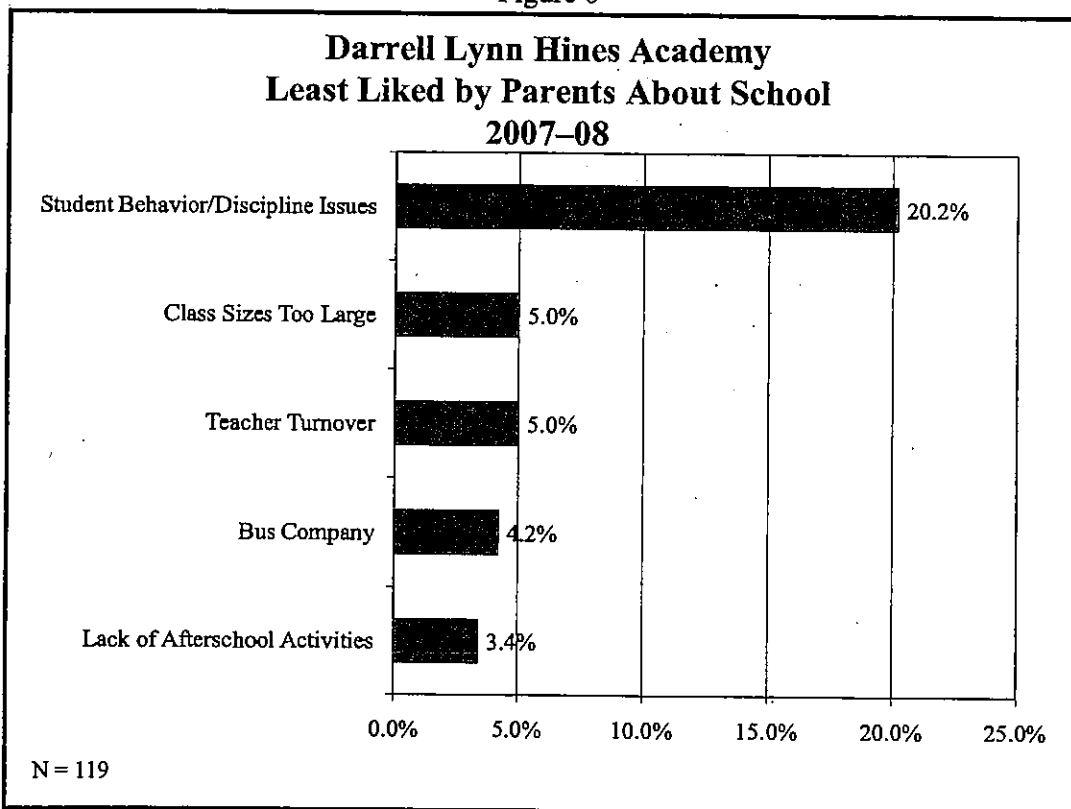
Other aspects of the school least liked by at least one parent included the following:

- Early start;
- Uniforms;
- Requirement for gym shorts;
- Preferential treatment given to church members;
- Limited computer time;
- Limited gym time;
- Need more foreign language classes;
- Not equipped to meet child's needs;
- Disorganized;
- Pretentious;
- Methodology needs to be revisited;
- Should close on bad weather days;
- Stereotypes children; and
- Lack of communication about child's progress.

When asked to rate the level of their child's involvement with the school, 55 (46.2%) parents indicated it was excellent, 56 (47.1%) good, seven (5.9%) fair, and no parents indicated that their child had a poor level of involvement with the school. (Note: One parent did not respond.)

Table 1 indicates that parents rated aspects of the school's academic environment as good or excellent most of the time. For example, most (63.0%) parents rated the program of instruction as excellent, 56.3% rated enrollment policy and procedures as excellent, and 63.0% parents rated their child(ren)'s academic progress as excellent. Where "no response" was indicated, the parent either had no knowledge or experience with that aspect or had no opinion.

| Table 1 | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Darrell Lynn Hines Academy<br>Parental Rating of Academic Aspects<br>2007–08<br>(N = 119) | | | | | | | | | |
| Area | Response | | | | | | | | |
| | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | No Response | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Program of instruction | 75 | 63.0% | 42 | 35.3% | 1 | 0.8% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.8% |
| Enrollment policy and procedures | 67 | 56.3% | 48 | 40.3% | 3 | 2.5% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.8% |
| Child's academic progress | 75 | 63.0% | 37 | 31.1% | 6 | 5.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.8% |
| Student/teacher ratio | 46 | 38.7% | 49 | 41.2% | 20 | 16.8% | 4 | 3.4% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Discipline methods | 44 | 37.0% | 47 | 39.5% | 20 | 16.8% | 5 | 4.2% | 3 | 2.5% |
| Parent-teacher relationships | 69 | 58.0% | 40 | 33.6% | 9 | 7.6% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.8% |
| Communication regarding learning expectations | 69 | 58.0% | 40 | 33.6% | 8 | 6.7% | 1 | 0.8% | 1 | 0.8% |
| Parent involvement in policy and procedures | 72 | 60.5% | 35 | 29.4% | 9 | 7.6% | 2 | 1.7% | 1 | 0.8% |
| Teacher performance | 58 | 48.7% | 44 | 37.0% | 14 | 11.8% | 0 | 0.0% | 3 | 2.5% |
| Principal performance | 74 | 62.2% | 38 | 31.9% | 5 | 4.2% | 1 | 0.8% | 1 | 0.8% |
| Teacher/principal accessibility | 78 | 65.5% | 34 | 28.6% | 6 | 5.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 1 | 0.8% |
| Responsiveness to concerns | 68 | 57.1% | 44 | 37.0% | 6 | 5.0% | 1 | 0.8% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Standardized testing | 63 | 52.9% | 50 | 42.0% | 4 | 3.4% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 1.7% |
| Progress reports | 83 | 69.7% | 31 | 26.1% | 5 | 4.2% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |

Parents were asked their opinions about school staff. Parents rated each of the following as strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, or strongly disagree.

| Table 2 |
| --- |
| Darrell Lynn Hines Academy<br>Parental Rating of School Staff<br>2007–08<br>(N = 119) |

| Area | Response | | | | | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Strongly Agree | | Agree | | Neutral | | Disagree | | Strongly Disagree | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| I am comfortable talking with the staff. | 77 | 64.7% | 37 | 31.1% | 5 | 4.2% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| The staff welcomes suggestions from parents.* | 67 | 56.3% | 40 | 33.6% | 11 | 9.2% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| The staff keeps me informed about my child's performance.** | 68 | 57.1% | 42 | 35.3% | 6 | 5.0% | 1 | 0.8% | 0 | 0.0% |
| I am comfortable with how the staff handles discipline.*** | 49 | 41.2% | 37 | 31.1% | 21 | 17.6% | 6 | 5.0% | 3 | 2.5% |
| I am satisfied with the number of adult students available to work with the students.** | 56 | 47.1% | 40 | 33.6% | 16 | 13.4% | 2 | 1.7% | 3 | 2.5% |
| I am satisfied with the overall performance of the staff.* | 60 | 50.4% | 40 | 33.6% | 16 | 13.4% | 1 | 0.8% | 1 | 0.8% |

*One parent did not respond.
**Two parents did not respond.
***Three parents did not respond.

Last, parent satisfaction was evident in the following findings:

- Nearly all (89.1%, or 106) parents would recommend this school to other parents.

- Of 119 parents, 84 (70.6%) will send their child to DLHA next year.[15]

- When asked to rate the school's overall contribution to their child's learning, most (66.4%, or 79) parents indicated it was excellent and 38 (31.9%) parents rated the school as good. Two (1.7%) parents thought the school was fair, and no parents rated the school poor.

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[15] There were 15 parents who indicated that their child(ren) would not return and 19 who did not know. One parent did not respond. Children of ten parents are graduating; children of two parents are leaving due to behavior of other students in the school; one parent wants his/her child to attend a Christian school; one says there are too many social issues and his/her child is unfocused; one says his/her child is bored and needs more challenge; one is leaving due to location of the school; one is looking for more diversity; one parent does not like the program; and two are exploring what other schools have to offer. No other reasons were provided.

## B.    Teacher Interviews

In May and June 2008, nine teachers were interviewed regarding their reasons for teaching and overall satisfaction with the school. One teacher was responsible for teaching subjects in sixth through eighth grades, one taught fifth grade, one taught fourth, one taught first, one taught kindergarten, and one teacher taught K4. One teacher was the special education teacher and another was the physical education and health instructor. Teachers were responsible for ten to 30 students at a given time. Five of the nine teachers used team-teaching techniques and the other four did not team teach. One of the teachers had been teaching at this school for five years, three teachers had taught at the school for four years, one teacher had taught for two years, and four teachers were in their first year at the school.

All nine teachers indicated that they routinely used data to make decisions in the classroom. For example, one teacher indicated that he/she used data to assign students into reading groups; two teachers indicated that math test results are used to identify problematic areas, which that are then re-taught; another stated that standardized test results are used to provide information for grouping students; and another teacher uses grades, student reports, and performance for lesson planning. Eight of nine teachers also indicated that school leadership used data to make schoolwide decisions, such as discussing math and reading scales at staff meetings; using MAP results for planning purposes; setting standards for each grade; and using standardized test results to plan curriculum.[16] Five teachers indicated that their performance is reviewed annually and four teachers indicated that their performance was reviewed at least twice during the year. Eight of the nine teachers indicated that they were very satisfied and one teacher was somewhat satisfied with the performance review process.

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[16] One teacher did not know.

When asked about their reasons for teaching at the school, all nine teachers indicated that educational methodology and general atmosphere were important reasons for teaching at the school. Seven teachers indicated that financial reasons, discipline, and class size were also important reasons for teaching at the school. See Table 3 for more details.

| Table 3 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Darrell Lynn Hines Academy<br>Reasons for Teaching at School<br>2007–08<br>(N = 9) | | | | |
| Reason | Importance | | | |
| | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Somewhat Unimportant | Not At All Important |
| Location | 1 | 5 | 0 | 3 |
| Financial | 2 | 5 | 0 | 2 |
| Educational methodology | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Age/grade of students | 5 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Discipline | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 |
| General atmosphere | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Class size | 2 | 5 | 2 | 0 |
| Type of school | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| Parental participation/involvement | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 |

In terms of overall evaluation of the school, teachers were asked to rate the school's performance related to class size, materials and equipment, the school's overall student assessment plan, shared leadership, professional support and development opportunities, and the school's progress toward becoming excellent. Most teachers rated these areas as good or excellent (see Table 4).

| Table 4 | | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**<br>**School Performance Rating by Teachers**<br>**2007–08**<br>**(N = 9)** | | | | | |
| **Area** | **Rating** | | | | |
|  | **Excellent** | **Good** | **Fair** | **Poor** | **N/A or No Response** |
| 1.  Class size | 1 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 2.  Materials and equipment | 1 | 7 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 3.  Student assessment plan | 3 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3a.  Local measures | 2 | 7 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 3b.  Standardized tests | 2 | 3 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| 3c.  Progress reports to parents | 4 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 4.  Shared leadership | 0 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| 5.  Professional support | 3 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 6.  Professional development opportunities | 2 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| 7.  Progress toward becoming an excellent school | 1 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 1 |

On a satisfaction rating scale ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied, teachers responded on the satisfied end of the response range in most areas. Areas where teachers expressed the most dissatisfaction were parent involvement and opportunities and teacher involvement in policy and procedure decisions (see Table 5).

| Table 5 | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|---|
| Darrell Lynn Hines Academy<br>Teacher Satisfaction<br>2007–08<br>(N = 9) | | | | |
| Performance Measure | Response | | | | |
| | Very Satisfied | Somewhat Satisfied | Somewhat Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | N/A or No Opinion |
| Program of instruction | 3 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Enrollment policy and procedures | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 |
| Student's academic progress | 3 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Student-teacher ratio | 3 | 4 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Discipline policy | 2 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Adherence to discipline policy | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Instructional support | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Parent-teacher relationships | 3 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Teacher collaboration to plan learning experiences | 3 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Parent involvement | 1 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Community/business involvement | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 8 |
| Teacher performance | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Principal performance* | 4 | 5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Teacher involvement in policy and procedures decisions | 0 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Board of directors performance | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 8 |
| Opportunity for continuing education | 2 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 2 |
| Frequency of staff meetings | 7 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Effectiveness of staff meetings | 0 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 |

*Instructional leader.

When teachers were asked what they most liked about the school, teachers responded as follows:

- The supportive, open, and visionary administration/leadership (six teachers);

- Staff members (e.g., comfort level, communication, mentoring, care about students, cooperation; six teachers);

- The curriculum (e.g., music program, science and social studies program; two teachers);

- Students/student-teacher relationships (two teachers);

- Resources, such as the library, gym, and school psychologist (two teachers);

- Para-professionals (two teachers);

- Overall mission of the school (one teacher);

- School and class size (one teacher);

- PYP/IB program (one teacher); and

- Autonomy of the school (one teacher).

Teachers most often mentioned the following as least liked about the school:

- Lack of funding for supplemental materials/support (three teachers);
- Discipline issues (two teachers);
- Lack of recess/time out of classroom/time to prepare (two teachers);
- Students' lack of respect for staff (one teacher);
- Need for additional administrative staff (one teacher);
- Need for additional para-professional staff (one teacher);
- Large class sizes (one teacher);
- Writing curriculum lacks grade-level criteria (one teacher);
- Lack of support staff to allow individual work with students (one teacher);
- Lack of follow-through on parent participation requirements (one teacher);
- Lack of professional communication between staff members (one teacher);
- Preferential treatment for students and families who attend church (one teacher);
- High teacher turnover (one teacher); and
- Teachers are not getting positive reinforcement (one teacher).

When asked to make one suggestion for improving the school, teachers' responses were as follows:

- Develop and consistently implement a better discipline policy (two teachers).

- Cap the number of suspensions before expelling a student (one teacher).

- Add teaching assistants to the middle school to help with discipline (one teacher).

- Increase teacher participation in schoolwide decisions (one teacher).

- Ensure consistency in everything we do (one teacher).

- Clearly define the role of teaching assistants, especially related to discipline (one teacher).

- Create two separate administrative offices, one for elementary and one for middle school (one teacher).

- Smaller class sizes (one teacher).

When teachers were asked to make one suggestion for improving their classrooms, at least one indicated the following:

- Add para-professional staff (one teacher);
- Improve classroom management techniques (one teacher);
- Additional support needed to help with small groups or one-to-one (one teacher);
- Need technology in the classroom (one teacher);
- Need new textbooks (one teacher);
- Decrease class size (one teacher);
- Strengthen the writing program (one teacher); and
- Climate control needed in every classroom (one teacher).

Teachers also rated the school's overall progress toward contributing to students' academic progress. On a scale of poor, fair, good, or excellent, eight teachers rated the school as good and one teacher indicated it was fair. Seven teachers indicated that they plan to continue teaching at the school and the other two were undecided.

## C. Student Interviews

Interviews were conducted by CRC staff at the end of May and early June. Twenty students in seventh or eighth grade were selected to participate in an interview. Students were asked several questions about their school. All students indicated that their reading skills had improved this year, they use computers at school, teachers are helpful, and that they feel safe in school (see Table 6).

| Table 6 Darrell Lynn Hines Academy Student Interviews 2007–08 (N = 20) | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Question** | **Answer** | |
| | Yes | No |
| 1. Do you like your school? | 17 | 3 |
| 2. Are you learning enough? | 14 | 6 |
| 3. Have you improved your reading? | 20 | 0 |
| 4. Have you improved your math? | 16 | 4 |
| 5. Do you use computers at school? | 20 | 0 |
| 6. Is your school clean?* | 16 | 3 |
| 7. Do you like the school rules? | 8 | 12 |
| 8. Do you follow the rules? | 18 | 2 |
| 9. Does your homework help you learn more? | 17 | 3 |
| 10. Do your teachers help you at school? | 20 | 0 |
| 11. Do you like being in school? | 17 | 3 |
| 12. Do you feel safe in school? | 20 | 0 |
| 13. Do people work together in school? | 16 | 4 |
| 14. Do you feel the marks you get on class work, homework, and report cards are fair? | 14 | 6 |
| 15. Do your teachers talk to your parents? | 19 | 1 |
| 16. Do your teachers talk with you about high school plans? | 17 | 3 |
| 17. Do your teachers talk with you about college? | 15 | 5 |
| 18. Are you planning to go to college? | 20 | 0 |
| 19. Do you participate in afterschool activities? | 12 | 8 |

*One student did not respond.

Students were then asked what they liked best about the school. Their responses were as follows:

- Eleven students liked that teachers help students, know about behavior and help sort out problems, encourage students to do their best, are thoughtful, and help with hard work.

- Three students liked activities, both in the classroom and field trips.

- Two students liked that everybody works together.

- One student felt there was a good connection between students and teachers.

- One student liked the computers provided by the school.

- One student liked the lunch provided by the school.

When asked what they liked least, students responded with the following:

- Four students did not like the uniforms.
- Three students thought classes are sometimes boring, e.g., gym or social studies.
- Three students did not like school rules.
- One student felt there were not enough field trips.
- One student thought they did not learn as much as they could.
- One student thought school starts too early.
- One student did not like Mother Horton.
- One student did not like school lunch.
- One student did not like some boys' disrespect for girls.
- One student did not like student behavior/disrespect for teachers.
- One student did not like that teachers yell.
- One student thought teachers did not support ideas.

## D. Board Member Interviews

Board member opinions are qualitative in nature and provide valuable, although subjective, insight regarding school performance and organizational competency. Three members of the DLHA Board of Directors were interviewed via telephone by CRC staff using a prepared interview guide. One of the board members has served for ten years, one for eight, and

the third for the six years since the school was chartered by the city in 2002. One interviewee is currently the board president; another, the secretary; and the third, a board member at large. The board members had experience in financial management and for-profit and nonprofit administration, as well as legal and advocacy experience.

The board members were asked to rate the school's performance in class size, materials and equipment, the student assessment plan (local measures of achievement, standardized testing, progress reports to parents), shared leadership, decision making and accountability, professional support and development opportunities, and progress toward becoming an excellent school. The interviewees could indicate if they did not have sufficient knowledge to rate a particular school performance element. The rating scale was excellent, good, fair, or poor. All of the interviewees rated these elements as either excellent or good, except for class size. One indicated class size was excellent; one, good; and one, fair. One board member did not have sufficient knowledge to rate the local measures of student achievement and progress reports to parents.

One of the interviewees indicated that, overall, the school was excellent, and the other two interviewees rated the school as good overall. They also reported that the board of directors uses data to make decisions and cited several examples.

On a satisfaction rating scale ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied, all three interviewees indicated that they were very satisfied with the program of instruction, the assistant principal's and the executive director's performance, the board of directors' performance, opportunities for continuing education for the educational staff, the administrative resources to fulfill the school's mission, the commitment of the school's leadership, and the safety of the educational environment.

The interviewees were either very or somewhat satisfied with enrollment policy/procedures, students' academic progress, the discipline policy, adherence to the discipline

policy, instructional support, community/business involvement, teachers' performance, opportunities for teacher involvement in policy/procedures decisions, and the human resources to fulfill the school's mission. In some instances, however, at least one board member did not have the knowledge base to form an opinion about these areas.

The only areas of dissatisfaction expressed by at least one board member were as follows:

- Student/teacher ratio: One board member was somewhat dissatisfied, citing the need for more classroom space to reduce class size.

- Parent involvement: One board member was somewhat dissatisfied, citing lack of parental response to outreach by the school staff.

- Financial resources: One board member was somewhat dissatisfied with per-pupil reimbursement amount for chartered schools, citing the regular increase of costs along with increases in income.

When asked what they liked best about the school, the board members liked the following about DLHA:

- The leadership of the administrative staff;
- The IB program;
- The small size of the school allowing for better opportunities for families;
- The requirement of parental involvement; and
- The atmosphere of high expectations for every program.

Regarding dislikes, financial strain resulting in the inability to serve the students in the manner in which the school would like (including more-competitive salaries for teachers) and the lack of parental involvement (including working with parents who may lack the understanding of the nature of education) were the main themes identified.

When asked for one suggestion for improving the school, board members mentioned increasing financial resources, including an increase in the state's per-pupil reimbursement, and obtaining 100% support from each family.

## IV. EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

To monitor DLHA's activities as described in its contract with the City of Milwaukee, a variety of qualitative and quantitative information was collected at specified intervals during the past several academic years. At the start of this year, the school established attendance and parent participation goals, as well as goals related to special education students. The school also identified local and standardized measures of academic performance to monitor student progress. The local assessment measures included reading assessments based on the MAP for second through eighth graders; mathematics progress reports for K5 and first graders and MAP results for students in second through eighth grades; language arts progress as measured by MAP for second through eighth graders; and results of the Six Traits of Writing assessment.

The standardized assessment measures used were the SDRT and the WKCE–CRT. This is the third year that the WKCE–CRT was used in the state of Wisconsin. It is administered to third- through eighth-grade students to meet federal No Child Left Behind requirements that schools test children's skills in reading and math. The WKCE–CRT is similar to the former test used in Wisconsin, the WKCE; however, it is administered not just to fourth, eighth, or tenth graders but to all third- through eighth-grade students.[17] Goals related to local standardized measures are described in the annual student learning memorandum in Appendix B.

### A. Attendance

At the beginning of the academic year, the school established a goal of maintaining an average attendance rate of 90.0%. Attendance rates were calculated for 317 students enrolled at any time during the school year and averaged across all students.[18] Not including excused

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[17] Additional subtests in language arts, social studies, and science are included in the WKCE–CRT for fourth, eighth, and tenth graders. Items on the language arts and social studies subtests are based primarily on the *TerraNova* test and are not CRT items.

[18] Individual student attendance rate was calculated by dividing the total number of days present by the total number of days that the student was enrolled. Individual rates were then averaged across all students.

absences, the school's attendance rate was 93.0%. When excused absences were included, the attendance rate rose to 97.0%. Based on these calculations, DLHA exceeded its attendance goal.

## B. Parent Participation

At the beginning of the academic year, the school set a goal that parents/guardians would attend at least two scheduled family-teacher conferences. This year, there were 273 children enrolled at the time of both conferences. Parents of 235 (86.1%) children attended the first and parents of 271 (99.3%) children attended the second scheduled conference. DLHA has, therefore, met its goal related to parent participation.

## C. Special Education Needs

This year, the school set a goal to develop and maintain records on all special education students. IEPs were completed for all 38 children with special education needs, and IEP reviews were conducted for all children requiring one. In addition, CRC conducted a review of a representative number of files during the year. This review showed that students had current IEPs indicating their eligibility for special education services and that their parents were invited to and involved in developing the IEP. The school has met its goal related to special education needs students.

## D. Local Measures of Educational Performance

Charter schools, by their definition and nature, are autonomous schools with curricula that reflect each school's individual philosophy, mission, and goals. In addition to standardized testing, each charter school has the responsibility of describing the goals and expectations of its students in meaningful language in light of that school's unique approach to education. These goals and expectations are established by each City of Milwaukee charter school at the beginning

of the academic year to measure the educational performance of its students. These local measures are useful for monitoring and reporting progress, guiding and improving instruction, clearly expressing the expected quality of student work, and providing evidence that students are meeting local benchmarks.

## 1. Reading Progress for Second Through Eighth Graders

This year, the school set a goal that students in second through eighth grades would demonstrate progress in reading as measured by the MAP tests administered in the fall and again in the spring.[19] On average, students demonstrated an improvement of five points from one test administration to the next. Average scores for each grade are described in Table 7.

| Table 7 | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**<br>**Average Reading Scores for 2nd Through 8th Graders**<br>**Based on Measures of Academic Progress Tests** | | | | |
| Grade | N | Average Score Fall | Average Score Spring | Average Change |
| 2nd | 26 | 166 | 178 | 12 |
| 3rd | 31 | 178 | 186 | 8 |
| 4th | 26 | 186 | 192 | 6 |
| 5th | 26 | 199 | 205 | 6 |
| 6th | 22 | 201 | 203 | 2 |
| 7th | 21 | 201 | 206 | 5 |
| 8th | 47 | 211 | 211 | 0 |
| Total | 199 | 193 | 198 | 5 |

*Includes students with both fall and spring test results.

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[19] Note that second through eighth graders were also tested during the winter of 2008. There were no goals associated with these examinations; therefore, results are not included in this report.

Overall, 74.4% of students improved their test scores from the fall to the spring test administration. The number of students who showed improvement in reading scores, as measured by MAP, is illustrated Table 8.

| Table 8 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Darrell Lynn Hines Academy<br>Reading Progress for 2nd Through 8th Graders<br>Based on Measures of Academic Progress Tests | | | |
| Grade | N | Number of Students With Improved Score | % of Students With Improved Score |
| 2nd | 26 | 23 | 88.5% |
| 3rd | 31 | 25 | 80.6% |
| 4th | 26 | 22 | 84.6% |
| 5th | 26 | 22 | 84.6% |
| 6th | 22 | 13 | 59.1% |
| 7th | 21 | 15 | 71.4% |
| 8th | 47 | 28 | 59.6% |
| Total | 199 | 148 | 74.4% |

## 2. Math Progress

### a. K5 and First Graders

To track math progress at a local level, DLHA set a goal that students in K5 or first grades would exhibit a grade of 2 or better or show one or more levels of progress between the first and sixth marking periods using the following scale:

1      Indicates that the student exceeds expectations, demonstrating exemplary performance.

2+      Indicates that the student meets expectations, demonstrating slightly above average performance.

2      Indicates that the student meets expectations, demonstrating average performance.

2-      Indicates that the student is demonstrating slightly below average performance and meets expectations.

3       Indicates that the student needs improvement, demonstrating far below average performance.

This year, math progress indicators for 50 K5 and first-grade students assessed at the beginning (first marking period) and end of the school year (sixth marking period) showed that by the end of the year, 19 (38.0%) students exceeded expectations; 27 (54.0%) met expectations; and four (8.0%) students needed to improve math skills (see Figure 7).

Figure 7



**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**Math Progress**
**K5 and 1st Graders**
**2007–08**

Exceeded Expectations 19 (38.0%)

Needs Improvement 4 (8.0%)

Met Expectations 27 (54.0%)

N = 50
Note: Based on math progress reports.
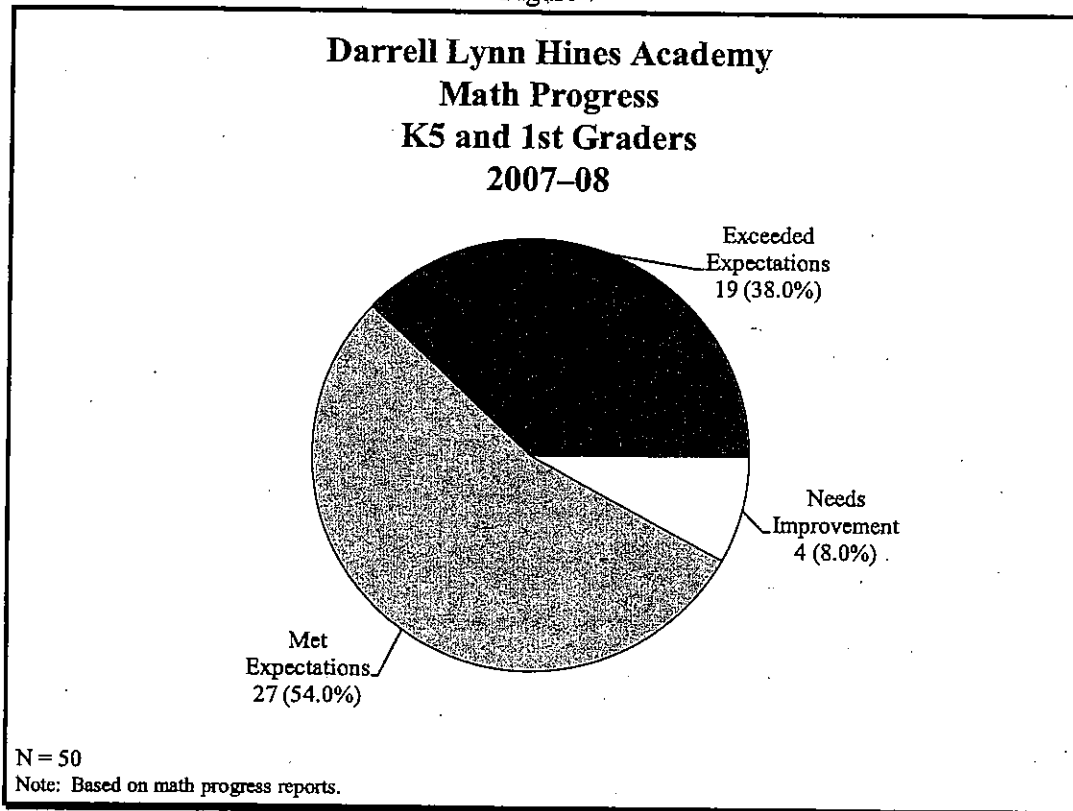
**b.      Second Through Eighth Graders**

This year, the school set a goal that students in second through eighth grades would demonstrate math progress on the MAP tests administered in the fall and again in the spring. MAP results were submitted for 198 students who were administered the test at both times.

Results indicate that, on average, student math scores improved by four points from the fall to the spring test administration (see Table 9).

| Table 9 Darrell Lynn Hines Academy Average Math Scores for 2nd Through 8th Graders Based on Measures of Academic Progress Tests | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grade | N | Average Score Fall | Average Score Spring | Average Change |
| 2nd | 26 | 166 | 179 | 13 |
| 3rd | 31 | 181 | 186 | 5 |
| 4th | 26 | 188 | 191 | 3 |
| 5th | 26 | 201 | 207 | 6 |
| 6th | 21 | 204 | 205 | 1 |
| 7th | 21 | 206 | 207 | 1 |
| 8th | 47 | 220 | 219 | -1 |
| Total | 198 | 197 | 201 | 4 |

Overall, 132 (66.7%) students improved their math scores from the fall to the spring MAP test administration (see Table 10).

| Table 10 Darrell Lynn Hines Academy Math Progress for 2nd Through 8th Graders Based on Measures of Academic Progress Fall and Spring Tests | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Grade | N | Number of Students With Improved Score | % of Students With Improved Score |
| 2nd | 26 | 25 | 96.2% |
| 3rd | 31 | 23 | 74.2% |
| 4th | 26 | 16 | 61.5% |
| 5th | 26 | 23 | 88.5% |
| 6th | 21 | 11 | 52.4% |
| 7th | 21 | 10 | 47.6% |
| 8th | 47 | 24 | 51.1% |
| Total | 198 | 132 | 66.7% |

### 3. Language Arts Progress for Second Through Eighth Graders

As it did last year, the school elected to use MAP test results from the fall and spring to assess student progress in language arts. Test results were submitted for 198 students who were administered both examinations. Results indicate that, overall, student scores improved by five points from one test to the next (see Table 11).

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Table 11** | | | | |
| **Darrell Lynn Hines Academy** **Average Language Arts Scores for 2nd Through 8th Graders** **Based on Measures of Academic Progress Tests** | | | | |
| **Grade** | **N** | **Average Score Fall** | **Average Score Spring** | **Average Change** |
| 2nd | 26 | 169 | 181 | 12 |
| 3rd | 31 | 184 | 193 | 9 |
| 4th | 26 | 187 | 196 | 9 |
| 5th | 26 | 205 | 210 | 5 |
| 6th | 22 | 207 | 206 | -1 |
| 7th | 20 | 207 | 206 | -1 |
| 8th | 47 | 212 | 214 | 2 |
| **Total** | **198** | **197** | **202** | **5** |

Overall, 136 (68.7%) students improved their language arts score from the fall to the spring test administration (see Table 12).

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Table 12** | | | |
| **Darrell Lynn Hines Academy** **Language Arts Progress for 2nd Through 8th Graders** **Based on Measures of Academic Progress Fall and Spring Tests** | | | |
| **Grade** | **N** | **Number of Students With Improved Score** | **% of Students With Improved Score** |
| 2nd | 26 | 26 | 100.0% |
| 3rd | 31 | 29 | 93.5% |
| 4th | 26 | 22 | 84.6% |
| 5th | 26 | 18 | 69.2% |
| 6th | 22 | 9 | 40.9% |
| 7th | 20 | 6 | 30.0% |
| 8th | 47 | 26 | 55.3% |
| **Total** | **198** | **136** | **68.7%** |

4.      **Writing Progress**

To assess writing skills at the local level, the school set a goal that by the end of the sixth marking period, students would be able to produce a grade-appropriate piece of writing. The grade-level written assignment was assessed using the Six Traits of Writing rubric. The Six Traits of Writing is a framework for assessing the quality of student writing and offers a way to link assessments with revisions and editing. Based on grade-level specific requirements, each student was categorized as having minimal, basic, proficient, or advanced writing skills.

Results provided for 264 students in K5 through eighth grades indicated that 48 (18.2%) exhibited advanced skills, 98 (37.1%) proficient, 81 (30.7%) basic, and 37 (14.0%) students exhibited minimal writing skills on their grade-level writing pieces. Since 86.0% of the students demonstrated basic or better proficiency levels in writing, this local measure of academic performance was met (see Figure 8).

Figure 8



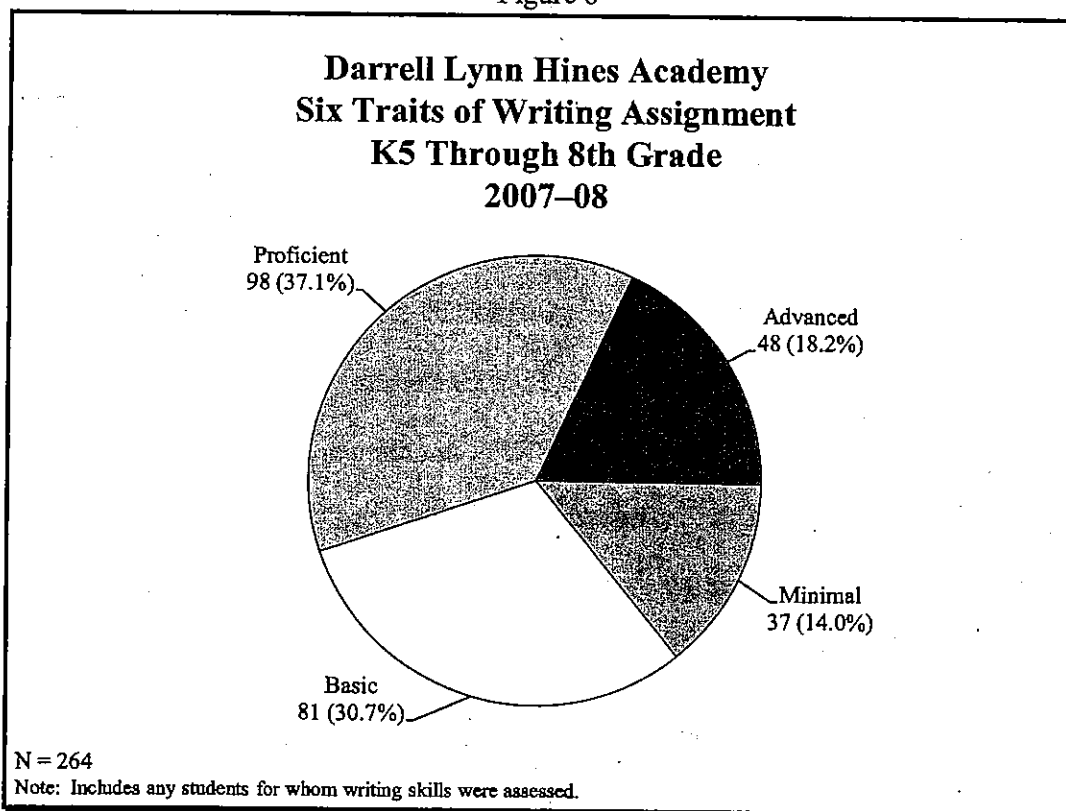**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**Six Traits of Writing Assignment**
**K5 Through 8th Grade**
**2007–08**

Proficient
98 (37.1%)

Advanced
48 (18.2%)

Minimal
37 (14.0%)

Basic
81 (30.7%)

N = 264
Note: Includes any students for whom writing skills were assessed.

Table 13 illustrates the Six Traits of Writing results for each grade.

| Grade | Results | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Minimal | | Basic | | Proficient | | Advanced | | Total | |
| K5 | 1 | 3.8% | 9 | 34.6% | 10 | 38.5% | 6 | 23.1% | 26 | 100.0% |
| 1st | 6 | 21.4% | 15 | 53.6% | 7 | 25.0% | 0 | 0.0% | 28 | 100.0% |
| 2nd | 4 | 16.0% | 7 | 28.0% | 13 | 52.0% | 1 | 4.0% | 25 | 100.0% |
| 3rd | 6 | 19.4% | 10 | 32.3% | 14 | 45.2% | 1 | 3.2% | 31 | 100.0% |
| 4th | 4 | 14.3% | 12 | 42.9% | 12 | 42.9% | 0 | 0.0% | 28 | 100.0% |
| 5th | 4 | 13.3% | 6 | 20.0% | 9 | 30.0% | 11 | 36.7% | 30 | 100.0% |
| 6th | 1 | 4.0% | 10 | 40.0% | 10 | 40.0% | 4 | 16.0% | 25 | 100.0% |
| 7th | 2 | 9.5% | 4 | 19.0% | 9 | 42.9% | 6 | 28.6% | 21 | 100.0% |
| 8th | 9 | 18.0% | 8 | 16.0% | 14 | 28.0% | 19 | 38.0% | 50 | 100.0% |
| Total | 37 | 14.0% | 81 | 30.7% | 98 | 37.1% | 48 | 18.2% | 264 | 100.0% |

**Table 13**

**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**Six Traits of Writing Assessment Results by Grade**
**2007–08**

## E.    External Standardized Measures of Educational Performance

The CSRC requires that the school administer certain standardized tests depending on the grade. The school is required to administer the SDRT to all first, second, and third graders enrolled in charter schools, while third through eighth graders take the Wisconsin Student Assessment System tests. These tests were revised for the 2005–06 school year and now include the WKCE–CRT for reading and math. This is the third year the WKCE–CRT was administered to students in Wisconsin. It is similar to the WKCE reading and math tests formerly given to fourth graders.[20] However, the test is directly aligned with State of Wisconsin model academic standards and is available to students in third through eighth grades. The WKC–CRT meets federal No Child Left Behind requirements to test students' reading and math skills. The
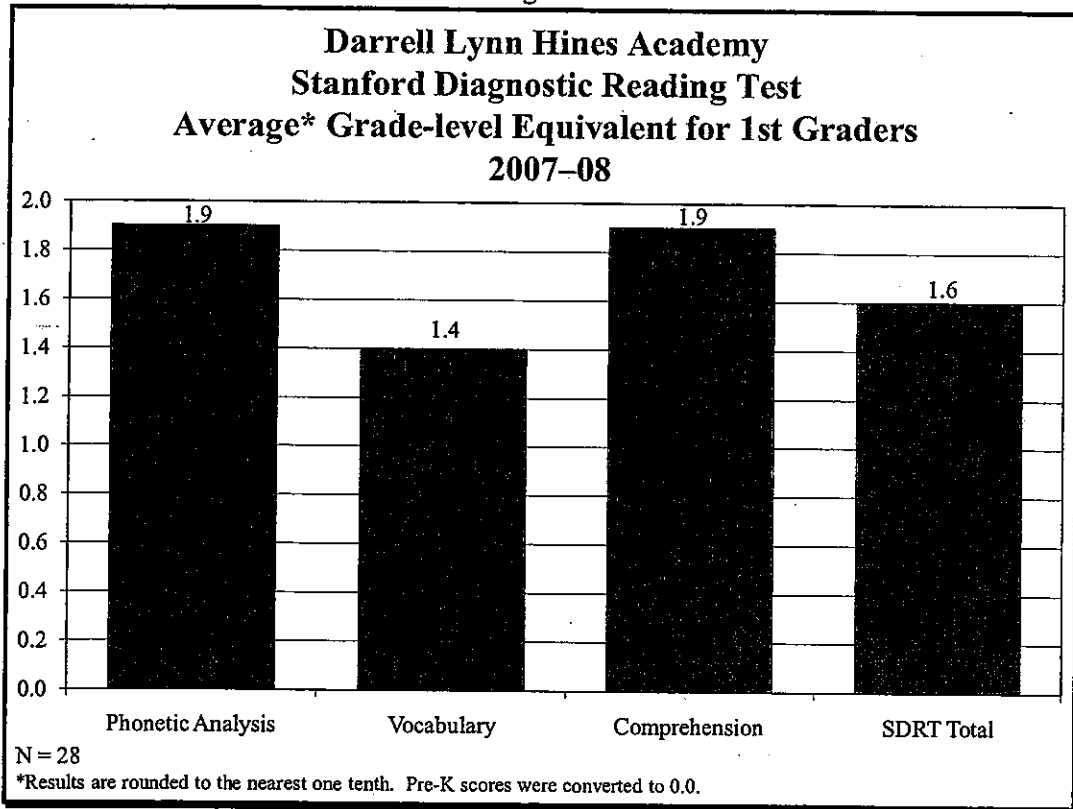
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[20] Note that the WKCE–CRT for fourth and eighth grades includes language arts, social studies, and science subtests. Items on the language arts and social studies subtests are based primarily on the *TerraNova* test and are nationally normed. The items on the reading, math, and science subtests are CRT items that reflect student performance relative to Wisconsin model academic standards.

following section describes results of these standardized tests for all children administered the tests.

## 1. SDRT for First Graders

For first graders, student performance on the SDRT is reported in phonetic analysis, vocabulary, comprehension, and a total SDRT score. In April 2008, the test was administered to 28 first graders. Results on this measure indicate that first graders were functioning in reading, on average, at GLEs of 1.4 to 1.9 in the three areas (see Figure 9).

Figure 9



**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test**
**Average\* Grade-level Equivalent for 1st Graders**
**2007–08**

N = 28
\*Results are rounded to the nearest one tenth. Pre-K scores were converted to 0.0.

The GLE range and median score for first graders is illustrated in Table 14.  The range of levels in each area indicates a fairly wide distribution among the first graders.

| Table 14 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Darrell Lynn Hines Academy<br>Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test<br>Grade-level Equivalent Range for 1st Graders<br>2007–08<br>(N = 28) | | | |
| Area Tested | Lowest Grade Level Scored | Highest Grade Level Scored | Median |
| Phonetic Analysis | Pre-K | 5.2 | 1.5 |
| Vocabulary | K.2 | 2.9 | 1.4 |
| Comprehension | K.4 | 3.4 | 1.8 |
| SDRT Total | K.1 | 2.8 | 1.6 |

Note:  Results are rounded to the nearest one tenth.

## 2. SDRT for Second Graders

Second graders were administered the SDRT in April 2008. Results are presented in Figure 10 and Table 15. As illustrated, second graders were, on average, reading at 1.9 to 3.0 GLEs in the areas tested.
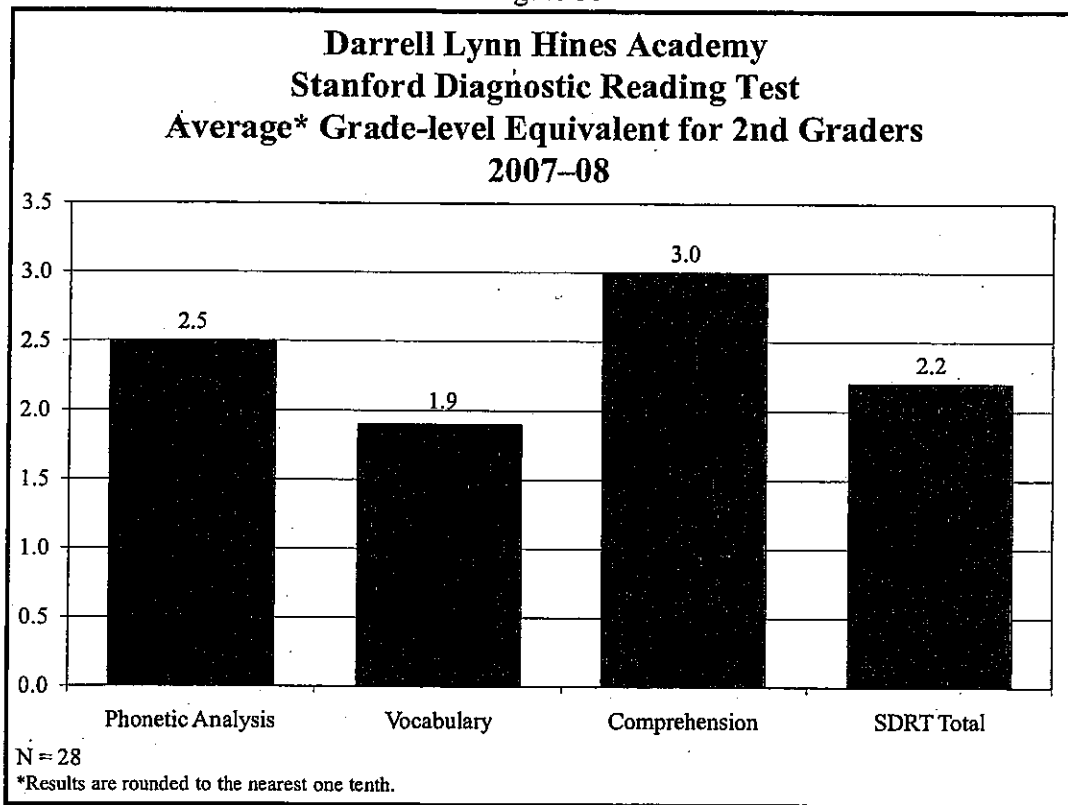
Figure 10



**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test**
**Average\* Grade-level Equivalent for 2nd Graders**
**2007–08**

N = 28
\*Results are rounded to the nearest one tenth.

**Table 15**

**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test**
**Grade-level Equivalent Range for 2nd Graders**
**2007–08**
**(N = 28)**

| Area Tested | Lowest Grade Level Scored | Highest Grade Level Scored | Median |
|---|---|---|---|
| Phonetic Analysis | K.4 | 7.9 | 1.8 |
| Vocabulary | K.5 | 3.9 | 2.0 |
| Comprehension | 1.1 | 8.9 | 2.7 |
| SDRT Total | K.9 | 3.9 | 2.2 |

3.  **Standardized Tests for Third Graders**

    a.  **SDRT for Third Graders**

Results from this year's SDRT, administered in April 2008, indicate that third graders were, on average, reading at grade level in the areas tested (see Figure 11 and Table 16).
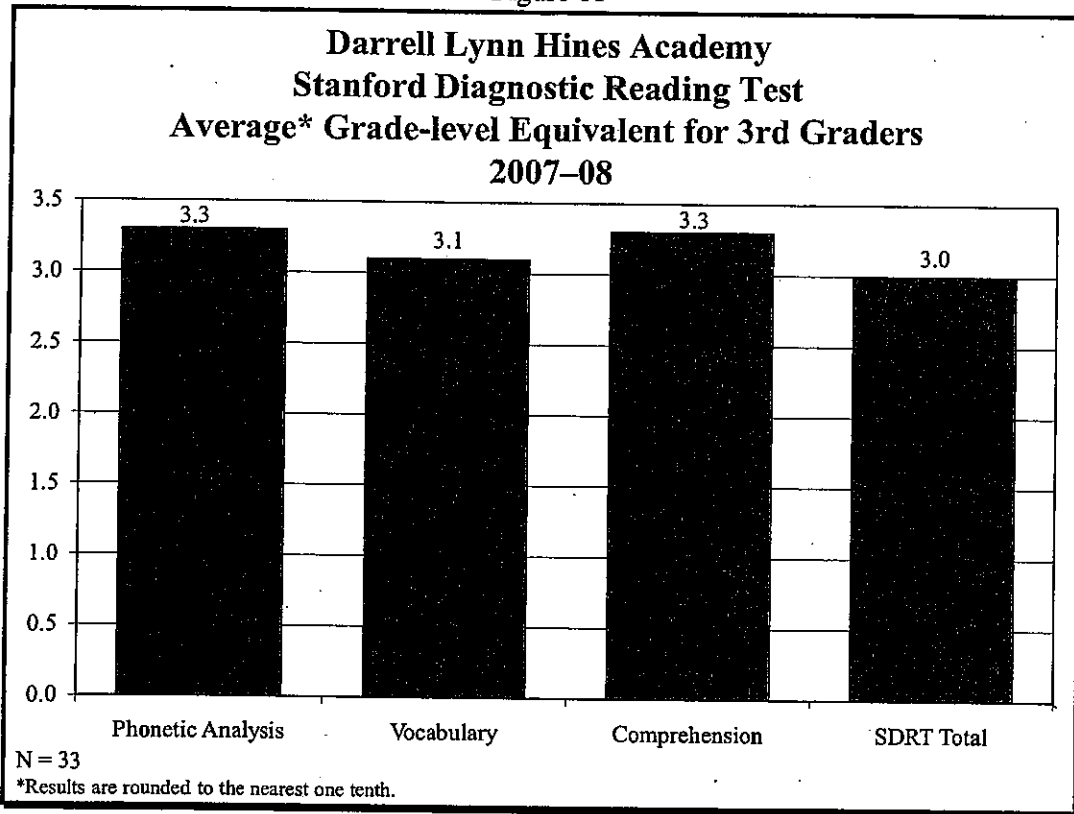
Figure 11



**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy
Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test
Average\* Grade-level Equivalent for 3rd Graders
2007–08**

N = 33
\*Results are rounded to the nearest one tenth.

| Table 16 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**<br>**Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test**<br>**Grade-level Equivalent Range for 3rd Graders**<br>**2007–08**<br>**(N = 33)** | | | |
| **Area Tested** | **Lowest Grade Level Scored** | **Highest Grade Level Scored** | **Median** |
| Phonetic Analysis | K.9 | 10.8 | 2.3 |
| Vocabulary | 1.5 | 4.7 | 3.1 |
| Comprehension | 1.4 | 8.1 | 3.2 |
| SDRT Total | 1.5 | 5.4 | 3.0 |

**b.  WKCE–CRT for Third Graders**

This year, the CSRC required its charter schools to administer the WKCE–CRT to third graders.  Based on how they scored on these assessments, students were placed in one of four proficiency categories:  advanced, proficient, basic, and minimal performance.[21]  Results were used to assess third-grade reading and math skills, as well as provide scores against which to measure progress over multiple years.  This year, the test was administered in November 2007 to 33 third graders.

As illustrated in Figure 12, one (3.0%) third grader scored advanced, 20 (60.6%) proficient, eight (24.2%) scored basic, and four (12.1%) scored in the minimal proficiency level in reading.  In math, no students scored advanced, eight (24.2%) scored proficient, nine (27.3%) scored in the basic level, and 16 (48.5%) students scored minimal proficiency.

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[21] *Advanced*:  Demonstrates in-depth understanding of academic knowledge and skills; *proficient*:  demonstrates competency in the academic knowledge and skills; *basic*:  demonstrates some academic knowledge and skills; and *minimal*:  demonstrates very limited academic knowledge and skills.

Figure 12



**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**WKCE–CRT Proficiency Levels for 3rd Graders**
**2007–08**

N = 33
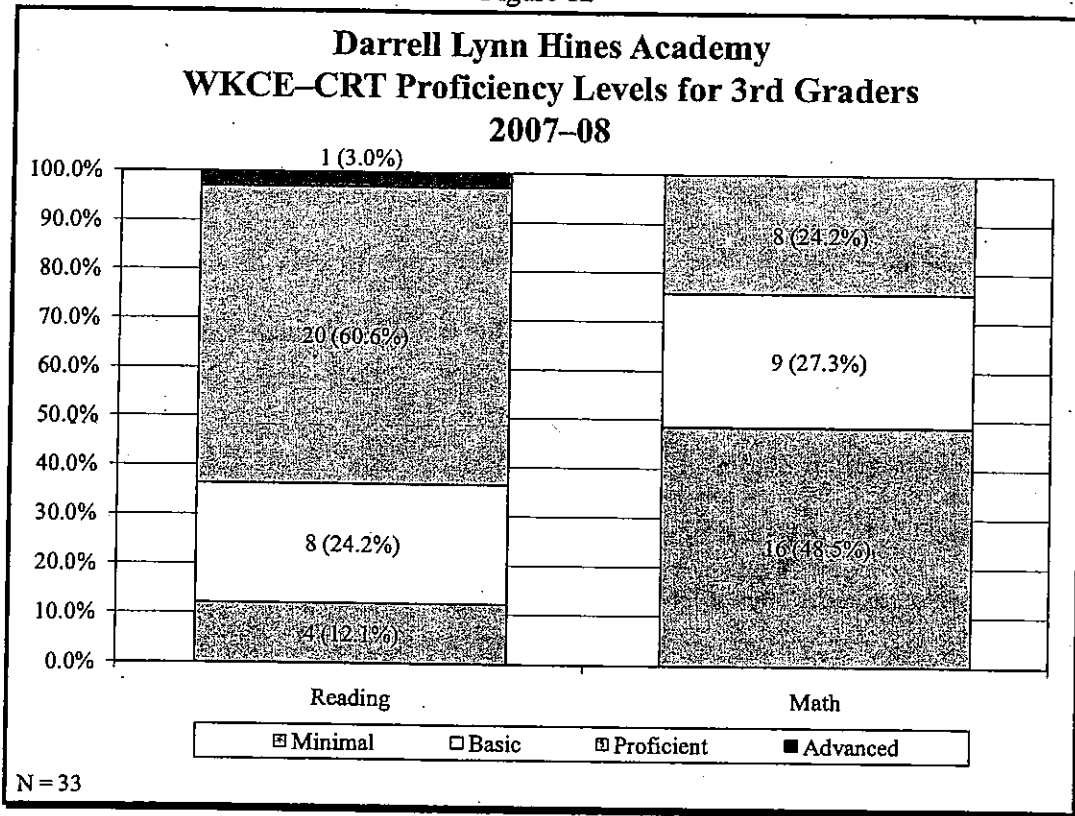
## 4.  WKCE–CRT for Fourth Graders

In November 2007, all fourth graders in Wisconsin public schools were given the WKCE–CRT. The WKCE–CRT is similar to the WKCE administered in past years except the reading, math, and science portions of the test are now called criterion-referenced tests (CRT). The fourth grade test also includes language arts and social studies. Items on the language arts and social studies subtests are based primarily on *TerraNova* test items and are nationally normed. Items on the reading, math, and science subtests are CRT items directly aligned with Wisconsin model academic standards and reflect students' achievement relative to those standards. The CSRC requires that schools report student achievement on the WKCE–CRT in reading, language arts, and math for fourth graders.

The WKCE–CRT was administered to 27 fourth-grade students at DLHA. This year, in reading, one (3.7%) fourth grader scored advanced, 11 (40.7%) scored proficient, 12 (44.4%) scored basic, and three (11.1%) fourth graders scored in the minimal category. In math, no students exhibited advanced skills, nine (33.3%) students scored proficient, three (11.1%) scored basic, and 15 (55.6%) students exhibited minimal skills. In language arts, one (3.7%) student was advanced, 11 (40.7%) were proficient, seven (25.9%) had basic skills, and eight (29.6%) students exhibited minimal skills (see Figure 13).

Figure 13

**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**WKCE–CRT**
**Proficiency Levels for 4th Graders**
**2007–08**
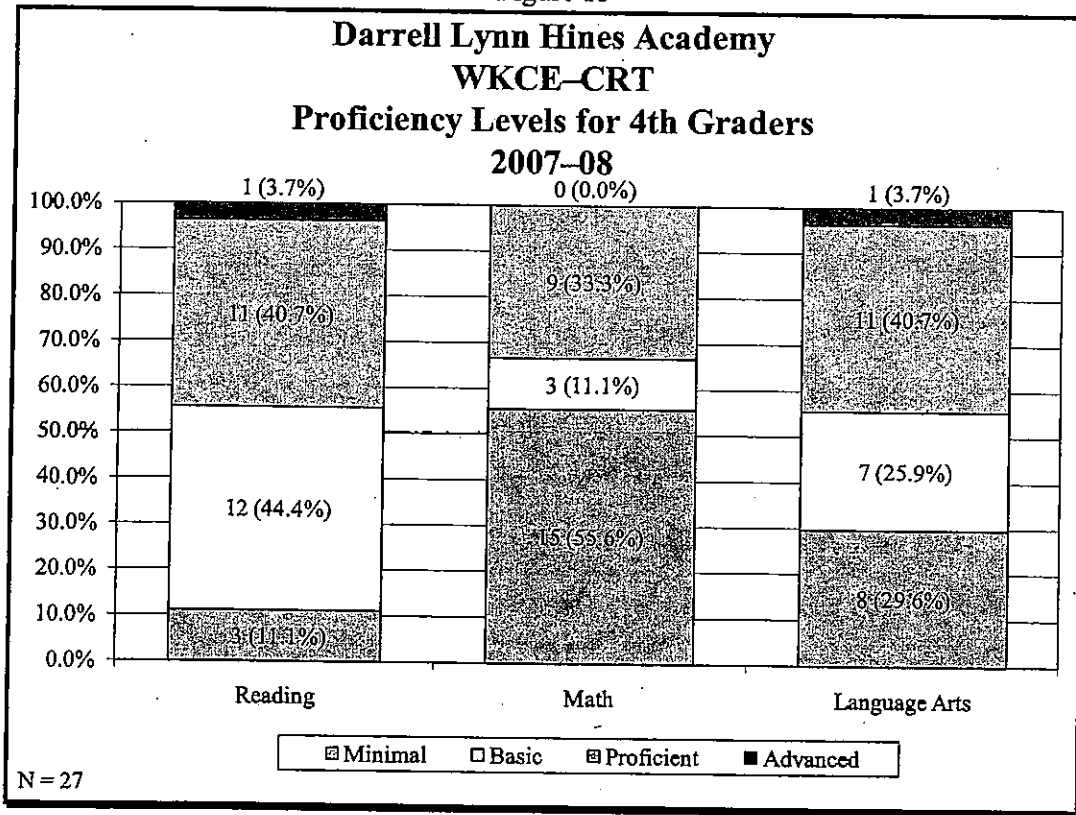


The final score from the WKCE–CRT is a writing score. The extended writing sample is evaluated using two scoring methods. A six-point composition score evaluates students' ability to control purpose, organization, content development, sentence fluency, and word choice. A three-point conventions score evaluates students' ability to manage punctuation, grammar, capitalization, and spelling. Scores are combined to produce a single score ranging from 0.0 to a maximum possible score of 9.0.

DLHA's fourth graders' writing scores ranged from 1.0 to 6.0. The average score was 4.0. The median score was 4.5, meaning half of students scored at or below 4.5 and half scored 4.5 to 6.0.

## 5. WKCE–CRT for Fifth Graders

As required by the CSRC, fifth graders were administered the WKCE–CRT reading and math subtests. The CSRC requires that these subtests be administered to assess student achievement and provide a basis for multiple-year student progress.

The examinations were administered in November 2007 to 28 fifth-grade students. Results indicated that four (14.3%) fifth graders scored advanced, 17 (60.7%) were proficient, seven (25.0%) scored basic, and no fifth graders scored in the minimal reading level. In math, five (17.9%) fifth graders scored advanced, five (17.9%) scored proficient, four (14.3%) scored basic, and 14 (50.0%) fifth graders scored in the minimal proficiency level (see Figure 14).
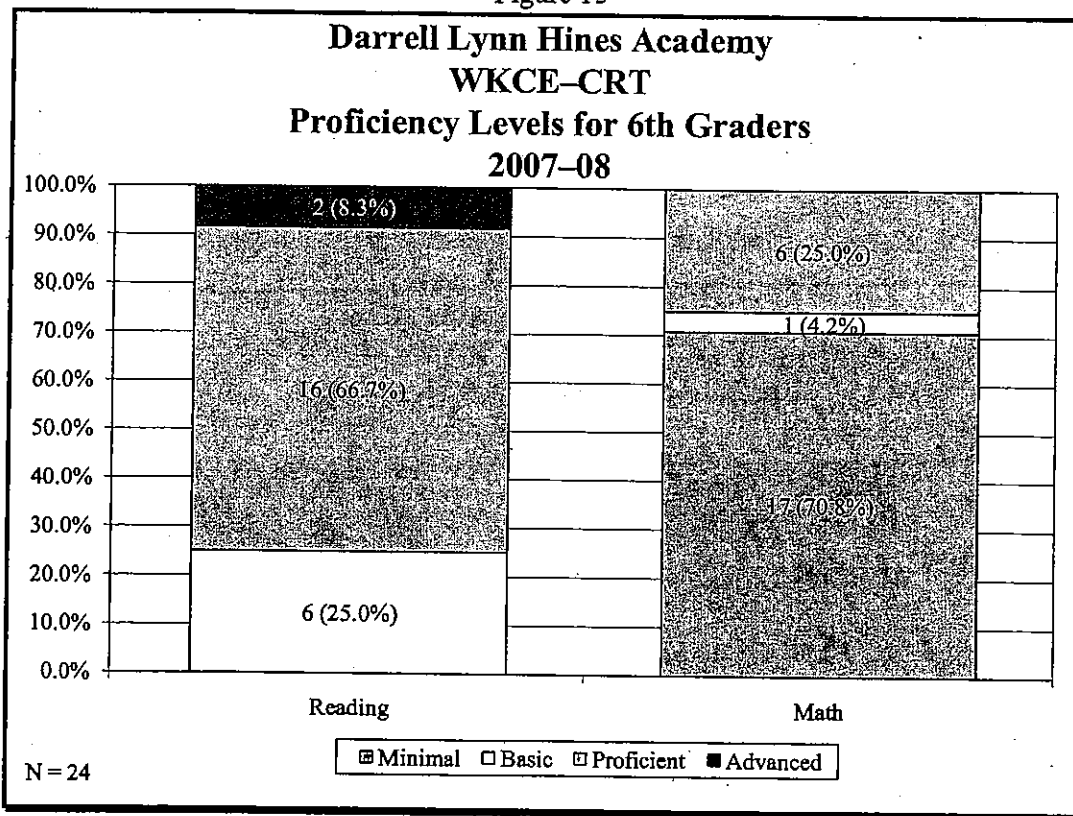
Figure 14



**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**WKCE–CRT**
**Proficiency Levels for 5th Graders**
**2007–08**

N = 28
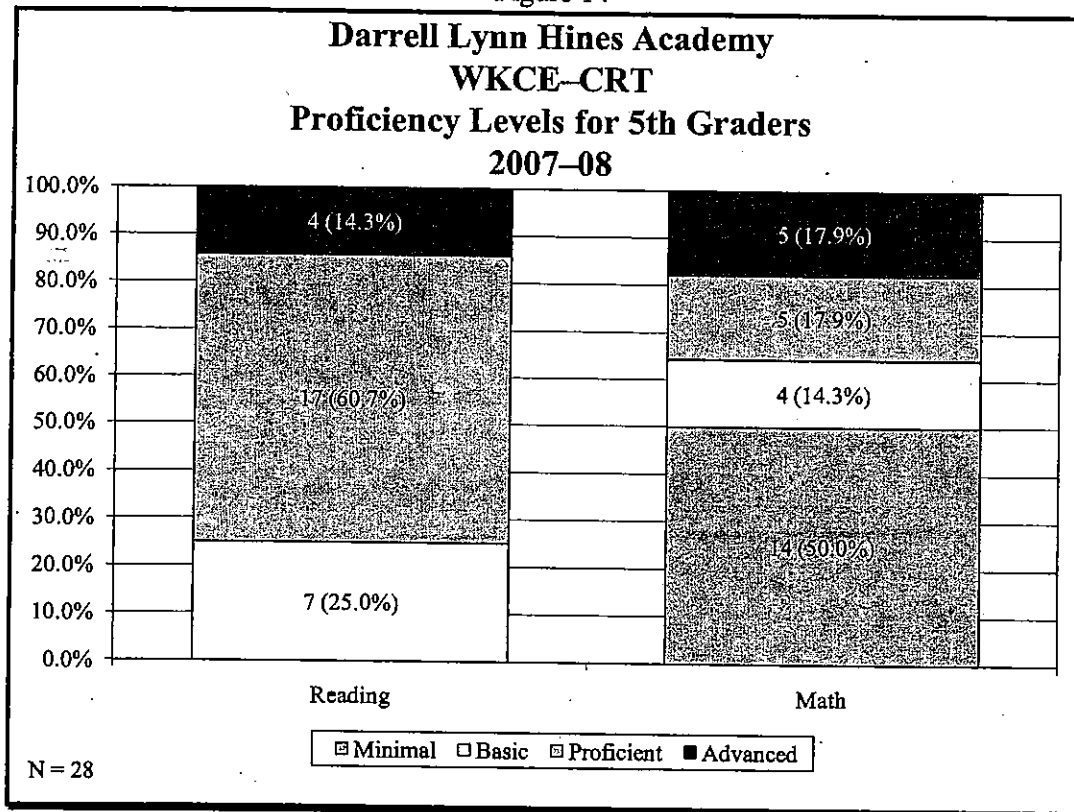
## 6. WKCE–CRT for Sixth Graders

Figure 15 illustrates proficiency levels for all sixth graders who took the WKCE–CRT in November 2007. Two (8.3%) scored advanced, 16 (66.7%) scored proficient, six (25.0%) scored basic, and no students scored minimal in reading. No students scored advanced, six (25.0%) scored proficient, one (4.2%) scored basic, and 17 (70.8%) students scored minimal in math.
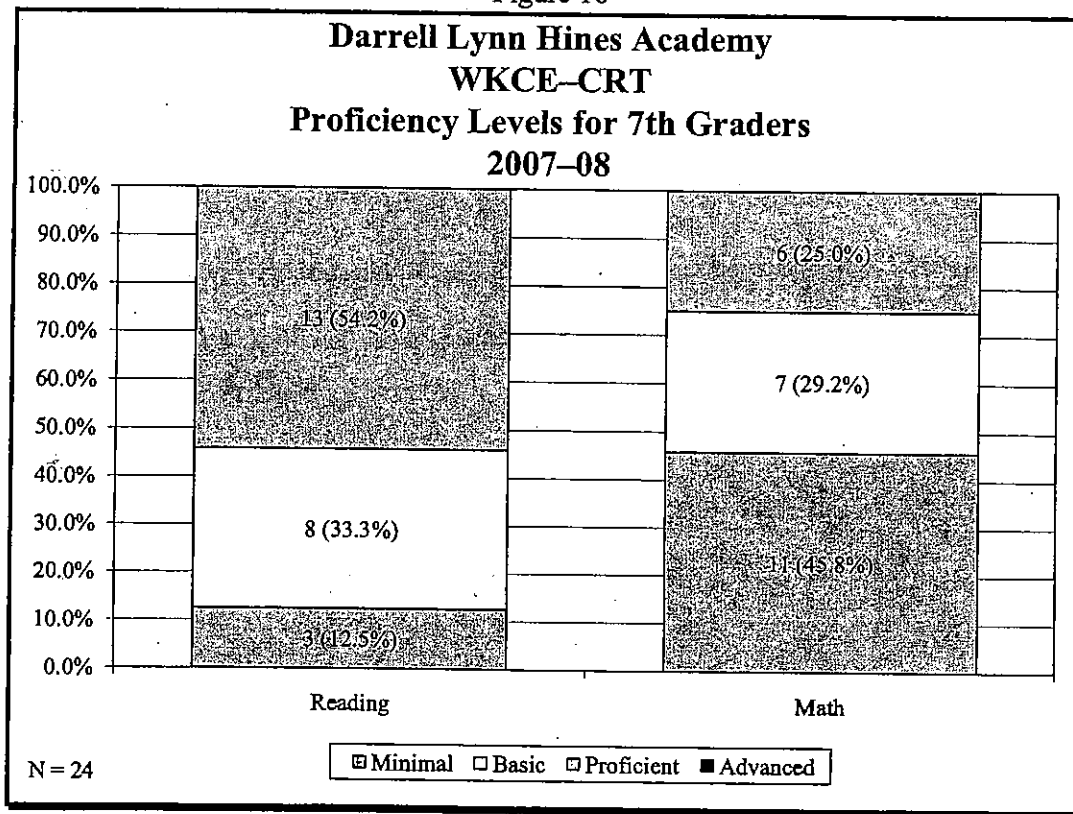
Figure 15



Darrell Lynn Hines Academy
WKCE–CRT
Proficiency Levels for 6th Graders
2007–08

7.    **WKCE–CRT for Seventh Graders**

Figure 16 illustrates the proficiency levels from the seventh grade WKCE–CRT, administered in November 2007. In reading, no seventh graders scored advanced, 13 (54.2%) scored proficient, eight (33.3%) scored basic, and three (12.5%) scored at the minimal reader level. In math, no seventh graders scored advanced, six (25.0%) scored proficient, seven (29.2%) scored basic, and 11 (45.8%) seventh graders were at the minimal level in math.

Figure 16



Darrell Lynn Hines Academy
WKCE–CRT
Proficiency Levels for 7th Graders
2007–08

N = 24

Minimal  Basic  Proficient  Advanced

## 8. WKCE–CRT for Eighth Graders

Eighth graders were administered the WKCE–CRT in November 2007. The eighth grade test consists of reading, math, language arts, science, and social studies. The items on the language arts and social studies subtests are based primarily on nationally normed *TerraNova* items. Items on the reading, math, and science tests are CRT and are directly aligned with Wisconsin model academic standards. The CSRC requires results be reported in reading, math, and language arts.

This year, the test was administered to 47 students. Six (12.8%) eighth graders scored advanced, 23 (48.9%) scored proficient, 13 (27.7%) scored basic, and five (10.6%) scored minimal in reading. In math, two (4.3%) students scored advanced, 14 (29.8%) scored proficient, 11 (23.4%) scored basic, and 20 (42.6%) students scored at the minimal level. In language arts, three (6.4%) scored advanced, 12 (25.5%) students scored proficient, 19 (40.4%) scored basic, and 13 (27.7%) students were at the minimal level (see Figure 17).

Figure 17

**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy
WKCE–CRT
Proficiency Levels for 8th Graders
2007–08**
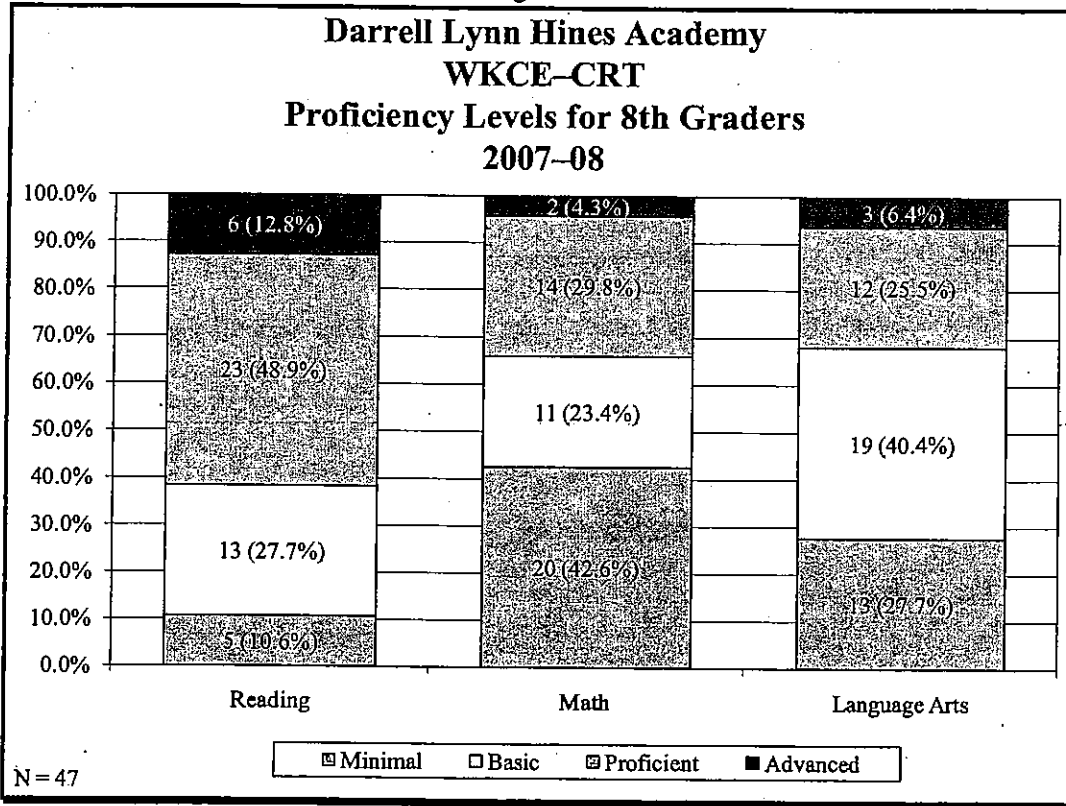


Eighth graders are also assessed on an extended writing sample. The extended writing sample is assigned up to three points for punctuation, grammar, capitalization, and spelling, and up to six points for purpose, organization, content development, sentence fluency, and word choice. The maximum possible score is nine points.

This year, eighth graders' scores ranged from 4.0 to 6.5. The average score was 5.0, and the median score was 5.0.

## F.     Multiple-year Student Progress

Year-to-year progress is measured by comparing scores in reading, language, and math on standardized tests from one year to the next. The tests used to examine progress are the SDRT (reading only) and the WKCE–CRT from 2006–07.

The CSRC requires that multiple-year student progress in first through third grades be reported for all students tested in consecutive years. Progress for fourth through eighth graders is to be reported for students enrolled a full academic year (FAY), i.e., since September 15, 2006. In addition to reporting GLE growth for second and third graders, the CSRC requires that progress for students who met proficiency expectations during the prior year be reported separately from those who did not.

### 1.     First Through Third Graders

First- through third-grade reading progress is measured using the SDRT. Results from this test are stated in GLEs and do not translate into proficiency levels. The CSRC expects students to advance, on average, at least one GLE per year from spring to spring testing. Results in this section include all students who were administered the SDRT in consecutive years.

The following table describes reading progress results, as measured by the SDRT, over consecutive academic years for 24 students enrolled in DLHA as first graders in 2006–07 and then as second graders in 2007–08, and 28 students enrolled as second graders in 2006–07 and then as third graders in 2007–08.

Overall, SDRT totals indicated an average improvement of 0.6 GLE from first to second grade and 0.7 GLE from second to third grade. The school did not meet the expectations for second graders or third graders (see Table 17).

**Table 17**

**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**Average GLE Advancement in Reading From 1st to 2nd and 2nd to 3rd Grade**
**Based on SDRT**

| SDRT Total 2006–07 to 2007–08 | Grade-level Equivalent | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Average GLE 2006–07 | Average GLE 2007–08 | Average Advancement | Median Advancement |
| 1st to 2nd        (n = 24) | 1.7 | 2.3 | 0.6 | 0.5 |
| 2nd to 3rd        (n = 28) | 2.3 | 3.0 | 0.7 | 0.7 |

Note: Results are rounded to the nearest tenth.

It is possible to compare SDRT results over two academic years, i.e., 2005–06 to 2007–08, using scores from kindergarten students who took the SDRT in 2005–06 and again in 2007–08 as second graders, and to compare 2005–06 first-grade scores to the scores these students earned as third graders in 2007–08.[22] As illustrated, in 2005–06, kindergarten students were reading a full grade level above GLE and were able to maintain a grade-level GLE in 2007–08. Likewise, first graders in 2005–06 were reading at or above GLE and maintained GLE as third graders in 2007–08. Progress for the 20 students with comparison scores from K5 to second and 21 students from first to third grade indicates an average improvement of 1.0 GLE and 1.3 GLE respectively over two years (see Table 18).

**Table 18**

**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**Average GLE Advancement From K5 to 2nd and 1st to 3rd Grade**
**Based on SDRT**

| Reading | Grade-level Equivalent | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Average GLE (2005–06) | Average GLE (2007–08) | Average Advancement | Median Advancement |
| K5 to 2nd (n = 20) | 1.4 | 2.4 | 1.0 | 1.0 |
| 1st to 3rd (n = 21) | 1.7 | 3.0 | 1.3 | 1.3 |

Note: Results are rounded to the nearest tenth.

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[22] The school administered the SDRT to kindergarteners in April 2006.

## 2. Progress for Students Who Met Proficiency Level Expectations

For the past three years, the CSRC has required that schools administer the WKCE–CRT reading and math subtests to all students in third through eighth grades.

The CSRC expects that at least 75.0% of the students who reached proficiency, i.e., proficient or advanced, in 2006–07 will maintain their status of proficient or above in 2007–08. As illustrated, 83.8% of students met this expectation in reading and 76.7% met this expectation in math (see Tables 19a and 19b).

| Table 19a | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Darrell Lynn Hines Academy<br>Reading Proficiency Level Progress for<br>FAY Students Who Tested at Proficient or Advanced in 2006–07<br>Based on WKCE–CRT | | | |
| Grade | Students Proficient/Advanced in 2006–07 | Students Maintained Proficient/Advanced in 2007–08 | |
| | | N | % |
| 3rd to 4th | 12 | 9 | 75.0% |
| 4th to 5th | 17 | 14 | 82.4% |
| 5th to 6th | 13 | 12 | 92.3% |
| 6th to 7th | 11 | 9 | 81.8% |
| 7th to 8th | 27 | 23 | 85.2% |
| Total | 80 | 67 | 83.8% |

| Table 19b |||||
| :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Darrell Lynn Hines Academy<br>Math Proficiency Level Progress for<br>FAY Students Proficient or Advanced in 2006–07<br>Based on WKCE–CRT |||||
| Grade | Students Proficient/Advanced in 2006–07 | Students Maintained Proficient/Advanced in 2007–08 || |
| | | N | % |
| 3rd to 4th | 5 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 4th to 5th | 9 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 5th to 6th | 5 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 6th to 7th | 8 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 7th to 8th | 16 | 13 | 81.3% |
| Total | 43 | 33 | 76.7% |

## 3. Progress for Students Who Did Not Meet Proficiency Level Expectations

The CSRC requires that student progress be examined separately for students who did not meet proficiency level expectations in 2006–07. Progress for first- through third-grade students is assessed using the SDRT. The SDRT results do not translate into proficiency levels. Therefore, CRC selected students who scored below GLE in 2006–07. It is expected that these students would improve more than one GLE. This year, there were four second graders and nine third graders who tested below grade-level expectations in the prior year as first and second graders. Combined, the average progress for these students was 1.1 GLE. Note that to protect student identity, CSRC requires a minimum group size of ten students. See Table 20.

| Table 20 |||
| :--- | :--- | :--- |
| Darrell Lynn Hines Academy<br>Reading Progress for FAY Students Below GLE<br>on 2006–07 SDRT |||
| Grade | N | % Advanced |
| 1st to 2nd | 4 | Cannot report due to N size |
| 2nd to 3rd | 9 | Cannot report due to N size |
| TOTAL | 13 | 1.1 |

Analysis of scores from 2005–06 to 2007–08 (two FAYs) indicated that there were no third graders who tested below GLE in 2005–06 as first graders. Therefore, there are no results to report over this two-year period.

Progress for fourth through eighth graders is assessed using proficiency levels from the WKCE–CRT from 2006–07. The CSRC expects students who scored minimal or basic to progress at least one level or, if they scored in the same level, to progress within that level. To examine whether or not students who remained within the same level, e.g., minimal in 2006–07 and minimal in 2007–08, CRC used the scale score thresholds used by the DPI to establish proficiency levels. The basic and minimal levels were then equally divided into quartiles, and CRC determined whether or not a student had progressed one or more quartiles.

As illustrated in Table 21, 30.0% of fourth graders who were below proficiency expectations in reading showed improvement in reading by progressing a proficiency level or advancing to a higher quartile. Overall, 52.1% of students who were below proficiency improved at least one proficiency level or advanced a quartile within their reading proficiency level.

| Table 21 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Darrell Lynn Hines Academy<br>Reading Proficiency Level Progress for<br>FAY Students Minimal or Basic in 2006–07<br>Based on WKCE–CRT | | | | | |
| Grade | # Students Minimal/Basic in 2006–07 | # Students Who Advanced One Proficiency Level | If Not Advanced, # Who Improved Quartile(s) Within Proficiency Level | Total Advancement | |
| | | | | N | % |
| 3rd to 4th | 10 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 30.0% |
| 4th to 5th | 8 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 5th to 6th | 7 | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size | Cannot report due to N size |
| 6th to 7th | 11 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 36.4% |
| 7th to 8th | 12 | 4 | 4 | 8 | 66.7% |
| Total | 48 | 19 | 6 | 25 | 52.1% |

Proficiency level progress in math is described in Table 22. As illustrated, 30.6% of students who did not meet proficiency level expectations, i.e., scored minimal or basic, in 2006–07, either advanced one proficiency level (N = 14) or if they did not advance a level, improved at least one quartile within their level (N = 12).

| Table 22<br><br>Darrell Lynn Hines Academy<br>Math Proficiency Level Progress for<br>FAY Students Minimal or Basic in 2006–07 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grade | # Students Minimal/Basic in 2006–07 | # Students Who Advanced One Proficiency Level | If Not Advanced, # Who Improved Quartile(s) Within Proficiency Level | Total Proficiency Level Advancement | |
| | | | | N | % |
| 3rd to 4th | 17 | 4 | 2 | 6 | 35.3% |
| 4th to 5th | 16 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 18.9% |
| 5th to 6th | 15 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 20.0% |
| 6th to 7th | 14 | 4 | 1 | 5 | 35.7% |
| 7th to 8th | 23 | 3 | 6 | 9 | 39.1% |
| Total | 85 | 14 | 12 | 26 | 30.6% |

## G.    Annual Review of the School's Adequate Yearly Progress

### 1.    Background Information[23]

State and federal laws require the annual review of school performance to determine student academic achievement and progress. Annual review of performance required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act is based on the test participation of all students enrolled, a required academic indicator (either graduation or attendance rate), and the proficiency rate in reading and mathematics. Science achievement is also considered in some instances.

In Wisconsin, the DPI releases an annual review of school performance for each chartered school with information about whether that school has met the criteria for each of the four required adequate yearly progress (AYP) objectives. If a school fails to make AYP for two

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[23] This information is taken from the DPI website: www.dpi.state.wi.us/sifi/AYP_Summary.

consecutive years in the same objective, the school is designated as "identified for improvement." Once designated as "identified for improvement," the school must meet the annual review criteria for two consecutive years in the same objective to be removed from this designation.

The possible school status designations are as follows:

- "Satisfactory," which means the school is not in improvement status.

- "School Identified for Improvement" (SIFI), which means the school has not met AYP for two consecutive years in the same objective.

- SIFI Levels 1-5, which means the school missed at least one of the AYP objectives and is subject to the State requirements and additional Title I sanctions assigned to that level.

- SIFI Levels 1-4 Improved, which means the school met the AYP in the year tested but remains subject to sanctions due to the prior year. AYP must be met for two consecutive years in that objective to be removed from "improvement" status and returned to "satisfactory" status.

- Title I Status, which identifies if Title I funds are directed to the school. If so, the schools are subject to federal sanctions.

2.    **Adequate Yearly Progress Review Summary**[24]

According to DLHA's *Adequate Yearly Progress Review for 2007–08*, published on the DPI's website, DLHA met three of four of the AYP objectives: test participation, attendance, and reading. The school did not meet the AYP expectation that 58% of students would be proficient in mathematics.

In addition, the DPI has reported that although DLHA did not meet AYP in math for this year, the school received a "satisfactory" status designation in all four objectives for the past three years. The DLHA's improvement status remains satisfactory.

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[24] For a copy of DLHA's Annual Review of School Performance, see www.dpi.state.wi.us/sifi/AYP_Summary.

## IV.   CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

This report covers the sixth year that DLHA has operated as a City of Milwaukee charter school.   For the 2007–08 academic year, DLHA has met nearly all of its education-related contract provisions.   One provision that was not met was that second and third graders would advance, on average, one GLE in reading from the previous year.   This year's second graders showed an average increase of 0.6 GLE and third graders advanced, on average, 0.7 GLE.   In addition to the information explained in the body of this report, see Appendix A for an outline of specific contract provision compliance information.

The secondary educational outcomes included the following attendance and parental involvement findings:

- Average student attendance was 93.0%, exceeding the school's goal of 90.0%.

- Parents of 86.1% of the children attended the first family-teacher conference and parents of 99.3% of the children attended the second scheduled conference, meeting DLHA's goal.

Primary educational outcomes for this year were measured by local measures and standardized tests. DLHA's local measures of academic progress indicated the following:

- Of 50 kindergarten and first-grade students, 46 (92.0%) either met or exceeded math expectations from the first to the sixth marking periods.

- Fall to spring MAP scores for second- through eighth-grade students were as follows:

  » Improvement in reading was demonstrated by 74.4% of students (an average overall change of 5.0 points);

  » Improvement in math was demonstrated by 66.7% of students (an average overall change of 4.0 points); and

  » Improvement in language arts was demonstrated by 68.7% of students (an average overall change of 5.0 points).

- Of the school's 264 students, 86.0% demonstrated basic or better proficiency levels in writing using the Six Traits of Writing as a framework for each grade level.
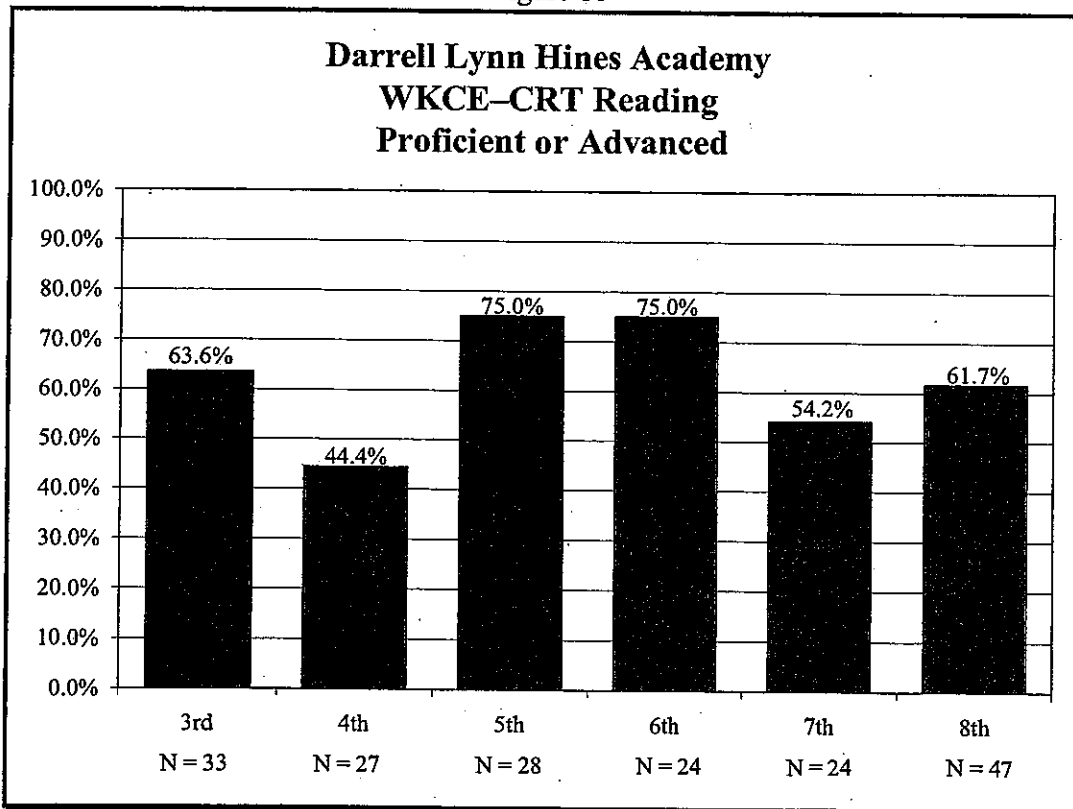
Required standardized tests results for DLHA were as follows.[25]

The April 2008 SDRT results indicate the following:

- First graders were, on average, reading at 1.6 GLE overall;
- Second graders were at 2.2 GLE; and
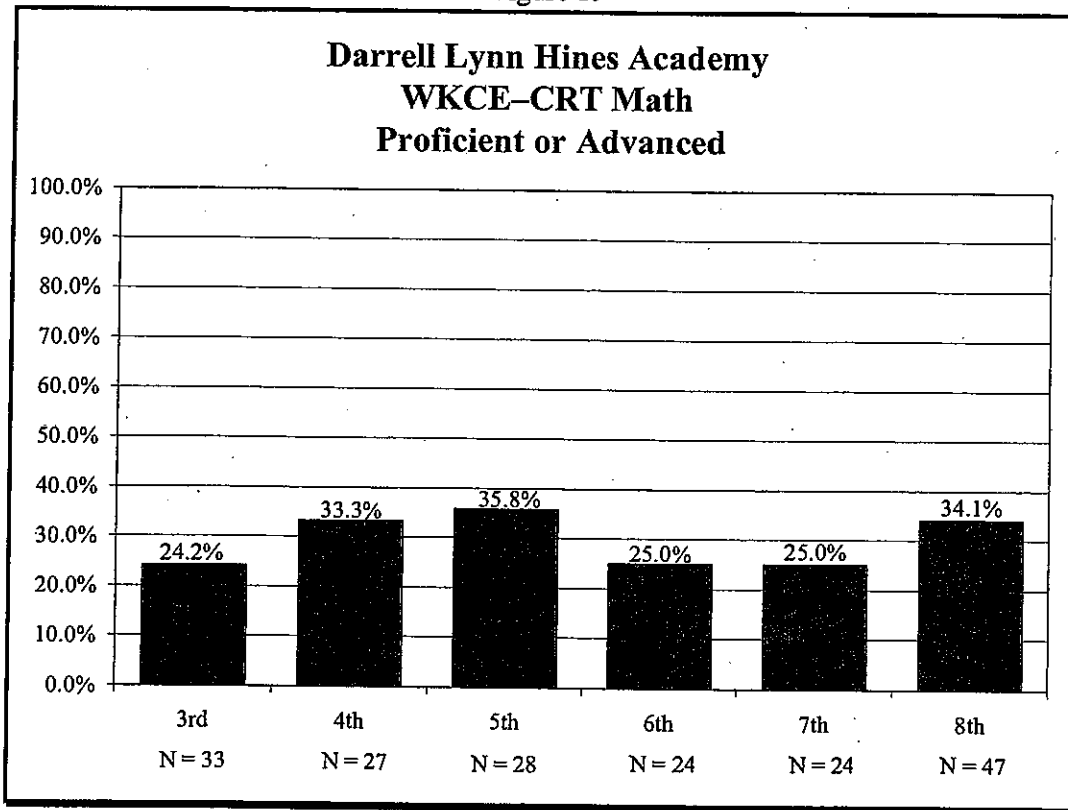- Third graders were at 3.0 GLE.

The WKCE–CRT reading and math results are summarized in Figures 18 and 19.

Figure 18



**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**WKCE–CRT Reading**
**Proficient or Advanced**

| Grade | 3rd | 4th | 5th | 6th | 7th | 8th |
|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| % | 63.6% | 44.4% | 75.0% | 75.0% | 54.2% | 61.7% |
| N | N = 33 | N = 27 | N = 28 | N = 24 | N = 24 | N = 47 |

---

[25] Due to rounding, some of the percentages may not total exactly 100.0%.

Figure 19



**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**
**WKCE–CRT Math**
**Proficient or Advanced**

- SDRT multiple-year advancement results indicated that in reading, second and third graders advanced an average of 0.6 GLE and 0.7 GLE, respectively. The school did not meet the CSRC expectation of at least one year advancement for second and third graders.

- WKCE–CRT results indicated that multiple-year advancement results for students who met proficiency level expectations in 2006–07 are as follows:

  » Of 80 fourth through eighth graders, 83.8% maintained a proficient or advanced level in reading, exceeding the CSRC's expectation of at least 75.0%.

  » Of 43 fourth through eighth graders, 76.7% maintained a proficient or advanced level in math, falling short of the CSRC's expectation of at least 75.0%.

- Second and third grade students who scored below grade level expectations in reading using the 2006-07 SDRT advanced, on average, 1.1 GLE.

- Multiple-year advancement results for students below proficiency level expectations on their WKCE–CRT 2006–07 results indicated the following:

» Of 48 fourth through eighth graders, 52.1% either advanced one proficiency level or one quartile within the previous year's proficiency level in reading.

» Of 85 fourth through eighth graders, 30.6% either advanced one proficiency level or one quartile within the previous year's proficiency level in math.

After reviewing the information in this report and considering the information gathered during the administration interview in May 2008, it is recommended that the focus of activities for the 2008–09 school year include the following:

• Continue to focus on math instruction and techniques to improve math performance.

• Continue to focus on improving the rate of progress in reading for second and third graders as measured by the year-to-year SDRT.

• Continue to focus on staff development.

# Appendix A

## Contract Compliance Chart

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4" align="center">**Darrell Lynn Hines Academy**<br><br>**Overview of Compliance for Educationally Related Contract Provisions**<br>**2007–08**</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Section of Contract**</td><td>**Educationally Related Contract Provision**</td><td>**Page**</td><td>**Contract Provisions Met or Not Met?**</td></tr>
<tr><td>Section B</td><td>Description of educational program: student population served.</td><td>pp. 4–6</td><td>Met</td></tr>
<tr><td>Section I,V</td><td>Education program of at least 180 days (including five banked and two organization days).</td><td>p. 9</td><td>Met</td></tr>
<tr><td>Section C</td><td>Educational methods.</td><td>pp. 2–4</td><td>Met</td></tr>
<tr><td>Section D</td><td>Administration of required standardized tests.</td><td>pp. 40–53</td><td>Met</td></tr>
<tr><td>Section D</td><td>Academic criteria #1: Maintain local measures, showing pupil growth in demonstrating curricular goals.</td><td>pp. 32–40</td><td>Met</td></tr>
<tr><td>Section D and subsequent memos from the CSRC</td><td>Academic criteria #2: Year-to-year achievement measure.<br>a. 2nd- and 3rd-grade students: advance average of one GLE in reading.<br>b. 4th- to 8th-grade students proficient or advanced in reading: at least 75.0% maintain proficiency level.<br>c. 5th- to 8th-grade students proficient or advanced in language arts: at least 75.0% maintain proficiency level.<br>d. 4th- to 8th-grade students proficient or advanced in math: at least 75.0% maintain proficiency level.</td><td>a. pp. 54–55<br><br>b. p. 56<br><br><br>c. N/A<br><br><br>d. pp. 56–57</td><td>a. Not met.*<br><br>b. Met for 83.8% of 80 4th- through 8th-graders.<br><br>c. N/A**<br><br>d. Met for 76.7% of 43 4th- through 8th-grade students.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Section D</td><td>Academic criteria #3:<br>a. 2nd- and 3rd-grade students with below grade level 2006–07 scores in reading: advance more than one GLE in reading.<br>b. 4th- to 8th-grade students below proficient level in 2006–07 reading test: advance one level of proficiency or to the next quartile within their proficiency level range.<br>c. 5th- to 8th-grade students below proficient level in 2006–07 language test: advance one level of proficiency or to the next quartile within their proficiency level range.<br>d. 4th- to 8th-grade students below proficient level in 2006–07 math test: advance one level of proficiency or to the next quartile within their proficiency level range.</td><td>a. p. 57<br><br><br>b. p. 58<br><br><br><br><br>c. N/A<br><br><br><br><br>d. p. 59</td><td>a. Met.<br><br>b. Met for 52.1% of 48 4th- through 8th-grade students.<br><br><br>c. N/A**<br><br><br><br>d. Met for 30.6% of 85 4th- through 8th-grade students.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Section E</td><td>Parental involvement</td><td>pp. 9–10, 33</td><td>Met</td></tr>
<tr><td>Section F</td><td>Instructional staff hold a DPI license or permit to teach</td><td>p. 7</td><td>Met</td></tr>
<tr><td>Section I</td><td>Pupil database information</td><td>pp. 4–6</td><td>Met</td></tr>
<tr><td>Section K</td><td>Discipline procedures</td><td>p. 10–11</td><td>Met</td></tr>
</table>

*Second graders with comparison first-grade SDRT scores advanced 0.6 GLE on average; third graders with comparison second-grade SDRT scores advanced 0.7 GLE on average.
**There are no comparable tests with which to measure year-to-year change in language arts.

# Appendix B

## Student Learning Memorandum

| To: | Children's Research Center |
|---|---|
| From: | Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy Of Excellence |
| Re: | Student Learning Memorandum for the 2007-08 School Year |
| Date: | October 24, 2007 |

The following procedures and outcomes will be used for the 2007-08 school year to monitor the educationally related activities described in the Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence's charter school contract with the City of Milwaukee. The data will be provided to the Children's Research Center (CRC), the monitoring agent contracted by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee. Data will be reported in a spreadsheet or database that includes each student's ID number(s). The spreadsheet or database should include all students enrolled at any time during the school year and each student's race/ethnicity and gender.

**Attendance**
The school will maintain an average daily attendance rate of 90.0%. Attendance rates will be reported as present, excused absence, or unexcused absence.

**Enrollment**
The school will record the enrollment date for every student. Upon admission, individual student information, including gender and race/ethnicity, will be added to the school database.

**Termination**
The date and reason for every student leaving the school will be recorded in the school database.

**Parent Participation**
On average, parents will participate in at least two of the scheduled parent-teacher conferences. The date of the conference and whether a parent/guardian or other interested person participated in the conference will be recorded by the school for each student.

**Special Education Needs Students**
The school will maintain updated records on all special education students including disability type, date of the Individual Education Program (IEP) team assessment, assessment outcome, IEP completion date, IEP review dates, and any reassessment results.

**Academic Achievement: Local Measures**
On average, students in K5 and first grades will exhibit a grade of 2 or better or show one or more levels of progress between the first and sixth marking periods in mathematics.

Students from second through eighth grades will demonstrate progress in reading, language arts, and mathematics on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests administered in the fall and again in the spring.[26]

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[26] In addition to fall and spring testing, all second through eighth grade students will be assessed using the MAP in January 2008 to inform classroom instruction.

**Writing**

By the end of the sixth marking period, students will demonstrate a grade appropriate writing piece using the 6 traits - writing rubric that corresponds with the student's respective grade level. Grading of the writing piece will be scored based on the 6-trait writing rubric. Students will be scored in the following way:

❑ Minimal
❑ Basic
❑ Proficient
❑ Advanced

**Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures**

The following standardized test measures will assess academic achievement in reading and/or mathematics. On average, each class will demonstrate a minimum increase of one grade level on the SDRT as measured by the academic progress of each student in that grade. Students who initially test below grade level on the SDRT will demonstrate more than one grade level gain. At least 75.0% of the students who were proficient or advanced on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination – Criterion Referenced Test (WKCE – CRT) in 2006-07 will maintain their status of proficient or above. Students who tested below proficient on the WKCE – CRT in 2006-07 will improve a level or at least one quartile within their level.

> **Grades 1, 2, & 3**   **Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test** will be administered each spring. The first year testing will serve as baseline data. Progress will be assessed based on the results of the testing in reading in the second and subsequent years.

> **Grades 3,4,5,6,7,8**   **Wisconsin Knowledge Concept Examination – Criterion Referenced Test** will be administered on an annual basis in the timeframe identified by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. The WKCE – CRT reading subtest will provide each student with a proficiency level via a scale score in reading, and the WKCE – CRT math subtest will provide each student with a proficiency level via a scale score in math.
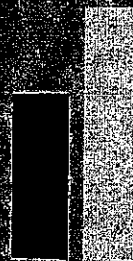
# Attachment E

# Maasai Institute

## Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance

## 2007-08 School Year

Report Date: September 2008

Prepared by:
Janice Fihan, Ph.D.
Susan Grambling
Theresa Healy

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (continued)

APPENDICES

Appendix A: CSRC Contract Provisions
Appendix B: Small High School Learning Memo With Data Addendum
Appendix C: Trends

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
## for
## Maasai Institute's
## Third Year of Operation as a City of Milwaukee Charter School
## and as a *New Vision* Small High School
## 2007–08

This third annual report on the operation of Maasai Institute (Maasai), a small high school chartered by the City of Milwaukee, is a result of the intensive work undertaken by the City of Milwaukee's Charter School Review Committee (CSRC), the school's staff, the staff of the Technical Assistance & Leadership Center (TALC), and the Children's Research Center (CRC). Based on the information gathered and discussed in the attached report, CRC has determined the following results for Maasai's third year of operation.

## I.     CITY OF MILWAUKEE CONTRACT COMPLIANCE

Maasai met over half of the 19 education-related City of Milwaukee contract provisions. The provisions not met were the following: the teacher licensing requirement, maintenance of a local measure in reading, individualized education program (IEP) progress, writing, and the intervention requirement for students scoring below a certain threshold on the ninth-grade EXPLORE and tenth-grade PLAN tests.

## II.     PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

### A.     Local Measures

### 1.     Secondary Measures of Academic Progress

To meet City of Milwaukee requirements, Maasai identified measurable outcomes in the following secondary measures of academic progress:

- Attendance;
- Student demographics, including special education student information;
- Parent involvement;
- Graduation requirements; and
- Graduation plans.

The school did not meet its internal goals in some of these outcomes. See the Attendance and Educational Performance sections of this report for details.

### 2.     Primary Measures of Academic Progress

The primary measures of academic progress are the school's local measures as well as standardized test results.

The CSRC requires that the school track student progress in reading, writing, and mathematics throughout the year to identify students in need of additional help and to assist teachers with

developing strategies to improve the academic performance of all students. TALC required that the school track progress in at least two academic areas.

Maasai identified local measures of academic progress in reading/literacy, math, and special education goals. (This also fulfilled the TALC requirements.) Results indicated the following:

- Based on the data provided for the High School Placement Test (HSPT), results from the spring of 2007 and the spring of 2008 show that 14 (56.0%) students improved in reading and six (25.0%) students improved in language arts from the spring of 2007 to the spring of 2008. (The school did not provide fall 2007 data; therefore, CRC could not determine if the goal that 50% of students would show improvement from fall 2007 to spring 2008 was met.)

- Approximately half (50.9%) of 106 students met the school's goal related to math competencies.

- Eleven (73.3%) of 15 students with special education needs were making sufficient progress on their IEP benchmarks during the school year.

## B.    Standardized Tests

Maasai administered all required standardized tests. Standardized test results indicated the following:

- Forty-seven (63.5%) of the 74 ninth-grade students with EXPLORE composite scores scored below 13, indicating a need for supplemental instruction.

- Based on the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Exam – Criterion-referenced Test (WKCE–CRT) reading test, 25.7% (N = 9) of 35 tenth graders were functioning at the proficient or advanced levels and 74.3% (N = 26) were functioning at the minimal or basic levels.

- Based on the WKCE–CRT language arts test, 19.4% (N = 6) of 31 tenth graders were functioning at the proficient level and 80.6% (N = 25) were functioning at the minimal or basic levels.

- Based on the WKCE–CRT math test, 18.9% (N = 7) of 37 tenth graders were functioning at the proficient level and 81.1% (N = 30) were functioning at the minimal or basic levels.

- Twenty-four (64.9%) of 37 tenth-grade students with PLAN composite scores scored below 15, indicating a need for supplemental instruction.

- Twelve (41.4%) of 29 eleventh-grade students took the ACT.

- Three (60.0%) of five twelfth graders took the ACT in the fall and two (50.0%) of four twelfth graders enrolled at the time of the spring ACT took the ACT. Scores are not provided in order to protect student identity.

## C.    Year-to-year Academic Achievement on Standardized Tests

A comparison of year-to-year EXPLORE (ninth grade) and PLAN (tenth grade) tests for 15 tenth-grade students indicated the average composite score improvement was 0.6.

Scores from students' eighth-grade WKCE–CRT were not available; therefore, multiple-year academic progress from eighth to tenth grade could not be assessed.

## D.    Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)

The school did not meet adequate yearly progress (AYP) in test participation and in the graduation rate. The school met AYP in reading and math. While the school did not meet AYP in all four areas, its status was "satisfactory" because the school did not miss AYP for two consecutive years.

## III.    FINDINGS RELATED TO KEY ATTRIBUTES OF EQUITABLE SMALL HIGH SCHOOLS

To address the school's overarching goal to establish an ability-based assessment in the context of project-based learning, the school established several outcome measures. Results include the finding that all (100.0%) teachers who had been at the school all year used backward design for unit and project development.

## IV.    STUDENT, TEACHER, AND PARENT SATISFACTION

Approximately 18.2% of teachers thought that the school's contribution to students' academic growth was excellent and 18.2% thought that it was good. Approximately 57.1% of parents thought the school's contribution to their child's learning was excellent and 35.7% though that it was good (see Figure ES1).

Figure ES1



**Maasai Institute**
**School's Contribution to Child's Learning/Growth**
**2007–08**
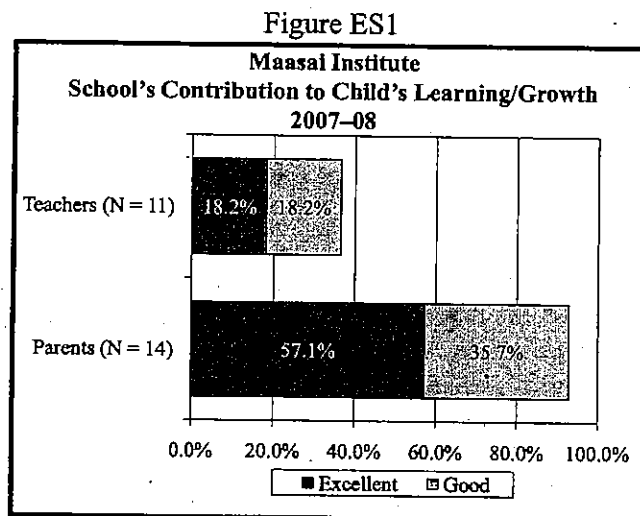
Twenty-one students were interviewed. Their responses included the following (see Figure ES2).

### Figure ES2

**Maasai Institute**
**Student Interviews**
**2007–08**

| Statement | Percentage |
|---|---|
| I Use Computers at School | 100.0% |
| I Plan to Go to College | 95.2% |
| I Feel the Grades I Get Are Fair | 81.0% |
| I Know the # of Credits to Graduate | 81.0% |

0.0% 25.0% 50.0% 75.0% 100.0%

N = 21
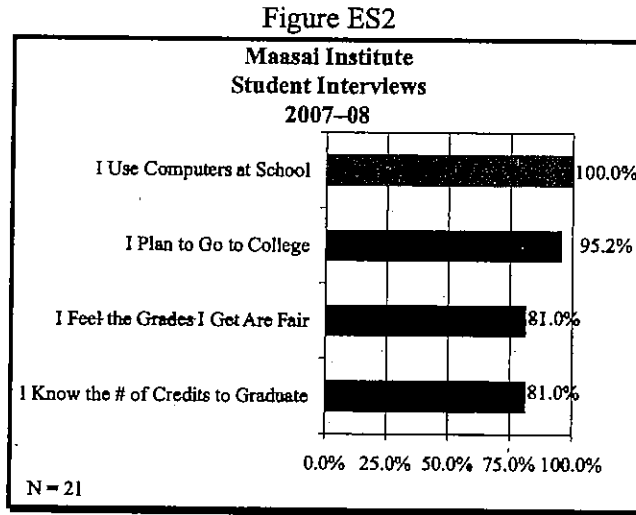
- A majority of the teachers interviewed suggested that to improve the school there needed to be experienced, education-based, and financially responsible leadership.

## V. RECOMMENDATIONS

On June 19, 2008, the President of the Board of Directors of Maasai Institute presented a letter to the CSRC withdrawing their charter. As of the writing of this report, the school has closed.

# I.   INTRODUCTION

This is the third and final program monitoring report to address educational outcomes for Maasai Institute (Maasai), one of five schools chartered by the City of Milwaukee for the 2007–08 academic year. This report focuses on the educational component of the monitoring program undertaken by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) and was prepared according to the contract between the CSRC and the Children's Research Center (CRC).[1] Please see Appendix A for an overview of compliance with education-related contract provisions. In addition, this report includes the outcomes required by Maasai's contract with the Technical Assistance & Leadership Center (TALC), a founding member of *A New Vision for Secondary Education in Milwaukee*.[2]

The process used to gather the information in this report included the following:

1.  CRC made an initial site visit to conduct a structured interview with the administrator to gather information about the school and to review pertinent documents. Additional site visits were made to facilitate communication with the CSRC and to learn about the overall school operations.

2.  CRC staff assisted the school in developing a small high school learning memo, including a data addendum that specified the data elements to be tracked throughout the year. See Appendix B for a copy of the learning memo with data addendum.

3.  At the end of the academic year, CRC staff conducted a structured interview with Maasai staff.

4.  CRC staff reviewed a sample of special education student files.

5.  CRC staff interviewed a random selection of 21 students and 11 teachers. In addition, the school distributed a satisfaction survey to parents.

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[1] CRC is a nonprofit research organization and division of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency.

[2] In 2003, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation awarded $17.25 million to a consortium of community organizations in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to create 50 small high schools over five years in the City of Milwaukee. This initiative was designed to improve graduation rates and better prepare high school graduates for college by creating small learning environments that foster student growth. As part of this effort, community leaders from multiple disciplines created TALC, which connects schools, workplaces, and other community resources to improve pathways for youth to post-secondary learning, careers, and effective citizenship. As an intermediary between the Foundation and the small schools, TALC assists leaders in planning efforts and managing school operations through the first two years of operation. It is one of the founding members of *A New Vision of Secondary Education in Milwaukee*.

6. The school provided electronic data, which, along with interview data, were compiled and analyzed by CRC.

Maasai is the only *New Vision* small high school that is chartered by the City of Milwaukee. It is in its third year working with TALC.[3] This year, TALC required each third-year implementing school to focus on an overarching goal. The school was then to design performance measures, or outcomes, that not only demonstrated progress toward reaching this overarching goal but also implemented the Gates Foundation's seven key attributes of equitable schools. The seven key attributes of equitable schools are a demonstration of common focus, high expectations, personalized environment, respect and responsibility, time to collaborate, performance-based, and the use of technology as a tool.

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[3] TALC did not provide the school with a coach for this third year of TALC funding.

## II.   SCHOOL PROFILE

Maasai Institute

Address:     4744 North 39<sup>th</sup> Street
             Milwaukee, WI 53209

Telephone:  (414) 755-7810

Contact:    Janis McCollum, Founder, Village Matriarch

### A.   Educational Methodology[4]

### 1.   Mission and Philosophy

Maasai's mission is to ensure that "all children are well" through a holistic approach to education that connects family and community. The vision of the school is that Maasai is "an education village of children, youth, and elders empowered to make positive changes in the world in which they live."

### 2.   Instructional Design or Curricular Approach

To create a family-centered approach, Maasai's educational program is designed to endorse strong, continuous student-adult relationships, where every student works with an adult to develop and maintain a personal plan for progress. The mentor/advisor acts as an advocate for the students and serves as a main adult point-of-contact, gathering information from teachers and parents about what the young people need and locating the resources to address them.

The design of Maasai's inclusive educational program structure was greatly influenced and informed by current charter school legislation and literature; full-service school, small school, and *New Vision* school literature; the expertise of the members of the school design team; and the vision of Maasai's founder. The student instructional program design is adapted from

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[4] This information is taken from the Maasai Institute *2007–2008 Family Handbook* and its charter school application to the City of Milwaukee.

the ability-based model for student-centered learning used at Alverno College of Milwaukee and the youth development model of the Networks for Youth Development, New York City, and is influenced and informed by multiple other sources on child and youth development.

## B. Data Collection Methodology

In the fall of the academic year, CRC staff conducted a structured interview with the school's leadership team. This information led to the development of a small high school learning memo, which states the school's planned outcomes for the year. CRC also identified specific data elements related to each outcome measure and, in conjunction with the school, identified where the data are stored and the person responsible for entering and reporting the data to CRC. See Appendix B for a copy of the learning memo and data addendum.

CRC staff also completed site visits to facilitate communication with the CSRC and to learn about the overall school operations. At the end of the academic year, a structured interview was conducted with the chief executive administrator and a follow-up meeting was held with teaching staff to clarify data requirements. CRC staff also interviewed a random selection of students and teachers. A survey for parents was developed by CRC and mailed to parents by the school toward the end of the school year.[5] Parents were asked to return the survey to the school in a sealed envelope. After the school submitted the completed surveys to CRC, CRC staff made at least two telephone attempts to reach and survey parents who had not responded.

The CSRC, TALC, and CRC required that all data be collected and reported to CRC in an electronic file, such as a spreadsheet or a database, which included a student ID number. At the end of the academic year, the school was required to submit data to CRC, where the data were compiled and analyzed. The CSRC also required that hard copies of all standardized test data be submitted in addition to the spreadsheet form.

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[5] Initially the school was going to distribute the surveys to parents at a school function toward the end of the year, but such an occasion did not occur.

## C. School Structure

### 1. Grades and Areas of Instruction

During 2007–08, Maasai served ninth-, tenth-, eleventh-, and twelfth-grade students, including students with special education needs. The courses provided during this academic year included courses in science, social studies, math, music, English, art, physical education, French, and Spanish.

### 2. Hours of Instruction/School Calendar Information

The school day began at 8:00 a.m.; ended at 2:47 p.m.; and included seven periods, including subject area periods, study hall, lunch, and "Student Group." On Wednesdays, school was dismissed at 12:30 p.m. to allow time for staff development opportunities.

The first day of school was August 29, 2007, and the last day of school was June 13, 2008.[6] The highest number of possible days for student attendance was 169. In addition, as indicated on the school's 2007–08 calendar, ninth graders attended orientation from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. on August 27, 2007, and other returning students attended an orientation at the same time on August 28, 2007. Students were scheduled to attend a two-day retreat at Camp Matawa and parents were scheduled to attend a parent retreat at Camp Minikani in early September. There were nine additional days set aside for staff development throughout the year.

Maasai met the City of Milwaukee's requirement to provide 875 instructional hours in its chartered schools as well as its contract provision requiring the school to publish an annual calendar.

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[6] Students were seen on August 12, 2007, for placement testing.

3.     **Student Population**

At the start of the school year, there were 184 students enrolled.[7] During the year, 40 students enrolled in and 99 students withdrew from the school. Two students were expelled, one dropped out, and the other 37 students transferred to other schools.

At the end of the year, the 125 enrolled students could be described as follows:

- Nearly all (122, or 97.6%) of the students were African American and three (2.4%) were Hispanic.

- Fifteen (12.0%) students had special education needs. Seven students had learning disabilities; two students had learning disabilities combined with cognitive disabilities (CD); two students had learning disabilities combined with emotional-behavioral disabilities; one student had a learning disability combined with autism; one student had a cognitive disability; one student had an other health impairment (OHI); and one student had a learning disability combined with CD and OHI. Individual education programs (IEPs) had been completed for all 15 students.

- Over half (74, or 59.2%) of the students were female and 51 (40.8%) were male.

- There were 45 (36.0%) students in ninth grade, 47 (37.6%) in tenth, 29 (23.2%) in eleventh, and four (3.2%) students in twelfth grade. The number of students by grade level is illustrated in Figure 1.

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[7] As of September 21, 2007.

Figure 1

**Maasai Institute
Student Grade Levels\***
**2007–08**



9th
45 (36.0%)

12th
4 (3.2%)

10th
47 (37.6%)

11th
29 (23.2%)

N = 125
*At the end of the school year.
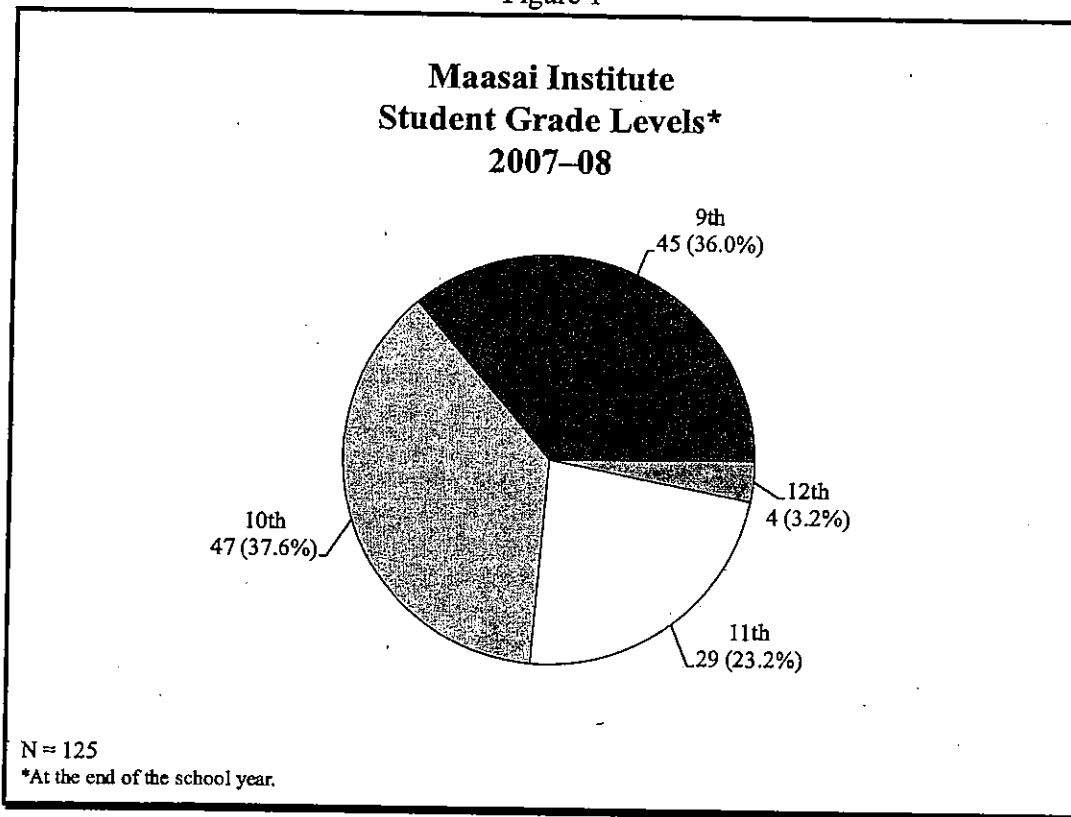
Data regarding the number of students returning to Maasai from the previous year were gathered in the fall of 2007. At that time, the school reported that there were 145 students attending on the last day of the 2006–07 academic year who were eligible for continued enrollment at the school for the 2007–08 academic year. Of those, 64 students were enrolled on the third Friday in September 2007, representing a return rate of 44.1%.[8] Appendix C contains data regarding return rate trends.

## 4. School Staffing: Administrator and Teacher Information

During the year, the school employed 17 full-time teachers, including a principal. Fourteen teachers held a valid Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) license or

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[8] The school's data files submitted to CRC indicated that there were 133 students on the last day of 2006–07 academic year. Of those, 78 were enrolled on the third Friday in September 2007. This represents a return rate of 58.6%.

permit and the other three had applied for emergency licenses. During the year, the principal (also known as the director of education) left the school, as did the French/Spanish teacher, a math teacher, a music teacher, and the chief executive administrator. At the end of the year, there were 13 full-time teachers at the school. Two teachers taught science, two taught English, two taught math, and two taught social studies. One teacher taught math and social studies, and another taught special education and social studies. There was one music teacher, one art teacher, and one physical education teacher.

## 5. Discipline Policy

Maasai's student behavioral policies are described in the *2007–2008 Family Handbook* and include the following topics:

- Behavioral policies;
- Grievance process;
- Classroom etiquette;
- Building and group etiquette/expectations;
- Lockers;
- Substance and alcohol policy;
- Cafeteria etiquette;
- Fighting/safety;
- Gangs;
- Student disrespect;
- Harassment/sexual behavior;
- Probation;
- Selling items;
- Theft;
- Vandalism;
- Pranks;
- Weapons;
- Academic integrity (cheating);
- Books and supplies;
- Classroom preparedness;
- Classroom equipment;
- Hall passes;
- Computer use; and
- Uniforms.

The school uses an approach known as "Growth-positive Behavior," a schoolwide effort for improved educational outcomes.[9] These strategies include responding to individual needs, altering environments, explicitly teaching new skills to the individual with challenging behavior, and positively reinforcing and acknowledging appropriate behaviors. The approach includes prevention; problem solving; and intervention with integrated support systems at the school, classroom, and specific student levels.

In addition, the school has set a policy for acceptable use of the network, Internet, and email, which covers student computer use, an Internet access agreement, and students' rights and responsibilities while using the school Internet.

All of these expectations are communicated to families and students via activities at the family orientation, the summer camp, and staff and student retreats.

## D.    Activities for Continuous School Improvement

Following is a description of Maasai's response to the recommended activities in its programmatic profile and education performance report for the 2006–07 academic year. This information was gathered during the end-of-the-year interview conducted by CRC staff with the leadership of Maasai Institute.[10]

- Recommendation: Develop a strategy for monitoring the acquisition of DPI permits or licenses for teachers in the application process.

  Response: During the fall semester, the director of education tracked the applications and verification of DPI licensure. However, the director of education left the school mid-year. On March 13, 2008, the school provided a memo to the chair of the CSRC outlining a plan to ensure that all teaching staff held a DPI permit to teach for the current and future academic years. The plan included the involvement of the organization's chief executive administrator, the human resources committee, and the director of education. The steps described in this

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[9] Section 11 of the school's charter school application.

[10] The school's chief executive administrator left the school shortly before the end of the school year. The position of director of education (principal) was vacant. Therefore, this information was provided by a lead teacher.

process include a requirement that staff show evidence of license application and that the director of education follow up with DPI at regular intervals.

- Recommendation: Implement specific plans for tracking student progress and regular review of data collection to ensure that outcomes continue to be measured in the event of staff changes.

  Response: The school submitted the data required by the city and TALC in a timely fashion at mid-year. The school also reviewed that data in order to meet the requirement to provide intervention for students falling below expectations.

- Recommendation: Continue the improvement plans for students with less than a 2.0 GPA.

  Response: The school gathered information on the students attending the school in the spring of 2007 and wrote a synopsis of their needs. Advisors worked with the students who were struggling in any class during the period set aside each day for advisors to meet with their students.

- Recommendation: Develop and implement specific improvement plans for the following students:

  » Ninth-grade students scoring below 13 on the EXPLORE;

  » Tenth-grade students scoring below 15 on the PLAN; and

  » Tenth-grade students scoring at minimal or basic levels in the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination – Criterion-referenced Test (WKCE–CRT) math test in the fall of 2006 and the fall of 2007.

  Response: During the end-of-the-year interview, the lead teacher provided "An Overview of Student Interventions, 2007–2008." There were three points of intervention for students in need of academic support. One was for students identified as being in need of special education services; the second was a description of daily math and reading intervention classes for "gray-area" students (based on the High School Placement Test [HSPT] assessment); and the third was an intervention process to identify students in need of academic support based on credits earned/not earned, grades below/above C, and specific skill areas as identified by the PLAN/EXPLORE assessments. This process was used for all students, including students who did not take the EXPLORE, PLAN, or WKCE–CRT.

  The first point of intervention is described in the special education portion of this report.

  The second point of intervention included the development of an integrating math (basic math skills) class and basic English 9 and English 10 classes.

The last point of intervention was implemented in April 2008. The implementation presumably included activities described in a letter to the chair of the CSRC dated February 29, 2008, which outlined the role of advisors, the chief executive officer, and the parent outreach coordinator in the development of a realistic plan of improvement for students identified as needing intervention because of their low PLAN/EXPLORE test results.

- Recommendation: Identify and intervene with students who need organizational skill development, including planning skills.

  Response: The school reported that there is no specific plan to intervene with these students. This area is covered as part of the advisory period.

- Recommendation: Continue efforts to provide onsite health and social services.

  Response: A nurse visited twice each week for two hours. The nurse was paid directly by Maasai. The nurse's duties included meeting with students who had specific private problems, helping with health records, and consulting with staff.

- Recommendation: Implement the initial phase of project-based learning.

  Response: The school staff decided to use project-based learning with Alverno College's ability-based assessment methodology. The staff implemented full use of the backward design unit methodology. They participated in a summer training on backward design, with mid-year check-in on how it was going. Some staff with an expertise in backward design provided leadership. At the mid-year retreat, follow-up training with individualized attention to address specific content areas was provided. All staff went to the Young Women's Leadership Academy to observe the Alverno model.

- Recommendation: Determine and implement the actual life-planning process, including emphasis on parental participation.

  Response: The school reported that they did not have the opportunity to address this recommendation this past year.

## III. MEASURES FOR KEY ATTRIBUTES OF EQUITABLE SMALL HIGH SCHOOLS

### A. Introduction/Background

TALC required each third-year implementing school to focus on an overarching goal. Each school was then directed to design performance measures, or outcomes, that not only demonstrated progress toward this overarching goal, but also implemented the Gates Foundation's seven key attributes of equitable schools. The seven key attributes of equitable schools are as follows:

1. <u>Common focus</u>: The staff and students are focused on a few important goals. The use of time, tools, materials, and professional development activities are aligned with instruction.

2. <u>High expectations</u>: All staff members are dedicated to helping every student achieve state and local standards; all students are engaged in an ambitious and rigorous course of study; and all students leave school prepared for success in work, further education, and responsible citizenship.

3. <u>Personalized environment</u>: The school is designed to promote powerful, sustained student relationships with adults, where every student has an adult advocate and a personal plan for progress.

4. <u>Respect and responsibility</u>: The school becomes a community. The environment is peaceful, safe, just, and studious. The staff teaches, models, and expects responsible behavior. Relationships are based on mutual respect.

5. <u>Time to collaborate</u>: Staff has time to collaborate and develop skills and plans to meet the needs of all students. Parents are recognized as partners in education. Partnerships are developed with businesses for student work-based learning opportunities and with institutions of higher education to improve teacher preparation.

6. <u>Performance-based</u>: Students are promoted to the next instructional level only when they have achieved competency, and students receive additional time and assistance when needed.

7. <u>Technology as a tool</u>: Teachers use technology to design engaging and imaginative curriculum linked to learning standards; they analyze results and have easy access to best practices and professional learning opportunities.

This year, the school's overarching goal was to establish an ability-based assessment in the context of project-based learning. With the assistance of CRC, school staff then selected outcomes that were specific, measurable, attainable, results-oriented, and time-bound (S.M.A.R.T. goals). Those outcomes are included in the small high school learning memorandum.

**B.     Outcome Measures Related to Establishing an Ability-based Assessment in the Context of Project-based Learning**

Maasai's overarching goal was to establish an ability-based assessment model, using semester projects as the primary assessment mechanism. Instructors used four rubrics to assess ability. Three rubrics were standardized, meaning that every teacher used the same rubric for assessment purposes. These rubrics were for research, writing, and presentation. The fourth rubric was created by each teacher, assessing content-specific requirements, and changed depending on the content covered for a given unit. Teachers were trained in backward design, a unit-planning tool in which each unit is constructed as a means to an end, the end being Wisconsin state academic standards. Teachers were trained in the summer of 2007 and designed semester-ending projects for one of their classes. Individual units during the semester were subsets of the overall project. Each teacher was also required to create a syllabus. As part of this effort, the school set a goal that 75% of teachers would use backward design to develop their units and that 75% would use backward design to develop the semester-ending project. Use of backward design meets the Gates Foundation's requirements in all seven key attribute areas.

The school submitted an ability-based assessment for 15 teachers. Fourteen of the 15 teachers had been trained in backward design. (One teacher was at the school for only a few months near the end of the year. Since that teacher would not be joining the teaching staff next year, he/she was not trained in backward design.) Two teachers who had been trained left the

school during the year. All 12 teachers who had been at the school all year used backward design (see Figure 2).[11] Teachers developed from four to 14 units and from two to six semester-ending projects using backward design methods (not shown). The school therefore exceeded its goal that 75% of the teachers would use backward design to develop units and 75% would use it to develop projects.

Figure 2



**Maasai Institute**
**Overarching Goal: Ability-based Assessment**
**Use of Backward Design**
**2007–08**

Unit Development                    Project Development

Used
Backward
Design
12
(100.0%)

Used
Backward
Design
12
(100.0%)

N = 12 teachers                    N = 12 teachers

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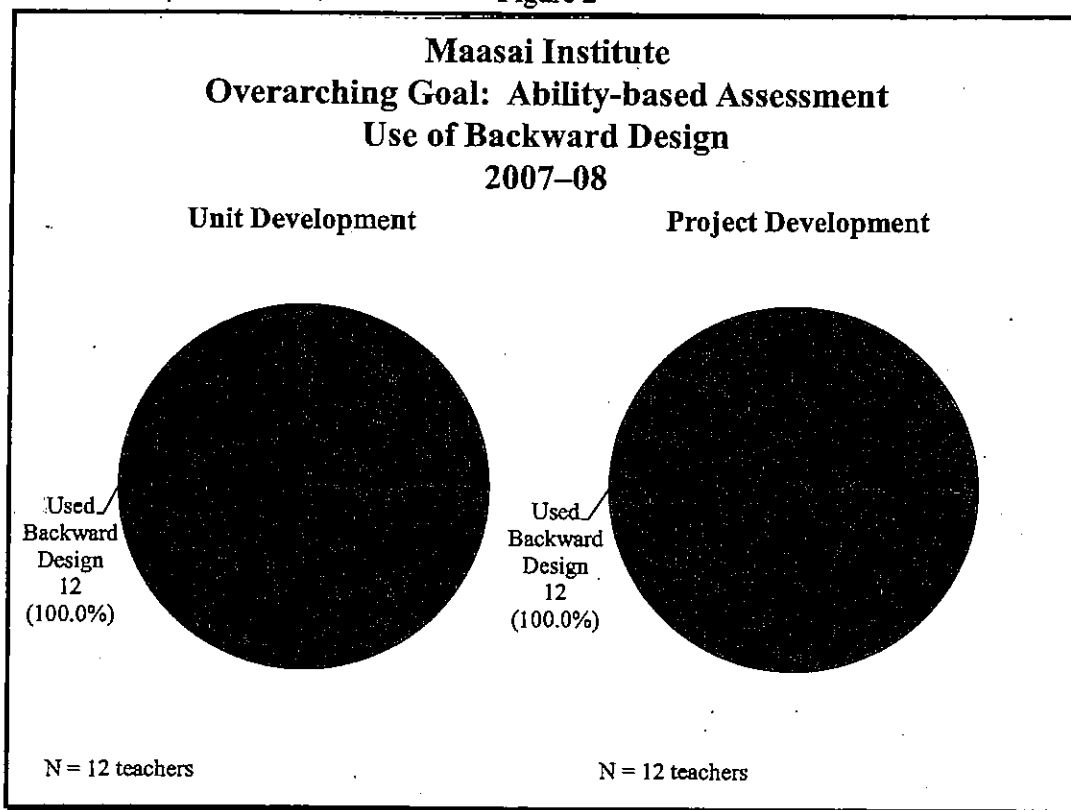
[11] The two teachers who left the school had also used backward design to create units and develop semester-ending projects.

## IV.    EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

,   In addition to outcomes related to establishing an ability-based assessment, Maasai was also required by the CSRC to identify outcomes related to attendance, parent/guardian participation, graduation requirements, and graduation plan objectives.   The school also identified local and standardized measures to describe students' academic achievements.

### A.    Attendance

The school's attendance goal as described in the learning memo was that students would attend school, on average, 85.0% of the time.   Attendance rates were calculated for 231 students for whom data were submitted and averaged across all students.   This year, the average attendance rate was 71.3%.   When excused absences were included in the calculation, the average attendance rate rose to 74.6%, short of the school's goal related to attendance.[12]

### B.    Parent/Guardian Participation

Maasai's goal regarding parent/guardian participation was that all students would be represented by a family member at the time of enrollment and during at least two of the family/parent/guardian events held by the school.   Maasai also set a goal that participation at the last schoolwide event would be higher than participation at the first schoolwide event.   Maasai provided parent participation data for all 108 students enrolled for the entire school year.[13] Parent participation data were included for several events, including the following:

- Enrollment family interview;
- Parent retreat;

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[12] Based on school-supplied enrollment data for 231 students.  The attendance rate was computed by subtracting the number of days enrolled for each student from the number of total days absent, then averaging all students' attendance rates.  A student was considered present if he/she attended at least five of seven classes.

[13] Data are only included for students enrolled for the entire school year, as parents of those students had an opportunity to attend all of the events.

- Volunteers meeting;
- Family movie night;
- Parent chat nights (10/3/2007 and 11/7/2007);
- Idea meeting;
- Parent-teacher organization (PTO) meeting;
- Senior meeting;
- Family conferences (11/19/2007 and 1/31/2008);
- Christmas concert dinner; and
- Black history dinner.

As shown, all parents attended the enrollment family interview (100.0%). The goal of all students being represented by a family member at the time of enrollment was met. However, the goal that participation at the last schoolwide event would be higher than the first was not met, as the first event, the parent retreat on 9/7/07, had a participation rate of 2.8%, and the last event, the family conference on 1/31/08, had the same participation rate (see Figure 3).

Figure 3



**Maasai Institute**
**Parent Participation**
**2007–08**

| Event | Participation |
|---|---|
| Enrollment Family Interview | 108 (100.0%) |
| Christmas Concert Dinner, 12/12/07 | 11 (10.2%) |
| Family Conference, 11/19/07 | 9 (8.3%) |
| Volunteers Meeting, 9/17/07 | 7 (6.5%) |
| Idea Meeting, 10/11/07 | 5 (4.6%) |
| PTO Meeting, 10/15/07 | 5 (4.6%) |
| Black History Dinner, 9/22/07 | 4 (3.7%) |
| Parent Chat Night, 11/7/07 | 4 (3.7%) |
| Family Conference, 1/31/08 | 3 (2.8%) |
| Family Movie Night, 9/26/07 | 3 (2.8%) |
| Parent Retreat, 9/7/07 | 3 (2.8%) |
| Senior Meeting, 11/15/07 | 3 (2.8%) |
| Parent Chat Night, 10/3/07 | 0 (0.0%) |

0.0%    20.0%    40.0%    60.0%    80.0%    100.0%

N = 108

The goal of a family member being present at at least two events other than the enrollment family interview was met by ten (9.3%) students' family members (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

**Maasai Institute
Parent Participation in School Events***
**2007–08**



One Event
18 (16.7%)

Two or More
Events
10 (9.3%)

No Events
80 (74.1%)

N = 108
*Does not include enrollment family interview.
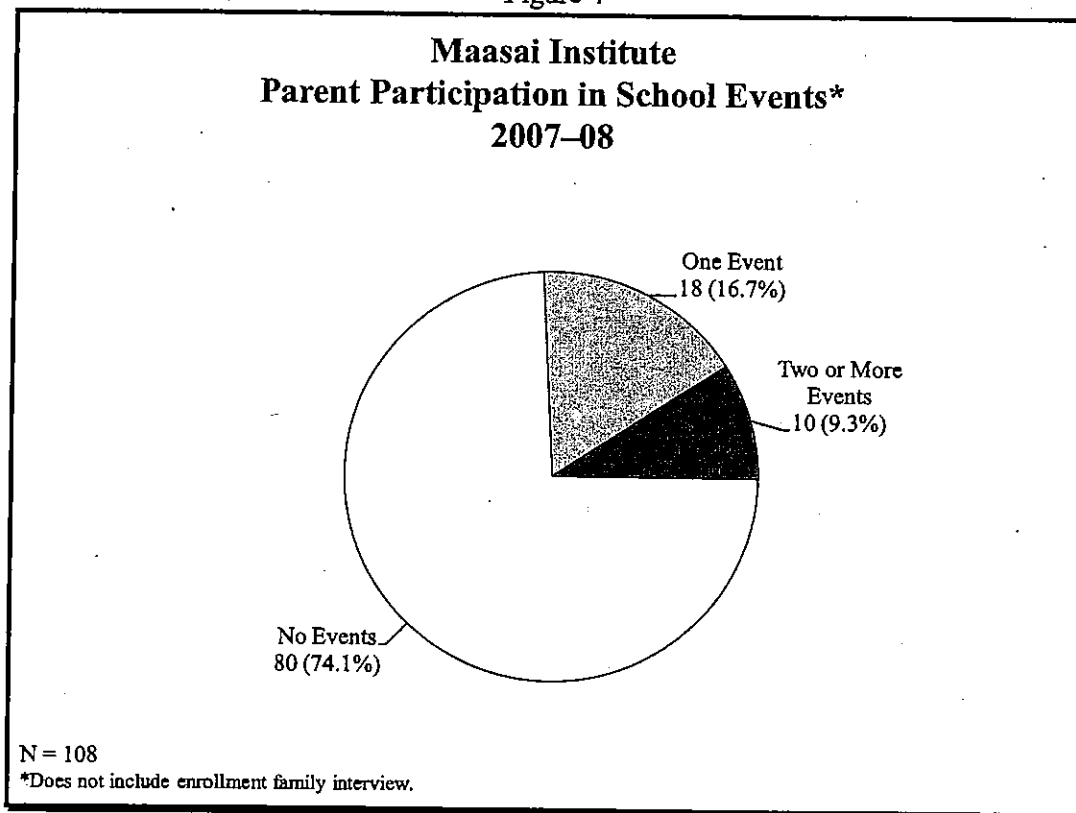
## C.  Graduation Requirements

The school's goal to ensure that students were meeting graduation requirements was that ninth graders would be promoted after successfully completing six of the credits required for graduation, tenth graders would be promoted after earning 12 credits, eleventh graders would be promoted after earning 18 credits, and twelfth graders would be eligible for graduation after earning 24 credits.

The school provided a count of credits earned this school year, the total number of credits accumulated during high school, and an indicator of whether or not the student was promoted.

Data were submitted in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet. Analysis was based on the total number of credits accumulated during each student's high school career. Results indicate that ninth graders had earned, on average, 6.6 credits;[14] tenth graders, on average, had accumulated 13.0 credits;[15] and eleventh graders had earned an average of 18.6 credits during their years in high school.[16] There were four twelfth-grade students enrolled at the end of the school year. In order to protect student identity, CRC does not report results for less than ten students. Therefore, graduation requirement data for twelfth-grade students are not included in this report.

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[14] Total credit information was provided for all 45 ninth-grade students enrolled at the end of the school year.

[15] Total credit information was provided for 46 tenth graders. Total credit data were missing or a transcript had not been received for one additional student.

[16] Total credit information was provided for all 29 eleventh-grade students enrolled at the end of the school year.

Figure 5

**Maasai Institute**
**Graduation Requirements**
**Average Number of Credits Earned During High School**
**2007–08**



Note: There were only four 12th-grade students. To protect student identity, results were not included in this report.
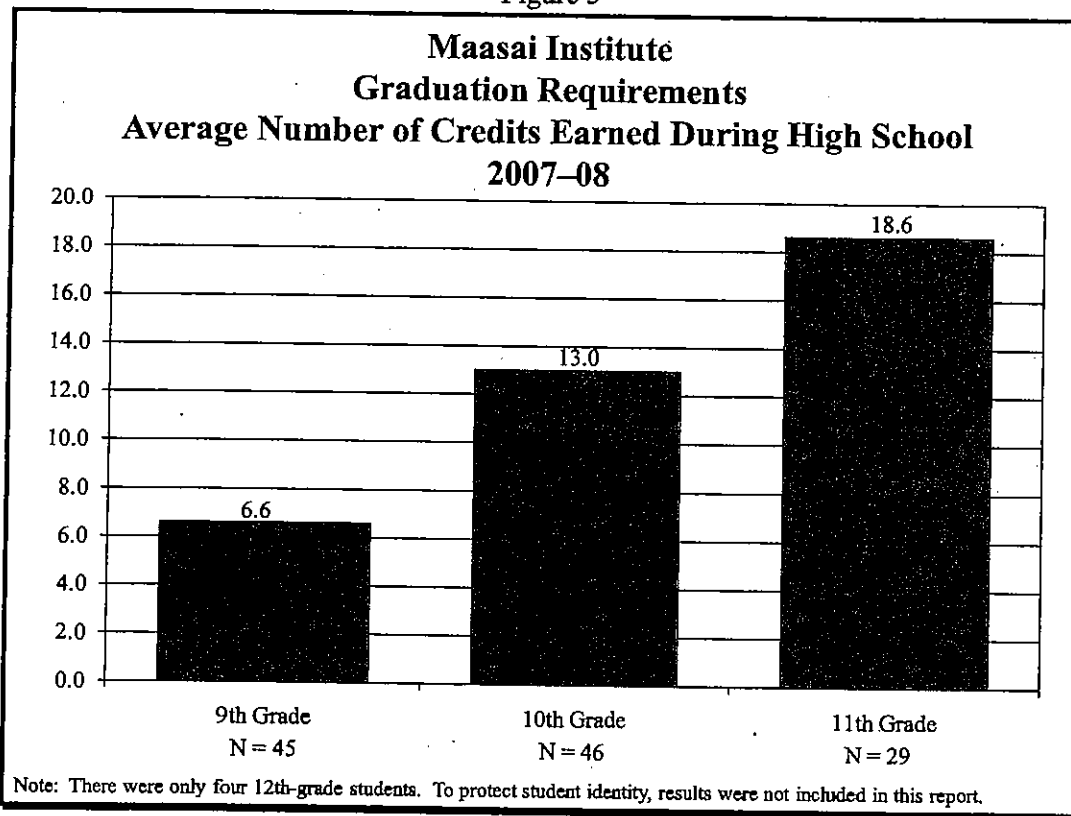
There were 32 ninth graders who earned 6.0 or more credits. These students were eligible for promotion. As illustrated in Figure 6, all 32 ninth graders who earned six or more credits were promoted. No ninth graders who had earned fewer than six credits were promoted to the tenth grade.

Figure 6

**Maasai Institute**
**Graduation Requirements**
**9th Grade Credits and Promotions**
**2007–08**

Less Than 6
13 (28.9%)

6 or More
32 (71.1%)

Yes
32 (100.0%)

Total Credits

Promotion

N = 45

There were 34 (73.9%) tenth graders who earned 12 or more credits and became eligible for promotion to the eleventh grade. All (100.0%) of these students were promoted (see Figure 7). However, three (25.0%) of the tenth graders who had earned fewer than 12 credits were promoted to the eleventh grade (not shown).

Figure 7

**Maasai Institute
Graduation Requirements
10th Grade Credits and Promotions
2007–08**



Less Than 12
12 (26.1%)

12 or More
34 (73.9%)

Yes
34 (100.0%)

Total Credits

Promotion

N = 46

There were 22 (75.9%) eleventh graders who had earned 18 or more credits in high school. All (100.0%) of these were promoted to twelfth grade (see Figure 8). No eleventh graders who had earned fewer than 18 credits were promoted to the twelfth grade.

Figure 8

**Maasai Institute
Graduation Requirements
11th Grade Credits and Promotions
2007–08**

Less Than 18
7 (24.1%)

18 or More
22 (75.9%)

Yes
22 (100.0%)

Total Credits

Promotion

N = 29
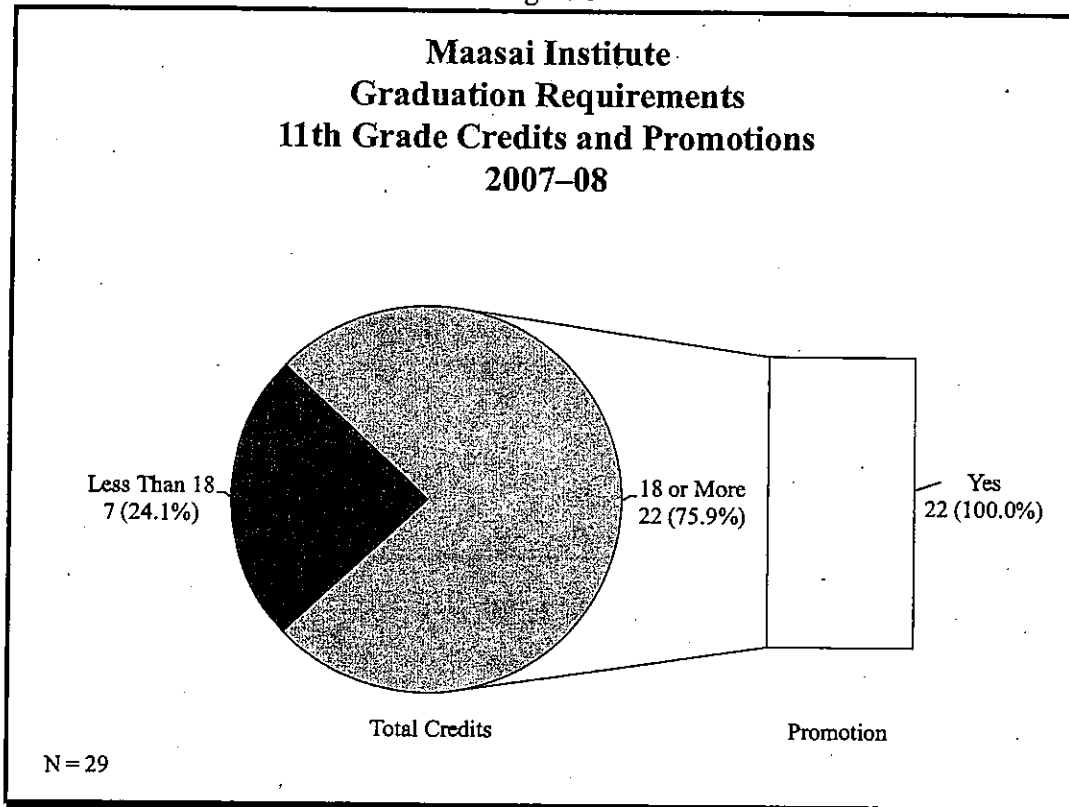
## D.     Graduation Plan

The CSRC required that each student have an annual plan for graduation that included evidence of parent involvement; information regarding the student's post-secondary plans; and a schedule reflecting plans for completing four years of English and three years each of college-preparatory mathematics, science, and social studies, and two years of a foreign language.

The school submitted data for all 125 students enrolled at the end of the school year. Data submitted included information regarding student post-secondary plans and whether each student was on schedule to complete all requirements for graduation. Student schedules were to be reviewed at the spring retreat. Due to budgetary constraints, the spring retreat was cancelled. However, each student met with his/her advisor during the last week of school to review credits earned during the 2007–08 school year and the courses the student was enrolled in for next year. A student needs assessment was used by the advisor during the review of credits. Figure 9 shows how many students provided information regarding post-secondary plans, how many were on schedule for graduation, and how many student needs assessments were completed by advisors. As shown, all three measures were completed for all (100.0%) of the 125 students enrolled in Maasai at the end of the school year.

Figure 9

**Maasai Institute**
**High School Graduation Plan**
**2007–08**



N = 125
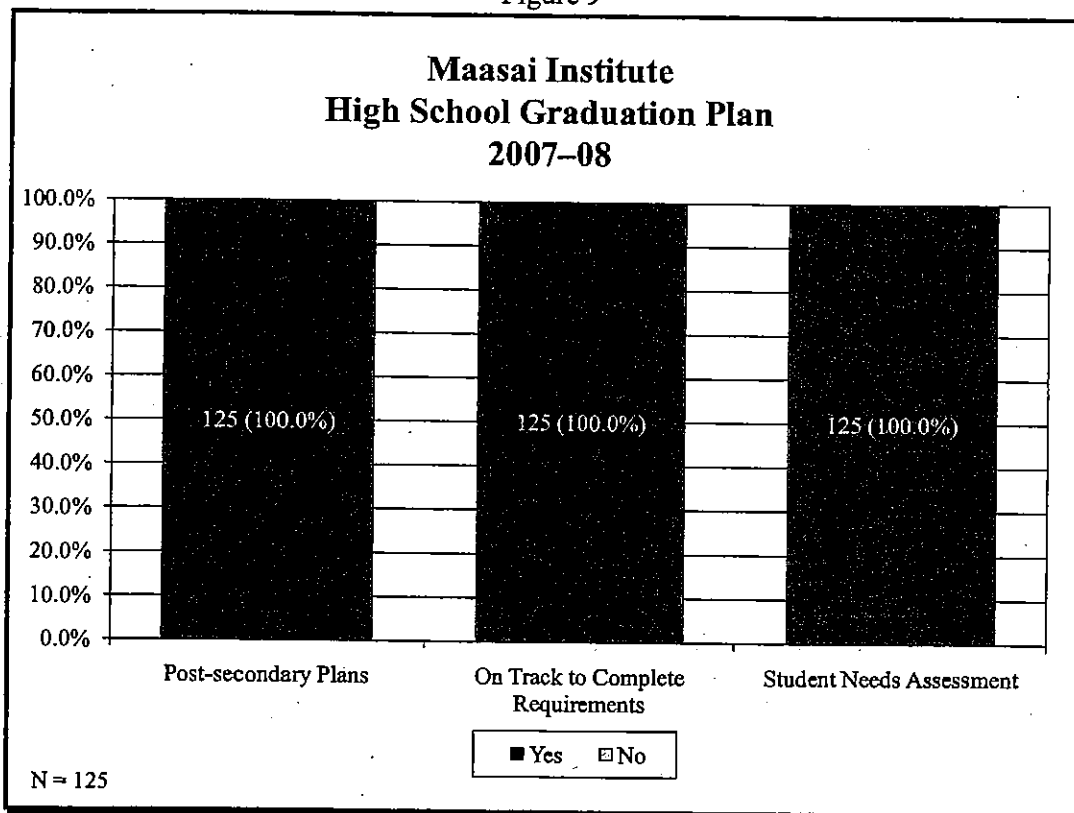
Part of the high school graduation plan was that at least 50% of returning students' parents were to attend at least one of Maasai's parent events. There were 78 students who were enrolled at the end of 2006–07 and who returned to Maasai for the 2007–08 school year. Parents of all 78 (100.0%) of those returning students attended the enrollment family interview (see the Parent/Guardian Participation section of this report).

All twelfth-grade students, along with their parents/guardians/families, were expected to attend the senior meeting held on November 14, 2007. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss final preparations for graduation, plans to take the ACT test, and the process for enrollment into college. The school provided senior meeting data for all five twelfth-grade students enrolled at the time of the meeting. As Figure 10 shows, four (80.0%) of those students attended the senior meeting and parents/guardians/families of three (60.0%) of the students attended the meeting.

Figure 10

**Maasai Institute
Senior Meeting
2007–08**
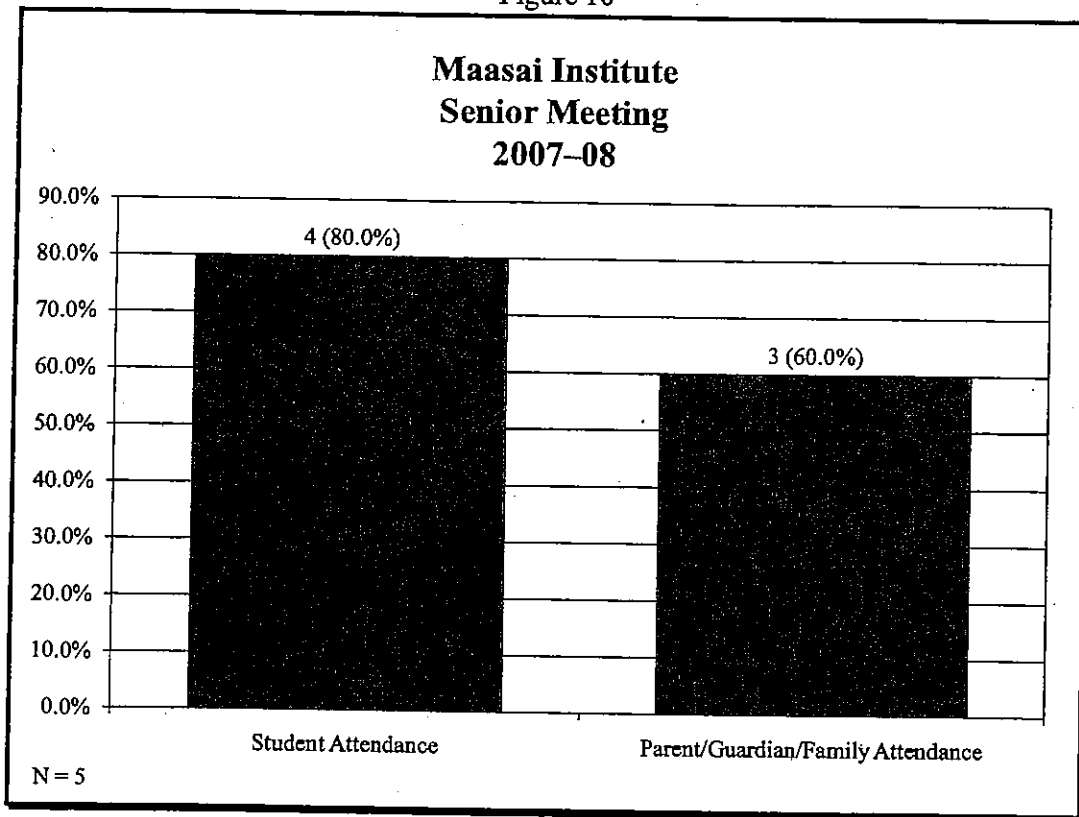


E.    **Local Measures of Educational Performance**

The school was required by the CSRC to establish local measures of academic progress in reading (or literacy), mathematics, and writing. This requirement also satisfied the TALC requirement to set local measures of academic progress in at least two areas. These local measures are useful for monitoring and reporting progress, guiding and improving instruction, clearly expressing the expected quality of student work, and providing evidence that students are meeting local benchmarks.

## 1. Literacy

This year, the school set a goal that at least 50% of students tested would show improvement in reading and language arts as measured by the High School Placement Test (HSPT). Improvement was defined as any increment of score above the student's score on the fall 2007 HSPT. The HSPT is administered to all new students at the time of enrollment and to all others in May of each school year. The fall of 2007 test scores were not completely recorded and could not be submitted to CRC for analysis.[17] Therefore, CRC was unable to determine if the school met this goal.

The school provided grade-level equivalency (GLE) scores for the spring 2007 and spring 2008 HSPT reading and language arts tests.[18] Twenty-five students took both the spring 2007 and spring 2008 reading test. Fourteen (56.0%) of those students increased their scores from the spring 2007 to the spring 2008 test. Twenty-four students took the spring 2007 and spring 2008 language arts test. Six (25.0%) students increased their scores (see Figure 11).

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[17] Data for the students were only entered for the students with last names starting with letters A through G.

[18] Student IDs were not provided with the spring 2008 test scores, and CRC matched the scores across years using student last name. Students with the same last name and first initial were not included in the analysis as CRC was unable to determine the correct match.

Figure 11

# Maasai Institute
# High School Placement Test
# GLE Progress
# From Spring 2007 to Spring 2008

**Reading**                                    **Language Arts**

Score
Increased
14
(56.0%)

Score
Increased
6
(25.0%)

Score Did
Not
Increase
11
(44.0%)

Score Did
Not
Increase
18
(75.0%)

N = 25                                         N = 24
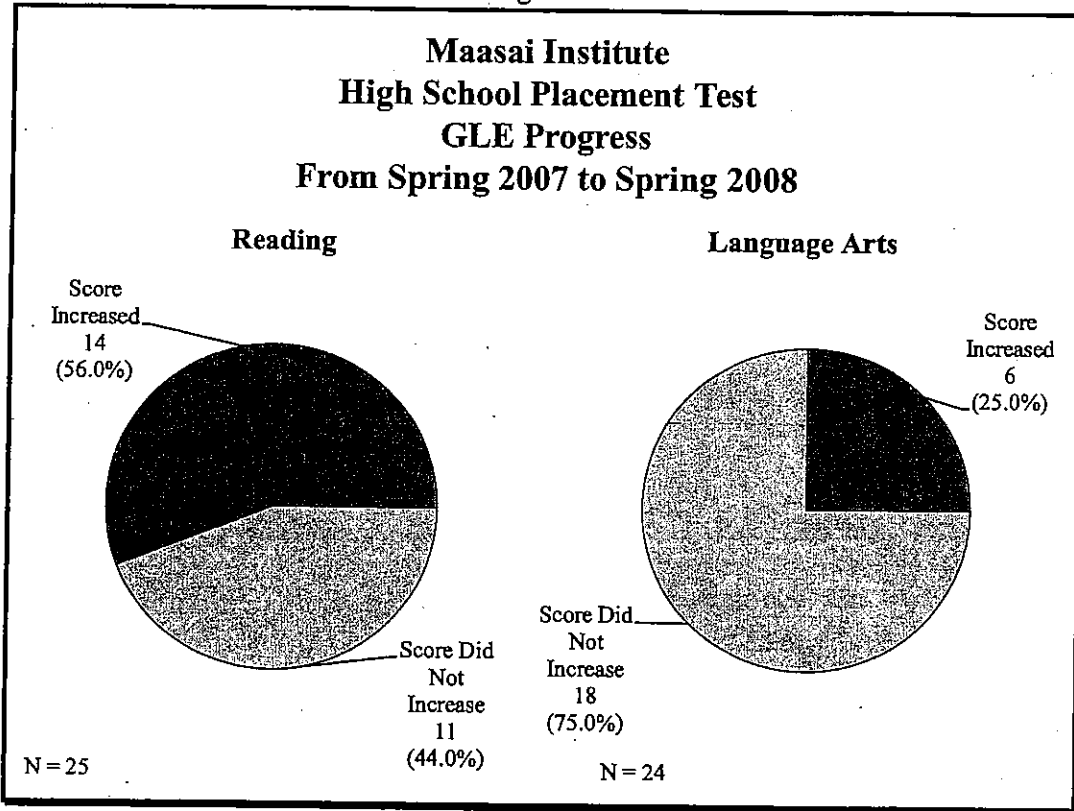
CRC also examined the minimum, maximum, median, and average change in GLE between the spring 2007 and spring 2008 tests. As Table 1 shows, the minimum change in GLE in reading was -1.7 and the maximum change was 2.6. The median change was 0.3 and the average change was 0.5. For the language arts test, the minimum change in GLE was -2.3 and the maximum was 1.7. The median change was -0.5 and the average change in GLE was -0.5.

| Table 1 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maasai Institute<br>Local Measures: High School Placement Test<br>Change in GLE<br>Spring 2007–08 | | | | |
| Test | Change in High School Placement Test Score | | | |
| | Minimum Change | Maximum Change | Median Change | Average Change |
| Reading | -1.7 | 2.6 | 0.3 | 0.5 |
| Language Arts | -2.3 | 1.7 | -0.5 | -0.5 |

## 2. Mathematics

First- and second-semester math grades were reported for 106 students enrolled at the end of the school year. After the first semester, 54 (50.9%) of those students had received a grade of C- or higher, while 52 (49.1%) of those students received a D+ or lower. All math students who received a D+ or lower first semester were to increase that grade to a C- or higher by second semester. Of the 52 who received a D+ or lower, 26 (50.0%) had improved their grade to at least a C- by the end of the second semester (see Figure 12).

Figure 12



**Maasai Institute**
**Math Grades and Improvement**
**Fall 2007 to Spring 2008**

C- or Better
First Semester
54 (50.9%)

D+ or Lower
First Semester
52 (49.1%)

Yes
26 (50.0%)

No
26 (50.0%)

Improved to C- or Better
Second Semester

N = 106
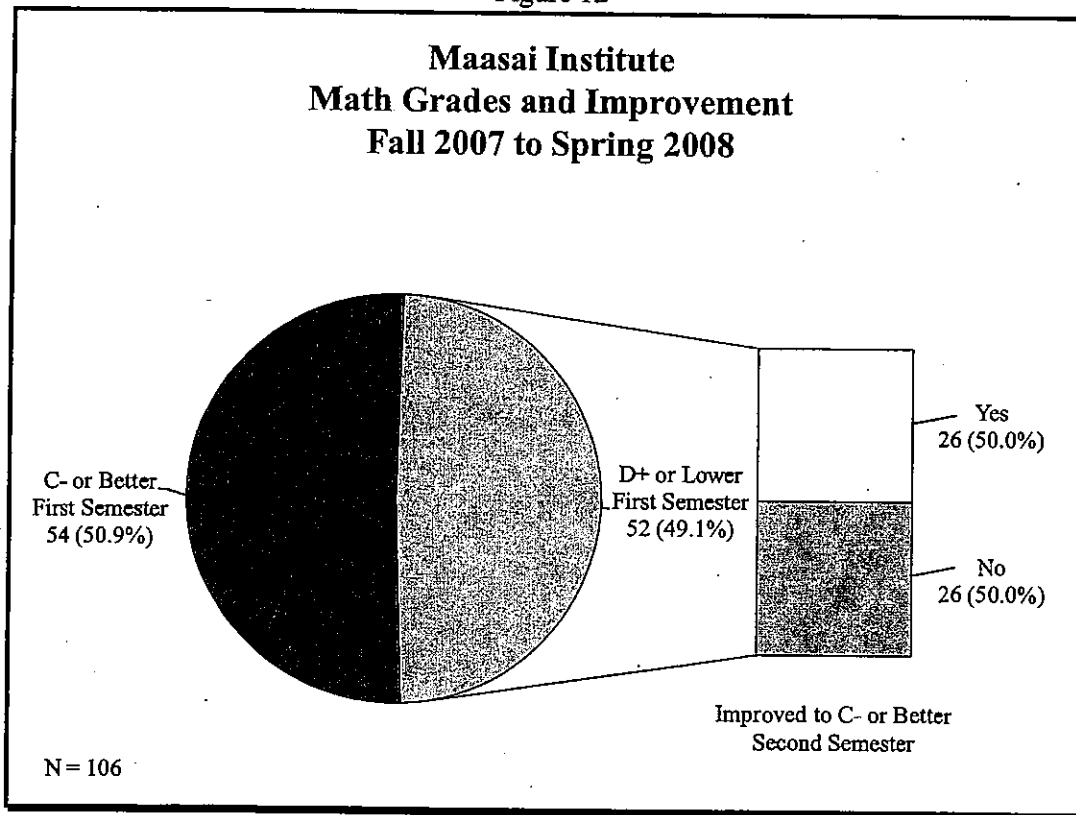
### 3. Writing

The school set a goal that 50% of students who received a rubric score of three or lower on their fall writing sample would increase by at least one rubric score by the time of the spring writing sample. The school did not provide data related to student writing ability; therefore, CRC was unable to determine if the school met this goal.

### F. Individual Education Programs

This year, the school set a goal that all special education students would reach 80.0% of benchmarks indicated on their IEP for at least eight months. The school reported that there were 15 students with IEP goals.[19] The school reported that all 15 students had three IEP goals and did not specify whether there were benchmarks indicating "sufficient progress" toward the goals. The school reported that 11 (73.3%) students were making sufficient progress on the goals. Four (26.7%) of the students were not making sufficient progress. Sufficient progress was not well enough defined for CRC to determine if students reached 80% of the benchmarks or 80% of the goals. Therefore, CRC was unable to determine if the school met the requirement of maintaining a local measure of progress related to special education goals.

### G. External Standardized Measures of Educational Performance

### 1. EXPLORE for Ninth Graders
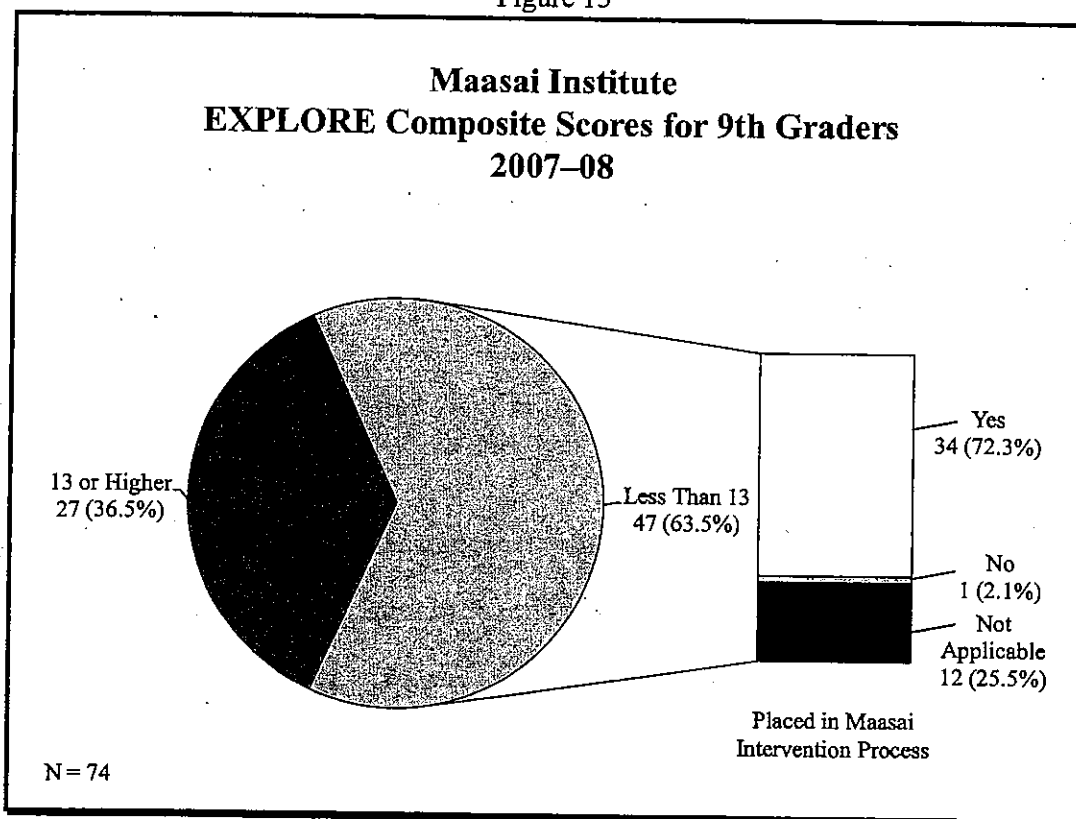
The CSRC required that all ninth-grade students take the EXPLORE test. EXPLORE consists of tests in English, mathematics, reading, and science. Results are summarized in a composite score. It is one of two pre-ACT examinations used to identify students who may not be adequately prepared to take the ACT.

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[19] CRC assumed that the goals were on the students' IEPs for at least eight months.

Composite scores on the EXPLORE can range from 1 to 25. The CSRC required that all ninth-grade students who scored below 13 on the EXPLORE receive additional supplemental instruction in any areas that needed strengthening. During second semester, all ninth-grade students who scored below 13 were to be placed into the Maasai intervention process. In the fall of 2007, there were 91 ninth-grade students enrolled at Maasai. Of those, 74 were administered the EXPLORE test. Of these, 47 (63.5%) scored below 13 and 27 (36.5%) scored 13 or higher (see Figure 13). Of the 47 students who scored below 13, 34 (72.3%) were placed into the Maasai intervention process implemented in April 2008, one (2.1%) student was not placed into the intervention process, and 12 (25.5%) of the students were not eligible for the intervention process because they withdrew from Maasai prior to the second semester.

Figure 13



**Maasai Institute**
**EXPLORE Composite Scores for 9th Graders**
**2007–08**

13 or Higher
27 (36.5%)

Less Than 13
47 (63.5%)

Yes
34 (72.3%)

No
1 (2.1%)

Not Applicable
12 (25.5%)

Placed in Maasai Intervention Process

N = 74

## 2. Standardized Tests for Tenth Graders

### a. WKCE–CRT

Every fall, all tenth graders in Wisconsin public schools are required to take the WKCE–CRT. This test consists of subtests in reading, language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies. The reading, math, and science portions consist of CRT items directly aligned with the State of Wisconsin model academic standards. The language arts and social studies subtests are similar to the WKCE subtests used in the past and consist of items that are nationally normed. The WKCE–CRT meets federal No Child Left Behind requirements that student reading and math skills be tested in high school. The CSRC requires that schools report students' results in reading, language arts, and mathematics.

This year, the test was administered to 38 tenth graders.[20] (Note that some students took some but not all subtests.) Results indicate that five (14.3%) students reached proficient and four (11.4%) reached advanced levels in reading, six (19.4%) reached a proficient level in language arts, and seven (18.9%) students reached a proficient level in mathematics (see Figure 14).

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[20] Based on data provided by the school.

Figure 14



**Maasai Institute**
**WKCE–CRT**
**Proficiency Levels for 10th Graders**
**2007–08**
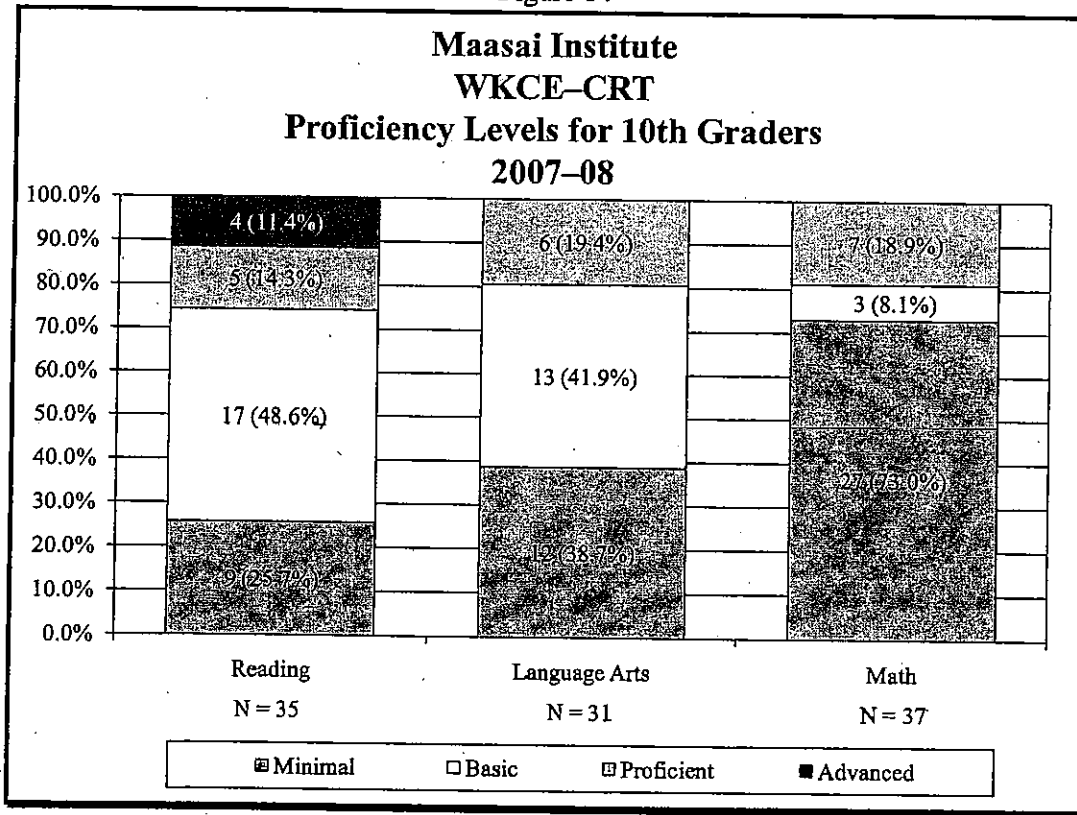
b.    PLAN

The CSRC required that all tenth-grade students take the PLAN, the second in a series of two pre-ACT tests that track student progress and identify students who are not ready for the ACT. The test was to be administered within two weeks of taking the WKCE–CRT. Student PLAN scores can range from 1 to 32. The CSRC further required that all tenth-grade students who scored below 15 on the PLAN receive additional supplemental instruction in any areas that needed strengthening. This year, the test was administered in the fall of 2007.

The school provided PLAN test scores for 37 tenth graders. Thirteen (35.1%) scored 15 or higher and 24 (64.9%) students scored below 15. All (100.0%) of the 24 students who scored below 15 were placed into the Maasai intervention process implemented in April 2008 (see Figure 15).

Figure 15



**Maasai Institute**
**PLAN Composite Scores for 10th Graders**
**2007–08**

15 or Higher
13 (35.1%)

Less Than 15
24 (64.9%)

Yes
24 (100.0%)

Placed in Maasai
Intervention Process

N = 37
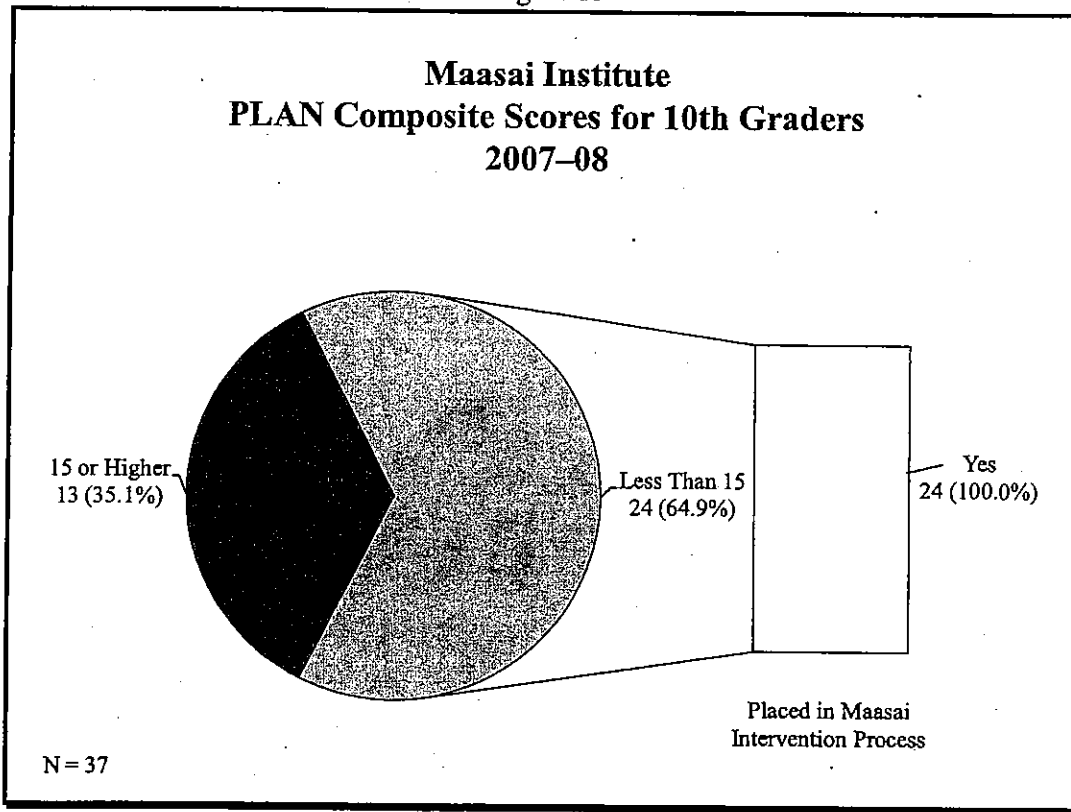
3.    **ACT for Eleventh Graders**

This year, the school set a goal that all eleventh graders would take the ACT preparation course unless the needs of the students' core courses took precedence over ACT preparation. The school submitted ACT preparation information for 52 eleventh graders.  Forty (76.9%) students participated in the ACT preparation course at Maasai.  Twelve (23.1%) students were not able to participate, as they needed to work on other courses first.

Figure 16

**Maasai Institute**
**ACT Preparation Course for 11th Graders**
**2007–08**

Did Not
Participate
12 (23.1%)

Participated
40 (76.9%)

N = 52
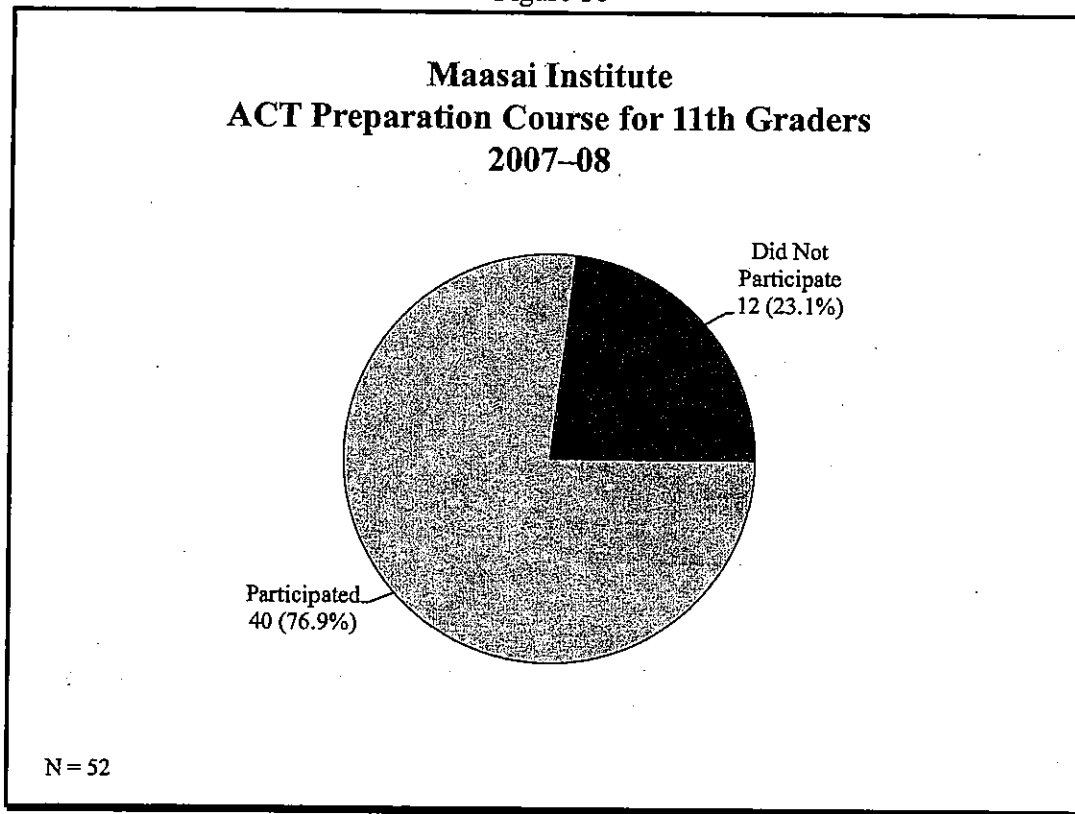
Although not required, some Maasai eleventh graders took the ACT when it was offered in the spring. The objective was to have the eleventh graders take the test at least once.[21] There were 29 eleventh graders enrolled in the school at the time of the spring ACT. Twelve (41.4%) of the eleventh graders took the test.

Figure 17



**Maasai Institute
Spring ACT for 11th Graders
2007–08**

Yes
12 (41.4%)

No
17 (58.6%)

N = 29
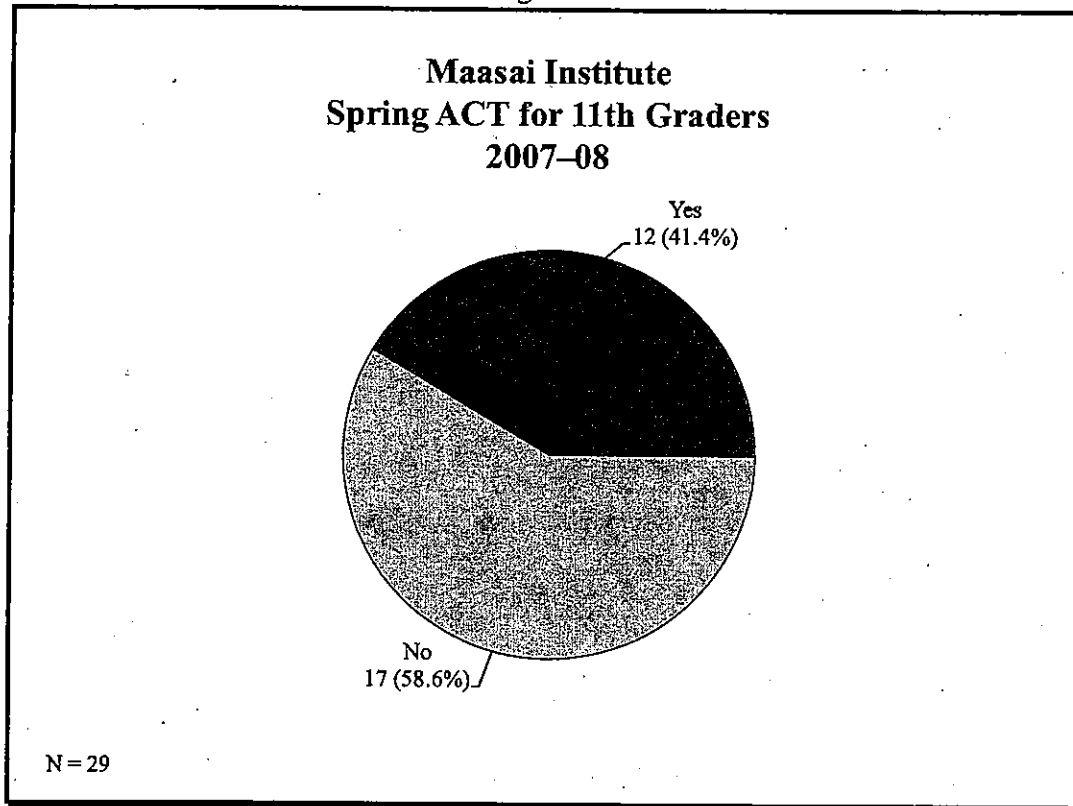
4.    **ACT for Twelfth Graders**

This year, the school set a goal to register and pay for all seniors to take the ACT in the fall of 2007. Maasai would then work closely with students who scored below 20 to prepare them for the ACT in the spring of 2008. Based on information supplied by the school, all students who were enrolled at the time of ACT registration were registered to take the test. The

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[21] Several students have requested to take the ACT on June 14, 2008.

test was given to three (60.0%) of five twelfth graders in the fall and two (50.0%) of four twelfth graders who were enrolled in the school at the time of the spring ACT. One twelfth grader who was enrolled for the full year did not take either test. To protect student identity, results were not provided in this report.

## H.    Multiple-year Student Progress

Year-to-year student progress is based on composite scores on the EXPLORE for ninth graders and the PLAN for tenth graders. The two tests are similar in that they focus on attaining skills. They differ in that the scores reflect skill levels at different times in the student's educational experience.[22] This year, there were 15 tenth graders who had been administered the EXPLORE in the ninth grade and PLAN in the tenth grade.

Composite scores from the EXPLORE given in 2006–07 ranged from 11 to 16; scores from the PLAN given in 2007–08 ranged from 11 to 19. The average composite score from the EXPLORE was 13.3; the average composite score from the PLAN was 13.9, an average improvement of 0.6 (see Table 2).

| Table 2 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Maasai Institute<br>Multiple-year Student Progress<br>Based on Composite EXPLORE and PLAN Scores<br>(N = 15) | | | |
| Grade | Average EXPLORE Score<br>2006–07 | Average PLAN Score<br>2007–08 | Average Improvement |
| 9th to 10th | 13.3 | 13.9 | 0.6 |

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[22] See "Using EXPLORE and PLAN Data to Evaluate GEAR UP programs," ACT and the National Council for Community and Education Partnerships, http://www.act.org/research/reports/index.html.

## I. Annual Review of the School's Adequate Yearly Progress

### 1. Background Information[23]

State and federal laws require the annual review of school performance to determine student academic achievement and progress. In Wisconsin, the annual review of performance required by the federal No Child Left Behind Act is based on each school's performance relative to four objectives:

- The test participation of all students enrolled;
- A required academic indicator (either graduation or attendance rate);
- The proficiency rate in reading; and
- The proficiency rate in mathematics.

In Wisconsin, the DPI releases an annual review of school performance for each chartered school with information about whether that school met the criteria for each of the four required adequate yearly progress (AYP) objectives. If a school fails to meet the criteria in the same AYP objective for two consecutive years, the school is designated as "identified for improvement." Once designated as "identified for improvement," the school must meet the annual review criteria for two consecutive years in the same AYP objective to be removed from the status designation.

The possible school status designations are as follows:

- "Satisfactory," which means the school is not in improvement status.

- "School Identified for Improvement" (SIFI), which means the school does not meet AYP for two consecutive years in the same objective.

- SIFI levels 1–5, which means the school missed at least one of the AYP objectives and is subject to the state requirements and additional Title I sanctions, if applicable, assigned to that level.

- SIFI levels 1–4 Improved, which means the school met the AYP in the year tested but remains subject to sanctions due to the prior year. AYP must be met for two

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[23] This information is taken from the DPI website: www.dpi.state.wi.us/oea/annrvw07.html.

years in a row in that objective to be removed from "improvement" status and returned to "satisfactory" status.

- Title I Status identifies if Title I funds are directed to this school; if so, the schools are subject to federal sanctions.

## 2. Adequate Yearly Progress: Maasai Institute Summary[24]

According to Maasai Institute's *Annual Review of School Performance: 2007–08*, published by DPI, Maasai did not reach AYP in test participation (95% of the students enrolled in tenth grade) and in the "other academic indicator," graduation rate (have a graduation rate of at least 80% or show growth over the prior year). The school met AYP in reading (a proficiency index of 74%) and mathematics (a proficiency index of 58%). The school's status rating for test participation, graduation, reading, and mathematics was "satisfactory." While the school did not meet the state's requirement for AYP in all four areas, its improvement status remains "satisfactory" because the school has not missed AYP in the same area for two consecutive years.

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[24] For a copy of Maasai Institute's Adequate Yearly Progress Review Summary, see: http://www2.dpi.state.wi.us/sifi/AYP_Summary.asp?AgKey=000058.

# V.    STUDENT, TEACHER, AND PARENT SATISFACTION

As part of its contract with the CSRC, CRC conducted interviews with students and teachers, and surveyed parents.   The interviews and surveys were designed to measure satisfaction with the school as well as to measure issues related to organizational competency.  In previous years board members were also interviewed at the end of the year; however, it was decided that due to the closing of the school this was not necessary.

## A.    Student Interviews

At the end of May and beginning of June 2008, CRC staff interviewed 21 students at Maasai.  The students were in tenth, eleventh, or twelfth grade and were asked several questions about their school.  Results are summarized below.  For example, 15 of the 21 students liked being in school and 20 planned to go to college after high school (see Table 3).

| Table 3 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maasai Institute<br>Student Interview<br>2007–08<br>(N = 21) | | | | |
| Question | Answer | | | |
| | A Lot | A Little | Not Much | Not at All |
| 1. Do you like your school? | 10 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| 2. Do you feel safe in your school? | 12 | 7 | 1 | 1 |
| 3. Do you follow the rules? | 14 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| 4. Do people work together at your school? | 11 | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| 5. Do you like being in school? | 15 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
| 6. Does your homework help you learn more? | 10 | 9 | 1 | 1 |
| 7. Do your teachers help with your coursework? | 14 | 6 | 0 | 1 |
| 8. How much have you improved in reading? | 10 | 7 | 3 | 1 |
| 9. How much have you improved in writing? | 10 | 10 | 1 | 0 |
| 10. How much have you improved in math? | 13 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| 11. Are you learning enough? | 10 | 10 | 1 | 0 |
| 12. Is your school clean? | 10 | 8 | 3 | 0 |
| 13. Do your teachers talk to your parents? | 11 | 9 | 1 | 0 |
| 14. Do you think the school rules are fair? | 15 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| 15. Do you feel the marks you get on class work, homework, and report cards are fair? | 17 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| 16. Do you participate in afterschool activities? | 5 | 5 | 0 | 11 |
| 17. Do you use computers at your school? | 21 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 18. Do you have a high school graduation plan? | 14 | 6 | 1 | 0 |
| 19. Do you know how many credits you need to graduate? | 17 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| 20. Does the school staff help you plan for work or school after graduation? | 12 | 8 | 1 | 0 |
| 21. Are you planning to go to college? | 20 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

Students were then asked to identify their favorite subjects. Eight (38.1%) of the 21 students indicated math and five (23.8%) said they favored English. One student each indicated art, biology, physical education, reading, social studies, and writing. One student said that he/she liked all subjects and one other indicated that he/she was not sure which subject was his/her favorite.

Students were then asked what they liked best and least about the school. Students liked the following the most:

- Caring, helpful teachers (n = 16);
- Family atmosphere/small size/closeness (n = 10);
- Projects, classwork, grades (n = 5);
- Other students (n = 3);
- Safe, no violence, minimal drama (n = 2);
- Uniforms (n = 1); and
- Half-day on Wednesdays (n = 1).

The following qualities are those which students indicated they liked least:

- The school is disorganized (n = 4);
- There is no gymnasium (n = 3);
- The school is dirty/unsanitary/messy (n = 3);
- Leadership is lacking (n = 3);
- Uniforms (n = 3);
- Student behavior (n = 3);
- Lack of afterschool activities (n = 2);
- Computers are old, there aren't enough (n = 2);
- Teacher turnover (n = 2);
- Teacher attitudes (n = 1);
- Extended class time (n = 1);
- Promises but no follow-through (n = 1);
- Careless environment (n = 1);
- Differential treatment of students (n = 1);
- School does not prepare students for college (n = 1);
- Lunch (n = 1);
- HVAC (n = 1);
- Money situation (n = 1); and
- Getting bad grades (n = 1).

## B.    Teacher Interviews

In late May and early June 2008, CRC staff interviewed 11 teachers regarding their reasons for teaching at the school and overall satisfaction with the school. One teacher taught ninth and tenth grades, one taught tenth and eleventh, one taught ninth through eleventh, six taught ninth through twelfth, one teacher taught tenth through twelfth grades, and one teacher was the special education teacher. Teachers were responsible for 11 to 29 students at a given time. Four of the teachers used team-teaching techniques. Eight of the teachers were in their first year at the school, two were in their second year, and one teacher had been teaching at the school for three years. Years of experience ranged from one to 24 years teaching. Combined, the teachers' experience exceeded 76 years. Nine (81.8%) teachers indicated that they routinely used data to make decisions in the classroom, and five (45.5%) indicated that school leadership used data to make schoolwide decisions. One teacher's performance had not been reviewed, six had had annual performance evaluations, one teacher's performance was reviewed informally, one teacher had had two reviews, and one teacher's performance evaluation was on another schedule. Seven (63.6%) of the teachers were somewhat satisfied to very satisfied with the performance review procedures. Two teachers were somewhat to very dissatisfied. One teacher did not indicate his/her opinion, and one teacher's performance had not yet been reviewed; therefore, the question did not apply.

All teachers indicated that class size was a very important reason for teaching at this school. Ten of 11 indicated that financial considerations and the general atmosphere at the school were also important reasons. See Table 4 for more details.

| Table 4                                       |        |           |             |           |
| --------------------------------------------- | ------ | --------- | ----------- | --------- |
| Maasai Institute<br>Reasons for Teaching at Maasai<br>2007–08<br>(N = 11) | | | | |
| Reason | Importance | | | |
|        | Very Important | Somewhat Important | Somewhat Unimportant | Not At All Important |
| Class size             | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Financial              | 2  | 8 | 1 | 0 |
| General atmosphere     | 8  | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Educational methodology| 8  | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Age/grade of students  | 3  | 5 | 0 | 3 |
| Type of school         | 7  | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| Discipline             | 4  | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Parental involvement   | 2  | 4 | 1 | 4 |
| Location               | 3  | 2 | 1 | 5 |

Other reasons teachers gave for teaching at the school included African ideology; the school's reputation; the mission and vision of the school; the opportunity to have close relationships with students; the team approach used by staff; and the opportunity to work with urban high school kids.[25] One teacher said that he/she worked at the school because he/she knew another staff member and one said that it was a job (not shown).

During the interview, teachers were asked to rate the school's performance related to class size, materials and equipment, the school's overall student assessment plan, shared leadership, decision making and accountability, professional support and development, and the school's progress toward becoming an excellent school. Most (n = 9) teachers rated class size as good or excellent. However, most (n = 8) teachers indicated that materials and equipment at the school were of poor quality. Overall, eight teachers rated the student assessments as "fair."

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[25] Nine of 11 teachers provided an "other" reason.

When asked about shared leadership, decision making, and accountability, teachers consistently rated this area as fair (n = 3) or poor (n = 7). Note that one teacher did not provide a response. See Table 5 for additional ratings.

| Area | Rating | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Excellent | Good | Fair | Poor | No Response |
| Class size | 4 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Materials and equipment | 1 | 2 | 0 | 8 | 0 |
| Student assessment plan | 1 | 2 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| Local measures | 1 | 6 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Standardized tests | 1 | 1 | 7 | 2 | 0 |
| Progress reports to parents | 1 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| Shared leadership, decision making, accountability | 0 | 0 | 3 | 7 | 1 |
| Professional support | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 1 |
| Professional development opportunities | 0 | 6 | 1 | 3 | 1 |
| Progress toward becoming an excellent school | 0 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 1 |

Table 5 caption:

**Table 5**

**Maasai Institute
School Performance Rating
2007–08
(N = 11)**

On a satisfaction rating scale ranging from very satisfied to very dissatisfied, most teachers responded on the satisfied end of the response range in most areas. Areas where teachers expressed dissatisfaction most often were with the school's adherence to the discipline policy, parental involvement, community and/or business involvement, teacher involvement in policy and procedure decisions, opportunities for continuing education, and the effectiveness of staff meetings. All teachers expressed dissatisfaction with the performance of the board of directors. Table 6 lists all of the teacher responses in each area.

| Table 6 Maasai Institute Teacher Satisfaction 2007–08 (N = 11) | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Performance Area | Response | | | | |
| | Very Satisfied | Somewhat Satisfied | Somewhat Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | No Opinion/N/A |
| Program of instruction | 2 | 6 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Enrollment policy and procedures | 1 | 7 | 0 | 3 | 0 |
| Your students' academic progress | 2 | 5 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Student-teacher ratio, class size | 6 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Discipline policy | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| Adherence to discipline policy | 1 | 2 | 2 | 6 | 0 |
| Instructional support | 3 | 3 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| Parent-teacher relationships | 1 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| Teacher collaboration to plan learning experiences | 3 | 5 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Parent involvement | 1 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 0 |
| Community/business involvement | 0 | 1 | 1 | 5 | 4 |
| Your performance as a teacher | 4 | 6 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Principal performance | 8 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Teacher involvement in policy and procedures decisions | 0 | 3 | 3 | 5 | 0 |
| Board of directors performance | 0 | 0 | 5 | 6 | 0 |
| Opportunity for continuing education | 1 | 3 | 2 | 4 | 1 |
| Frequency of staff meetings | 4 | 5 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Effectiveness of staff meetings | 1 | 1 | 4 | 5 | 0 |

When teachers were asked the three things they most liked about the school, they noted the following:

- Staff, particularly staff collaboration (n = 7);
- Class size (n = 6);
- Students (n = 4);
- School's mission and/or philosophy (n = 4);
- Freedom to set curriculum (n = 2);
- Atmosphere (n = 1);
- Block scheduling (n = 1);
- Class requirements, e.g., that art is required two semesters (n = 1);
- Location (n = 1);
- Project-based learning (n = 1); and
- Learned to be creative and innovative due to lack of resources (n = 1).

Teachers mentioned the following as least liked about the school:

- Administration, e.g., lack of principal, lack of experienced leadership, lack of financial responsibility (n = 9);

- Lack of resources, e.g., library, computers, support, materials (n = 4);

- Lack of academic vigor (n = 2);

- Lack of follow-through (n = 2);

- Inadequate funding (n = 2);

- Unstable environment, e.g., financially, as well as possibility of closing (n = 2);

- Facility is falling apart (n = 2);

- Discipline policy (n = 1);

- School is disorganized (n = 1);

- Inconsistent policy and procedures (n = 1);

- Communication is vague (n = 1);

- Lack of effective input from teachers (n = 1);

- Lack of communication from board of directors (n = 1); and

- Lack of mentors for teachers (n = 1).

Teachers were then asked to rate the school's overall progress in contributing to students' academic progress. Two teachers indicated that excellent progress had been made, two indicated that good progress had been made, and seven teachers indicated that the school's progress toward contributing to students' academic progress was fair.[26]

Eight teachers indicated that they intended to continue teaching at the school, two indicated that they did not, and one teacher did not provide a response. One of the two teachers who will not be back is moving out of state. The other is seeking an elementary school teaching position.

When asked to provide a suggestion to improve the classroom, teachers indicated the following:

- Add resources, e.g., whiteboard, computers, textbooks, age- and ability-level materials, desks, smart board (n = 8);

- Assess student skill level and learning style at beginning of year, particularly in math (n = 2);

- Use different assessment tools, e.g., use tools designed for urban students (n = 1); and

- Need a plan for progressive curriculum in social studies (n = 1).

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[26] The rating scale was excellent, good, fair, or poor.

When asked for a suggestion to improve the school, teachers responded as follows:

- Hire competent, experienced, education-based, and financially responsible leadership (n = 5);

- Function openly regarding policies, budget (n = 1);

- Additional resources, e.g., get computers up and running (n = 1);

- Keep class size to 15 or fewer students (n = 1);

- Involve teachers more in planning (n = 1); and

- Stabilize financial well-being of the school (n = 1).


C.    Parent Interviews

Parent opinions are qualitative in nature and provide a valuable external measurement of school performance. To determine how parents heard about the school, why they elected to send their children there, parental involvement with the school, and an overall evaluation of the school, parents were asked to complete a parent survey. The survey was mailed to parents toward the end of the school year by the school. Parents were asked to return the surveys in sealed envelopes. The school then provided the completed surveys to CRC. Two attempts by telephone were made by CRC to gather survey information from parents who did not complete a survey. At the time of the phone contact parents were asked if they would like to complete the survey over the telephone or receive a survey with a stamped and addressed envelope. At the time of this report,[27] 14 surveys (representing parents of 14 children) had been completed and submitted to CRC.[28] Results are presented below.
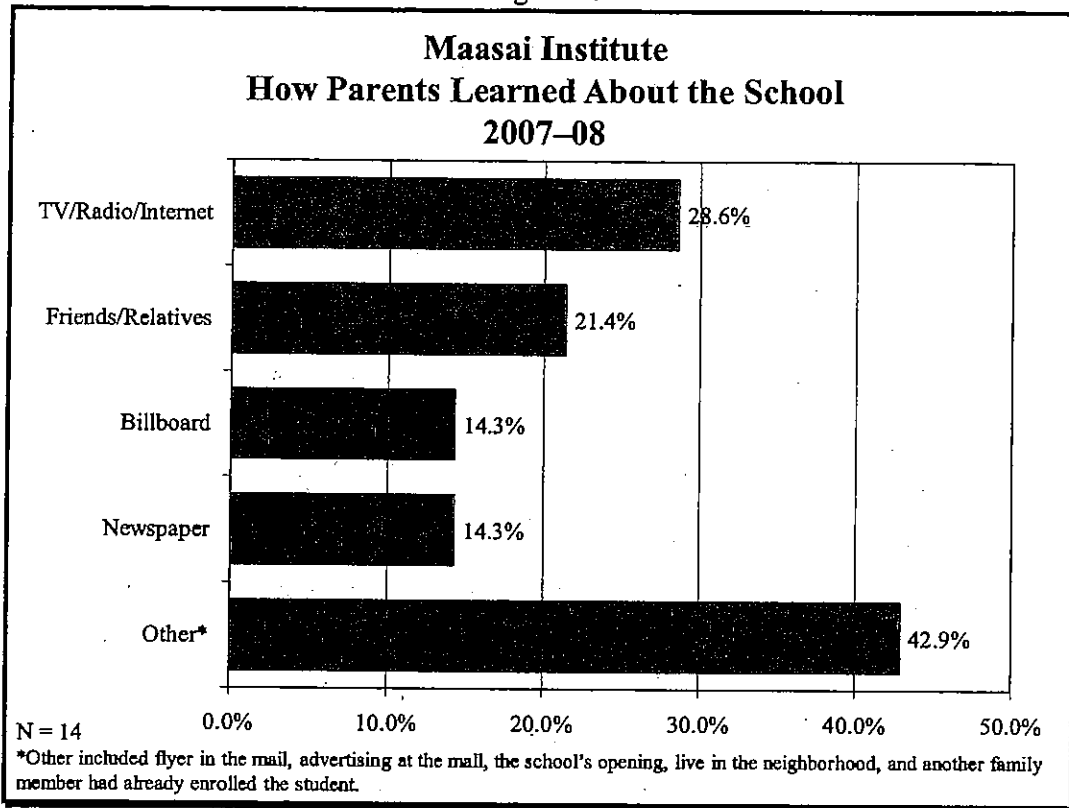
Parents learned of Maasai in a number of ways. Some parents heard about the school from television/radio/Internet (28.6%). Others heard about the school through friends or

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[27] As of July 24, 2008.

[28] There were 125 students enrolled at the time of the survey. This represents an 11.2% survey return rate.

relatives (21.4%), a billboard (14.3%), and the newspaper (14.3%). Others (42.9%) heard about the school from other sources.

Figure 18

**Maasai Institute**
**How Parents Learned About the School**
**2007–08**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| TV/Radio/Internet | 28.6% |
| Friends/Relatives | 21.4% |
| Billboard | 14.3% |
| Newspaper | 14.3% |
| Other* | 42.9% |

N = 14

*Other included flyer in the mail, advertising at the mall, the school's opening, live in the neighborhood, and another family member had already enrolled the student.

Parents chose to send their child(ren) to Maasai for a variety of reasons. Figure 19 illustrates the reasons parents considered very important when making the decision to send their child(ren) to this school.[29] For example, 92.9% of parents stated that discipline and/or opportunities for parental involvement/participation were very important reasons for selecting this school.

Figure 19
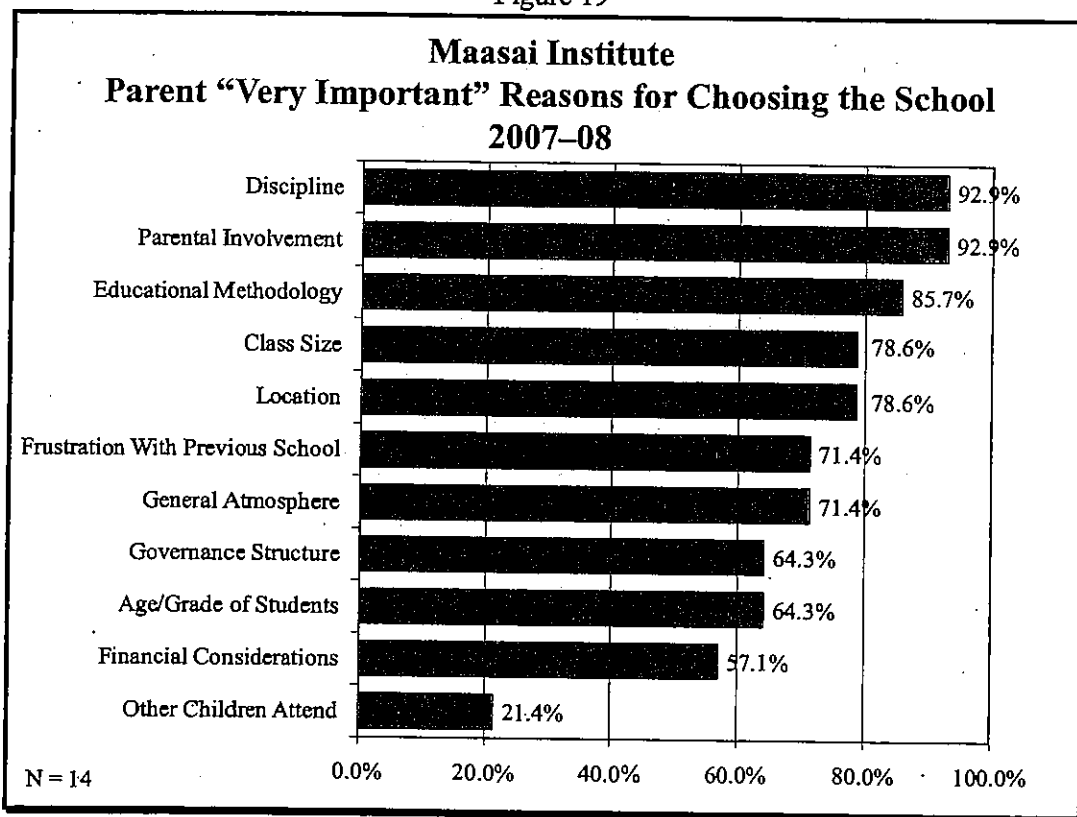
**Maasai Institute**
**Parent "Very Important" Reasons for Choosing the School**
**2007–08**

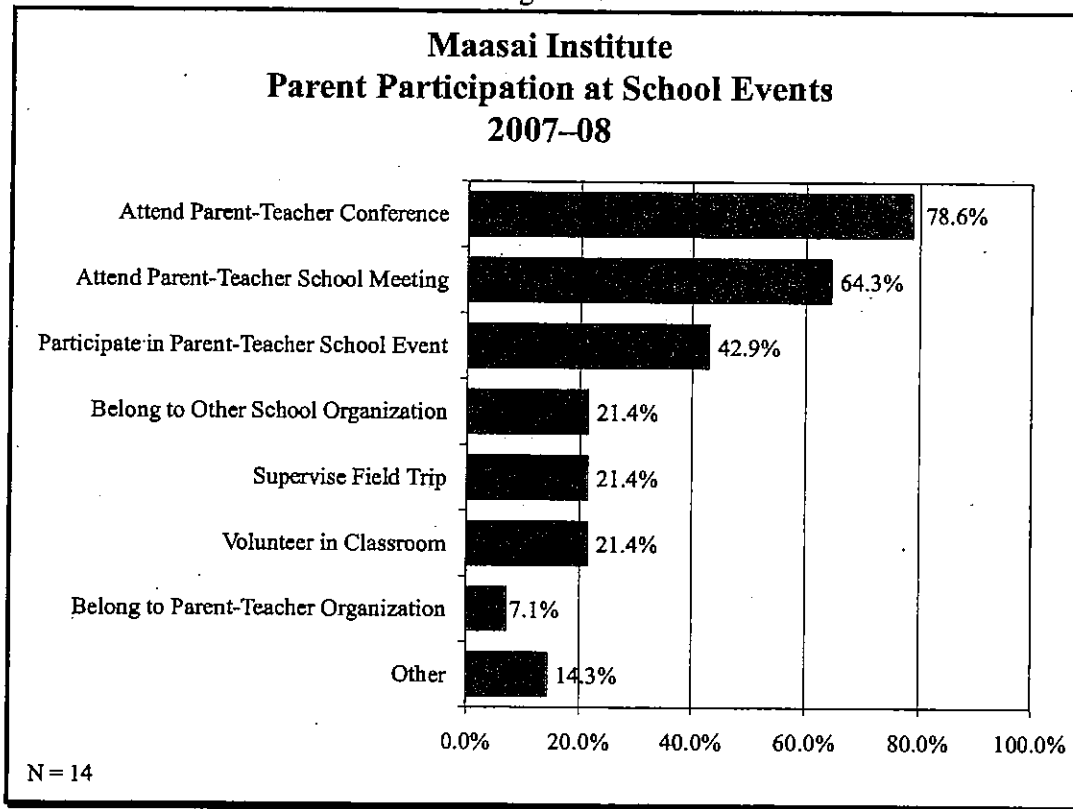| Reason | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Discipline | 92.9% |
| Parental Involvement | 92.9% |
| Educational Methodology | 85.7% |
| Class Size | 78.6% |
| Location | 78.6% |
| Frustration With Previous School | 71.4% |
| General Atmosphere | 71.4% |
| Governance Structure | 64.3% |
| Age/Grade of Students | 64.3% |
| Financial Considerations | 57.1% |
| Other Children Attend | 21.4% |

N = 14

Parental involvement was also used as a measure of satisfaction with the school. Parental involvement was measured by participation in school activities.

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[29] Parents were given the following choices for each reason: very important, somewhat important, somewhat unimportant, and not at all important.

The extent to which parents participated in school events is illustrated below. Approximately 78.6% of the parents responding to the survey attended at least one parent-teacher conference, 64.3% attended a parent-teacher school meeting, and 42.9% participated in at least one parent-teacher school event this year (see Figure 20).

Figure 20



**Maasai Institute**
**Parent Participation at School Events**
**2007–08**

| Category | Percentage |
|---|---|
| Attend Parent-Teacher Conference | 78.6% |
| Attend Parent-Teacher School Meeting | 64.3% |
| Participate in Parent-Teacher School Event | 42.9% |
| Belong to Other School Organization | 21.4% |
| Supervise Field Trip | 21.4% |
| Volunteer in Classroom | 21.4% |
| Belong to Parent-Teacher Organization | 7.1% |
| Other | 14.3% |

N = 14

When asked if staff collaborated with them, eight (57.1%) parents responded "yes" and three (21.4%) indicated "no." Three (21.4%) parents did not respond.

When asked to indicate their child's overall involvement in the school, six (42.9%) parents said it was excellent, four (28.6%) said it was good, two (14.3%) said it was fair, and two (14.3%) parents indicated that their child had poor involvement in school.

In terms of overall evaluation, parents were asked to rate the school's performance in class size, materials and equipment, and the student assessment plan, as well as to indicate their level of satisfaction in various aspects of the school ranging from academic progress to communication issues. As shown in Table 7, most parents rated these areas as excellent or good.

| Table 7 Maasai Institute Parental Rating of School Performance 2007–08 (N = 14) | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Measure | Rating | | | | | | | | | |
| | Excellent | | Good | | Fair | | Poor | | No Response | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| 1. Class size | 4 | 28.6% | 6 | 42.9% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 14.3% | 2 | 14.3% |
| 2. Materials and equipment | 4 | 28.6% | 4 | 28.6% | 1 | 7.1% | 3 | 21.4% | 2 | 14.3% |
| 3. Student assessment plan overall | 6 | 42.9% | 2 | 14.3% | 2 | 14.3% | 2 | 14.3% | 2 | 14.3% |
| 3a. Standardized tests | 5 | 35.7% | 4 | 28.6% | 2 | 14.3% | 1 | 7.1% | 2 | 14.3% |
| 3b. Progress reports | 7 | 50.0% | 4 | 28.6% | 1 | 7.1% | 2 | 14.3% | 0 | 0.0% |
| 4. College planning | 3 | 21.4% | 6 | 42.9% | 2 | 14.3% | 1 | 7.1% | 2 | 14.3% |

Table 8 indicates that parents were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied most of the time with 14 aspects of the academic environment. The area in which parents expressed the most dissatisfaction was in the principal's performance. Where no response was indicated, the parent either had no knowledge or experience with that aspect, or had no opinion.

| Table 8 | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Maasai Institute**<br>**Parental Satisfaction**<br>**2007–08**<br>**(N = 14)** | | | | | | | | | |
| **Area** | **Response** | | | | | | | | |
| | **Very**<br>**Satisfied** | | **Somewhat**<br>**Satisfied** | | **Somewhat**<br>**Dissatisfied** | | **Very**<br>**Dissatisfied** | | **No Response** | |
| | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % | N | % |
| Instructional program | 8 | 57.1% | 2 | 14.3% | 1 | 7.1% | 2 | 14.3% | 1 | 7.1% |
| Enrollment policy and procedures | 5 | 35.7% | 6 | 42.9% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 14.3% | 1 | 7.1% |
| Child's academic progress | 9 | 64.3% | 3 | 21.4% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 14.3% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Student-teacher ratio/class size | 9 | 64.3% | 1 | 7.1% | 1 | 7.1% | 1 | 7.1% | 1 | 7.1% |
| Discipline methods | 5 | 35.7% | 4 | 28.6% | 2 | 14.3% | 3 | 21.4% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Parent-teacher relationships | 10 | 71.4% | 2 | 14.3% | 1 | 7.1% | 1 | 7.1% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Communication regarding child's credits, homework, etc. | 7 | 50.0% | 3 | 21.4% | 2 | 14.3% | 2 | 14.3% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Parent involvement in policy and procedures | 6 | 42.9% | 4 | 28.6% | 1 | 7.1% | 2 | 14.3% | 1 | 7.1% |
| Teacher performance | 9 | 64.3% | 3 | 21.4% | 2 | 14.3% | 0 | 0.0% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Principal performance | 3 | 21.4% | 3 | 21.4% | 0 | 0.0% | 6 | 42.9% | 2 | 14.3% |
| Teacher/principal accessibility | 7 | 50.0% | 4 | 28.6% | 1 | 7.1% | 2 | 14.3% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Responsiveness to concerns | 10 | 71.4% | 2 | 14.3% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 14.3% | 0 | 0.0% |
| Respectful treatment as parent/guardian | 8 | 57.1% | 2 | 14.3% | 0 | 0.0% | 2 | 14.3% | 2 | 14.3% |
| Child's high school graduation plan | 5 | 35.7% | 3 | 21.4% | 0 | 0.0% | 3 | 21.4% | 3 | 21.4% |

Parents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with several statements about school staff. Responses are summarized below.

<table>
<tr><td colspan="11" align="center">Table 9<br><br>Maasai Institute<br>Parental Rating of School Staff<br>2007–08<br>(N = 14)</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Statement</td><td colspan="10" align="center">Response</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Strongly Agree</td><td colspan="2">Agree</td><td colspan="2">Neutral</td><td colspan="2">Disagree</td><td colspan="2">Strongly Disagree</td></tr>
<tr><td>N</td><td>%</td><td>N</td><td>%</td><td>N</td><td>%</td><td>N</td><td>%</td><td>N</td><td>%</td></tr>
<tr><td>I am comfortable talking with the staff</td><td>10</td><td>71.4%</td><td>4</td><td>28.6%</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr>
<tr><td>The staff welcomes suggestions from parents</td><td>6</td><td>42.9%</td><td>5</td><td>35.7%</td><td>2</td><td>14.3%</td><td>1</td><td>7.1%</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr>
<tr><td>The staff keeps me informed about my child's performance</td><td>8</td><td>57.1%</td><td>4</td><td>28.6%</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td><td>2</td><td>14.3%</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr>
<tr><td>I am comfortable with how the staff handles discipline.</td><td>4</td><td>28.6%</td><td>4</td><td>28.6%</td><td>4</td><td>28.6%</td><td>2</td><td>14.3%</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr>
<tr><td>I am satisfied with the number of adult staff available to work with the students</td><td>5</td><td>35.7%</td><td>4</td><td>28.6%</td><td>2</td><td>14.3%</td><td>3</td><td>21.4%</td><td>0</td><td>0.0%</td></tr>
<tr><td>I am satisfied with the overall performance of the staff</td><td>6</td><td>42.9%</td><td>5</td><td>35.7%</td><td>1</td><td>7.1%</td><td>1</td><td>7.1%</td><td>1</td><td>7.1%</td></tr>
</table>

Lastly, overall parent satisfaction was evident in the following findings:

- Eleven (78.6%) of 14 parents would recommend this school to other parents;

- Eight (57.1%) of 14 parents would send their child to Maasai next year;[30] and

- When asked to rate the school's overall contribution to their child's learning, 57.1% of parents indicated it was excellent and 35.7% of parents rated the school as good. One (7.1%) parent rated the school as poor.

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[30] Some parents were surveyed prior to and some after the school closed. Four parents said they were not sending their child because the school closed. The others did not give a reason.

## VI. CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

This report covers the third year of Maasai's operation as a City of Milwaukee charter school and as a *New Vision* small high school supported by TALC. For the 2007–08 academic year, Maasai met over half of the educationally related City of Milwaukee contract provisions. The provisions not met were the teacher licensing requirement, maintenance of a local measure in reading, IEP progress, writing, and the intervention requirement for students scoring below a certain threshold on the ninth-grade EXPLORE and tenth-grade PLAN tests. In addition to the information explained in the body of this report, see Appendix A for an outline of specific contract provision compliance information.

In addition to academic outcome measures, information provided by the school has been used to examine and report the school's progress related to the overarching goal and to the Gates Foundation's key attributes, as required by TALC. The school set an overarching goal to establish an ability-based assessment in the context of project-based learning. The measured outcomes indicated that all (100.0%) teachers who had been at the school all year used backward design for unit and project development.

The major findings related to secondary measures of academic progress for this year were as follows:

- Average student attendance was 71.3% excluding excused absences, falling short of the school's goal of 85.0%.

- All (100.0%) parents/guardians participated in the enrollment family interview.

- Graduation requirement data submitted indicated the following:

  » On average, ninth graders earned 6.6 credits;
  » Tenth graders earned 13.0 credits; and
  » Eleventh graders earned 18.6 credits during their years in high school.

- The school met its goal related to graduation plans. All information provided regarding students' post-secondary plans showed that all students were on

schedule for graduation and had student needs assessments completed by advisors.

Maasai's primary measures of academic progress were assessed using local measures and standardized test results. Maasai maintained local measures of academic progress in reading/literacy, math, and special education goals. Those results indicated the following:

- Based on the data provided for the HSPT, results from the spring of 2007 and the spring of 2008 show that 14 (56.0%) students improved in reading and six (25.0%) students improved in language arts from the spring of 2007 to the spring of 2008. (The school did not provide fall 2007 data; therefore, CRC could not determine if the goal that 50% of students would show improvement from fall 2007 to spring 2008 was met.)

- Approximately half (50.9%) of 106 students met the school's goal related to math competencies.

- Eleven (73.3%) of 15 special education students were making sufficient progress on their benchmarks on their IEP.

Standardized test results for Maasai students were as follows:

- Forty-seven (63.5%) of the 74 ninth-grade students with EXPLORE composite scores scored below 13, indicating a need for supplemental instruction.

- WKCE–CRT results for tenth graders indicated that in reading, 74.3% (n = 26) of 35 students were functioning at the minimal or basic levels; in math, 18.9% (n = 7) of 37 students were functioning at the proficient level and 81.1% (n = 30) were functioning at the minimal or basic levels; and in language arts, 19.4% (n = 6) of 31 were functioning at the proficient level and 80.6% (n = 25) were functioning at the minimal or basic levels.

- Twenty-four (64.9%) of the 37 tenth-grade students with PLAN composite scores scored below 15, indicating a need for supplemental instruction.

- Twelve (41.4%) of 29 eleventh graders took the ACT.

- Three (60.0%) of five twelfth graders took the ACT in the fall and two (50.0%) of four twelfth graders enrolled at the time of the spring ACT took the ACT. Scores are not provided to protect student identity.

- A comparison of year-to-year EXPLORE (ninth grade) and the PLAN (tenth grade) tests for 15 tenth-grade students indicated that the average composite score improvement was 0.6.

On June 19, 2008, the President of the Board of Directors of Maasai Institute presented a letter to the CSRC withdrawing their charter. As of the writing of this report, the school has closed.

# Appendix A

# CSRC Contract Provisions

| | Maasai Institute<br>Overview of Compliance for Education-related Contract Provisions<br><br>2007–08 | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Section of Contract** | **Education-related<br>Contract Provision** | **Report<br>Reference Page** | **Contract<br>Provision Met or<br>Not Met** |
| Sec. I –B | Description of educational program and curriculum focus, etc. | pp. 3–4 | Met |
| Sec. I –V | School calendar | p. 5 | Met |
| Sec. I –C | Educational methods | pp. 3–4 | Met |
| Sec. I – E | Parental involvement | pp. 15–17 | Met |
| Sec. I – F | DPI license or permit | pp. 7–8 | Not met* |
| Sec. I –I | Student database information including information regarding special education students | pp. 6–7 | Met |
| Sec. I – K | Procedures for disciplining students | pp. 8–9 | Met |
| Memo subsequent to contract (per Sec.I-D) | Annual graduation plan for all students | pp. 22–25 | Met |
| Memo subsequent to contract (per Sec.I-D) | Administration of required standardized tests:<br><br>a. EXPLORE (ninth graders)<br><br>b. PLAN (tenth graders)<br><br>c. ACT (eleventh graders)<br><br>d. SAT (eleventh graders) | a. pp. 30–31<br><br>b. pp. 33–34<br><br>c. pp. 35–36<br><br>d. N/A | a. Met<br><br>b. Met<br><br>c. Met<br><br>d. N/A |
| Memo subsequent to contract (Per Sec.1-D) | Maintain local measures of academic progress in the following areas:<br><br>a. Reading or literacy<br><br>b. Mathematics<br><br>c. Writing<br><br>d. Special education plan: percentage of goals met | a. pp. 26–28<br><br>b. p. 29<br><br>c. p. 30<br><br>d. p. 30 | a. Unable to determine; not met.<br><br>b. Met<br><br>c. Not met<br><br>d. Unable to determine; not met. |
| Memo subsequent to contract | High school intervention requirement:<br><br>a. 9th-grade students scoring below 13 on EXPLORE<br><br>b. 10th-grade students scoring below 15 on PLAN | a. pp. 30–31<br><br>b. pp. 33–34 | a. Not met**<br><br>b. Not met** |
| Memo subsequent to contract | Measure of year-to-year progress (using the EXPLORE and PLAN)[31] | p. 37 | Met |

*At the time of this report, according to the DPI website, two teachers did not hold a valid license or permit during the 2007–08 academic year.

**The intervention plan was not implemented until April 2008.

# Appendix B

## Small High School Learning Memo With Data Addendum

**To:** Children's Research Center/Charter School Review Committee
**From:** Maasai Institute
**Re:** Small High School Learning Memorandum for the 2007–08 Academic Year
**Date:** Finalized January 31, 2008

Note: This memorandum of understanding includes the *minimum* measurable outcomes required by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) and the Technical Assistance & Leadership Center (TALC). Schools can add outcomes to this memo if additional measures of academic progress are developed and the school desires them to be included in the final monitoring report (e.g., if a school administers additional standardized tests).

The specific outcomes will be defined by the leadership and/or staff at each school in consultation with staff from the Children's Research Center (CRC) and CSRC. All data shall be reported to CRC in an electronic file such as a spreadsheet or a database **that includes a consistent student ID number.** CRC will request electronic submission of data January 14, 2008, to ensure that the data are being collected and reported in a manner that allows for analysis. The full year's data submission will be due no later than the fifth day following the last day of student attendance for the academic year.

All reports outlined will include an enrollment start date and an enrollment end date.

**Measures for Key Attributes of Equitable Small High Schools**
Each school will select an overarching goal for this area of the Learning Memo. In the area of equity, TALC requires each second-year implementing school to focus on an overarching goal such as one of the following: *College-Bound Culture, Community Engagement,* or *Project-based Learning.* The measurable outcomes (S.M.A.R.T. goals) demonstrate how progress toward the goal can be measured in relationship to the Gates Foundation's Seven Key Attributes of Equitable Schools. The Seven Key Attributes are: Common Focus (CF), High Expectations (HE), Personalized Environment (PE), Respect and Responsibility (RR), Time to Collaborate (TC), Performance Based (PB), and Technology as a Tool (TT). The school will determine measurable outcomes related to their overarching goal and the corresponding key attribute(s) addressed within those outcomes. All measurable outcomes related to this goal and the corresponding attribute(s) assessed by these outcomes are inserted into this memo. These measures will be reported to CRC and included in the annual monitoring report.

**Maasai Institute's overarching goal is to establish an ability-based assessment in the context of project-based learning.**
Maasai Institute's goal is to implement an ability-based assessment model while incorporating projects as the major assessment tool. To begin this effort, Maasai will use the Backwards Design methodology to implement projects as the main assessment tool. Instructional staff will develop units for each semester and will require students to complete a project at the end of each unit. Instructional staff will also develop a cumulative semester ending project. Each project will be required to have a research, writing, and presentation component. Standardized rubrics will be used by each instructor to evaluate these components. Each instructor will also develop a rubric for each project that is specific to the content area. The following measures will be used over the period of the academic year:

- At least 75% of all instructional staff will have used Backwards Design to develop their units (CF, HE, PE, RR, TC, PB, TT).

- At least 75% of all instructional staff will have used Backwards Design to develop their semester ending project (CF, HE, PE, RR, TC, PB, TT).

**Attendance**

The school will maintain appropriate attendance records including in-school and out-of-school suspensions and will include student ID numbers. Maasai will achieve an attendance rate of at least 85% compiled at the end of the school year. A student will be marked present for the day if he/she attends five out of seven classes.

The school will record student data in the Infinite Campus (IC) database. The school will be able to generate a student roster that lists all students enrolled at any time during the school year. The roster will include student grade, gender, and race/ethnicity.

**Enrollment**

The school will record enrollment dates for every student. Upon admission, individual student information and the actual enrollment date, will be added to the school's IC database.[32]

**Termination**

The date and reason for every student leaving the school will be determined and an exit date will be recorded in the school's IC database. Information will include the date of withdrawal/ termination, where the student went, expulsion, drop-out information, and reason why the student left.

**Parent/Guardian Participation**

All students will be represented by a family member at the time of enrollment and during at least two of the parent/guardian/family events held by the school. Participation at the last school-wide event will be higher than participation at the first school-wide event of the year as measured by the percentage of students represented by a parent, guardian, or other family member. School staff will maintain a spreadsheet by student ID of the events held throughout the year and whether the student was represented.

**Special Education Needs Students**

The school will maintain updated records on all special education students including disability type, date of IEP-team assessment, assessment outcome, IEP completion date, IEP review dates, and any reassessment results.

**High School Graduation Plan**

Each student will incorporate the following into their high school graduation plan:

- Evidence of parent/guardian/family involvement: at least 50% of returning students' parents will attend at least one of Maasai's parent events;

- Information regarding the student's post-secondary plans; and

- A schedule reflecting plans for completing four years of English; three years each of college preparatory mathematics, science, and social studies; and two years of a

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[32] Transfer student information will be obtained by the receiving school and transcript information will be entered into the receiving school's database.

foreign language. Student schedules will be reviewed at the spring scheduling retreat. The school will record results on a spreadsheet that includes student ID and whether or not the student participated in the spring retreat.

Seniors will attend a senior meeting where parents/guardians/family are encouraged to attend to discuss final preparations for graduation, plans to take the ACT test, and the process for enrollment into college. Participation in the senior meeting will be stored in a spreadsheet by student ID.

## High School Graduation Requirements[33]

- All freshmen who earn at least six credits will be eligible for promotion to the tenth grade.

- All sophomores who earn at least 12 credits will be eligible for promotion to the eleventh grade.

- All juniors who earn at least 18 credits will be eligible for promotion to twelfth grade.

- All seniors that earn at least 24 credits will be eligible for graduation.

- All seniors will attend a senior meeting where parents/guardians/family are informed about final graduation requirements, ACT testing, and college registration.

## Academic Achievement: Local Measures[34]

Literacy:
Students will show progress in reading and language arts as measured by the High School Placement Test (HSPT) administered to all new students at enrollment and to all students in May of each year. At least 50% of students tested will show improvement. Improvement is defined as any increment of score above the students score on the HSPT in the fall. Returning students' scores from the testing in May of the previous year will be used to compare improvement to the students' scores after completing testing in May of the current school year.

Mathematics:
All math students who received a D+ or lower on their first semester grade will increase that grade to a C- or higher by their second semester grade.

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[33] This item depends upon the school's high school graduation requirements and the timing of the student's course work. Outcomes reflect what would be needed at each grade level to meet the graduation requirements by the end of the fourth year.

[34] Local measures of academic achievement are the classroom- or school-level measures that monitor student progress throughout the year (formative assessment) and can be summarized at the end of the year (summative assessment) to demonstrate academic growth. They are reflective of each school's unique philosophy and curriculum. The CSRC requires local measures of academic achievement in the areas of literacy, mathematics, writing, and IEP goals.

<u>Writing:</u>
Fifty percent of students that received a three or lower based on their score using a writing rubric on the fall writing sample will increase at least one point by the spring writing sample.

<u>Individual Education Program (IEP) Goals:</u>
Special education students will achieve at least 80% of the benchmarks indicated on their IEP for at least eight months.

**Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures**

<u>Ninth Grade Students:</u>
All ninth grade students are required to take all subtests[35] of the EXPLORE test (the first in a series of two pre-ACT tests that will identify students who are not ready for the ACT[36]) in the same timeframe identified by the State of Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (WI DPI) for the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination – Criterion Referenced Test (WKCE – CRT). During the second semester, all ninth grade students who scored below 13 on the EXPLORE test will be placed into the Maasai Intervention process.

<u>Tenth Grade Students:</u>
All tenth grade students are required to take the WKCE – CRT in the timeframe identified by the WI DPI.

All tenth grade students are required to take all subtests[37] of the PLAN (the second in a series of two pre-ACT tests that will track student progress and identify students who are not ready for the ACT). The PLAN will be administered in the fall of 2007. During the second semester of tenth grade, all students who scored below 15 on the PLAN will be placed into the Maasai Intervention process.

<u>Eleventh Grade Students:</u>
All eleventh grade students are required to take the ACT preparation course offered at Maasai unless the needs of the student's core courses outweigh the ACT preparation. Those students will have the option to work with their advisor on practice questions during their advising, workshop, or afterschool. Maasai will monitor students' participation on a spreadsheet.

<u>Twelfth Grade Students:</u>
Maasai will register and pay for all seniors to take the ACT test in the fall of 2007. For those students who have scored below 20, Maasai will work with them through senior advising to prepare for the ACT test in the spring.

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[35] English, mathematics, reading, and science

[36] The Educational Planning and Assessment System (EPAS), developed by the American College Testing (ACT) service, provides a longitudinal, standardized approach to educational and career planning, assessment, instructional support, and evaluation. The series includes the EXPLORE, PLAN, and ACT tests. Score ranges from all three tests are linked to *Standards for Transition* statements that describe what students have learned and what they are ready to learn next. The *Standards for Transition*, in turn, are linked to *Pathways* statements that suggest strategies to enhance students' classroom learning. *Standards* and *Pathways* can be used by teachers to evaluate instruction and student progress and advise students on the courses of study.

[37] English, mathematics, reading, and science

## Small High School Learning Memo Data Addendum
## Maasai Institute

This addendum has been developed to clarify the data collection and submission process related to each of the outcomes stated in your school's Small High School Learning Memo for the 2007–08 academic year. Additionally, there are important principles applicable to all data collection that must be considered.

1. All students attending the school *at any time during the 2007-08 academic year* should be included in all student data files created by the school. This includes students who enroll after the first day of school and students who withdraw before the end of the school year. Be sure to include each student's unique ID number in each data file.

2. All data fields must be completed for each student *enrolled at any time during the school year*. If a student is not enrolled and/or present when a measure is completed, record an N/A for that student to indicate "not applicable." This may occur if a student enrolls after the beginning of the school year, withdraws prior to the end of the school year, or is absent when a measure is completed.

3. Record and submit a score/response for each student. Please do not submit aggregate data (e.g., 14 students scored 75.0%, or the attendance rate was 92.0%).

Mid-year data must be submitted to CRC by no later than January 14, 2008.

Staff person responsible for mid-year data submission:  Michael Wridt/Janis McCollum
Staff person responsible for year-end data submission:  Michael Wridt/Janis McCollum

| Learning Memo Section/Outcome | Data Description | Location of Data | Person(s) Responsible for Collecting Data |
|---|---|---|---|
| Measures for Key Attributes:<br><br>Ability-based Assessment Model Learning Teacher Outcomes | Create a datasheet including all instructional staff. For each staff person, include a column for each of the following:<br>• Staff person's name.<br>• The grade(s) the staff person taught during the school year.<br>• Use of Backwards Design. Enter Yes if the staff person used Backwards Design methodology to implement projects as the main assessment. Enter No if he/she did not.<br>• Number of units developed. Enter the number of units the staff person developed during the school year.<br>• Cumulative semester ending project developed. Enter the number of semesters in which | Microsoft Excel or other spreadsheet designed by school.<br><br>Microsoft Excel | Wridt, Michael |

| Learning Memo Section/Outcome | Data Description | Location of Data | Person(s) Responsible for Collecting Data |
|---|---|---|---|
| | the staff person developed a cumulative semester ending project.<br><br>Provide a narrative description of Backwards Design.<br><br>Also provide a narrative description of the rubric used to assess the projects. | | |
| Student Roster and Attendance | For each student, include:<br>• Student name<br>• Student ID number<br>• Student grade level (e.g., 9, 10, 11, 12)<br>• Student race/ethnicity<br>• Student gender (M, F)<br>• The number of days the student was enrolled at the school (i.e., expected to attend)<br>• The number of days the student attended<br>• The number of excused absences<br>• The number of unexcused absences<br>• The number of in-school suspensions<br>• The number of out-of-school suspensions | Infinite Campus | Thompson, LaTasha and Wridt, Michael |
| Enrollment | For each student, include the following: enrollment date. | Infinite Campus | Owens, Geneva |
| Termination | For each student, include:<br>• Termination date or N/A if the student did not withdraw.<br>• Reason for termination/ withdrawal (including expulsion and drop-out).<br>• Where the student went (e.g., another MPS school). | Infinite Campus | Owens, Geneva and McCollum, Devin |
| Parent Participation | For each student, include:<br>• Student ID<br>• One column for enrollment. Indicate with Y or N whether the parent was present at enrollment.<br>• One column for the first parent event. Indicate with a Y or N whether the parent attended. If the student was not enrolled at the time of the conference, indicate with N/A.<br>• One column for the second parent event. Indicate with a Y or N whether the parent participated. If the student was | Microsoft Excel or other spreadsheet designed by school. | Owens, Geneva and Peterson, Linda |

| Learning Memo Section/Outcome | Data Description | Location of Data | Person(s) Responsible for Collecting Data |
|---|---|---|---|
| | not enrolled at the time of the conference, indicate with N/A. | | |
| Special Education Needs Students | For each student, include:<br>• Y/N if the student had special education needs.<br>• For each student marked Y, indicate the special education needs type (e.g., ED, CD, etc.).<br>• For each student marked Y, indicate the IEP team assessment date.<br>• For each student marked Y, indicate the IEP completion date.<br>• For each student marked Y, indicate the IEP review date.<br>• For each student marked Y and with an IEP review date, enter the review result (whether the student no longer qualified for special ed or continued to qualify for special education. | Infinite Campus and Excel Spreadsheet | Wridt, Michael and Kalumbula, Kasongo |
| High School Graduation Plan | For each student, indicate if the graduation plan included:<br>• Information regarding post-secondary plans (Y or N).<br>• A schedule to complete four years of English; three years of math, science, and social studies; and two years of a foreign language (Y or N).<br>Then in another column:<br>• Student attendance at the spring retreat (Y or N).<br>For twelfth graders, indicate if:<br>• Student attended the senior meeting (Y or N).<br>• The parent attended the senior meeting (Y or N). | Microsoft Excel or other spreadsheet designed by school. | Wridt, Michael and Swope-Farr, Telashay |
| High School Graduation Requirements | For each student, include:<br>• The number of credits earned during the current school year.<br>• The number of cumulative credits earned at Maasai and any other high school attended.<br>• An indication if the student was promoted to the next grade level (Y or N). | Infinite Campus | Wridt, Michael |
| Academic Achievement: Local Measures<br><br>Literacy (Based on HSPT | For each student include:<br>• In one column, indicate the student's HSPT reading score from the spring of 2008. If the student was not enrolled at the time, enter N/A. | Infinite Campus and Excel Spreadsheet | Wridt, Michael |

| Learning Memo Section/Outcome | Data Description | Location of Data | Person(s) Responsible for Collecting Data |
|---|---|---|---|
| reading and language arts scores) | • In another column, indicate the student's HSPT reading score from the spring of 2007. Note: If the student was not enrolled in spring 2007, enter the student's reading score based on the HSPT administered at enrollment.<br>• In one column, indicate the student's HSPT language arts score from the spring of 2008. If the student was not enrolled at the time, enter N/A.<br>• In another column, indicate the student's HSPT language arts score from the spring of 2007. Note: If the student was not enrolled in the spring of 2007, enter the student's language arts score based on the HSPT administered at enrollment. | | |
| Academic Achievement: Local Measures<br><br>Math<br>(Based on semester grades) | For each student include:<br>• In one column, indicate the student's first semester math grade. If the student was not enrolled during the first semester, indicate N/A.<br>• In one column, indicate the student's second semester math grade. If the student was not enrolled during the second semester, please indicate with N/A. | Excel Spreadsheet | Wridt, Michael |
| Academic Achievement: Local Measures<br><br>Writing | For each student, enter the following:<br>• Fall writing score. If the student was not enrolled, enter N/A.<br>• Spring writing score. If the student was not enrolled, enter N/A. | Infinite Campus | Wridt, Michael |
| Academic Achievement: Local Measures<br><br>Individual Education Program (IEP) | For each student with an IEP, indicate:<br>• Number of goals or benchmarks on the IEP.<br>• Number of goals or benchmarks achieved. | Excel Spreadsheet | Wridt, Michael and Kalumbula, Kasongo |
| Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures<br><br>EXPLORE | For each ninth grade student, include:<br>• EXPLORE composite score from fall semester. Enter N/A if the student was not enrolled.<br>• Placed in Maasai Intervention process. If the student scored less than 13, indicate Yes if he/she was placed in the | Infinite Campus | Wridt, Michael |

| Learning Memo Section/Outcome | Data Description | Location of Data | Person(s) Responsible for Collecting Data |
|---|---|---|---|
| | intervention process during the second semester, enter No if not. If the student was not enrolled during the second semester, enter N/A. | | |
| Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures<br><br>WKCE – CRT and PLAN | For each tenth grade student, include the following:<br>• Proficiency level and scale score for WKCE – CRT math test.<br>• Proficiency level and scale score for WKCE – CRT reading test.<br>• Proficiency level and scale score for WKCE – CRT language test.<br>• Proficiency level and scale score for WKCE – CRT social studies test.<br>• Proficiency level and scale score for WKCE – CRT science test.<br>• PLAN composite score from the fall semester.<br>• If the student scored below 15 on the PLAN, indicate if he/she was enrolled in the Maasai Intervention process for the second semester. Enter Yes or No.<br>Note: Enter N/A in each column if the student was absent or not enrolled in the tenth grade at the time of the test. | Infinite Campus | Wridt, Michael |
| Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures<br><br>ACT Preparation | For each eleventh grade student:<br>• Indicate if he/she took the ACT preparatory course.<br>• If the student did not take the ACT preparatory course, indicate why. | Microsoft Excel or other spreadsheet designed by school | Wridt, Michael |
| Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures<br><br>ACT | For each twelfth grade student:<br>• Indicate the student's composite ACT score from the fall. If the student was not enrolled, enter N/A.<br>• Indicate the student's composite ACT score from the spring. If the student was not enrolled, enter N/A. If the student was enrolled but was not required to take the test, enter NR. | Excel Spreadsheet | Wridt, Michael |

# Appendix C

## Trends

## Maasai Institute
## Year-to-year Trend Data
## 2005–06, 2006–07, and 2007–08

| Table C1 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Maasai Institute<br>Student Enrollment<br>2005–06, 2006–07, and 2007–08 | | | | | |
| Year | Number Enrolled on First Day | Number Enrolled During Year | Number Withdrew | Number Enrolled for the Entire Year | Enrollment Rate* |
| 2005–06 | 74 | 26 | 30 | 48 | 64.9% |
| 2006–07 | 144 | 37 | 48 | 99 | 68.8% |
| 2007–08 | 184 | 40 | 99 | 109 | 59.2% |

*The percent of students enrolled for the entire year is the percent of students still enrolled at the end of the year who were also enrolled at the beginning (number enrolled for the entire year/number enrolled at the beginning of the year).

| Table C2 | | |
|---|---|---|
| Maasai Institute<br>Re-enrollment Rates*<br>2005–06 to 2006–07 and 2006–07 to 2007–08 | | |
| Enrollment at the End of the 2005–06 School Year | Students From 2005–06 Enrolled at the Beginning of 2006–07** | |
| | N | % |
| 69 | 37 | 53.6% |
| Enrollment at the End of the 2006–07 School Year | Students From 2006–07 Enrolled at the Beginning of 2007–08** | |
| | N | % |
| 133*** | 78 | 58.6% |

*Reenrollment data represented here is based on data the school provided in 2005–06, 2006–07, and 2007–08.
**The third Friday of September is considered the beginning of the school year.
***The school reported that there were 145 students on the last day of the 2006–07 school year and that 64 of them were enrolled on the third Friday in September 2007. Those figures reflect a return rate of 44%.
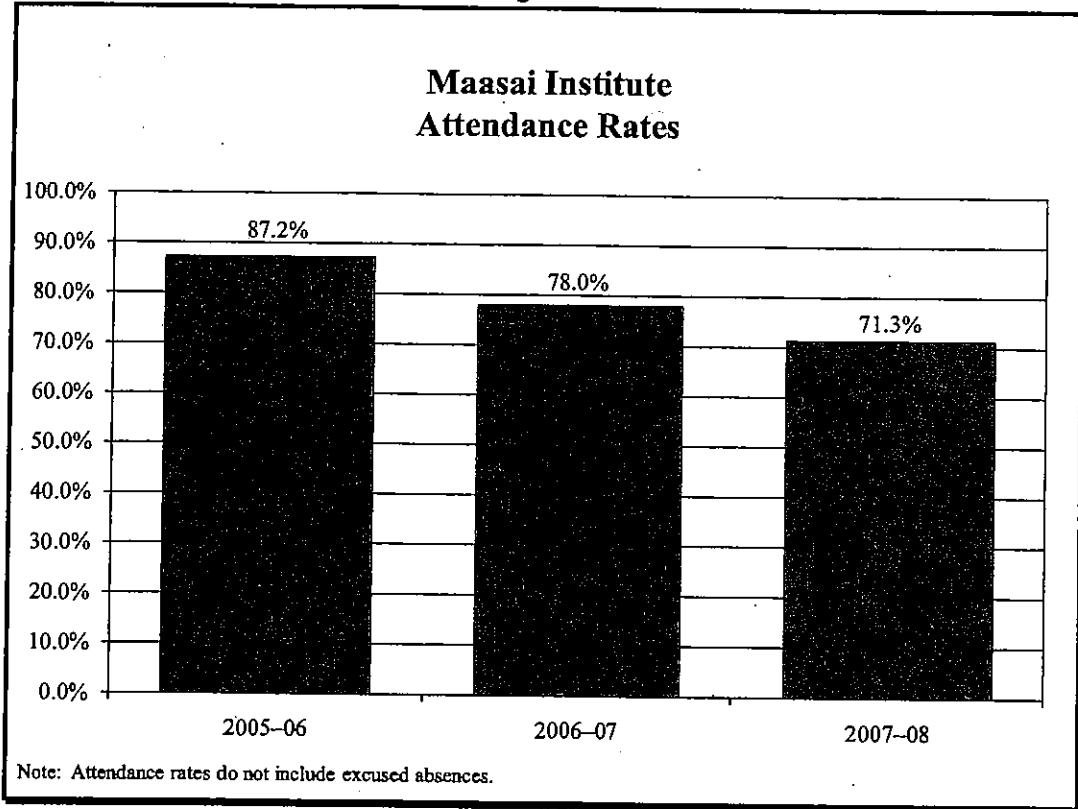
Figure C1

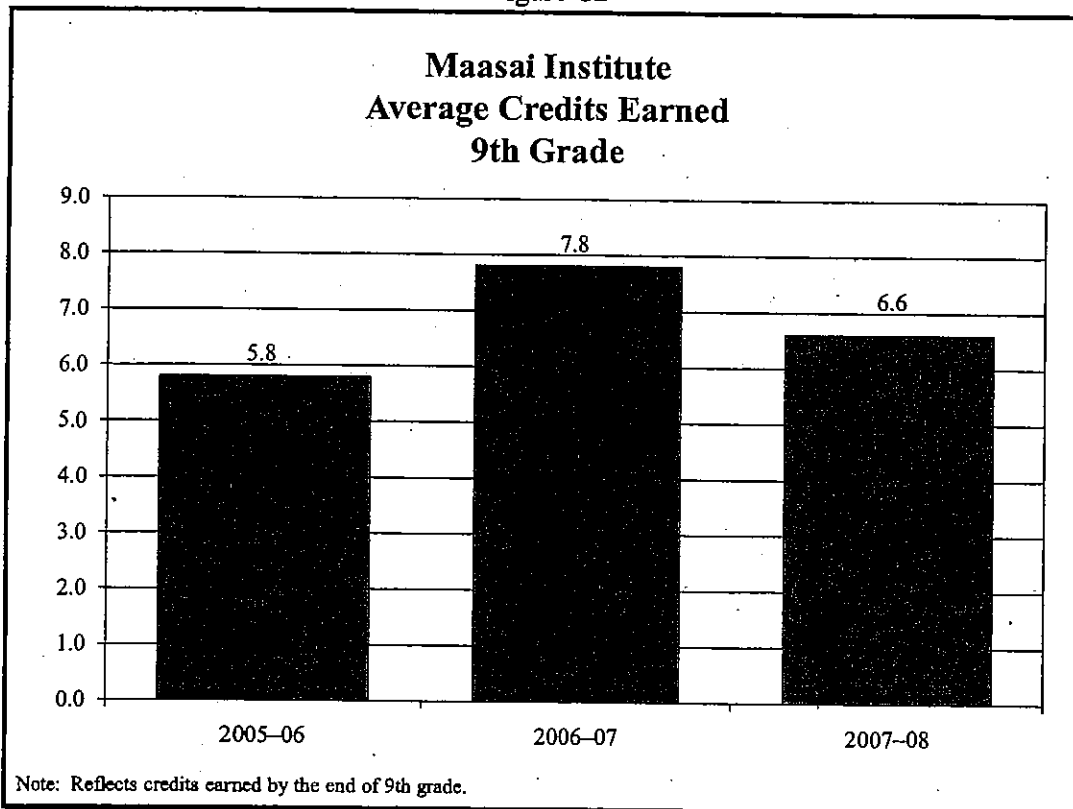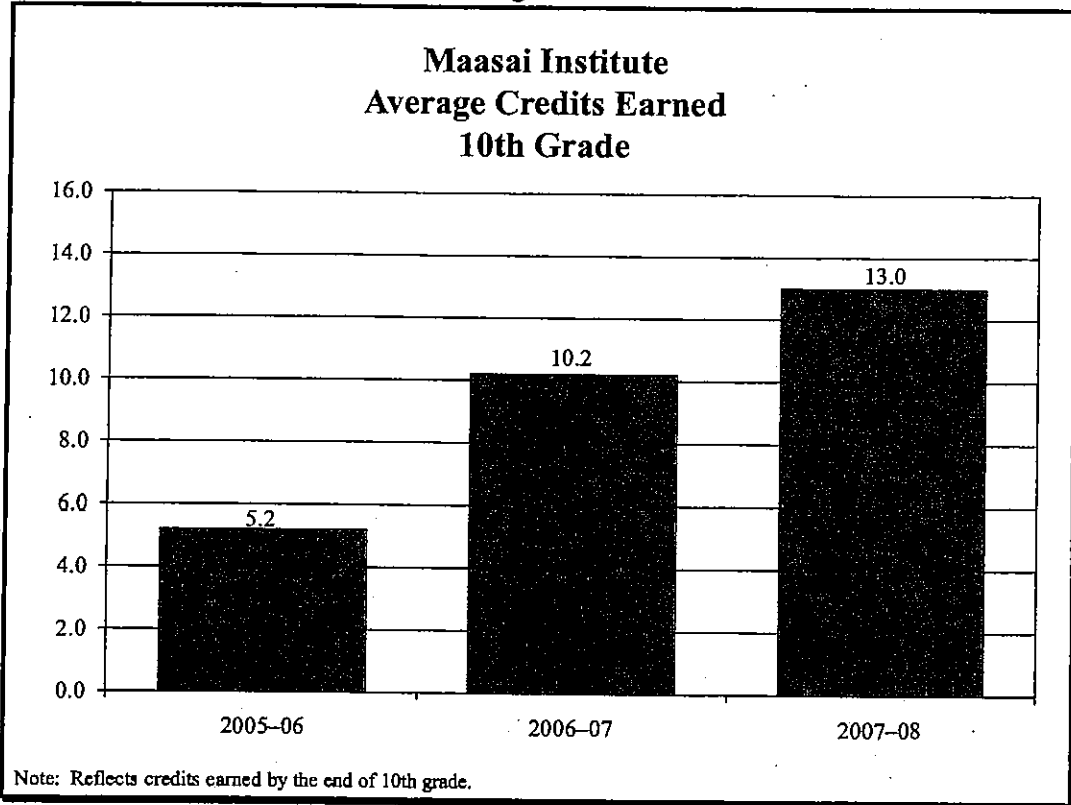**Maasai Institute**
**Attendance Rates**



Note: Attendance rates do not include excused absences.

Figure C2

**Maasai Institute**
**Average Credits Earned**
**9th Grade**



Note: Reflects credits earned by the end of 9th grade.

Figure C3

## Maasai Institute
## Average Credits Earned
## 10th Grade



Note: Reflects credits earned by the end of 10th grade.

Figure C4

## Maasai Institute
## Average Credits Earned
## 11th Grade



Note: Reflects credits earned by the end of 10th grade.
*Credits earned data were not provided for 11th grade for the 2005–06 school year.

Maasai did not provide parent/guardian participation data in 2005–06 or 2006–07; therefore, data for this trend are not shown.

Figure C5



**Maasai Institute**
**EXPLORE Test for 9th Graders**
**Students With Composite Scores Over 13**
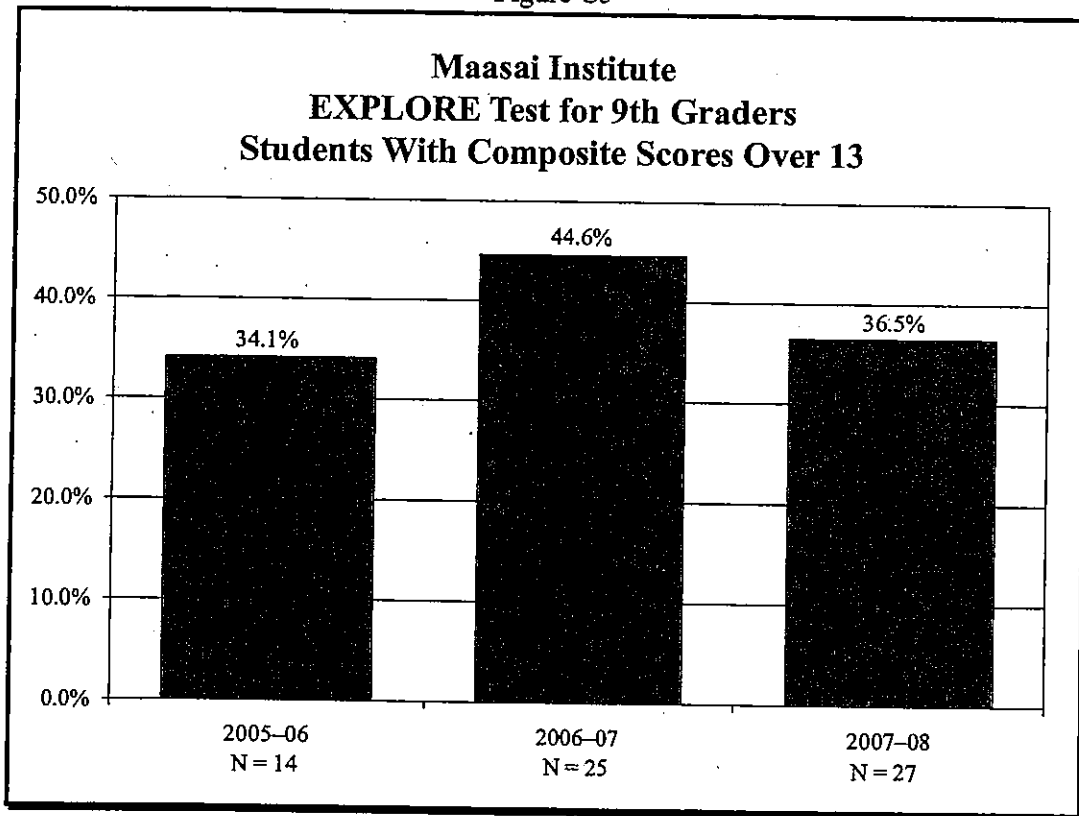
| | Table C3 | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Maasai Institute** <br> **WKCE–CRT for 10th Graders** <br> **Students Proficient or Advanced** | | |
| **Year** | **Subtest** | | |
| | **Math** | **Reading** | **Language Arts** |
| 2005–06 | 10.0% of 20 | 35.0% of 20 | 25.0% of 20 |
| 2006–07 | 8.5% of 47 | 17.0% of 47 | 17.4% of 46 |
| 2007–08* | 18.9% of 37 | 25.7% of 35 | 19.4% of 31 |

Note: The WKCE–CRT scores presented in the table represent the scores for the students who took the test each year. Since the students who took the test in 2005–06, 2006–07, and 2007–08 were not the same, results do not represent individual student progress from year to year.
*Some students took some but not all subtests.

# Attachment F

# City of Milwaukee – Charter Schools
# Report of Management Oversight Consultant
# For the School Year Ended June 30, 2008

**M. L. Tharps & Associates, LLC**
Management Consultants / Certified Public Accountants
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

# M. L. Tharps & Associates, LLC
*1845 North Farwell Avenue Suite 109*
*Milwaukee, WI 53202*
*(414) 278-8532 Fax (414) 278-7579*

Certified Public Accountants                                     Management Consultants

To the Members of The City of Milwaukee
Charter School Review Committee

We have completed a review of the management function of the five charter schools (Downtown Montessori Academy, Central City Cyberschool, DLH Academy, Academy of Learning and Leadership, and Maasai Institute), which have contracted with the City of Milwaukee for the 2007-2008 school year, and have issued our report herein. This report is based on a review of and limited testing of the policies and procedures employed by each school. We have not performed an audit of these schools, however, we have performed sufficient procedures to get an adequate understanding of each school's management policies and procedures. Based on these procedures, we are issuing this report of each school's management activities.

We would like to thank the management of each charter school for their cooperation in our efforts to perform our management oversight services.

*M.L. Tharps & Associates, LLC*

February 6, 2009

# City of Milwaukee – Charter Schools
## Report of Management Oversight Consultant
## Table of Contents

# City of Milwaukee – Charter Schools
## Report of Management Oversight Consultant
## Description of Procedures Performed

M. L. Tharps & Associates developed procedures for reviewing both Charter Schools' management policies and procedures and their compliance with the City of Milwaukee contract. These procedures were developed based on the review of the contracts between the Charter Schools and the City of Milwaukee, the management oversight requirements outlined in the Request for Proposal, and conferences/discussions with the Charter School Review Committee and various City personnel. The procedures are as follows:

a) For new schools in the program, M. L. Tharps & Associates (MLTA) met with financial management personnel to get an understanding of school's operations as well as the accounting, budgeting and financial management functions.

b) For each major system function (cash receipts / accounts receivable, cash disbursements / accounts payable, and payroll), MLTA has obtained an understanding of the schools processes and/or controls over each area.

c) Cash account reconciliations were reviewed and compared to month-end general ledger balances.

d) Revenues were reviewed to verify whether charter students were paying tuition, book and/or registration fees.

e) Liability accounts were reviewed to determine if large or unusual liabilities exist.

f) Quarterly financial statements were obtained from the schools to monitor the financial situation of the school on an ongoing basis.

g) Obtained a copy of the school's annual audit reports. MLTA reviewed the reports for propriety, noting any findings reported by the auditor, and that the reports were in accordance with reporting standards.

## Reports on Charter Schools

# Downtown Montessori Academy

MLTA reviewed Downtown Montessori Academy's management policies, procedures and contract compliance during the 2007-08 school year. Communications were conducted with Virginia Flynn, Principal as well as the school's administrative assistant.

## Current Year Financial Results

The school relocated to the south side of Milwaukee during 2006-07, which resulted in a temporary decrease in enrollment, and a corresponding loss of revenues. During 2007-08, enrollment increased by approximately 30 students, thus revenues increased significantly.

Per review of the periodic financial statements and the year-end audited financial statements, the school performed well financially in the 2007-08 school year. The increase in enrollment and resulted in a $10,000 increase in net assets for the year compared to a $134,000 decrease in the prior year. Charter school aids increased by $160,000 and expenses increased by only $16,000, which accounts for the strong turn-around in the year-to-year financial results of the school.

## Current Financial Position

The school's year-end cash position increased by $46,000 to $117,000 from the prior year. Presently there are no concerns regarding the financial position of the school, as past experience with the school indicates that they are very fiscally-minded and are well aware of their budget limitations. The ratio of cash and receivables to liabilities remains reasonable at a 1.3 to 1 ratio. Although a 2 to 1 ratio is desired for most organizations, a school with a positive ratio is a positive sign. It is expected that this will increase in the coming year based on current conditions.

The school also obtained a $50,000 line of credit during the school year to supplement cash needs due to timing issues with state aid payments. The outstanding balance of this line of credit was approximately $41,000 as of June 30, 2008.

## Contract Compliance

### Annual Audit
The annual audit for Downtown Montessori Academy was completed as of October 24, 2008 by the firm David L. Scrima, S.C. The audit was due to be completed by September 15, 2008, therefore the audit was not completed on time per terms of the charter school agreement with the City. Per review of the report, there were no material findings by the auditor and the audit appears to have been properly submitted and is in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards.

Student Tuition / Fees

As stated in the contract between Downtown Montessori Academy and the City of Milwaukee, the school may not charge tuition for any charter student, nor may it charge fees for registration, books, teacher salary, equipment or courses credited for graduation. Activity and uniform fees may be charged, but the school must not profit from these fees.

We noted that any fees charged appeared to be allowable and were not considered excessive. There was no evidence that a charter funded student paid tuition or paid any other unallowable fees during the school year.

## Internal Control Structure

During our current year review, we noted several changes in the financial and internal control structure at Downtown Montessori Academy. Accounting duties for the 2007-08 year were fully under the direction of the school's administrative assistant, and no outside accounting support was provided. The internal control structure appears solid, with adequate segregation of duties and solid fiscal practices.

## Conclusion

Based on our review of management's policies and procedures, it appears the school has in place a solid financial management system. The school appears to be in good financial condition, with a solid cash flow. Other than the late submission of its audit report, the school appears to be in compliance with the financial management provisions of its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

## Recommendations

Due to the late submission of the audit report for June 30, 2008, we recommend that the school take steps to ensure that future audits are completed on a timely basis, in accordance with the agreement with the City.

## Central City Cyberschool

MLTA performed an ongoing review of Central City Cyberschool's management policies, procedures and contract compliance during the 2007-08 school year. Our primary contact is Dr. Christine Faltz, Principal, who is also in charge of the financial management functions for the school.

### Current Year Financial Results

Per review of the audited financial statements, the school showed a increase in net assets of $303,000 on revenues of $3.8 million for the fiscal year. An increase in enrollment resulted in approximately $380,000 increase in charter school revenues. A significant portion of the large increase in net assets can be attributed to a large ($300,000) investment in educational media during the year. Cash flow appeared adequate for the 2007-08 year.

### Current Financial Position

Based on our review, it appears that the school continues to be financially stable and has improved over the past year. The school is now showing a very solid net asset balance of approximately $725,000. The ratio of cash and receivables to current payables (excluding notes payable) is approximately 1.6:1, compared to a 1.4:1 ratio in the prior year. This can be attributed to the enrollment increase in 2007-08 and operating expenses remaining consistent with the prior year.

The school continues to have a large long-term debt obligation (approximately $3.1 million). The school has been able to pay the debt service on this balance without major financial hardship, and should be able to continue without any problems.

### Contract Compliance

Annual Audit
The annual audit for Central City Cyberschool for the fiscal year ended July 31, 2007 was completed as of October 16, 2008 by the firm of David L. Scrima, S.C. Per review of the report, there were no material findings by the auditor and the audit appears to have been properly submitted and is in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards.

Student Tuition / Fees
As is stated in the contract between Central City Cyberschool and the City of Milwaukee, the school may not charge tuition for any charter student, nor may it charge fees for registration, books, teacher salary, equipment or courses credited for graduation. Activity and uniform fees may be charged, but the school must not profit from these fees.

Per review of revenues for the school's fiscal year ended July 31, 2008, we noted that no tuition or fees were charged to any student.

## Internal Control Structure

During our review for 2006-07, we noted no major changes in the internal control structure of the school. It appears that the school continues to have a solid internal control structure, with good financial practices in place. The school now has a business manager to perform the accounting functions for the school.

## Conclusion

Based on our review of the management policies and procedures of Central City Cyberschool as of the end of the school's fiscal year, July 31, 2008, it appears that the school has adequate procedures in place to ensure a sufficient financial management system. The school appears to be in good financial condition, with a solid cash flow. The school appears to be in compliance with the financial management provisions of its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

## Recommendations

During the 2007-08 fiscal year, the school implemented our recommendation for to hire a person with adequate training to perform the accounting functions for the school. As this recommendation has been implemented, we have no further recommendations for improvement at this time.

# D.L. Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence (DLH Academy)

MLTA reviewed DLH Academy's management policies, procedures and contract compliance for the 2007-08 school year. Communications were conducted with Ms. Barbara Horton, Executive Director and the school's financial manager.

## Current Year Financial Results

Based on a review of the annual audit, the school once again had another solid year, showing an unrestricted net asset increase of $229,000 on unrestricted revenues of $2.8 million. This continues a trend of surpluses, as the school had a prior year surplus of $227,000. Revenue rose by $230,000 over the prior year, which can be attributed to a $270,000 increase in grant revenues. Expenses only increased by $170,000, resulting in the increase in net assets.

## Current Financial Position

Currently, the school has unrestricted net assets of over $739,000, and excellent cash flow position and a very solid 27:1 ratio of cash and receivables to current liabilities. Year-end cash balances totaled approximately $400,000, and the school had receivables of $244,000. Current liabilities total $25,000, thus resulting in the favorable ratio. The school does maintain a $100,000 line of credit for cash flow purposes, however, based on the school's cash position, this line of credit is not needed like it was in past years, and there was no balance outstanding on this line of credit as of June 30, 2008.

## Contract Compliance

### Annual Audit
The annual audit for DLH Academy for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2007 was completed as of August 30, 2008 by the firm Reilly, Penner & Benton LLP. Per review of the report, there were no material findings by the auditor and the audit appears to have been properly submitted and is in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards.

### Student Tuition / Fees
As is stated in the contract between DLH Academy and the City of Milwaukee, the school may not charge tuition for any charter student, nor may it charge fees for registration, books, teacher salary, equipment or courses credited for graduation. Activity and uniform fees may be charged, but the school must not profit from these fees.

Per review of revenues for the school's fiscal year ended June 30, 2008 we noted that no tuition or fees were charged to any student.

## Internal Control Structure

Based on our review of the financial operations of the school, DLH Academy has a solid financial management system and internal control structure in place. Personnel appear to have financial and accounting experience to adequately maintain the school's accounting system. The school continues to build on its surpluses to where it has a significant reserve, indicating the school has budgeted its funds well over time.

## Conclusion

Based on our review of the management policies and procedures of the DLH Academy as of June 30, 2008 it appears that the organization continues to have excellent procedures in place to ensure a sufficient financial management system. The school appears to be in excellent financial position, and has an excellent cash flow position. As of June 30, 2008, the school appears to be in compliance with the financial management provisions of its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

## Recommendations

Based on our management review, we believe that the DLH Academy should continue its current management policies and procedures. We are satisfied with all areas of the schools financial management and contract compliance.

# Academy of Learning and Leadership

MLTA reviewed the Academy of Learning and Leadership's management policies, procedures and contract compliance during the 2007-08 school year. Communications were conducted with Ms. Camille Mortimore, Executive Director, as well as the school's office manager and accountant.

## Current Year Financial Results

For the year ended June 30, 2007, the school showed a decrease in net assets of $133,000, on revenues of $4.19 million and expenses of $4.32 million. The school's cumulative deficit is now $155,000.

During 2006-07, the school embarked on an expansion project, adding a new school building, which allowed the school to increase its enrollment by approximately 60%. The school financed this through $10 million bonding issue, which refinanced their existing debt, provided financing for the building construction, and provided a reserve to pay interest on the bonds until full enrollment is realized. Details of this bonding issue are described in the next section.

## Current Financial Position

The bond issue described above allowed the school to eliminate a large share of short-term debt that had accumulated during the schools first year. Currently, the only short-term debt is the school's line of credit, which at year-end, stood at $293,000 compared to $465,000 in the prior year. The school has a long-term budget that proposes to pay down and eliminate the line of credit over the next several years, and become self-sustaining.

As noted above, the school embarked on a significant expansion in 2007. From the audited financial statements, below is a description of the financing arrangement for this expansion:

*"In April 2007 the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Milwaukee (RACM) issued a 15 year and 30 year tax-exempt Redevelopment Education Revenue Bonds (Series A tax-exempt bonds) totaling $7.8 million and underwritten by A.G. Edwards. Interest rates on the tax-exempt bonds are between 5.5% and 5.625%. RACM also issued 6 and 9 year taxable Redevelopment Education Revenue Bonds (Series B taxable bonds and Series C taxable bonds) totaling $850,000. The interest rate on the taxable Bonds is 7.56%.*

*RACM loaned the bond proceeds of the Series A and Series B bonds to an investment fund. The Investment fund received capital contributions, in the form of New Market Tax Credits, from TransCapital Community Improvement Fund, LLC, (an "Investment Fund Tax Credit Investor"). The bond proceeds and capital contributions were invested in Community Development Funding IX, LLC (CDE) which in turn made two loans (a Senior Loan of $8,130,000 and a Subordinate Loan of $1,658,800) to the Academy. The Series C bond proceeds ($520,000) were loaned by RACM directly to the Academy. Interest over the period of the loans vary between 1% and 7.56% over the term of the loans and mature on various dates with a final payment of $1,658,800 on April 24, 2047.*

*RACM directly to the Academy. Interest over the period of the loans vary between 1% and 7.56% over the term of the loans and mature on various dates with a final payment of $1,658,800 on April 24, 2047.*

*For the years ended June 30, 2008, 2009 and 2010, the Academy's debt service payments are defrayed by a Capitalized Interest Fund in the amounts of $72,062, $312,020 and $133,723, respectively.*

*At the end of seven years, the CDE has an option to call the Subordinate Loan for a single payment of $82,900, which will extinguish the Subordinate Loan."*

Principal payments on the debt begin in the year ending June 30, 2009, and continue through the year ending June 30, 2037. In the event that the Subordinate Loan is not called after the seven-year period expires, payments will continue through the year ending June 30, 2047.

Under the terms of the bond agreement, the school is required to submit quarterly statements and projections for bond compliance. We will be closely monitoring the financial results of the school to determine whether the financial plan for the bond financing will be properly followed to ensure the long-term viability of the school.

## Contract Compliance

Annual Audit
The annual audit for the Academy of Learning and Leadership for the fiscal year ended June 30, 2007 was completed by the firm Coleman & Williams, Ltd. as of September 29, 2008. As the audit report was due September 15, 2008, the school did not complete its audit on a timely basis. Per review of the report, there were no material findings by the auditor and the audit appears to have been properly submitted and is in accordance with generally accepted accounting standards.

Student Tuition / Fees
As is stated in the contract between the Academy of Learning and Leadership and the City of Milwaukee, the school may not charge tuition for any charter student, nor may it charge fees for registration, books, teacher salary, equipment or courses credited for graduation. Activity and uniform fees may be charged, but the school must not profit from these fees.

Per review of revenues for the school's fiscal year ended June 30, 2008, we noted that no tuition or fees were charged to any student.

## Internal Control Structure

Based on our review of the financial operations of the school, the financial management staff of the school appears to have established a solid internal control system. Our review noted no significant deficiencies in the internal control structure. Ms. Mortimore is directly involved in the financial management of the school, along with her business manager. Due to the complexity of the school's finances and the reporting requirements related to the bond financing, the school has an accountant to handle accounting and financial reporting duties for the school.

## Conclusion

Based on our review of the management policies and procedures of the Academy of Learning and Leadership as of June 30, 2008, it appears that the organization has procedures in place to ensure an adequate financial management system. Other than the late filing of its annual audit, the school appears to have be in compliance with the financial management provisions of its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

## Recommendations

Based on our management review, we have recommended that the school continue with its current management policies and procedures. As the school has a very complicated and significant debt issuance that is highly dependent on the school's projected budgets, we recommend that management continue to closely monitor budget to actual results. We also recommend that the school take steps to have its annual audit completed on a timely basis in accordance with its contract with the City of Milwaukee.

## Maasai Institute

MLTA reviewed the Maasai Institute's management policies, procedures and contract compliance during the 2007-08 school year. Communications were conducted with Ms. Janis McCollum, Executive Director, the school's business manager, and various board members.

### Current Year Financial Results

Due to various financial and management factors Massai Institute was forced to cease operations as of June 2008. The school appeared to be showing an improvement in its finances in the prior year. However, a significant variance in the schools budgeted and actual enrollment, and the failure to adjust the school budget to bring expenses in line with revenues resulted in a large deficit from which the school could not recover.

Due to resignations from management and other personnel, and the closing of the school, we were unable to obtain year-end financial data. Our latest data as of March 2008 indicated a budget deficit of almost $250,000. This deficit included large balances due for building rent (over $100,000), a large line of credit balance (approximately $250,000), as well as significant other vendor liabilities.

The school board proposed a plan to turn this deficit around, however, the plan was contingent on the school's ability to maintain its line of credit with Sunset Bank. When Sunset Bank called the line of credit in June 2008, the board had no choice but to cease operations. The school's request for withdrawal from the program was accepted by the Charter School Review Committee June 19, 2008.

# Attachment G

**Dr. Howard Fuller**
Founder and Director
The Institute for the Transformation of Learning
Marquette University
750 North 18<sup>th</sup> Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233

December 22, 2008

M. Camille Mortimore, Ph.D.
Academy of Learning and Leadership
1530 West Center Street
Milwaukee, WI 53206

Re:    Academy of Learning and Leadership Probation

Dear Dr. Mortimore:

The Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) met to consider placing the Academy of Learning and Leadership (ALL) on probation for its lack of progress in meeting the City's expectations for the academic performance of your students. Specifically, the CSRC identified the following concerns:

- For three years in a row, second and third grade students on average have not met the expectation of one year progress in reading as measured by the Stanford Diagnostic Reading Test (SDRT).

- The percentage of 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who were proficient on the WKCE reading subtest the prior year has declined consistently over the past three years.

- The percentage of 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who were proficient on the WKCE math subtest the prior year has declined from 2006-07 to 2007-08. The cohort was too small to report in 2005-06.

- For two years in a row, second and third grade students who were below grade level in reading the prior year, have not meet the expectation of more than one year progress as measured by the SDRT. The cohort was too small to report in 2005-06.

- The percentage of 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who were below proficient on the WKCE reading subtest the prior year and who advanced one level of proficiency

or to the next quartile within the proficiency level range has consistently declined over the last three years.

- The percentage of 4<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade students who were below proficient on the WKCE math subtest the prior year and who advanced one level of proficiency or to the next quartile within the proficiency level range has been consistently low, with the highest percentage of students meeting this expectation being 32.4% in 2006-07.

In addition, ALL's Annual Yearly Progress Review Summary, issued by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction for the 2007-2008 school year, indicated that the school did not meet the AYP in reading and math. Because your school has not met AYP in those areas for two consecutive years, the school's improvement status is SIFI (School Identified for Improvement) Level I.

The CSRC can take into account several factors in determining probation. These factors, both academic and others, are described in Appendix A of the City's charter school application, entitled *Academic Performance and Educational Program Criteria*. The CSRC determined that all of the concerns identified above are factors specifically noted in Appendix A and are grounds for placing ALL on probation.

The CSRC has therefore voted to place ALL on probation. The CSRC requires that ALL meet the following year to year academic achievement expectations by the time of the report issued for the 2009-2010 school year:

a.    Current 2nd and 3rd grade students with comparison SDRT scores from the previous spring:

It is expected that on average all students will advance at least one year using grade level equivalencies from spring test to spring test. All students below grade level on the previous year's SDRT will on average advance more than one year using grade level equivalencies from spring test to spring test.

The results for 3rd grade students with comparable 1st grade SDRT test results will be reported as supplementary information.

b.    Current 4th through 8th graders, meeting the FAY definition, who were at the proficient or advanced levels on their previous year's WKCE – CRT reading and/or math subtests:

It is expected that 75.0% or more of these students will maintain their status of proficient or above.

       c.      Current 4th through 8th graders, meeting the FAY definition, who were at the minimal or basic levels or proficiency on their previous year's WKCE - CRT reading and/or math subtests:

              It is expected that each year, the school will increase the percentage of students who show advancement in scale scores to the next highest quartile within the range of their previous year's proficiency level or advance to the next proficiency level.[1]

Being placed on probation will result in an increased level of monitoring by the CSRC monitors. The cost of additional monitoring shall be borne by ALL. Failure to address the CSRC's concerns could lead to termination of ALL's contract and revocation of its charter.

Very truly yours,


HOWARD FULLER, Ph.D.
Chair, Charter School Review Committee

SDB:ms
Doc. No. 140929

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[1] CRC will divide the scale scores at each proficiency level into quartiles.

# Attachment H

CSRC Written Findings and Recommendation
Hearing and investigation of Maasai school operations (fiscal status and performance) for possible termination of its contract and revocation of charter school status.

At our hearing on June 19, 2008, Maasai Institute's Board of Directors presented written documentation informing the committee that it will officially cease operation because it lost the support its bank to help cover its remaining financial obligations to keep the school in operations for the 2008-09 school term.

The CSRC agreed to accept the written documentation by Maasai Institute to officially cease operations. The CSRC then made the following motion:

"To accept the recommendation of Maasai Institute's Board of Directors to officially cease operations of Maasai Institution and provide the Board of Director with directions for taking the appropriate steps in closing the school".

The vote was unanimous. This decision was based on the following relevant information:

The CSRC was informed on April 30, 2008 by its accountant that Maasai Institute was having serious financial issues. The CSRC held an emergency meeting with the Board of Directors on May 7, 2008 to investigate Maasai Institute's school operations, fiscal status, and academic performance. On May 8, 2008, Maasai Institute Board of Directors met with their accountant to understand the nature of the school's financial stability. On May 14, 2008, the CSRC held a second meeting with Maasai Institute's Board of Directors. The Board of Directors informed the Committee that school had a projected September, 2008 deficit of approximately $400,000.

The CSRC determined that based on the information presented that Maasai Institute appeared to have sufficient financial resources to meet payroll and pay health insurance through the end of the school term ending June 12, 2008. Maasai Institute was asked by the CSRC to appear at a June 19, 2008 public hearing to present a financial plan that would demonstrate whether the school could reduce its debts and remain financially stable to continue operations through the end of the 2008-09 school term.

On June 19, 2008, the Maasai Institute's Board of Directors informed the CSRC in writing at its public hearing that their bank did not want to take the risk of providing Maasai Institute access to an additional line-of-credit to help the school pay off its remaining debts in order to remain open for the 2008-09 school term. Therefore, Maasai Institute reached the conclusion to officially cease operations of Maasai Institute and asked the CSRC to provide them with direction for taking the appropriate steps in closing the school.

The CSRC mutually agreed with Maasai Institute Board of Directors decision and also agreed to provide them with direction for taking the appropriate steps in closing the school.