

2015–2016 Programmatic Profile and Educational Performance

Report Date: October 2016



Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory
Academy of Excellence

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This report includes text from Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence student/parent handbook and/or staff handbook. CRC obtained permission from the school to use this text for the purposes of this report.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
for
Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence
2015–16

This is the 14th annual report on the operation of Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence (DLH Academy). It is a result of intensive work undertaken by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC), DLH Academy staff, and the NCCD 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

DLH Academy met or substantially met all provisions of its contract with the CSRC.¹

II. PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

A. Local Measures

1. Primary Measures of Academic Progress

The CSRC requires the school to track student progress in reading, writing, math, and special education goals 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.

a. Reading

K4 through first-grade reading skills were assessed using the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS).

- A total of 19 K4 students completed the fall and spring PALS assessments; 17 (89.5%) reached the developmental range for at least five of seven tasks at the spring assessment. The school’s goal was 85.0%.
- Out of 55 K5 through first-grade students, 43 (78.2%) met the spring summed score benchmark; the school’s goal was 85.0%.

¹ A middle school English teacher who was hired mid-year applied for and received a license that is effective July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2021, and technically was not licensed during the 2015–16 school year.

Second- through eighth-grade student reading skills were tested using the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) reading test.

- Overall, 29 (36.3%) of 80 second- through eighth-grade students who were at or above the national average (i.e., normative mean) for their grade level at the time of the fall MAP reading test reached their target Rasch unit (RIT) score on the spring test, falling short of the school's goal of 75.0%.
- Of 107 second- through eighth-grade students below the national average (i.e., normative mean) for their grade level on the fall MAP reading test, 66 (61.7%) reached their target RIT score in the spring; the school's goal was 70.0%.

b. Math

K5 and first-grade students were tested using the Math in Focus curriculum. Of 54 students, 45 (83.3%) scored proficient or higher on 75.0% of math skills; the school's goal was 85.0%.

Second- through eighth-grade student math skills were tested using MAP.

- Of the 46 students at or above the national average (i.e., normative mean) for their grade level at the time of the fall MAP math test, 19 (41.3%) met their target RIT score on the spring test; the school's goal was 75.0%.
- Of the 141 students below the national average (i.e., normative mean) for their grade level on the fall MAP math test, 63 (44.7%) reached their target RIT in the spring; the school's goal was 65.0%.

c. Writing

K5 through eighth-grade student writing skills were assessed using the Six Traits of Writing rubric.

- Out of 189 K5 through sixth-grade students, 143 (75.7%) scored at or above grade level on their spring test, exceeding the school's goal of 65.0%.
- Out of 52 seventh- and eighth-grade students, 29 (55.8%) had an overall score of proficient or advanced on their grade-level writing skills; the school's goal was 65.0%.

d. Special Education

All 21 special education students with active individualized education programs (IEP) demonstrated progress on at least 70.0% of their subgoals. The school's goal was that all students with active IEPs would show that amount of progress.

2. Secondary Measures of Academic Progress

To meet City of Milwaukee requirements, DLH Academy identified measureable education-related outcomes in attendance, parental involvement, and special education student records. The school met its goals in all of these outcomes.

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

DLH Academy administered all required standardized tests noted in their contract with the City of Milwaukee. However, data regarding year-to-year academic achievement on Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction standardized tests are not available this year due to the discontinuance of the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination and the Badger Exam. Year-to-year results for the newly administered Wisconsin Forward Exam will be available for the 2017–18 school year.

A total of 21 first-grade students were at or above the spring of 2015 summed score benchmark for the PALS; as second graders, all of these students remained at or above the summed score benchmark in the spring of 2016.

C. CSRC School Scorecard

The school's multiple measure scorecard score for the 2015–16 school year was 84.0% (B), placing the school in the promising/good category.

III. SURVEY/INTERVIEW RESULTS

Every other year, CRC collects feedback from parents, students, board members, and teachers to assess their perceptions of the school. This year, parents and students were offered the ability to complete their surveys online. Teachers and board members were interviewed personally.

- Parent surveys represented 73 (41.0%) of 178 families.
 - » A majority (83.8%) of parents rated the school's overall performance in contributing to their child's learning as "excellent" or "good."
 - » Most (89.2%) parents would recommend this school to other parents.
 - » The characteristics that parents liked most were: the family-friendly atmosphere, small class sizes, individual attention to students, and the staff. Those least liked were the lack of afterschool activities and discipline enforcement.
- Five of the school's eight board members participated in personal interviews.
 - » All rated the school as "excellent" or "good" overall;

- » All reported that the board receives a presentation of the school's annual academic performance report.
- » The main board member suggestions for school improvement were increased financial support and continuing to find and retain qualified staff.
- CRC interviewed 10 teachers and two other instructional staff.
 - » School climate opinions showed that 10 of 12 agreed or strongly agreed that:
 - Adults in the school respect students and their different points of view;
 - Staff typically work well with one another; and
 - All families are encouraged to become involved in school.
 - » Very or somewhat important reasons for continuing to teach at the school included:
 - The administrative leadership at the school, the students, and the general atmosphere (12 of 12 interviewees); and
 - Educational methodology/curriculum approach, discipline, and colleagues (11 of 12 interviewees).
 - » Regarding overall school performance, 10 of 12 staff rated program of instruction, progress toward becoming a high-performing school, and the students' academic progress as "good" or "excellent." Eight rated student/teacher ratio and adherence to discipline policy as fair or poor.
- A total of 46 seventh and eighth graders completed online surveys.
 - » Over 80% agreed or strongly agreed that their reading/writing and 78.3% agreed or strongly agreed that their math skills have improved.
 - » Over 80% agreed or strongly agreed that they use computers/tablets, and the majority (65.2%) agreed or strongly agreed that their teachers talk with them about high school plans.
 - » Half agreed or strongly agreed that they feel safe in school (one did not respond), while 26.1% neither agreed nor disagreed.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

The school addressed all recommendations in its 2014–15 programmatic profile and education performance report. Based on results in this report and consultation with school staff, CRC recommends that the school continue a focused school improvement plan by engaging in the following activities.

- Continue to work with Cambium Learning to improve all local measure results.
- Continue to reinforce the practices of differentiation with a focus on writing and math, especially with new teachers.
- Develop more culturally relevant practices throughout the school.
- Improve understanding and integration of Common Core State Standards to improve the fluidity of teaching.

V. CRC RECOMMENDATION FOR ONGOING MONITORING

Because the school met or substantially met all contract requirements, addressed all school improvement recommendations, and has a scorecard result of 84.0%, CRC recommends that DLH Academy continue regular, annual academic monitoring and reporting.

I. INTRODUCTION

This is the 14th annual monitoring report for the Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence (DLH Academy), one of 10 schools chartered by the City of Milwaukee during the 2015–16 school year. The 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 NCCD Children’s Research Center (CRC).² The following process was used to gather report information.

- CRC staff assisted the school in developing its student learning memorandum.
- CRC staff visited the school, conducted a structured interview with the executive director and principal, and reviewed pertinent documents.
- CRC staff and the CSRC chair attended a board of directors meeting to improve communications regarding the roles of the CSRC and CRC as the educational monitor and the expectations regarding board member involvement.
- CRC made additional site visits to observe classroom activities, student-teacher interactions, parent-staff exchanges, and overall school operations.
- CRC conducted a structured interview at the end of the academic year with the executive director and the assistant principal to review the year and develop recommendations for school improvement.
- CRC read case files for selected special education students to ensure that individualized education programs (IEP) were up to date.
- CRC staff verified the license or permit information for all instructional staff using the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) teacher license website.
- CRC staff gathered feedback from students, teachers, and school board members. Staff developed survey and interview questions, developed and implemented web-based surveys for parents and students, and interviewed teachers and board members.
- DLH Academy provided electronic and paper data to CRC, which, along with survey and interview data, were compiled and analyzed to produce the monitoring report.

² CRC is a nonprofit social science research organization and a center of the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD).

II. PROGRAMMATIC PROFILE

Darrell Lynn Hines College Preparatory Academy of Excellence
7151 N. 86th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53224

Telephone: (414) 358-3542

Director of Schools and Leadership: Precious Washington

Principal: Lois Fletcher

DLH Academy is on the Northwest side of Milwaukee. It was founded in 1998 as a private school affiliated with the Christian Faith Fellowship Church. In 2002, the school became an independent charter (public) school, chartered by the City of Milwaukee. DLH Academy provides educational programming for children in kindergarten (K4 and K5) through eighth grade.

A. Description and Philosophy of Educational Methodology³

1. Mission and Philosophy

The mission of DLH Academy is to prepare students academically, socially, physically, and emotionally. DLH graduates will be prepared to promote open-mindedness and social responsibility in their communities and the world around them. They will be equipped with the skills necessary to become well-balanced, caring, and knowledgeable individuals who understand that the many diverse voices in the world have a right to be heard and respected. The school's goals include the following.

- Deliver a quality education enriched with multiple opportunities to develop internationally minded students.
- Provide broad access to an exemplary K4 through eighth-grade college preparatory education that is internationally benchmarked through the International Baccalaureate (IB) program framework.

³ From DLH Academy's 2015–16 *Family Handbook*, available at <http://www.dlhacademy.org/docs/Family%20and%20Student%20Handbook%202015-2016.pdf>.

- Create a school community that values and recognizes scholarship, high levels of student effort, academic achievement, and creativity.
- Establish an environment in which each student is known, respected, and valued as an individual of great potential and promise.
- Prepare students to become active, ethical, and responsible citizens who develop an understanding of their role in a multicultural world.
- Create a professional setting for teachers and staff in which they are free to model and demonstrate best practices and engage in innovative pedagogical methods that promote international mindedness.
- Actualize partnerships with parents, families, and community-based organizations and develop global partnerships to build a holistic support system for students.

2. Educational Programs and Curriculum⁴

DLH Academy offers an interdisciplinary curriculum through the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP). Through the PYP curriculum, students learn to profile all of the characteristics of educated international persons.

The school offers instruction in reading/literacy, language arts (including writing), math, science, Spanish,⁵ music,⁶ physical education, health, and research methods. Art, as a subject, is integrated into the general curriculum. Students in K4 through fifth grade were included in the balanced literacy approach.

The school continued to focus on reading and math development and improved use of Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) data to identify gaps in student academic progress. All new students in second through eighth grades are tested with the MAP to determine their level of functioning in reading and math.

⁴ Based on the 2015–16 *Family Handbook* and interviews with school administration.

⁵ Spanish was provided for second through fifth graders under a contract with Berlitz.

⁶ Music was provided through an agreement with the Wisconsin Conservatory of Music. General music was offered to K4 through fifth-grade students; violin was offered to first through third graders; and fourth and fifth graders were offered orchestra.

In addition to academic subjects, DLH Academy provides other community-based opportunities for students. This was the fourth year of the Carrera Program, a teen pregnancy prevention program designed to create an environment where young people can identify their gifts and talents and can progress toward healthy growth and development. The program was implemented and is operated by Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Milwaukee. Club staff work with DLH Academy administration to deliver the Carrera Program curriculum to sixth- through eighth-grade students.

The school also provided an extended-care program from 7:00 to 7:30 a.m. at no additional charge. The school contracts bus services with a local company, but bus transportation is provided on a first-come, first-served basis and parents were responsible for transportation for the extended-care program.

The school's leadership team consists of the director of schools and leadership, a principal, an executive manager of finance and reporting, a special education coordinator, an executive assistant, and an administrative assistant. Other staff include a building operations specialist and a food services coordinator. The director of schools and leadership oversees the school's operations, including all administrative functions and administrative staff supervision. The principal directs and supervises the school on a day-to-day basis and is responsible for curriculum development, academic programming, and accountability for academic achievement. The principal provides IB program oversight.⁷

B. Student Population

At the beginning of the year, 283 students in K4 through eighth grade were enrolled in DLH Academy.⁸ A total of nine students enrolled after the school year started, and 25 students withdrew

⁷ From the 2015–16 *Family Handbook*.

⁸ As of September 18, 2015.

prior to the end of the year.⁹ Withdrawal reasons included the following: 11 students withdrew due to dissatisfaction with the school/program, seven moved out of state, and seven left due to transportation issues.¹⁰ Three (12.0%) students who withdrew had special education needs. Of the 283 students who started the year at the school, 260 remained enrolled at the end of the year, resulting in a 91.9% retention rate.¹¹

At the end of the year, 267 students were enrolled at DLH Academy.

- Most (242, or 90.6%) students were African American. Nine (3.4%) were Hispanic and 16 (6.0%) were Asian.
- There were 147 (55.1%) girls and 120 (44.9%) boys.
- A total of 34 (12.7%) students had special education needs: 12 with speech and language impairments (SL), eight with other health impairments (OHI), three with emotional/behavioral disorders, three with specific learning disabilities (SLD), two with SLD with SL, two with cognitive disabilities (CD), one with OHI and SL, one with visual impairment and OHI, one with significant developmental delay (SDD) and occupational therapy (OT), and one with CD, SL, and OT.
- Most (239, or 89.5%) students were eligible for free or reduced lunch prices. The remaining 28 (10.5%) were not eligible.

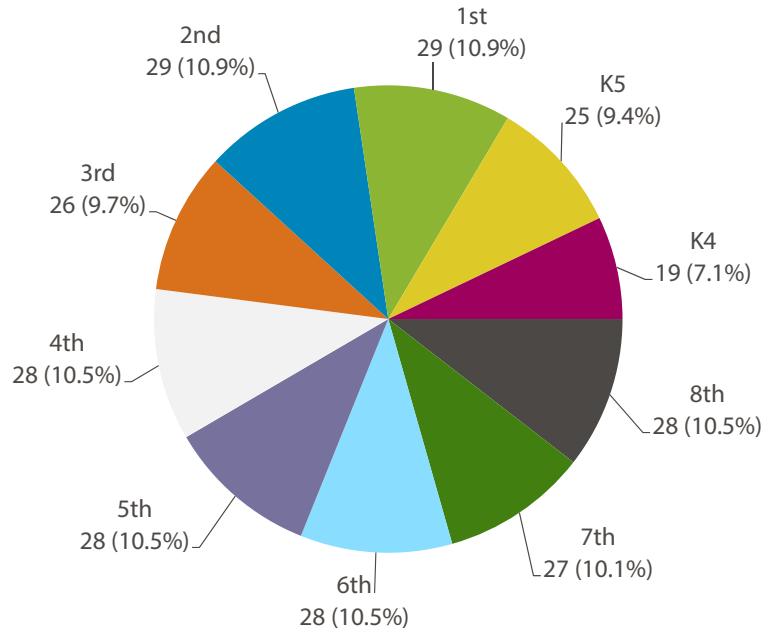
The largest grades were first and second, with 29 students each. Other grade levels had 19 to 28 students, with an average grade-level size of 27 students (Figure 1).

⁹ One student withdrew from K4, two from K5, two from first, two from second, six from third, one from fourth, two from fifth, three from sixth, two from seventh, and four from eighth grade.

¹⁰ The school provided withdrawal reasons for three additional students who withdrew prior to the third Friday in September: two withdrew because of transportation problems and one because of dissatisfaction with the school/program. These three students were excluded from the analysis.

¹¹ Two students enrolled after the start of the year and withdrew prior to the end of the year and therefore are not included in the retention rate.

Figure 1
DLH Academy
Student Enrollment Numbers by Grade Level*
2015–16



N = 267

*At the end of the school year.

Of the 232 students attending on the last day of the 2014–15 academic year who were eligible for 2015–16 enrollment at the school (i.e., who did not graduate from eighth grade), 194 enrolled on the third Friday in September 2015, representing a return rate of 83.6%. This compares to 77.9% in the fall of 2014.

A total of 46 seventh- and eighth-grade students completed an online survey about their school. Results are included in Appendix G and are incorporated into pertinent sections of this report.

C. School Structure

1. Board of Directors

DLH Academy is governed by a volunteer board of directors. The board currently consists of eight members, including a president, an executive vice president, a secretary, a treasurer, a teacher representative, a parent representative, and two other members, along with the director of schools and leadership and the principal.¹²

Five of the eight board members participated in the interview process. All five rated the school as good or excellent overall. They all reported that they use data to make decisions regarding the school, participated in strategic planning, received a presentation on the school's annual academic performance, and reviewed the annual budget and financial audit. Two things most liked by the board members included the IB curriculum and the entire staff's dedication to the school and the students. Improvement suggestions included increased financial resources and parental involvement. See Appendix H for additional board member interview results.

2. Areas of Instruction¹³

In addition to reading/literacy, language arts, and math, DLH Academy offered instruction in science, Spanish, music, physical education, health, and research methods. Special education programming was provided to students identified as needing an IEP. At the end of each nine-week quarter, report cards were distributed to parents. Midway through each quarter, progress reports were sent home to update parents. Parents also were encouraged to use PowerSchool, a web-based student information system that facilitates student information management and communication among school administrators, teachers, parents, and students. The parent portal gives parents and

¹² The director of schools and the principal are ex officio members.

¹³ From the 2015–16 *Family Handbook*.

students access to real-time information, including attendance, grades, detailed assignment descriptions, school bulletins, lunch menus, and personal messages from teachers.

3. Classrooms

DLH Academy had 11 classrooms. There was one classroom each for K4 through fifth grade; sixth, seventh, and eighth graders moved among four classrooms: one each for English, social studies, science, and math. The school also had a gym, a resource room (for special education services outside of the classrooms), a library, a health room, an additional classroom for small-group and pull-out instruction, and a cafeteria. Each K4 through fourth-grade classroom had a teacher and an educational assistant. Fifth, sixth, and seventh graders were supported by paraprofessionals and tutors through the Carrera Program. At the end of the year, there were 19 to 29 students per classroom.

Two of the five board members agreed that the teacher/student ratio at DLH was appropriate; one had no opinion and two disagreed. Four of the 12 teachers interviewed rated class size/teacher ratio as excellent or good, while seven rated this area as fair and one poor.

4. Teacher Information

During the 2015–16 school year, DLH Academy employed 22 instructional staff members, plus a director of schools and leadership, a principal, and a curriculum coordinator/mentor.¹⁴ At the beginning of the year, there were 10 classroom teachers and seven other instructional staff. Classroom teachers consisted of seven elementary (one each for K4 through fifth grade) and four middle school classroom teachers (one each for math, English, science, and social studies). The seven other instructional staff included one special education coordinator/teacher, one special education

¹⁴ A fourth-grade teacher did not show up on the first day of school, so the fourth grade was initially covered by a substitute. The curriculum coordinator/mentor took over the fourth-grade classroom at mid-year due to difficulty in hiring the appropriate classroom teacher.

paraprofessional, one speech language pathologist, one health/physical education teacher,¹⁵ one curriculum coordinator, and one librarian/media specialist. A school psychologist was contracted through the Cooperative Educational Service Agency (CESA) #1.

All teachers and instructional staff who started the school year in the fall were eligible to remain for the entire year. Of the 10 classroom teachers, nine remained for the entire school year for a classroom teacher retention rate of 90.0%. Six (85.7%) of the seven other instructional staff who started in the fall completed the entire school year. Overall, 15 (88.2%) of 17 instructional staff who began in the fall of 2015 completed the entire year. One teacher left due to a difference of school philosophy, and the part-time special education teacher left to take a full time position. Two fourth-grade teachers hired after the school year began left after just a few months, resulting in the curriculum coordinator completing the year as a fourth-grade teacher.

Eight classroom teachers and six other instructional staff employed at the end of the 2014–15 school year were eligible to return. Six (75.0%) classroom teachers returned and five (83.3%) of the other instructional staff returned for an overall teacher/instructional staff return rate of 78.6% (11 of 14 eligible staff).

All of the instructional staff employed at the end of the year held DPI licenses or permits, except for a middle school English teacher who came mid-year and applied for a DPI license, which was granted for July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2021. The school engaged in many staff development activities prior to and during the 2015–16 school year (Table 1).

¹⁵ One physical education teacher resigned and was subsequently replaced.

Table 1	
DLH Academy 2015–16 Training Dates	
August 2015	Professional Development and Standards-Based Planning for 2014–2015 School Year, 8/19–20—New teacher orientation, school vision/mission, 2015–2016 goals, learning A-Z training
	Culturally Relevant Practices—Dr. Kunjufu
	Conscious Discipline; NWEA training K – 1st grades
	Standards-Based Instruction, Curriculum Review (Cambium coaches), 8/25
	Math Training (Cambium consultant), 8/26–27
	Standards—conceptual learning (Cambium coaches)
	Red Cross and Emergency Responder Training, 8/31
September 2015	Curriculum Meeting; update unit planning
	Easy CBM training began
	Saturday Planning Session, 9/26
	Mimio Training—Mr. Oliver; Ms. Cleveland
October 2015	Teacher Data Review (Cambium coaches), 10/22–23
	Saturday Planning Session, 10/24
	Response to Intervention (Rtl) Practices
November 2015	All-School Meeting, 11/4—Student Monitoring (academic and social); Conscious Discipline—Self-Regulation
	Saturday Planning Session, 11/5
	Teacher/Coaches Meetings (Cambium coaches)
	Teacher Data Review, 11/12
	Curriculum Meeting—Rtl
	Data Review (veteran teachers), 11/19
December 2015	All-School Meeting, 12/3—Systems that include high standards and expectations, maximizing AND monitoring learning time
	DPI Visit—Data review/next steps
	Middle School Meeting—Classroom management, helping students to manage time and materials, scheduling and systems
January 2016	All-School Meeting—Individual meeting rotations (management systems, data review, observation reflections)
	Planning and Management Support (Cambium coaches), 1/13
	Math Training and Planning (Cambium consultant), 1/13
	Data Meeting (teachers and Cambium coaches), 1/14
	Curriculum Meeting—MAP/PALS (Ms. Carrington and Ms. Jasinski support)
	Saturday Planning Session, 1/16
	Staff Development, 1/22—21st-century teaching, effectively using your educational assistant, Educator Effectiveness Plan (EEP) update, action plan for students who are struggling

Table 1	
DLH Academy 2015–16 Training Dates	
February 2016	Curriculum Pacing, Goals Review (Cambium coaches), 2/12–13
	Saturday Planning Session, 2/13
	Middle School Meeting—Management; culture/climate
	Data Review (Cambium coaches), 2/24–25
	Math Instructional Support (Cambium consultant), 2/25
March 2016	Saturday Planning Session, 3/5
	Data Review, Planning/Pacing Update, Math Instructional Support (teachers and Cambium coaches and math consultant), 3/15–17
	DPI Data Review and Next Steps, 3/17
	Teacher Data Review Meetings; Learning Memo Update and Planning; RtI; PYP Planners, 3/18
	Teacher/Principal Meeting Rotations
April 2016	All School Meeting, 4/6—Forward Exam, homework practices, minds on learning, motivating students, RtI, EEP
	Planning, Student Goal Monitoring (Cambium consultants), 4/7–8
	Saturday Planning Session, 4/9
	Data Review, 4/14
May 2016	Curriculum Meeting, 5/2—Maintaining management routines and systems, student internet usage, make-up conferences
	All-School Meeting, 5/4—Final goals/reports and closing procedures; emergency procedures, EpiPen usage training, appropriate teacher-student communications (in light of recent media coverage of educator misconduct)
	Teacher Data Review, 5/19
	Saturday Planning Session, 5/21
June 2016	All-School Meeting, 6/1—Continued instruction and systems; purposeful student management for close-out; maintaining positive tone
	DPI 2015–16 Data/Goal Review, 6/7
	Leadership Team Meeting—Summer planning, discuss 2016–17 expectations
	Year-End Data Review, 6/14

- Workshops Attended by Teachers
 - » ASCD Promoting Grit: Middle school math, third- and fifth-grade teachers
 - » Non-Violent Crisis Intervention: Educational assistant and library media specialist
 - » IB Organization Conference: Elementary teachers (K4 – fifth grade)
 - » CESA 9 Disproportionality Summit: Special education staff

- Workshops Attended by Administrative Staff (Director and Principal)
 - » ASCD conference
 - » Title One conference

First-year employees were formally evaluated twice during the school year. Each returning staff member received one formal evaluation during the year. During the interview process, teachers and other instructional staff were asked about the teacher assessment process. Nearly all (10 of 12) agreed or strongly agreed that the process was clear, that they were satisfied with performance assessment criteria, and that student academic performance is an important part of teacher assessment.

Issues related to school climate were favorably rated by the teacher/instructional staff survey. More than 83% agreed or strongly agreed with the statements that adults who work in the school respect the students, that staff work well with one another, and that staff encourage all families to become involved in the school.

Nine of the 12 staff rated the ease of professional support as excellent or good.

5. Hours of Instruction/School Calendar

The regular school day for all students began at 7:55 a.m. and ended at 3:30 p.m.¹⁶ The first day of school was September 1, 2015, and the last day of school was June 13, 2016. The school provided a calendar for the 2015–16 school year.¹⁷

¹⁶ Breakfast was served daily.

¹⁷ The school also offered a summer school program during the summer of 2015.

6. Parent and Family Involvement

DLH Academy's 2015–16 *Family Handbook* was provided to new families at a required new family orientation and is also available to all families on the school's website.¹⁸ In this annually updated handbook, DLH Academy invites parents to become active members of the Family Involvement Team (FIT). FIT's purpose is to provide positive communication between parents/family members and the school administration, facilitate parental involvement in school governance and educational issues, organize volunteers, review and discuss school performance issues, and assist in fundraising and family education training.

DLH Academy expects parents/family members to review and sign its family agreement, the School–Parent Compact. This agreement is a contract that describes the school's and family's partnership roles to achieve academic and school goals for students.

All new students and their parents were required to attend a mandatory orientation session prior to the start of school. Parents of returning students who had not consistently adhered to school policies and guidelines were invited to individual meetings to determine strategies to ensure each student's future success. Parent-teacher conferences were scheduled twice during the year (October 2015 and March 2016). Phone conferences were substituted for in-person conferences when parents were unable to attend. Families also were invited to attend special programs and events scheduled throughout the year.

Teachers and parents were asked about parental involvement. Half of the 12 teachers rated parent involvement as "good," four as "fair," and two as "poor." However, nine teachers reported that parent/teacher relationships were "excellent" (two) or "good" (seven). When asked about the school's staff, 96.0% of parents agreed or strongly agreed that they were comfortable talking with staff. Nearly 85% indicated that they were satisfied with overall staff performance, and 91.9% feel welcome at DLH.

¹⁸ <http://www.dlhacademy.org/docs/Family%20and%20Student%20Handbook%202015-2016.pdf>

7. Waiting List

On May 16, 2016, the school's leader reported that 29 students were on the fall of 2016 waiting list: seven for K4, three for K5, one for first, two for second, one for third, four for fourth, four for fifth, four for sixth, and three for seventh grade.

8. Disciplinary Policy

DLH Academy clearly explains its discipline policy and plan to parents and students in the current *Family Handbook*. The student management section of the handbook includes a statement of student expectations, parent expectations, and an explanation of the School–Parent Compact. In addition, an explanation of the school's discipline plan and disciplinary actions is provided. The types of disciplinary referrals include a conference with the student, teacher, and parent; referral to administration for Saturday detention; in-house suspension; out-of-school suspension; and expulsion recommendation. Each disciplinary referral 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 offenses can result in expulsion. The discipline plan states an action for each type of infraction.

Students also are referred for awards. These include awards for attendance and the academic honor roll. An annual awards convocation honors students who have excelled in academic achievement and demonstrated positive behavior and character traits that exemplify a model student.

This year, teachers, parents and students provided opinions related to the school's discipline and culture.

- Teachers
 - » Of the 12 teachers interviewed, 11 considered the discipline at the school as a very important (six) or somewhat important (five) reason for continuing to teach there.

- » Four of the 12 teachers rated adherence to the discipline policy as excellent (one) or good (three), five as fair, and three as poor.
- Parents
 - » Just over 81% of parents agreed/strongly agreed with the statement that they feel comfortable with how the staff handles discipline, while 8.1% were neutral and 8.1% disagreed.
 - » Nearly 90% of parents indicated that DLH Academy staff respond to their worries or concerns.
- Students
 - » Of the 46 students, 10 indicated that the school rules are fair, 14 neither agreed nor disagreed, and 22 indicated that they did not think the school rules are fair.
 - » A total of 24 students indicated that teachers at the school respect the students.

9. Graduation and High School Information

This year, Carrera staff supported the eighth-grade students. One of the middle school teachers was an advisor for the eighth-grade class, providing high school program information and enrollment process information to the eighth-grade students and parents. The school tracked high school applications and admission. Carrera staff also provided information and assistance to students regarding their transition to high school.

This year, 28 students graduated from DLH Academy. Of these, 27 were accepted in at least one of the following high schools: Christo Rey Jesuit High School, Bradley Tech High School, Rufus King International High School, Washington High School, Milwaukee Lutheran, Carmen High School of Science and Technology, Milwaukee High School of the Arts, Destiny High School, Vincent High School, Brown Deer High School, Whitefish Bay High School, Heritage Christian High School, Pius XI High School, Hope Christian High School, Bay View High School, Messmer High School, Wisconsin

Lutheran High School, and Riverside University High School. Some graduates were accepted at more than one school. One student moved out of state.

The school continues to use its DLH Academy alumni and friends Facebook page to identify former students who are enrolled in a university/college, a community college, in the military, are actively employed, etc. The school is planning an alumni event for college graduates, which will be open to all alumni. An alumnus/alumna has always been invited to speak at graduation.

D. Activities for Continuous School Improvement

The following is a description of DLH Academy's response to the recommendations in its 2014–15 programmatic profile and education performance report for the 2015–16 academic year.

- Recommendation: Continue to implement the recommendations resulting from the partnership with Cambium Learning to improve all of the local measure results with particular attention to improving writing outcomes.

Response: Teachers studied the Lucy Calkins framework to learn that writing is a process. Teacher leaders coached their peers on how to use the process with students. Everyone completed a published piece of writing on a rotating basis. At the middle school level, emphasis was placed on writing across the curriculum within the social studies classes.

The school worked with a Cambium consultant for math to help teachers with unpacking the standards, with a particular emphasis on the fifth-grade and middle school levels and on helping students reach mastery with narrowly focused, supplementary web-based materials. Cambium consultants also helped teachers see the relationships between the learning memo outcomes, state standards, and individual student skills.

- Recommendation: Continue and reinforce the practices of differentiation and monitoring the growth of all students, both those who struggle and those performing at or above their grade level.

Response: Special attention was placed on teachers understanding the importance of having a consistent process in place and implementation of that process for differentiation of learning. Professional development was provided to teachers on using data to support students working in independent groups on a routine basis and on student self-direction while teachers engage in differentiated instruction with a different group of students. Staff also helped students, whether struggling or

performing above grade level, know that they are learning by teaching them how to use data.

- Recommendation: Provide teachers with more professional development and support in the area of differentiation.

Response: All teachers received coaching and professional development in the area of differentiation. Professional development was provided based on individual teacher need and the needs of the staff as a whole in improving the consistent implementation of differentiated instruction.

- Recommendation: Work with the Cambium Learning consultants to improve parent involvement. Continue to develop and implement strategies to improve the number of returning students from year to year and the number who stay the entire year.

Response: The school increased the focus on parental involvement this year with FIT. The team held themed monthly meetings directed at providing parents with strategies to support their child's learning and incorporated school-related topics and community services of interest to parents. Some examples of the monthly meeting topics were academic skill building, financial literacy, Zumba, and juicing. This format served as a way to engage more parents and increase parental interaction with staff at the school.

The school addressed all of the recommendations in its 2014–15 programmatic profile and education performance report. Based on results in this report and in consultation with school staff, CRC recommends that the school continue a focused school-improvement plan by engaging in the following activities.

- Continue to work with Cambium Learning to improve all of the local measure results.
- Continue and reinforce the practices of differentiation with a focus on writing and math, especially with new teachers.
- Develop more culturally relevant practices throughout the school.
- Increase the depth of understanding and integration of the state standards to improve the fluidity of teaching.

III. EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE

To monitor activities as described in the school's contract with the City of Milwaukee, a variety of qualitative and quantitative information was collected at specific intervals during the past several academic years. At the start of the 2015–16 year, the school established attendance and parent participation goals, as well as goals related to special education student records. The school also identified local and standardized measures of academic performance to monitor student progress.

This year, local assessment measures included student progress in reading, math, and writing skills, as well as IEP progress for special education students. The standardized assessment measures used were the Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS) and the Wisconsin Forward Exam.

A. Attendance

CRC examined student attendance in two ways: actual student attendance and attendance plus excused absences. Both rates include all students enrolled any time during the school year. The school considered a student present if he/she attended for at least half of the day. At the beginning of the academic year, the school established a goal of maintaining an average attendance rate of 90.0%. Attendance data were available for 292 students. Those students attended 93.5% of the time on average, exceeding the school's goal.¹⁹ When excused absences were included, the attendance rate rose to 95.8%.

CRC also examined the time students spent, on average, suspended (in or out of school). This year, 106 (36.3%) students in K5 through eighth grade were suspended at least once. Those students spent 3.7 days, on average, out of school on suspension and an average of 1.8 days in school and on suspension.²⁰

¹⁹ Individual student attendance rates were 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.

²⁰ A total of 105 students had at least one out-of-school suspension and nine had at least one in-school suspension; eight students had both. A total of 106 students spent, on average, 3.8 days in both in-school and out-of-school suspension.

B. Parent Participation

At the beginning of the academic year, the school set a goal that parents of students enrolled for the entire school year would attend both scheduled parent-teacher conferences. Parents of all 260 children enrolled for the entire year attended both parent-teacher conferences, achieving the school's goal of 100.0% attendance.

C. Special Education Needs

This year, the school set a goal to develop and maintain records for all special education students. The school provided some special education service to 37 students during the year. Three of those students withdrew before the end of the school year, one student enrolled after their IEP review at the previous school, and the parents of one student revoked permission for services. All 27 continuing special education students had IEP reviews this year; those and five newly assessed students had new IEPs completed during the school year. Parents of all 27 students participated in IEP development for their students.

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, the IEPs were reviewed in a timely manner, and parents were invited to develop and be involved in their children's IEPs. Therefore, the school met its goal to develop and maintain records.

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 administering standardized tests, each charter school is responsible for describing goals and expectations for its students in the context of that school's unique approach to education. These goals and expectations are established by each City of Milwaukee-chartered 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. The CSRC's expectation is that at a minimum, schools establish local measures in reading, writing, math, and special education.

Reading progress was measured using PALS and the MAP assessment. Math progress was measured using the Math in Focus Curriculum and the MAP assessment. Writing progress was examined using the Common Core standards for writing, and special education progress was determined by looking at progress on IEP goals.

A full description of the PALS assessment can be found in section E, External Standardized Measures of Educational Performance. The MAP assessments, which were used to measure second through eighth graders' progress in reading and math, are administered in the fall and again in the spring of the same academic year. Schools can choose to administer the MAP mid-year as well. Results provide educators with information necessary to build the curriculum to meet student needs.

Student progress can be measured by comparing each student's performance to nationally normed scores for his/her grade level. In 2015, the Northwest Evaluation Association (NWEA) conducted a norming study using data from school districts all over the country.²¹ The association calculated a normative mean (i.e., national average) score for the fall, winter, and spring administrations of each MAP test for each grade level. For example, on a national level, fifth-grade students scored an average of 206 Rasch unit (RIT) points on the fall MAP reading test and 212 points on the spring MAP reading test (an overall improvement of six points). On the math test, fifth graders scored, on average, 211 points on the fall test and 221 points on the spring test (an overall

²¹ DLH Academy used the Common Core-aligned version of MAP. Because the 2015 norms are carefully constructed to be independent of any specific test, the 2015 norms apply to NWEA Common Core-aligned MAP tests.

improvement of 10 points).²² Using these national averages, teachers and parents can determine whether students are above, at, or below the national average score for all students in the same grade level at each test administration. For example, if a third grader scored 175 points at the beginning of the year, he/she was functioning below the national average for his/her grade level; the student was functioning within the range of a first or second grader. National average scores for each grade level are presented in Table 2.²³

Table 2 2015 NWEA MAP Normative Mean Scores Fall and Spring				
Grade Level	Reading		Math	
	Beginning-of-Year Mean	End-of-Year Mean	Beginning-of-Year Mean	End-of-Year Mean
K5	141.0	158.1	140.0	159.1
1st	160.7	177.5	162.4	180.8
2nd	174.7	188.7	176.9	192.1
3rd	188.3	198.6	190.4	203.4
4th	198.2	205.9	201.9	213.5
5th	205.7	211.8	211.4	221.4
6th	211.0	215.8	217.6	225.3
7th	214.4	218.2	222.6	228.6
8th	217.2	220.1	226.3	230.9
9th	220.2	221.9	230.3	233.4
10th	220.4	221.2	230.1	232.4
11th	222.6	222.3	233.3	235.0

²² Scores are rounded to the nearest whole number for analysis.

²³ NWEA. (2015). *2015 NWEA Measures of Academic Progress normative data*. Retrieved from <https://www.nwea.org/content/uploads/2015/06/2015-MAP-Normative-Data-AUG15.pdf>

CRC examined progress for students who were at or above the national average as well as students who were below the national average for their current grade level at the time of the fall test. Progress for both groups was measured by the percentage of students who were able to reach their target RIT score in the spring. Based on the student's grade level and his/her fall RIT score, he/she receives a spring target score. At the time of the spring test, progress can be measured by whether the student met his/her target score. The following sections describe results of the local measures goals in reading and math for students at DLH Academy.

1. Reading

a. *PALS for K4, K5, and First-Grade Students*

The PALS assessment and benchmarks are described in detail in section E, External Standardized Measures of Educational Performance. In addition to administering the assessment as required by DPI and the CSRC, DLH Academy also elected to use the PALS as their local measure for students in K4, K5, and first grade.

i. *PALS-PreK*

The school's goal was that at least 85.0% of students who completed both the fall and spring PALS-PreK assessments would be at or above the developmental range for at least five of seven tasks at the time of the spring assessment. A total of 19 K4 students completed the fall and spring PALS-PreK; 17 (89.5%) of those students were at or above the range for at least five of seven tasks at the time of the spring assessment, exceeding the school's goal of 85.0%.

ii. *PALS for K5 and First-Grade Students*

The school's goal was that at least 85.0% of students in K5 and first grade who completed the fall and spring PALS would achieve the summed score spring benchmark. A total of 55 K5 and

first-grade students completed the fall and spring PALS assessment for their respective grade level; most (43, or 78.2%) of those students were at or above the spring summed score benchmark, however, the school did not meet its goal of 85.0% (Table 3).

Table 3 DLH Academy PALS for K5 and 1st-Grade Students 2015–16			
Grade	N	Students at or Above Benchmark Spring of 2016	
		n	%
K5	25	16	64.0%
1st	30	27	90.0%
Total	55	43	78.2%

b. Reading Progress for Second Through Eighth Graders Using MAP Normative Mean Scores

The school's goal for MAP reading results was that at least 75.0% of the students who scored at or above the national average for their current grade level on the fall reading test would reach their target RIT score in the spring. The reading goal for students below their grade level in the fall was that at least 70.0% would reach their target RIT score in the spring.

Both the fall and spring MAP reading tests were completed by 187 second- through eighth-grade students. At the time of the fall MAP test, 80 (42.8%) students were at or above the national average for their respective grade levels, while 107 (57.2%) scored below the average (Table 4).

Table 4 DLH Academy Local Measures of Academic Progress: MAP Reading Assessment Fall of 2015*					
Grade Level	N	Students at or Above National Average		Students Below National Average	
		n	%	n	%
2nd	28	17	60.7%	11	39.3%
3rd	25	10	40.0%	15	60.0%
4th	28	14	50.0%	14	50.0%
5th	28	6	21.4%	22	78.6%
6th	26	12	46.2%	14	53.8%
7th	26	10	38.5%	16	61.5%
8th	26	11	42.3%	15	57.7%
Total	187	80	42.8%	107	57.2%

*Scores relative to the student's current grade level.

i. Students at or Above Average on the Fall MAP Reading Test

Of the 80 second- through eighth-grade students at or above the national average for their grade level on the fall test, 29 (36.3%) met their target RIT score in the spring; the school did not meet their goal of 75.0% (Table 5).

Table 5 DLH Academy Local Measures of Academic Progress: MAP Reading Assessment Progress for Students at or Above the National Average in Fall of 2015			
Grade	N	Students Who Met Their Target Score Spring of 2016	
		n	%
2nd	17	5	29.4%
3rd	10	4	40.0%
4th	14	3	21.4%
5th	6	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
6th	12	4	33.3%
7th	10	4	40.0%
8th	11	7	63.6%
Total	80	29	36.3%

ii. *Students Below the National Average on the Fall MAP Reading Test*

More than one half (107, or 57.2%) of the students scored below the national average for their current grade level on the fall test. By the time of the spring test, 66 (61.7%) had reached their projected target score, falling short of the school's goal of 70.0% (Table 6).

Table 6 DLH Academy Local Measures of Academic Progress: MAP Reading Assessment Progress for Students Below the National Average in Fall of 2015			
Grade	N	Students Who Met Their Target Score Spring of 2016	
		n	%
2nd	11	9	81.8%
3rd	15	13	86.7%
4th	14	5	35.7%
5th	22	12	54.5%
6th	14	9	64.3%
7th	16	10	62.5%
8th	15	8	53.3%
Total	107	66	61.7%

Except for the K4 cohort of students, the school fell short of its local reading goals, with a serious shortfall with the second through eighth grade-students who were at or above their grade level in the fall. Overall, 155 (59.4%) of 261 students met the school's local measure goals in reading.

2. Math

a. *Math in Focus for K5 and First Graders*

Math skills for students in K5 and first grade are assessed on a four-point rubric in which four is advanced, three is proficient, two is basic, and one indicates a minimal skill level. The local measure goal for math was that by the end of the year, 85.0% of students enrolled in K5 and first grade since the beginning of the year would reach proficient or advanced levels of mastery on at least 75.0% of the skills on the Math in Focus curriculum. K5 students were taught 30 concepts, and first graders were taught 28 concepts. This year, a total of 45 (83.3%) K5 and first-grade students scored proficient or higher on 75.0% of math skills, and the school therefore fell short of its goal of 85.0% (Table 7).

Table 7 DLH Academy Students Who Scored Proficient or Higher on 75.0% of Math Concepts K5 and 1st Grade 2015–16			
Grade	N	Met	
		n	%
K5	25	20	80.0%
1st	29	25	86.2%
Total	54	45	83.3%

b. *Math Progress for Second Through Eighth Graders Using MAP Normative Mean Scores*

The school's goal for MAP math results was that at least 75.0% of the students who scored at or above the national average for their current grade in the fall would reach their target RIT score in the spring. For students scoring below their grade level in the fall, at least 65.0% would reach their target RIT score in the spring.

There were 187 second- through eighth-grade students who completed both the fall and spring MAP math tests. At the time of the fall test, 46 (24.6%) students scored at or above the national average for their current grade level, while 141 (75.4%) scored below the national average (Table 8).

Table 8 DLH Academy Local Measures of Academic Progress: MAP Math Assessment Fall of 2015*					
Grade Level	N	Students at or Above National Average		Students Below National Average	
		n	%	n	%
2nd	28	9	32.1%	19	67.9%
3rd	25	8	32.0%	17	68.0%
4th	28	7	25.0%	21	75.0%
5th	28	1	3.6%	27	96.4%
6th	26	2	7.7%	24	92.3%
7th	26	9	34.6%	17	65.4%
8th	26	10	38.5%	16	61.5%
Total	187	46	24.6%	141	75.4%

*Scores relative to the student's current grade level.

i. *Students at or Above the National Average on the Fall MAP Math Test*

Of the 46 second- through eighth-grade students at or above the national average for their grade level on the fall test, 19 (41.3%) reached their target RIT score in the spring. The school did not meet their goal of 75%. In order to protect students' confidentiality, CRC does not report results for cohorts smaller than 10 students; therefore, most results are not broken down by grade (Table 9).

Table 9 DLH Academy Local Measures of Academic Progress: MAP Math Assessment Progress for Students at or Above the National Average in Math Fall of 2015			
Grade	N	Students Who Met Their Target Score Spring of 2016	
		n	%
2nd	9	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
3rd	8	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
4th	7	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
5th	1	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
6th	2	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
7th	9	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size	
8th	10	3	30.0%
Total	46	19	41.3%

ii. *Students Below the National Average on the Fall MAP Math Test*

There were 141 students who scored below the national average for their current grade level on the fall test. By the time of the spring test, 63 (44.7%) of those students reached their target RIT score in the spring (Table 10), falling short of the school's goal of 65.0%.

Table 10 DLH Academy Local Measures of Academic Progress: MAP Math Assessment Progress for Students Below the National Average in Math in Fall of 2015			
Grade	N	Students Who Met Their Target Score Spring of 2016	
		n	%
2nd	19	14	73.7%
3rd	17	11	64.7%
4th	21	5	23.8%
5th	27	5	18.5%
6th	24	8	33.3%
7th	17	10	58.8%
8th	16	10	62.5%
Total	141	63	44.7%

The math goals for the various grade levels were not attained. Overall, the school met local measures for math progress for 127 (52.7%) of 241 students.²⁴

²⁴ Calculation is based on the total number of K5 and first-grade students (enrolled all year) who achieved 75.0% of math concepts and second- through eighth-grade students who met one of the MAP goals. Because the math goals for first-grade students are based on students who are enrolled all year, one student who withdrew in mid-May was excluded from the analysis but was included in the reading local measure goal.

3. Writing Progress

To assess writing skills at the local level, the school had students in K5 through eighth grade complete and submit a writing sample by the middle of October 2015 and again in May 2016. The school used the Six Traits of Writing rubric to assess students' ability to produce writing samples appropriate for their respective grade levels. The Six Traits of Writing framework offers a way to link assessments with revisions and editing. The prompts for both writing samples was the same and was based on grade-level topics within the narrative genre.²⁵ Samples were assessed using the Common Core standards for writing, which include five focus areas: (1) language—conventions of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling; (2) language—conventions of grammar and usage; (3) narrative techniques; (4) organization/plot; and (5) focus/setting.

a. Writing for K5 Through Sixth Grade

Writing skills for K5 through sixth-grade students were rated using a four-point rubric: 1 = below grade level, 2 = approaching grade level, 3 = at grade level, and 4 = above grade level. The average score for all five focus areas was used to measure student progress. The school's goal was that at least 75.0% of the students who completed the writing sample in October would achieve an overall score of 3 (at grade level) or higher on the second writing sample in May 2016.

²⁵ The writing genres for K5 through sixth grade included opinion, informational, and narrative; the writing genres for seventh and eighth grades included argument, information/explanatory, or narrative.

Results were provided for 189 students in K5 through sixth grades who were tested at both times. Of those, 143 (75.7%) students scored at grade level or above on their May writing sample, meeting the school's local measure goal (Table 11).

Table 11 DLH Academy Local Measures of Academic Progress: Six Traits of Writing Assessment K5 Through 6th-Grade Proficiency-Level Results 2015-16										
Grade	Results									
	Below Grade Level		Approaching Grade Level		At Grade Level		Above Grade Level		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
K5	0	0.0%	5	20.0%	20	80.0%	0	0.0%	25	100.0%
1st	0	0.0%	6	20.7%	23	79.3%	0	0.0%	29	100.0%
2nd	1	3.6%	3	10.7%	15	53.6%	9	32.1%	28	100.0%
3rd	0	0.0%	5	20.0%	20	80.0%	0	0.0%	25	100.0%
4th	2	7.1%	8	28.6%	16	57.1%	2	7.1%	28	100.0%
5th	4	14.3%	7	25.0%	7	25.0%	10	35.7%	28	100.0%
6th	1	3.8%	4	15.4%	20	76.9%	1	3.8%	26	100.0%
Total	8	4.2%	38	20.1%	121	64.0%	22	11.6%	189	100.0%

Note: Shaded cells indicate students who met the writing goal this year.

b. Writing for Seventh and Eighth Grades

Seventh- and eighth-grade students were assessed using a rubric of one through five (1 = far below basic, 2 = below basic, 3 = basic, 4 = proficient [at grade level], 5 = advanced [above grade level]); the average, overall score for all six focus areas was used to measure student progress. The school's goal was that at least 65.0% of the students who completed the October writing sample would achieve an overall score of 4 (proficient) or higher on the second writing sample in May 2016. A total of 52 students submitted both fall and spring writing samples; of those, 29 (55.8%) had an overall writing score of proficient or advanced on the spring writing sample. While this is an increase from last year's performance, the school did not meet the school's local measure goal for seventh and eighth grades (Table 12).

Table 12 DLH Academy Local Measures of Academic Progress: Six Traits of Writing Assessment 7th- and 8th-Grade Proficiency-Level Results 2015–16												
Grade	Results											
	Far Below Basic		Below Basic		Basic		Proficient		Advanced		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	N	%
7th	1	3.8%	4	15.4%	5	19.2%	12	46.2%	4	15.4%	26	100.0%
8th	1	3.8%	4	15.4%	8	30.8%	11	42.3%	2	7.7%	26	100.0%
Total	2	3.8%	8	15.4%	13	25.0%	23	44.2%	6	11.5%	52	100.0%

Note: Shaded cells indicate students who met the writing goal this year.

Overall, 172 (71.4%) of 241 students in K4 through eighth grade who were assessed for writing in both the fall and the spring were at or above grade level (proficient or above) at the time of the spring writing assessment (Table 13).

Table 13 DLH Academy Six Traits of Writing Assessment Spring Proficiency-Level Results by Grade			
Grade	Total Students With Fall and Spring Writing Samples	Students With a Spring Score at or Above Grade Level (Proficient or Higher)	
		n	%
K5	25	20	80.0%
1st	29	23	79.3%
2nd	28	24	85.7%
3rd	25	20	80.0%
4th	28	18	64.3%
5th	28	17	60.7%
6th	26	21	80.8%
7th	26	16	61.5%
8th	26	13	50.0%
Total	241	172	71.4%

4. IEP Progress for Special Education Students

The school set a goal that all students with active IEPs would demonstrate progress toward meeting their IEP goals at the time of their annual review or reevaluation. Progress was to be determined by 70.0% achievement of the total number of subgoals reported for each student. All 21 (100.0%) special education students who were at the school for an entire IEP year met at least 70.0% of their goals.²⁶ Of the students who had IEP reviews this year, all 21 will continue to receive special education services next year.

E. External Standardized Measures of Educational Performance

In 2015–16, DPI required all schools to administer PALS assessments to K4 through second-grade students and the Wisconsin Forward Exam to third through eighth graders.²⁷ These tests and results are described in the following sections.

1. PALS

Beginning in 2014–15, DPI required that all students in K4 through second grade take the PALS assessment in the fall and spring of the school year. PALS aligns with both the Common Core English standards and the Wisconsin Model Early Learning Standards.

The PALS assessment is available in three versions: PALS-PreK for K4 students, PALS-K for K5 students, and PALS 1–3 for first through third graders.²⁸ The PALS-PreK includes five required tasks

²⁶ There were 23 students in total who were at the school for an entire IEP school year, however one withdrew and one student's consent was revoked prior to the IEP review date. These students were excluded from the analysis.

²⁷ Per the contract with the CSRC, the school will administer all tests required by DPI within the timeframe specified by DPI; this includes the PALS. The timeframe for the fall PALS assessment for K4 and K5 students was October 12 to November 6, 2015, and September 14 to October 9, 2015, for first and second graders. The spring testing window for all grade levels was April 25 to May 20, 2015. The timeframe for the Forward exam was March 28 to May 20, 2016.

²⁸ Although the PALS 1–3 can be used for students in third grade, DPI only requires the test for K4 through second graders; third-grade students are tested using the Forward Exam.

(name writing, uppercase alphabet recognition, beginning sound awareness, print and word awareness, and rhyme awareness). Two additional tasks (lowercase alphabet recognition and letter sounds) are completed only by students who reach a high enough score on the uppercase alphabet task. Schools can choose whether to administer the optional nursery rhyme awareness task. Because this latter task is optional, CRC will not report data on nursery rhyme awareness.

The PALS-K includes six required tasks (rhyme awareness, beginning sound awareness, alphabet knowledge, letter sounds, spelling, and concept of word) and one optional task (word recognition in isolation). The PALS 1–3 comprises three required tasks (spelling, word recognition in isolation, and oral reading in context). The PALS 1–3 also includes one additional required task for first graders during the fall administration (letter sounds) and additional tasks for students who score below the summed score benchmark in order to gather further diagnostic information about these students.

For the PALS-K and PALS 1–3, specific task scores are summed for an overall summed score. For the PALS 1–3, the fall and spring summed scores are calculated using different task combinations. The summed score is then compared to benchmarks set for each grade level and test administration. Reaching or surpassing the benchmark is not an indicator that the student is reading at grade level; the benchmark simply helps teachers identify which students may have difficulty learning to read. For example, if the student’s summed score is below the designated benchmark for his/her grade level and test administration, the student is identified as requiring additional instruction to master basic literacy skills.²⁹ Students who are at or above the benchmark have the basic skills required to, with targeted instruction, continue learning to read without intervention. Teachers may use PALS assessment results to help plan classroom reading and spelling instruction according to student needs.

²⁹ Information retrieved from <http://www.palswisconsin.info>

The PALS-PreK does not have a similar summed score or set benchmarks. Because students enter K4 with different levels of exposure to books, letters, and sounds, the purpose of the PALS-PreK is to learn students' abilities as they enter K4 in the fall. In the spring, developmental ranges for each PALS task indicate whether the student is at the expected developmental stage for a 4-year-old.

a. PALS-PreK

A total of 20 K4 students completed the PALS-PreK in the fall, and 19 students completed the spring assessment; 19 students completed both. Although the spring developmental ranges relate to expected age-level development by the time of the spring semester, CRC applied the ranges to both test administrations to see whether more students were at or above the range for each test by the spring administration. The number of students at or above the developmental range increased for each task from fall to spring (Table 14).

Table 14 DLH Academy PALS-PreK for K4 Students Students at or Above the Spring Developmental Range 2015–16 (N = 19)				
Task	Fall		Spring	
	n	%	n	%
Name writing	15	78.9%	18	94.7%
Uppercase alphabet recognition	7	36.8%	18	94.7.0%
Lowercase alphabet recognition	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size*		17**	100.0%
Letter sounds	Cannot report due to <i>n</i> size*		17**	100.0%
Beginning sound awareness	11	57.9%	19	100.0%
Print and word awareness	10	52.6%	18	94.7%
Rhyme awareness	4	21.1%	15	78.9%

*Out of six students who qualified to complete the lowercase and letter sound tasks in the fall.

**Out of 17 students who qualified to complete the lowercase and letter sound tasks in the spring.

b. *PALS-K and PALS 1–3*

As mentioned above, the PALS-K and PALS 1–3 tests have summed score benchmarks for the fall and spring (Table 15), which are each calculated using different task combinations. Therefore, the spring benchmark may be lower than the fall benchmark. Student benchmark status is only a measure of whether the student is where he/she should be developmentally to continue becoming a successful reader; results from fall to spring should not be used as a measure of individual progress.

Table 15		
PALS-K and PALS 1–3 Published Summed Score Benchmarks		
PALS Assessment	Fall Benchmark	Spring Benchmark
PALS-K	28	81
PALS—1st Grade	39	35
PALS—2nd Grade	35	54

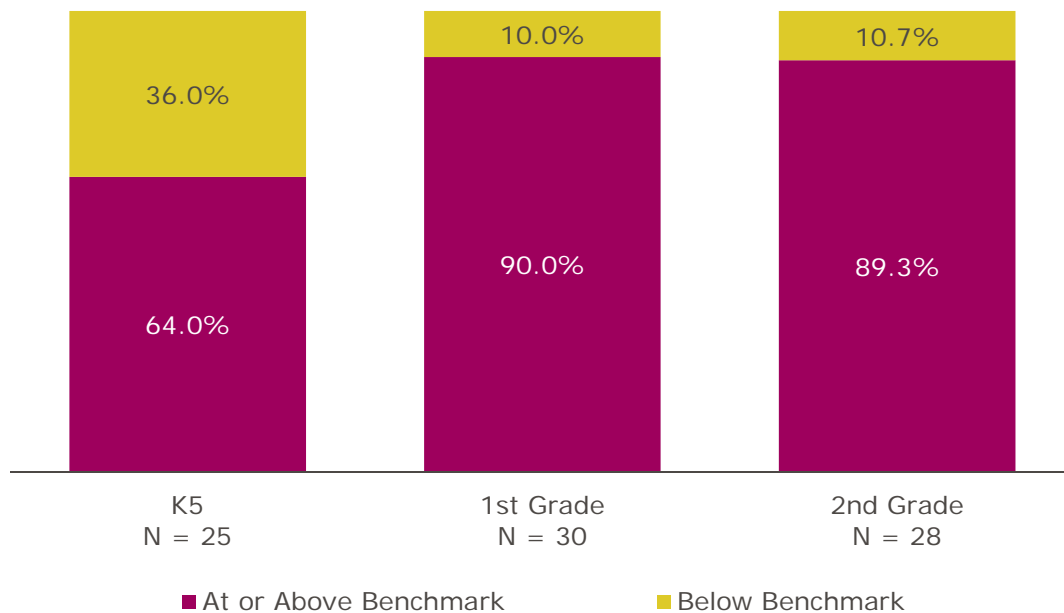
CRC examined reading readiness for any student who completed the fall or spring tests (Table 16).

Table 16			
DLH Academy Reading Readiness for K5 and 1st Graders Fall of 2015 and Spring of 2016			
Grade Level and Test Period	N	Students at or Above Benchmark	
		n	%
K5			
Fall	27	24	88.9%
Spring	25	16	64.0%
1st Grade			
Fall	31	21	67.7%
Spring	30	27	90.0%
2nd Grade			
Fall	29	25	86.2%
Spring	29	26	89.7%

Next, CRC looked at spring benchmark status for students who completed both the fall and spring assessments. At the time of the spring assessment, 64.0% of 25 K5 students, 90.0% of 30 first graders, and 89.3% of 28 second graders were at or above the spring summed score benchmark for their grade level (Figure 2).

Figure 2

**DLH Academy
Spring of 2016 Reading Readiness
Students With Fall and Spring PALS Scores**



2. Wisconsin Forward Exam for Third Through Eighth Graders³⁰

In the spring of 2016, the Wisconsin Forward Exam replaced the Badger Exam and the Wisconsin Knowledge and Concepts Examination (WKCE) as the state's standardized test for English/language arts and math for third through eighth graders, science for fourth and eighth graders, and social studies for fourth, eighth, and tenth graders. The Forward Exam was administered in the spring of the school year.³¹ The test is computerized but not adaptive based on student responses. The Forward Exam was developed and administered by the Data Recognition Center (DRC), a Minnesota-based company with a local office in Madison, Wisconsin. DRC will also be responsible for reporting results.

The Forward Exam is a summative assessment that provides information about what students know in each content area. Each student receives a score based on his/her performance in each area. Scores are translated into one of four levels: advanced, proficient, basic, and below basic.

A total of 158 third through eighth graders completed the English/language arts and math assessments in the spring of 2016. Of all students enrolled in the school for the entire school year (i.e., third Friday of September until the Forward Exam in the spring), 10.1% were proficient in English/language arts and 5.7% were proficient in math; no students were advanced in either English/language arts or math (not shown). Results by grade level are presented in figures 3 and 4.³²

³⁰ Information taken from the DPI website (<http://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/forward>) and Wisconsin Forward Exam family brochure (<http://dpi.wi.gov/sites/default/files/imce/assessment/pdf/Forward%20brochure%20for%20families.pdf>).

³¹ The Wisconsin Forward Exam testing window was March 28 – May 20, 2016.

³² This cohort of students is different from the cohort who were enrolled on the day of the assessment, which also includes students who enrolled during the school year. Among all 165 third through eighth graders enrolled on the day of the test, 9.8% were proficient in English/language arts and 5.5% were proficient in math.

Figure 3
DLH Academy
Forward Exam English/Language Arts Assessment
2015–16

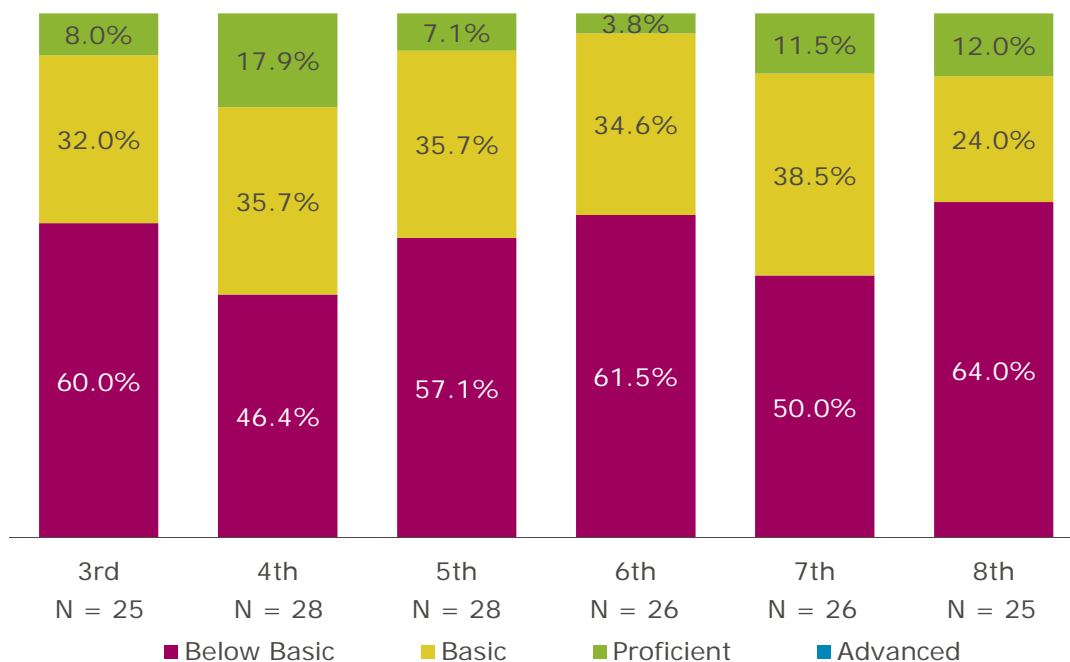
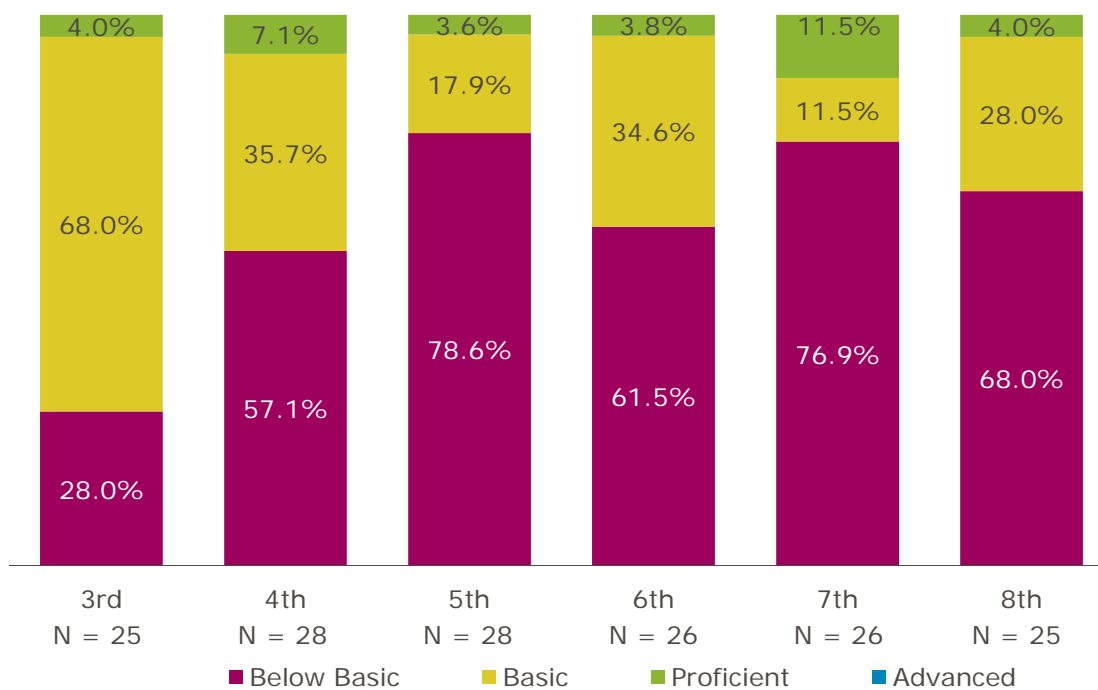
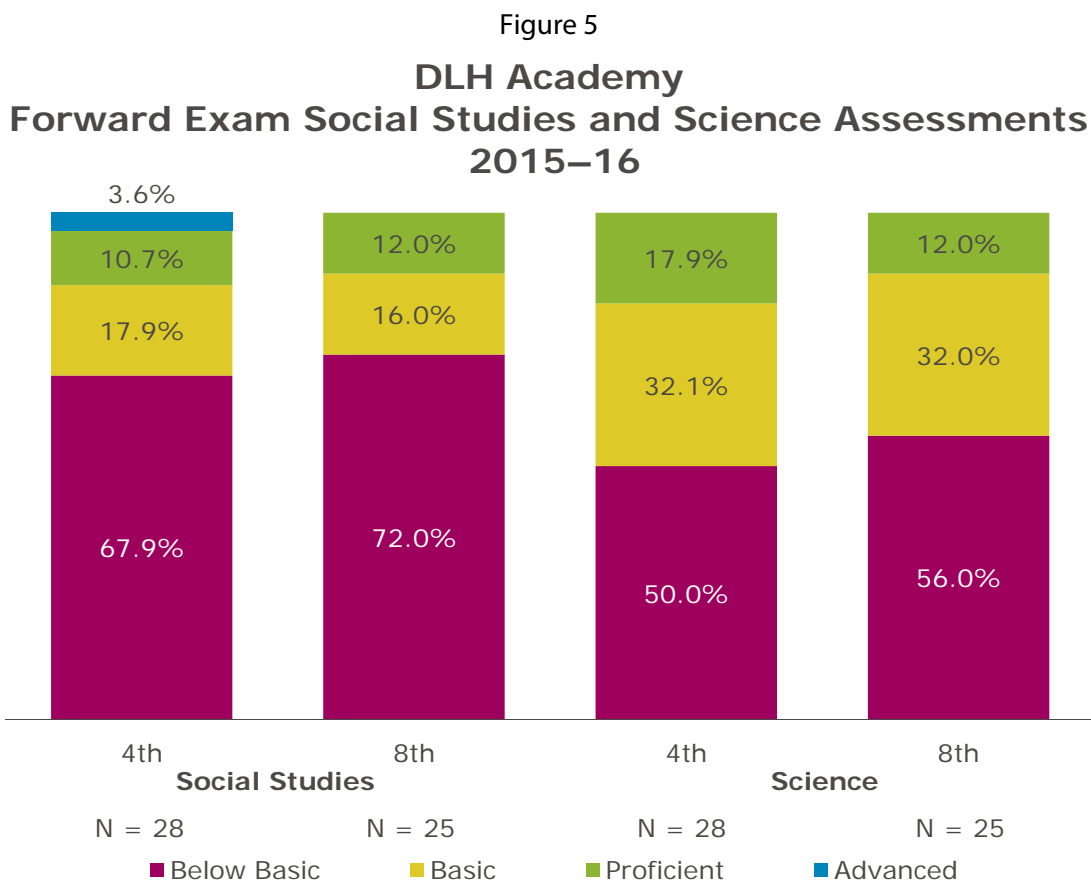


Figure 4
DLH Academy
Forward Exam Math Assessment
2015–16



Among 53 fourth and eighth graders who completed the social studies and science tests, 13.2% were proficient or advanced in social studies and 15.1% were proficient in science (not shown). Results by grade level appear in Figure 5.



F. Multiple-Year Student Progress

Year-to-year progress is measured by comparing scores on standardized tests from one year to the next. Year-to-year progress/performance expectations apply to all students with scores in consecutive years. In the fall of 2013, students in K4 through second grade began taking the PALS reading assessment. The PALS summed score benchmark is intended to show teachers which students require additional reading assistance—not to indicate that the student is reading at grade level.

Additionally, there are three versions of the test (PALS–PreK, PALS, and PALS 1–3), which include different formats, sections, and scoring. For these reasons, an examination of PALS results from one test to another provides neither a valid nor a reliable measure of student progress. Therefore, CRC examined results for students who were in first grade in 2015 and second grade in 2016 who took the PALS 1–3 during two consecutive years. The CSRC’s performance expectation is that at least 75.0% of students who were at or above the summed score benchmark in first grade will remain at or above the summed score benchmark as second graders in the subsequent school year.

Prior to this year, the WKCE was used to measure year-to-year progress for students in fourth through eighth grades. Because this is the first year the Forward Exam was administered, 2015–16 results will be used as baseline data to measure student progress from 2015–16 to 2016–17; results will be available at that time.

1. Second-Grade Progress Based on PALS

A total of 24 students completed the PALS spring assessment in 2014–15 as first graders and in 2015–16 as second graders. Based on PALS results from the spring of 2015, 21 students were at or above the spring of 2015 summed score benchmark as first graders; all of those students remained at or above the summed score benchmark in the spring of 2016 as second graders.

G. CSRC School Scorecard

In the 2009–10 school year, the CSRC piloted a scorecard for each school that it charters. The pilot ran for three years and in the fall of 2012, the CSRC formally adopted the scorecard to help monitor school performance. The scorecard includes multiple measures of student academic progress, such as performance on standardized tests and local measures. It also includes point-in-time academic achievement and engagement elements, such as attendance and student and teacher retention and

return. The score provides a summary indicator of school performance. The summary score is then translated into a school status rating.

In 2014, CSRC approved a new scoring system in order to make the scorecard percentages more meaningful and provide schools with greater opportunities to exhibit improvement. The new scoring system is based on the following scale.

A	93.4% – 100%	C	73.3% – 76.5%
A–	90.0% – 93.3%	C–	70.0% – 73.2%
B+	86.6% – 89.9%	D+	66.6% – 69.9%
B	83.3% – 86.5%	D	63.3% – 66.5%
B–	80.0% – 83.2%	D–	60.0% – 63.2%
C+	76.6% – 79.9%	F	0.0% – 59.9%

The percentage score is still translated into a school status level as in previous years, with small changes to the status-level cut scores. The previous and newly adopted cut scores are shown in Table 17.

Table 17 City of Milwaukee Educational Performance Rating Scale for Charter Schools		
School Status	Total Scorecard Percentage	
	Prior to 2014	New Scale
High Performing/Exemplary	100.0% – 85.0%	83.3% – 100.0% (B to A)
Promising/Good	84.9% – 70.0%	70.0% – 83.2% (C– to B–)
Problematic/Struggling	69.9% – 55.0%	60.0% – 69.9% (D– to D+)
Poor/Failing	54.9% or less	0.0% – 59.9% (F)

The CSRC uses the score and rating to guide decisions regarding whether to accept a school's annual education performance and continue monitoring as usual and whether to recommend a school for a five-year contract renewal at the end of its fourth year of operation under its current

contract. The CSRC's expectation is that schools will achieve a rating of 70.0% (Promising/Good) or more; if a school falls under 70.0%, the CSRC will carefully review the school's performance and determine whether a probationary plan should be developed.

This year, DLH Academy scored 84.0%, which places them at the promising/good level. This compares with 83.9% on the 2014–15 scorecard and 72.6% on the 2013–14 scorecard. See Appendix D for school scorecard information.

H. DPI School Report Card

At the time of the report, DPI has not published report cards for any schools for the 2015–16 school year.

I. Parent/Teacher/Student/Board Satisfaction Regarding Student Academic Progress

CRC surveyed 74 parents.

- Over 86% of parents agreed/strongly agreed that their child is learning what is needed to succeed in later grades.
- Almost 88% of parents indicated that the staff keeps them informed about their child's academic performance.
- Nearly all (91.9%) parents agreed/strongly agreed that they and their child clearly understand the school's academic expectations.
- A majority (83.8%) of parents rated the school's overall contribution to their child's learning as excellent or good.

Of the 12 teachers interviewed:

- Three rated their students' academic progress as excellent, seven as good, and two as fair;
- Eleven considered the educational methodology/curriculum approach at the school to be very or somewhat important reasons for continuing to teach at DLH; and

- Four rated the program of instruction as excellent, six as good and two as fair.

Of the five board members interviewed:

- Four agreed that the students were making significant academic progress;
- All five agreed that the school is making progress toward becoming a high-performing school; and
- On a scale of good to excellent, all five rated the school as excellent or good overall.

Of the 46 seventh and eighth graders surveyed, 41 indicated that their reading/writing skills have improved and 36 indicated that their math skills have improved.

IV. SUMMARY/RECOMMENDATIONS

This report covers the 14th year of DLH Academy's operation as a City of Milwaukee charter school. The school met or substantially met all of the educational provisions in its contract with the City of Milwaukee and subsequent CSRC requirements.³³ The school's multiple-measure scorecard score for the 2015–16 school year was 84.0% (B), placing the school in the promising/good category. Based on current and past contract compliance, the school's efforts toward meeting all school improvement recommendations, and scorecard results, CRC recommends that DLH Academy continue regular, annual academic monitoring and reporting.

³³ A middle school English teacher who was hired mid-year applied for and received a license that is effective July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2021, and was technically unlicensed during the 2015–16 school year.

Appendix A

Contract Compliance Chart

Table A DLH Academy Overview of Compliance for Education-Related Contract Provisions 2015–16			
Section of Contract	Education-Related Contract Provision	Report Page Number(s)	Contract Provisions Met or Not Met?
Section I, B	Description of educational program; student population served.	pp. 2–6	Met
Section I, V	Charter school shall operate under the days and hours indicated in the calendar for the 2014–15 school year and provide the CSRC with a school year calendar prior to the conclusion of the preceding school year.	p. 12	Met
Section I, C	Educational methods.	pp. 2–4	Met
Section I, D	Administration of required standardized tests.	pp. 33–40	Met
Section I, D	<u>Academic criterion #1</u> : Maintain local measures showing pupil growth in demonstrating curricular goals in reading, writing, math, and special education goals.	pp. 19–33	Met
Section I, D and subsequent memos from CSRC	<u>Academic criterion #2</u> : Year-to-year achievement measures. Year-to-year results were not available this year.	N/A	N/A
Section I, D	<u>Academic criterion #3</u> : Year-to-year achievement measures. Progress for students below grade level or proficiency level was not available this year.	N/A	N/A
Section I, E	Parental involvement.	p. 13	Met
Section I, F	Instructional staff hold DPI licenses or permits to teach.	p. 9	Substantially Met*
Section I, I	Pupil database information.	pp. 4–6	Met
Section I, K	Disciplinary procedures.	pp. 14–15	Met

*A middle school English teacher who was hired mid-year applied for and received a license that is effective July 1, 2016, through June 30, 2021, and therefore was technically unlicensed during the 2015–16 school year.

Appendix B

Student Learning Memorandum

**Student Learning Memorandum for
Darrell Lynn Hines Preparatory Academy of Excellence**

To: NCCD Children's Research Center and Charter School Review Committee
From: Darrell Lynn Hines Preparatory Academy of Excellence
Re: Learning Memo for the 2015–16 Academic Year
Date: October 16, 2015

Note: This memorandum of understanding includes the *minimum* measurable outcomes required by the City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee (CSRC) to monitor and report students' academic progress. These outcomes have been defined by the leadership and/or staff at the school in consultation with staff from the NCCD Children's Research Center (CRC) and CSRC. The school will record student data in Power School and/or MS Excel spreadsheets and provide the data to CRC, the educational monitoring agent contracted by CSRC. Additionally, paper test printouts or data directly from the test publisher will be provided to CRC for all standardized tests. All required elements related to the outcomes below are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section. CRC requests electronic submission of year-end data on the fifth working day following the last day of student attendance for the academic year, or June 20, 2016.

Enrollment

Darrell Lynn Hines Preparatory Academy of Excellence will record enrollment dates for every student. Upon admission, individual student information and actual enrollment date will be added to the school's database. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Termination/Withdrawal

The exit date and reason for every student leaving the school will be determined and recorded in the school's database. Specific reasons for each expulsion are required for each student. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Attendance

The school will maintain appropriate attendance records. The school will maintain an average daily attendance rate of 90%. A student is considered present for the day if he/she is present for a half day or more. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Parent/Guardian Participation

Parents (or other interested persons) of students enrolled for the entire school year will participate in both parent-teacher conferences. Face-to-face conferences are preferred, but phone conferences will be acceptable. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the "Learning Memo Data Requirements" section.

Special Education Needs Students

The school will maintain updated records on all students who received special education services at the school, including students who were evaluated but not eligible for services. Required data elements related to the special education outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Academic Achievement: Local Measures³⁴

Reading

Reading for K4

At least 85% of K4 students who complete the fall and spring Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening (PALS)-PreK will be at or above the developmental range for at least five of seven tasks at the time of the spring assessment. Required data elements related to the reading local measure outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Reading for K5 and First Grade

At least 85% of the students in K5 and first grade who completed the fall and spring PALS will achieve the summed score spring benchmark. Required data elements related to the reading local measure outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Reading for Second Through Eighth Grades

Students in second through eighth grades will demonstrate progress in reading on the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) tests administered in the fall and spring.

Specifically, students who complete both the fall and spring reading MAP tests will progress, with minimum required outcomes based on fall Rasch unit (RIT) score.

- At least 75% of the students whose fall RIT score placed them at or above the normative mean for their current grade level in reading will reach their target RIT score in the spring.
- At least 70% of the students whose fall RIT score placed them below the normative mean for their current grade level in reading (their functional grade level) will reach their target RIT score in the spring.³⁵

Required data elements related to the reading local measure outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

³⁴ Local measures of academic achievement are 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. CSRC requires local measures of academic achievement in the areas of literacy, math, writing, and individualized education program (IEP) goals.

³⁵ The student’s functional grade level represents the normative mean range at which the student tested in the fall.

Mathematics

Mathematics for K5 and First Grade

By the end of the year, 85% of K5 and first-grade students enrolled since the third Friday in September will reach either proficient or advanced levels of mastery on at least 75% of the grade-level skills on the Math in Focus curriculum.³⁶

- 4 = Advanced: Student demonstrates an advanced understanding of the concept or skill and is consistently working above grade-level expectations. Student repeatedly uses unique problem-solving tasks. Student communicates a sophisticated, well-articulated mathematical understanding of the concept.
- 3 = Proficient: Student solves problems independently, consistently, and efficiently (any errors that the student may make are infrequent and minor). Student may have some difficulty communicating his/her mathematical understanding of the concept.
- 2 = Student demonstrates a basic understanding of the concept or skill and is performing below grade-level expectations. Correct answers are not consistent/efficient, and/or reminders, suggestions, and learning aids may be necessary to complete the task.
- 1 = Student demonstrates a minimal understanding of the concept or skill and is performing noticeably below grade-level expectations. Student may require intensive assistance from the teacher to further develop his/her understanding

Required data elements related to the math local measure outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Mathematics for Second Through Eighth Grades

Students in second through eighth grades will demonstrate progress in mathematics on the MAP tests administered in the fall and spring.

Specifically, students who complete both the fall and spring math MAP tests will progress, with minimum required outcomes based upon their fall RIT score.

- At least 75% of the students whose fall RIT score placed them at or above the normative mean for their current grade level in math will reach their target RIT score in the spring.
- At least 65% of the students whose fall RIT score placed them below the normative mean for their current grade level in math will reach their target RIT score in the spring.

Required data elements related to the math local measure outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

³⁶ There are 22 skills for K5 students and 21 skills for first-grade students.

Writing

Writing for K5 Through Sixth Grades

Students in K5 through sixth grades will complete grade-level writing samples no later than October 30, 2015, and again in May 2016. The prompt for both writing samples will be at grade level, based on grade-level topics with the narrative genre.³⁷ The writing samples will be assessed using the Common Core State Standards for writing, which include five focus areas: (1) language—conventions of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling; (2) language—conventions of grammar and usage; (3) narrative techniques; (4) organization/plot; and (5) focus/setting. Students receive a rubric score of 1 through 4 (1 = below grade level, 2 = approaching grade level, 3 = at grade level, 4 = above grade level) for each focus area; the average, overall score for all five focus areas will be used to measure student progress. At least 75% of the students who complete the writing sample in October will achieve an overall score of 3 or higher on the second writing sample taken in May 2016. Required data elements related to the special education outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Writing for Seventh and Eighth Grades

Students in seventh and eighth grades will complete grade-level writing samples no later than October 30, 2015, and again in May 2016. The grade-level prompts for both writing samples will be based on grade-level topics with the argument genre.³⁸ The writing sample will be assessed using the Common Core writing standards, which include six areas: focus/claim, organization, support/evidence, language conventions (grammar and usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling), narrative techniques, and analysis. Students receive a rubric score of 1 through 5 (1 = far below basic, 2 = below basic, 3 = basic, 4 = proficient [at grade level], 5 = advanced [above grade level]); the average, overall score for all six focus areas will be used to measure student progress. At least 65% of the students who complete the October writing sample will achieve an overall score of 4 or higher on the second writing sample taken in May 2015. Required data elements related to the writing outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Special Education

All students with active individualized education programs (IEP) will demonstrate progress toward meeting their IEP goals at the time of their annual review or reevaluation. Progress will be determined by 70% achievement of the total number of subgoals reported for each student. Note that ongoing student progress toward IEP goals is monitored and reported throughout the academic year through the special education progress reports, attached to the regular report cards. Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

³⁷ The writing genres for K5 through sixth grades include opinion, informational, and narrative.

³⁸ The writing genres for seventh and eighth grades include argument, information/explanatory, or narrative.

Academic Achievement: Standardized Measures

The PALS for K4 Through Second-Grade Students³⁹

The PALS will be administered to all K4 through second-grade students in the fall and spring of each school year within the timeframe required by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI). Required data elements related to this outcome are described in the “Learning Memo Data Requirements” section.

Year-to-Year Achievement⁴⁰

1. CRC will report results from the DPI-required standardized assessment. Data from 2015–16 will serve as baseline data for subsequent years. If possible, beginning in the 2016–17 school year, CRC also will report year-to-year progress for students who completed the assessment in consecutive school years at the same school. When year-to-year data are available, CSRC will set its expectations for student progress, and these expectations will be effective for all subsequent years.
2. Data from the 2015 spring PALS assessment will be used as baseline data. CSRC’s expectation for students maintaining reading readiness is that at least 75% of students who were in first grade in the 2014–15 school year and met the summed score benchmark in the spring of 2015 will remain at or above the second-grade summed score benchmark in the spring of 2016.

³⁹ Students who meet the summed score benchmark have achieved a level of minimum competency and can be expected to show growth given regular classroom literacy instruction. Meeting this benchmark does not guarantee that the student is at grade level. (Information from <http://www.palswisconsin.info>)

⁴⁰ CSRC will not have year-to-year achievement measurements for students in K4 and K5.

Appendix C

Trend Information

Table C1					
DLH Academy Student Enrollment and Retention					
Year	Number Enrolled at Start of School Year	Number Enrolled During Year	Number Withdrew	Number at End of School Year	Number and Rate Enrolled for Entire School Year
2011–12	303	10	33	280	272 (89.8%)
2012–13	309	16	43	282	267 (86.4%)
2013–14	272	18	26	264	264 (97.1%)
2014–15	288	3	28	263	260 (90.3%)
2015–16	283	9	25	267	260 (91.9%)

Figure C1

DLH Academy Student Return Rates

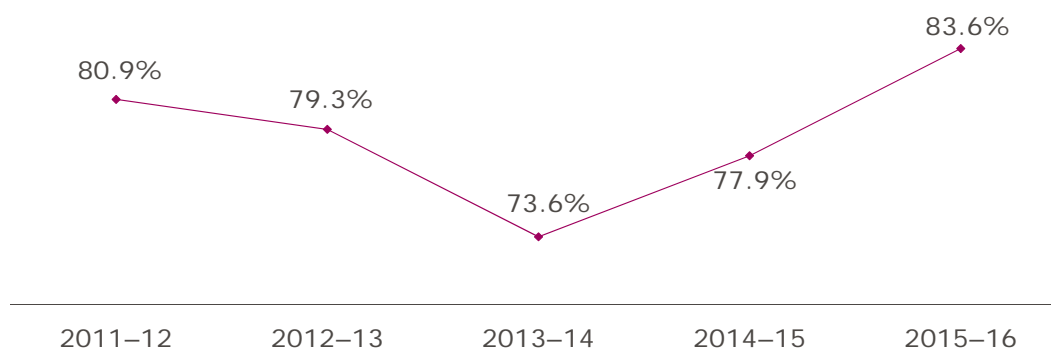


Figure C2

DLH Academy Student Attendance Rates

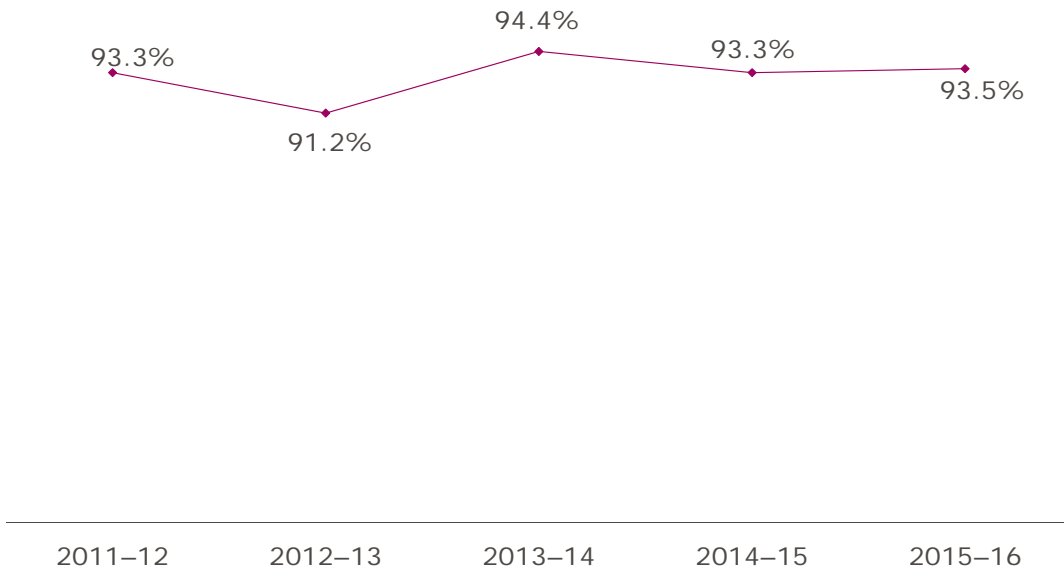


Table C2					
DLH Academy Teacher Retention Rates					
Teacher Type	Number at Beginning of School Year	Number Started After School Year Began	Number Terminated Employment During the Year	Number at End of School Year Who Began the Year*	Retention Rate: Rate Employed at School for Entire School Year
2011–12					
Classroom Teachers Only	13	0	0	13	100.0%
All Instructional Staff	21	0	0	21	100.0%
2012–13					
Classroom Teachers Only	12	1	2	10	83.3%
All Instructional Staff	21	1	4	17	81.0%
2013–14					
Classroom Teachers Only	12	0	2	10	83.3%
All Instructional Staff	18	0	2	16	88.9%
2014–15					
Classroom Teachers Only	11	0	1	10	91.0%
All Instructional Staff	17	1	2	15	88.2%
2015–16					
Classroom Teachers Only	10	3	3	9	90.0%
All Instructional Staff	17	3	4	15	88.2%

*Reflects the teachers who were eligible to remain at the school all year.

Table C3			
DLH Academy Teacher Return Rates			
Teacher Type	Number at End of Prior School Year	Number Returned at Beginning of Current School Year	Return Rate
2011–12			
Classroom Teachers Only	9	9	100.0%
All Instructional Staff	17	17	100.0%
2012–13			
Classroom Teachers Only	11	6	54.5%
All Instructional Staff	19	14	73.7%
2013–14			
Classroom Teachers Only	10	6	60.0%
All Instructional Staff	16	11	68.8%
2014–15			
Classroom Teachers Only	10	8	80.0%
All Instructional Staff	17	13	76.5%
2015–16			
Classroom Teachers Only	8	6	75.0%
All Instructional Staff	14	11	78.6%

Note: Includes only teachers who were eligible to return, i.e., were offered a position for fall.

Table C4	
DLH Academy CSRC Scorecard Results	
School Year	Result
2011–12	77.3%
2012–13	73.8%
2013–14	72.6%
2014–15	83.8%
2015–16	84.0%

Appendix D

CSRC 2015–16 School Scorecard

**City of Milwaukee Charter School Review Committee
School Scorecard**

r: 4/11

K5-8TH GRADE

STUDENT READING READINESS: GRADES 1-2

- PALS—% 1st graders at or above spring summed score benchmark this year (5.0)
- PALS—% 2nd graders who maintained spring summed score benchmark two consecutive years (5.0) **10%**

STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS: GRADES 3-8

- WKCE reading—% maintained proficient and advanced (7.5)
- WKCE math—% maintained proficient and advanced (7.5)
- WKCE reading—% below proficient who progressed (10.0)
- WKCE math—% below proficient who progressed (10.0) **35%**

LOCAL MEASURES

- % met reading (3.75)
- % met math (3.75)
- % met writing (3.75)
- % met special education (3.75) **15%**

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: GRADES 3-8

- WKCE reading—% proficient or advanced (7.5)
- WKCE math—% proficient or advanced (7.5) **15%**

ENGAGEMENT

- Student attendance (5.0)
- Student reenrollment (5.0)
- Student retention (5.0)
- Teacher retention (5.0)
- Teacher return* (5.0) **25%**

HIGH SCHOOL

STUDENT ACADEMIC PROGRESS: GRADES 9, 10, and 12

- EXPLORE to Aspire—composite score at or above benchmark on EXPLORE and at or above benchmark on the Aspire (5)
- EXPLORE to Aspire—below composite benchmark on EXPLORE by increase one or more on Aspire (10)
- Adequate credits to move from 9th to 10th grade (5)
- Adequate credits to move from 10th to 11th grade (5)
- DPI graduation rate (5) **30%**

POSTSECONDARY READINESS: GRADES 11 and 12

- Postsecondary acceptance for graduates (college, university, technical school, military) (10)
- % of 11th/12th graders tested (2.5)
- % of graduates with ACT composite score of 21.25 or more (2.5) **15%**

LOCAL MEASURES

- % met reading (3.75)
- % met math (3.75)
- % met writing (3.75)
- % met special education (3.75) **15%**

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT: GRADE 10

- WKCE reading—% proficient and advanced (7.5)
- WKCE math—% proficient and advanced (7.5) **15%**

ENGAGEMENT

- Student attendance (5.0)
- Student reenrollment (5.0)
- Student retention (5.0)
- Teacher retention (5.0)
- Teacher return* (5.0) **25%**

*Teachers not offered continuing contracts are excluded when calculating this rate.

Note: If a school has fewer than 10 students in any cell on this scorecard, CRC does not report these data. This practice was adopted to protect student identity. Therefore, these cells will be reported as not available (N/A) on the scorecard. The total score will be calculated to reflect each school's denominator.

Table D DLH Academy Charter School Review Committee Scorecard 2015–16 School Year					
Area	Measure	Max. Points	% Total Score	Performance	Points Earned
Student Reading Readiness: 1st – 2nd Grades⁴¹	% 1st graders at or above spring summed score benchmark this year	5.0	10.0%	90.0%	4.5
	% 2nd graders at or above spring summed score benchmark this year	5.0		100.0%	5.0
Student Academic Progress: 3rd – 8th Grades	WKCE reading: % maintained proficient/advanced	7.5	35.0%	N/A	N/A
	WKCE math: % maintained proficient/advanced	7.5		N/A	N/A
	WKCE reading: % below proficient who progressed	10		N/A	N/A
	WKCE math: % below proficient who progressed	10		N/A	N/A
Local Measures	% met reading	3.75	15.0%	59.4%	2.2
	% met math	3.75		52.7%	2.0
	% met writing	3.75		71.4%	2.7
	% met special education	3.75		100.0%	3.75
Student Achievement: 3rd – 8th Grades	WKCE reading: % proficient or advanced	7.5	15.0%	N/A	N/A
	WKCE math: % proficient or advanced	7.5		N/A	N/A
Engagement*	Student attendance	5.0	25.0%	93.5%	4.7
	Student reenrollment	5.0		83.6%	4.2
	Student retention	5.0		91.9%	4.6
	Teacher retention rate	5.0		88.2%	4.4
	Teacher return rate	5.0		78.6%	3.9
Total		50⁴²			42.0
K5–8TH GRADE SCORECARD PERCENTAGE					84%

*Teacher retention and return rates reflect all instructional staff (classroom teachers plus other instructional staff).

⁴¹ Includes students who completed both the fall and spring PALS.

⁴² The WKCE reading and math tests were discontinued for the 2014–15 school year. Therefore, the maximum points possible for the WKCE scorecard measures were subtracted from the total possible points. The scorecard percent was calculated by dividing the number of points earned by the modified denominator.

Appendix E

Teacher Interview Results

In the spring of 2016, CRC interviewed 12 teachers regarding their reasons for teaching and overall satisfaction with the school. Interviews included 10 teachers and two other instructional staff. The teachers interviewed had been teaching for an average of 5.7 years. The number of years teaching at DLH Academy ranged from less than one year to 13 years.

Two teachers rated the school's overall progress in contributing to students' academic progress as excellent, seven as good, and three as fair (not shown). Most (83.3%) teachers agreed or strongly agreed that the school has clear teacher performance assessment processes and most (83.3%) were satisfied with the performance assessment criteria (Table E1).

Table E1 DLH Academy Teacher Performance Assessment 2015–16 (N = 12)						
Question	Response					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
This school has a clear teacher performance assessment process	5	5	0	2	0	0
I am satisfied with my school's teacher performance assessment criteria	4	6	1	1	0	0
Student academic performance is an important part of teacher assessment	4	6	1	1	0	0

Table E2 DLH Academy School Climate 2015–16 (N = 12)						
Question	Response					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
Adults who work in this school respect students and their different points of view	4	6	2	0	0	0
Staff at this school typically work well with on another	2	8	1	0	0	1
Staff at this school encourage all families to become involved in school activities	5	5	1	0	0	1

When asked to rate the importance of various reasons for continuing to teach at the school, all teachers rated general atmosphere, administrative leadership, and students as somewhat important or very important reasons for teaching at this school (Table E3).

Table E3 Reasons for Continuing to Teach at DLH Academy 2015–16 (N = 12)					
Reason	Importance				
	Very Important	Somewhat Important	Somewhat Unimportant	Not at All Important	No Response
Financial considerations	4	7	0	1	0
Educational methodology/ curriculum approach	7	4	1	0	0
Age/grade level of students	9	2	0	1	0
Discipline	6	5	0	1	0
General atmosphere	9	3	0	0	0
Class size	5	4	3	0	0
Administrative leadership	7	5	0	0	0
Colleagues	6	5	1	0	0
Students	9	3	0	0	0

CRC asked teachers 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 their performance as a teacher as excellent or good (n=11). Other areas that were often rated as excellent or good include program of instruction (n=10), progress toward becoming a high-performing school (n=10), student academic progress (n=10), professional support (n=9), and parent/teacher relationships (n=9; Table E4).

Table E4 DLH Academy School Performance Rating 2015–16 (N = 12)					
Area	Rating				
	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor	No Response
Class size/student-teacher ratio	1	3	7	1	0
Program of instruction	4	6	2	0	0
Shared leadership, decision making, and accountability	2	5	4	1	0
Professional support	5	4	3	0	0
Progress toward becoming a high-performing school	2	8	2	0	0
Your students' academic progress	3	7	2	0	0
Adherence to discipline policy	1	3	5	3	0
Instructional support	3	5	3	1	0
Parent/teacher relationships	2	7	2	1	0
Teacher collaboration to plan learning experiences	0	6	2	3	1
Parent involvement	0	6	4	2	0
Your performance as a teacher	5	6	1	0	0
Administrative staff's performance	1	6	3	0	2

When asked to name two things they liked most about the school, teachers noted:

- Teamwork and collaboration among colleagues;
- Professional development;
- Student growth;
- Parent/teacher collaboration;
- The IB curriculum; and
- Overall atmosphere.

Things teachers liked least about the school include:

- Inconsistent disciplinary policies;
- Teacher workload;
- Lack of resources (funding and space);
- Too much focus on data rather than teaching;
- Class sizes are too large;
- Parents not following end-of-day pick-up times; and
- Lack of extracurricular activities for students.

Teachers identified the following barriers that could affect their decision to remain at the school:

- Salary;
- Lack of opportunities for career advancement and growth;
- Workload;
- High teacher turnover rate; and
- Personal reasons.

Appendix F

Parent Survey Results

Parent opinions are qualitative in nature and provide a valuable measurement of school performance. To determine parental satisfaction/involvement with and overall evaluation of the school, each school distributed paper surveys during spring parent-teacher conferences and offered the ability to complete the survey online. CRC made at least two follow-up phone calls to parents who had not completed a survey. If these parents were available and willing, CRC completed the survey over the telephone. A total of 74 surveys, representing 73 (41.0%) of 178 DLH Academy families were completed and submitted to CRC.

Most parents agreed or strongly agreed that they are comfortable talking with staff (96.0%), that they feel welcome at the school (91.9%), that they and their child clearly understand the school's academic expectations (91.9%), and that staff recognize their child's strengths and weaknesses (90.5%; Table F1).

Table F1 DLH Academy Parent Satisfaction With School 2015-16 (N = 74)												
Factor	Response											
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Response	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
I am comfortable talking with the staff	58	78.4%	13	17.6%	0	0.0%	1	1.4%	0	0.0%	2	2.7%
The staff keep me informed about my child's academic performance	47	63.5%	18	24.3%	7	9.5%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	2.7%
I am comfortable with how the staff handles discipline	31	41.9%	29	39.2%	6	8.1%	6	8.1%	0	0.0%	2	2.7%
I am satisfied with the overall performance of the staff	36	48.6%	26	35.1%	9	12.2%	0	0.0%	1	1.4%	2	2.7%
The staff recognize my child's strengths and weaknesses	42	56.8%	25	33.8%	5	6.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	2.7%
I feel welcome at my child's school	55	74.3%	13	17.6%	3	4.1%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	3	4.1%
The staff respond to my worries and concerns	41	55.4%	25	33.8%	3	4.1%	1	1.4%	1	1.4%	3	4.1%
My child and I clearly understand the school's academic expectations	45	60.8%	23	31.1%	3	4.1%	0	0.0%	1	1.4%	2	2.7%

Table F1 DLH Academy Parent Satisfaction With School 2015–16 (N = 74)												
Factor	Response											
	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree		No Response	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
My child is learning what is needed to succeed in later grades or after high school graduation	41	55.4%	23	31.1%	4	5.4%	0	0.0%	1	1.4%	5	6.8%
My child is safe in school	44	59.5%	21	28.4%	5	6.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	4	5.4%
People in this school treat each other with respect	35	47.3%	26	35.1%	6	8.1%	3	4.1%	0	0.0%	4	5.4%
The school offers a variety of courses and afterschool activities to keep my child interested	24	32.4%	18	24.3%	15	20.3%	9	12.2%	4	5.4%	4	5.4%

The second measure examined the extent to which parents engaged in educational activities while at home. During a typical week, most of the parents of younger children (K4 through fifth grade) worked on homework with their children (93.0%); encouraged the use of phones, tablets, or computers for learning (91.2%); read with/to their children (89.5%); and worked on arithmetic or math (87.7%; Table F2).

Table F2 DLH Academy Parent Participation in Activities K4 – 5th Grade 2015–16 (N = 57)								
Activity	Response							
	Never		Monthly		Weekly		No Response	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Read with or to your child(ren)	0	0.0%	6	10.5%	51	89.5%	0	0.0%
Encourage the use of phones, tablets, or computers for learning	2	3.5%	3	5.3%	52	91.2%	0	0.0%
Work on arithmetic or math	1	1.8%	6	10.5%	50	87.7%	0	0.0%
Work on homework	0	0.0%	4	7.0%	53	93.0%	0	0.0%
Participate together in activities outside of school	2	3.5%	17	29.8%	38	66.7%	0	0.0%

Parents of older children (sixth through eighth grades) also worked with students on educational activities at home during the week. For example, 88.5% monitored homework completion and 73.1% encouraged the use of phones, tablets, or computers to do research (Table F3).

Table F3 DLH Academy Parent Participation in Activities 6th – 8th Grades 2015–16 (N = 26)								
Activity	Response							
	Never		Monthly		Weekly		No Response	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Monitor homework completion	1	3.8%	1	3.8%	23	88.5%	1	3.8%
Encourage the use of phones, tablets, or computers to do research	0	0.0%	6	23.1%	19	73.1%	1	3.8%
Participate together in activities outside of school	0	0.0%	10	38.5%	15	57.7%	1	3.8%
Discuss with your child his/her progress toward graduation	0	0.0%	8	30.8%	17	65.4%	1	3.8%
Discuss plans for education after graduation	1	3.8%	10	38.5%	14	53.8%	1	3.8%

Parental satisfaction was also evident in the following results.

- Most (89.2%) parents would recommend this school to other parents.
- Three quarters (75.7%) will send their child to the school next year. Seven (9.5%) said they will not send their child to the school next year, and eight (10.8%) were not sure. The remaining 4.0% did not respond to the question.
- When asked to rate the school's overall contribution to their child's learning, a majority (83.8%) of parents indicated that it was as excellent or good.

When asked what they liked most about the school, responses included:

- Family-friendly atmosphere;
- Individual attention to students;
- Small class sizes; and
- Teachers and staff.

When asked what they like least about the school, responses included:

- Lack of activities/afterschool programming;
- Concerns about discipline enforcement (some parents think it is too strict while others think it could be increased); and
- Communication could sometimes be better.

Appendix G

Student Survey Results

At the end of the school year, 46 students in seventh and eighth grade completed an online survey about their school. Responses from the student surveys were generally positive.

- The majority (80.4%) of students indicated that they used computers/tablets in their schoolwork.
- The majority (78.3%) of students agreed or strongly agreed that the teachers help them succeed in school.
- A total of 41 (89.1%) students agreed they had improved their reading ability and 78.3% indicated that their math abilities had also improved.
- The majority (65.2%) of students agreed or strongly agreed that their teachers talk with them about high school plans (Table G).

Table G DLH Academy Student Survey 2015–16 (N = 46)						
Question	Response					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
I like my school.	4	15	15	4	7	1
My reading/writing skills have improved.	13	28	2	2	1	0
My math skills have improved.	19	17	4	3	2	1
I regularly use computers/tablets in my school work.	19	18	4	5	0	0
The school rules are fair.	2	8	14	14	8	0
The teachers at my school help me to succeed in school.	10	26	5	1	3	1
I like being in school.	5	11	16	7	5	2
I feel safe in school.	6	17	12	7	3	1
The marks I get on classwork, homework, and report cards are fair.	18	19	4	4	0	1
My school has afterschool activities.	5	20	13	3	5	0
My teachers talk with me about high school plans.	15	15	8	5	3	0
Students at my school respect each other and their different points of view.	2	6	12	8	16	2
Teachers at my school respect students.	7	17	14	4	4	0
Teachers at my school respect students' different points of view.	5	17	17	5	2	0

When asked what they liked best about the school, students said:

- Gym/physical education;
- Clubs, programs, and assemblies;
- Friends; and
- Helpful teachers who challenge them to succeed.

When asked what they liked least, students said:

- The rules and the feeling that teachers are not fair about consequences for breaking the rules;
- The dress code, especially having to tuck in shirts;
- Lunch; and
- Some students are disrespectful to other students and/or teachers, which causes problems and makes it harder for the rest of the students to learn.

Appendix H

Board Interview Results

Board member opinions are qualitative in nature and provide valuable, although subjective, insight regarding school performance and organizational competency. DLH Academy's board of directors consists of eight members. CRC conducted phone interviews using a prepared interview guide with the eight board members who agreed to participate and who have served on the board for three to more than 25 years. Board member backgrounds include education, accounting and finance, law, and public housing.

One of the board members said he/she participates in strategic planning for the school. All five received a presentation on the school's annual academic performance report, received and approved the school's annual budget, and reviewed the school's annual financial audit.

Most (80.0%) board members strongly agreed that the administrator's financial management is transparent and efficient and that the environment of this school ensures the safety of its students and staff. Three out of five board members disagreed with the statement that the school has the financial resources to fulfill its mission (Table H).

Table H Darrell Lynn Hines Academy Board Member Interview Results 2015-16 (N = 5)						
Question	Response					
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Response
Teacher-student ratio/class size at this school is appropriate.	1	1	1	2	0	0
Program of instruction (includes curriculum, equipment, and building) is consistent with the school's mission.	3	2	0	0	0	0
Students make significant academic progress at this school.	3	1	0	1	0	0
The administrator's financial management is transparent and efficient.	4	1	0	0	0	0
This school is making progress toward becoming a high-performing school.	3	2	0	0	0	0
This school has strong linkages to the community, including businesses.	1	2	1	1	0	0
The administrative staff's performance meets the board's expectations.	3	2	0	0	0	0
The majority of the board of directors takes their varied responsibilities seriously.	3	2	0	0	0	0
This school has the financial resources to fulfill its mission.	1	1	0	3	0	0
The environment of this school ensures the safety of its students and staff.	4	1	0	0	0	0

All five members reported that the board uses data to make decisions regarding the school. On a scale of poor to excellent, all five board members rated the school good or excellent. When asked what they liked most about the school, the board members mentioned:

- The IB curriculum;
- Teacher and administrator dedication to the school and students;
- Technology use; and
- School growth.

Regarding things they like least, the board members mentioned:

- Lack of resources;
- Lack of parental involvement;
- Poor staff retention; and
- High student/teacher ratio.

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

- Increase financial support; and
- Continue to find and retain qualified staff.