

Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Martha's Vineyard Public Charter School to create a public school that will cultivate lifelong learners in a multi-aged, project-based setting.

Within an environment, that models interdependence as the foundation of society,

The *individual* student will learn to direct his/her own learning.

The *group* will make decisions together and recognize the unique contributions of each member.

The *community* will support and interact with the school body.

The Martha's Vineyard Public Charter School has shown that individualized and carefully monitored progress can be attained in a public school.

Specific adaptable innovations of the MVPCS include the following:

- Community interaction and service
- Student-driven curriculum
- Flexible block scheduling
- Real projects from meaningful practical themes
- Authentic assessment
- Collaborative teaching and learning
- Democratic governance
- Multiage grouping
- Parent, student, and teacher partnerships

Program Specifications

Director: Robert M. Moore

Grades Served: Kindergarten through Twelfth

Age Levels: Five through Twenty

Student / Teacher Ratio: 1:8.4

School Day: 8:20 - 3:10
School began on September 4, 2003. There were 180 days of instruction.

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Executive Summary

August 1, 2004

The Martha's Vineyard Public Charter School continued to celebrate the 'individual' through the many talents each of our community members offers to the school, during the 2003-2004 school year. In addition, the school continued to emphasize the importance of 'community', and the responsibility that each of us holds towards contributing to the success of the school. The school embraced this challenge of balancing the needs of the individual and the needs of the larger group.

The school community marked the accomplishments of its four high school graduates in June 2004. Celebrating the achievements of the graduates included recollecting their contributions to the school. The growth of our high school program, the development of the school's governance structure, the emphasis on the importance of community service, and the high school's utilization of the portfolio and juried exhibition requirement are all due in part to each of the graduates' hard work and dedication.

The 2003-2004 school wide goals included assessing the world language and physical education programs. We fielded suggestions from our community that helped the school move these programs forward in our five-year strategic plan. The school revised its progress report format, and the changes were received well by the parent body. Finally, based on the statistical work the school did for its 2003 Annual Report, the mathematics program received a higher degree of attention, both in and out of the classroom.

The Department of Education's eighth year site visit and the Coordinated Program Review, conducted this spring, affirmed the school's excellent reputation. We welcomed the auditors and visitors as we realized the rewards that evaluations reap especially when performed by outside entities. The preparations for these visits allowed the school community to self-assess its work, revisit its mission statement, and clarify its goals for the future. This was a positive and informative experience for all members of our community, and positioned us well to undergo our charter renewal site visit during the 2005-2006 school year.

The school is proud of its viable position in the educational fabric of the Island and is committed to the families who have chosen the school as their school of choice. Moreover, the school continues to dedicate itself to honoring the students with sustained vigilance and reflection about the work that is done on their behalf. It is our intent that the following Annual Report illustrates this dedication.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert M. Moore, Director

The President of the Board of Trustees

August 1, 2004

Our school's eighth year was one of continued organizational stability and programmatic growth and refinement. Under the direction of our able and respected Director, faculty worked collaboratively to strengthen academic programs in ways that will be explained throughout this report. They worked with the administration to show quantifiable measures of student growth in learning through our unique, "authentic," individualized Assessment Tool. Through an array of enriching, "hands-on" experiences, our students engaged in learning throughout the community and "off-island" world. A few of many examples: project-period camping/hiking trips in the spring, weekly mentoring of almost fifty students by business and artist volunteers, our middle school trip to Italy, a high school delegation to the Model UN in New York during which one of our students received Honorable Mention for her exemplary work, and middle-and-high-school team participation in the state and national "Botball" competition (a robotics event). In "Artists in Residence" programs, our students learned from dozens of community artists and experts on subjects ranging from dance to karate, from darkroom photography to ceramics. Each student had three different eight to ten-week experiences. These are but a few of the ways our school continues to develop into a reflection of our charter's goals of a school that cultivates life-long learners through individual, group, and community support, contributions, and interaction.

The Board functioned smoothly and effectively, mindful of the Strategic Plan it adopted in July. Our three new members quickly engaged themselves and assumed responsibilities. A dozen faculty members presented reports to the Board at regular monthly meetings to inform members about curricular areas and the ways they are working diligently to meet state Curriculum Framework standards and achieve strong MCAS scores. Through a dissemination grant, the Director, a faculty member, the Board President, and the Development Director developed and presented a workshop three times to members of the Massachusetts Charter School Association on the topic, "Working Together to Develop an Effective Board of Trustees." The workshop outlines some of the ways we have successfully cultivated a positive, constructive working relationship between our administration and Board.

Our school is in a strong position to enter its ninth year and prepare for our second charter renewal process.

Respectfully Submitted,

Susan Phelps, President
MVPCS Board of Trustees

Academic Program

Goal One: All MVPCS students will demonstrate competency as indicated by external measures in the curricular areas of Math and English Language Arts.

Measure 1: Each grade will perform in the Mastery (76-99) category as reported in terms of an Objectives Performance Index (OPI) in the curricular areas of Reading, Language and Mathematics, as indicated on the TerraNova Survey.

Measure 2:

Each grade of students will score in the top quartile (76-99 National Percentiles) in the tested curricular areas of Reading, Language, and Math according to the TerraNova CTBS Survey. Each grade is comprised of all students at each grade level for a particular year.

Measure 3:

The Mean Normal Curve Equivalent (MNCE) scores of the Grade 6, 7 and 8 cohorts (three or more years at the MVPCS) will be 65 or higher in Reading, Language, and Math as measured by the Terra Nova CTBS Survey.

Measure 4:

Grades 4,6,7 and 8 will meet or exceed the state wide Proficient/Advanced percent results in Math and/or English on the MCAS tests.

Measure 5:

Eighty five percent of third graders will score at or above grade level as measured by the Developmental Reading Assessment during the spring evaluation session.

Goal Two: All MVPCS students will demonstrate academic progress as indicated by the Martha's Vineyard Public Charter School's Internal Assessment Instrument in the curricular areas of Math and English Language Arts.

Measure 1:

More than 75% of students will reach Apprentice or Practitioner levels in Math and English Language Arts as indicated by the Internal Assessment Instrument at the end of their two-year cycle within a particular classroom (Grades 4,6,8).

Governance

Goal One: The MVPCS will maintain strong organizational viability by demonstrating sound financial practices.

Measure 1:

Actual and proposed budgets for each school year will show effective allocation of resources to ensure effective school programs.

Measure 2:

Yearly balance sheets will show that the school is fiscally sound and maintains adequate (20% of total budget) cash reserves.

Measure 3:

Yearly submission of audited financial statements will demonstrate that the school is responsible and prudent with public resources.

Goal Two: The MVPCS will maintain a strong level of parent satisfaction.

Measure 1:

The Annual Parent Survey will indicate that at least 80% of parents responding will Agree or Strongly Agree that they are satisfied with their experience at the MVPCS.

Measure 2:

Parent and student participation in Personal Education Plan Conferences will exceed 95%.

Measure 3:

One hundred percent of parents will contribute to the school's Annual Drive.

Goal Three: Student enrollment and full-time faculty retention will be stable.

Measure 1:

Student applications to available openings will average a 2:1 ratio.

Measure 2:

Enrollment will be between 155 -160 students.

Measure 3:

The five year average of the annual student retention rate in Kindergarten through Grade 8 will exceed 90%.

Measure 4:

The five year average of the annual full-time faculty retention rate will exceed 90%.

Unique Program Areas

“It is the mission of the MVPCS to create a public school that will cultivate lifelong learners in a multi-aged, project based setting....Education is most meaningful when the student is invested in the studies by choice. The curriculum evolves out of student needs and student choice in conjunction with the MA Curriculum Frameworks....At the core of the MVPCS educational program is the belief that self-directed learning is the deepest learning. The educational program of the MVPCS is designed to empower students to learn how to direct their own learning while sharing in the community’s resources. An environment of mutual respect is fostered where success is applauded and mistakes can be made during the daily process.”

MVPCS Charter

Goal One: Schoolwork will be project based.

Measure 1:

Each age group will host at least one Project Exhibition during each semester.

Measure 2:

Two 8-10 day successful “Project Periods” will occur during each school year. Successful Project Periods include active student participation in all class activities and public exhibitions of student’s accomplishments, which may include oral, written or multimedia presentations.

Goal Two: Students will make measurable progress in becoming self-directed learners.

Measure 1: Data from the “Charter Learner Assessment Tool” will indicate that more than 75% of students at the end of their two-year cycle in a particular classroom have achieved Apprentice or Practitioner levels.

Goal Three: MVPCS will instill in its students an understanding of and appreciation for the schools five “Rights”:

- 1. To feel safe in mind, body, and spirit.*
- 2. To have personal property reserved for personal use, unless loaned or given to someone else.*
- 3. To have needs, aspirations and responsibilities acknowledged and respected.*
- 4. To be him/herself as long as s/he is responsive to others.*
- 5. To have a clean, tidy and vandalism free campus.*

Measure 1:

Every classroom will thoroughly explore, in developmentally appropriate ways, the definition of each right during the first month of school. The rights will be posted in every classroom.

Measure 2:

Independent experts who visit the school throughout the year will conclude in over 80% of cases that students “always” or “usually” demonstrate the five rights in their daily interactions.

Martha’s Vineyard Public Charter School

2003-2004 Annual Report

Curriculum Guide

The MVPCS follows the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks to structure and guide curriculum development at all levels.

Project Based Learning opportunities using thematic integrated curriculum are prevalent in the classrooms on a daily basis. The individualization of instruction, student choice, public exhibitions of achievement, and community service are vital aspects of the school's Project Based Learning pedagogy.

Kindergarten

Reading

The Guided Reading instruction is an opportunity to work with small groups focusing on specific topics or stages of literary development using a variety of literacy games that help promote peer learning.

Writing

The goals for beginning writers include recognition of lower and upper case letters, recognition of letter/sound correspondence, and the use of inventive spelling to understand picture/text relationship. Fine motor, prior knowledge; attention level and interest areas are the focus areas of these beginning writers.

Math

The Everyday Math textbook series introduced at this level facilitates understanding of math concepts, which include number sense, patterns, and geometry. Math concepts are introduced throughout the school year through a variety of activities and games.

Social Studies

The students are encouraged to focus on building a healthy and unified community. Cooperation, responsibility, respect, and trust are daily areas of focus as they relate to the school's Bill of Rights. Throughout the thematic studies during the year, the students explore varying global attributes to help them understand their relationship to others.

Science

A number of activities encourage students to investigate, question, experience, and experiment through the process of discovery and inquiry. Critical thinking and research skills are goals of the program.

Community

The island community plays a large role in the entire classroom experience. Visits to people and places on the Island enhance the studies. For example, journeys to fish markets, boat builders, commercial fishermen, and a charter boat fishing trip augments the classroom study of oceans.

Twelve through Fourteen-Year-Old Program

English Language Arts

The program uses a reading and writing Workshop Model in which large blocks of time are designated to reading and writing. Short story, essay, memoir, grammar, poetry, biography and autobiography, literary analysis, and individual research projects are units of study. Language arts lessons focus on spelling patterns, etymology, vocabulary, and parts of speech.

Mathematics

The math text, Connected Math, set the course of study of the strands of Number Sense and Operations, Patterns, Relations, and Algebra, Geometry and Measurement and Data Analysis, and Statistics and Probability. Students study elements of graphing linear equations and inequalities while exploring the workings of a graphing calculator. Small and large group instruction is consistently part of the pedagogy.

Social Studies

During the two-year cycle students begin with an exploration of the Americas and the first human inhabitants of the North American continent. Students examine the transformation of America from an agrarian to industrial society. The group searches for the meaning and evidence of the beginnings of American democracy through reading primary source documents such as the Magna Carta, the Declaration of Independence, and the Constitution. Students explore the Africans in America, the development of slavery, and take an in-depth look at the causes and effects of the US Civil War. During the second year students examine the archeological and genetic evidence for African genesis and human migration across the globe. A review of Geography concepts and the development of Neolithic and the Early Civilizations of China, India, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Crete and Phoenicia follow this. Major focus is devoted to the transformation of cultures over time, religious and social connections between groups, and their systems of belief and government in Classical Greece, and Rome. After the group's trip to Italy, the class begins Facing History and Ourselves, a study of the Holocaust and Human Behavior. Students engage in an examination of racism and prejudice and the power of individuals to oppose hatred while creating a multi-media exhibition of courage honoring those who refused to commit crimes and fought against racism and fascism.

Science

The program covers the strands of Inquiry, Physical Science, Life Science, Earth and Space Science, and Technology and Engineering. Using the Island as a classroom, the learning experiences include scientific observations of different ecosystems. Investigation, lab and fieldwork, and individual research are cornerstones of this program.

Specials

Each student studies Art, World Language, Physical Education, and Electives (Offering and Artists in Residence classes) each week. Each student is invited to participate in the school's

Mentorship Program.

High School Program

The High School program is divided into two separate programs with a set of distinct goals. The 'First Years' (ninth and tenth grades) program is classroom and curriculum centered offering a variety of project based learning experiences in preparation for the 10th grade MCAS tests. The 'Penultimate and Ultimate Year's' program is driven by independent research experiences, referred to as portfolios and juried exhibitions, under the supervision of the faculty. In addition, the students are required to demonstrate 12th grade understandings as outlined in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

The First Years Program

English

The English program is literature-based using novels, short story, essays, poetry, and non-fiction. A Shakespeare study is an annual curricular component. Group and independent reading is an important part of the program. Creative writing, mastery of narrative and expository writing, and literary analysis are aspects of the program. Opportunities to explore creative writing and poetry through the Writing Workshop Model are provided. Vocabulary and literary terminology are also emphasized.

Mathematics

Math is designed to be an integrated two-year program of algebra, geometry, number sense, and probability and statistics. Students study linear, quadratic and exponential equations, the rules governing geometric relationships among symmetry, volume, and area. The group solves and graphs linear equations throughout the year. Learning of the subject matter incorporates the use of the graphing calculator and geometry software.

Social Studies

The two-year course of study concentrates on World History from 500 CE to the present. History, politics, geography, and economics are constantly intertwined in the students' research, projects, and activities. The use of primary and secondary sources to support research is the focus of independent research

Science

The program investigates logic and the scientific method in the studies of evolution, expansion, geology, energy, meiosis and mitosis, genetics and DNA, Physical Science, and chemistry. Lab work, journal entries, observations, experiments, and oral presentations are demonstrations of student understanding.

Specials

Physical Education, Art, Electives, Community Service Learning, and World Languages are part of each student's week. In addition, each student participates in a weekly mentorship with an

Summary of Dissemination Activities

2000-2001 School Year

1. Put Internal Assessment Instrument in published form for distribution.
2. A web site for the Internal Assessment Instrument was created to allow for wider access.
3. Worked with a group of Island District teachers on four Saturday workshops on the topic of *Assessment* and produced a group project entitled, Stories in the Classroom.

2001-2002 School Year

1. The school held four collaborative workshops in spring 2002 with other local teachers on the topic of “Project Based Learning”.
2. The school focused on developing centralized information for Project Period including curriculum, course descriptions, and expectations.

2002-2003 School Year

1. Designed and offered a two week summer session (2002) in project-based learning using the themes of Robotics and Art. Charter School and MV School District teachers co-taught the two courses that served over twenty-five island students.
2. Presentation delivered at the Coalition Center for Essential School Reform Conference on Equity and Democracy on March 21, 2003. The school’s SPED Administrator, one teacher and a parent and student presented a workshop on the MVPCS’ development and implementation of the *Personal Education Plan*.

2003-2004 School Year

1. The director, president of the board, development director, and a teacher presented three workshops entitled, “Building a Board of Trustees”, using the MVPCS model as a foundation for the discussion. The group presented the first workshop in April 2004, at the Massachusetts Charter School Association’s Annual Conference at the College of the Holy Cross. The second workshop was held on Martha’s Vineyard for three other Massachusetts charter schools. The

Parent Participation

Parents participated in school activities and school planning in numerous ways. Below is a listing of some of the areas in which parents were invited to participate during the 2003-2004 school year.

Parent Participation in School Activities

- Chaperones on field trips
- Mentors
- Mini-lessons
- Building and Grounds, i.e.: sign painting, plantings, and playground
- Lunch Program
- After School Tennis and Basketball
- Jurors on Student Assessment Panels
- School Book Fair and Library Celebration Day
- Community Service Learning
- Open Houses
- High School Graduation
- September Potluck Cookout
- Last Day of School Celebration
- Project Period
- Morning Meeting
- Theater Performances
- Student Portfolio and Exhibition Panels
- Community Building Activities

Parent Participation in School Planning

- Task Forces, Teacher Hiring Committees
- Standing Committees
- Board of Trustees
- Parent Roundtable Planning Meetings
- Fund Raising
- Phone Trees for the Classrooms
- Parent Representatives

