



**City on a Hill Charter Public School**

**Annual Report**

**2005-2006**

## Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	2
Mission, Contact Information.....	3
Introductory Description of the School.....	4
Educational Philosophy.....	5
Letter to the Community.....	7
Summary of Performance Relative to Accountability Plan.....	9
School Profile.....	12
Staff Profile.....	13
Governance Profile.....	14
Dissemination.....	16
List of colleges and universities that Accepted CoaH students.....	Appendix I
FY '06 Financial Report and FY '07 Budget.....	Appendix II



*Azzezat Lawal, City on a Hill class of '08, and Civics teacher Nadya Bech-Conger*

### The City on a Hill Mission

City on a Hill, a public high school in urban Boston, emphasizes academic achievement, citizenship, teacher leadership, and public accountability. We seek to graduate responsible, resourceful, and respectful democratic citizens prepared to advance community, culture and commerce, and to compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### Contact Information

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### INTRODUCTORY DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL:

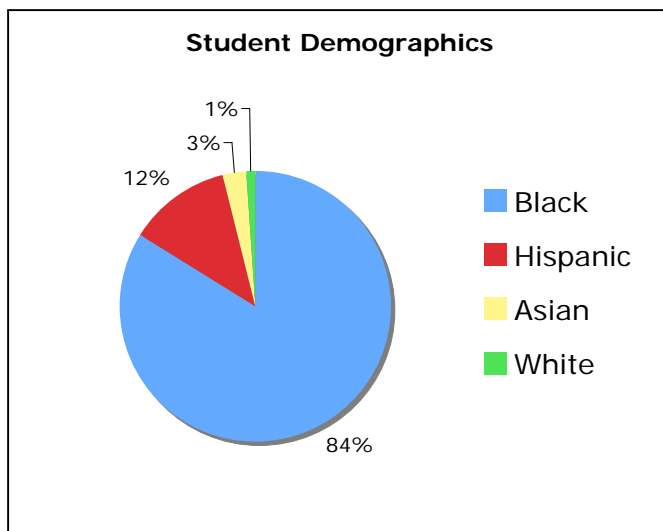
City on a Hill Charter Public School is a high school in Boston that strives to give all of its students the academic skills they will need to succeed in college. This can be a difficult task, but school leaders, faculty, and students are ready to give the time, energy, and hard work that it takes to achieve the school's mission.

At City on a Hill, as with all charter schools, students are admitted by a random lottery. For the most recent lottery, which was held in March 2006, five students applied for each available spot in the incoming 9<sup>th</sup> grade class. City on a Hill only admits new students in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. The school, which is small by design, allows for a maximum enrollment of 250.

Like all charter schools, City on a Hill is tuition-free, independent and open to all students in the city of Boston. City on a Hill does not have an entrance exam. City on a Hill principally serves low-income, students of color from Boston. City on a Hill students are between the ages of 14 and 18.

- 14% receive Special Education support
- 54% of students are female
- 46% of students are male.

In the 2005-2006 school year, City on a Hill attracted a variety of students from different ethnic and racial backgrounds:



Close to 70% of the students attending City on a Hill come from families that are living at or below the poverty line, and most are from single-parent households.



## THE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY:

### *City on a Hill Mission*

*City on a Hill Charter Public School, a public high school in urban Boston, emphasizes academic achievement, citizenship, teacher leadership, and public accountability. We seek to graduate responsible, resourceful, and respectful democratic citizens prepared to advance community, culture and commerce, and to compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

The first core principle of the City on a Hill mission is to emphasize academic achievement. The curriculum of every class is structured with high expectations so as to give students the academic skills they will need to succeed in college. Every student completes an educational program with the following requirements:

- 4 years of English
- 3 years of History
- 4 years of Mathematics
- 3 years of Science
- 3 years of Spanish
- Physical Education: All students must pass a swim test and life-saving test.
- Town Meeting: The entire City on a Hill community gathers every Friday to discuss and debate important issues facing our school, our city, and our world. Town Meeting is a required part of school. We invite parents and guardians and members of the public to attend.

Citizenship, the second core principle of the City on a Hill mission is embedded into the structure of the school day and week. Daily Advisory Groups, which meet for 25 minutes each day, serve as support groups and create a culture of working together toward goals. Students complete community service projects in a wide variety of Boston organizations and 9<sup>th</sup> grade students must pass a citizenship test that is closely aligned with United States citizenship test. Every Friday, a 45-minute town meeting engages all of City on a Hill's students in a debate of local, national, or international importance.

The academic and citizenship components of City on a Hill's mission are supported by a standards curriculum in which a consistent set of cultural expectations are taught to both students and teachers at the beginning of each year and reinforced throughout the year. The summer freshman orientation, which incoming freshmen must attend during the last two weeks of August, acclimates students to City on a Hill's rigorous academic standards and cultural expectations that in most cases were not common in the students' middle schools. Throughout the entire school

year City on a Hill faculty and staff uphold a culture in which respect for students, faculty, staff, neighbors and the school building itself is required at all times and relatively minor rules violations (i.e. shirt un-tucked, gum chewing, inappropriate language) are strictly enforced thereby heading off behavioral problems before they become more serious and promoting the discipline that students need to succeed academically.



320 Huntington Avenue  
Boston, MA 02115

#### To The Community:

In June of 2006, City on a Hill took a major step towards solidifying its place as one of Boston's best public high schools for years to come by purchasing the St. Joseph's parish property in Roxbury. This site will serve as City on a Hill's permanent home beginning in September 2007 after a significant renovation of the current schoolhouse and surrounding property. This purchase was made possible by the support of our generous donors who helped us raise more than one million dollars in a successful first year of a multi-year capital campaign.

While the physical well-being of City on a Hill was greatly enhanced with the purchase of a new home, the academic well-being of the school's students continued to improve as well. During the 2005-2006 school year, City on a Hill began to expand its one-on-one tutoring program; all freshmen received extensive one-on-one tutoring throughout the second semester to bolster their math and reading skills and more than half of the sophomore class voluntarily attended MCAS tutoring for 12 three-hour Saturday morning sessions. The success of the tutoring program has led City on a Hill's leaders to expand the one-on-one tutoring program during the 2006-2007 school year and require all freshmen to attend after-school tutoring and require all sophomores to attend Friday afternoon or Saturday morning MCAS tutoring. This upcoming expansion is made possible by generous foundation grants that have already been secured for the coming year.

As City on a Hill works to bring its youngest students up to grade level, we are also pursuing new avenues that will help our older students practice the higher order learning that they will need to succeed in college. This past year, City on a Hill offered AP Government and AP Art History for the first time to all of its seniors. In the coming year, we will be working to develop and integrate an AP Calculus course that will begin in the 2007-2008 school year.

I am especially pleased to report that City on a Hill's class of 2006 was the largest graduating class in school history and every member of the class of 2006 was admitted to college.

I am also pleased to report that City on a Hill's mission to prepare students to be responsible citizens is alive and well. The fruits of the hard work that students have been doing in this regard were on display at the school and in the community throughout the 2005-2006 school year. All students participated in internships during the spring; many in non-profits and government agencies. Every Friday, the school met as a community and held our traditional town meeting; at these town meetings, students debated matters of personal, local, and national importance. Topics this year ranged from lengthening the school day to whether capital punishment should be legal. All debates were lively and focused, and many were attended by members of the greater Boston community. Every student was part of a small group that had a chance to lead and decide a topic for a Town Meeting.

While we are proud of the many improvements we have made over the past year, everyone at City on a Hill continues to question how we can make the school better for our students and families: How do we ensure that more of our students achieve Proficient and Advanced levels on the MCAS each year? How can we make our new building in Roxbury the best teaching and learning environment for our teachers and students? And, most importantly, how can we better prepare City on a Hill graduates for success in college and beyond?

I hope to report back in one year's time as to what we have found and some of our successes in answering the questions above. In the meantime, the Board, management, teachers and staff of City on a Hill will continue to work hard each and every day to provide our students with we hope is one of the best high school educations in the city of Boston. We thank you for your continued support of our school.

Sincerely,

Stephen H.C. Kraus  
Chair, City on a Hill Board of Trustees



## SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE REALTIVE TO ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN:

### **Academic Program**

*City on a Hill will prepare students to succeed in college*

- All City on a Hill students will pass the MCAS on their first attempt:  
96% percent of the 10<sup>th</sup> graders who took the MCAS exam in the Spring of 2005 passed the English portion of the exam on their first attempt; 91 % passed the math portion on their first attempt. Both of these percentages are improvements from last year. To improve on scores, a voluntary Saturday tutoring program was implemented for sophomores. Starting in September of 2006, all City on a Hill sophomores will be required to attend MCAS tutoring sessions during the weekend.
- By 2010 80% of City on a Hill students will earn a Proficient or Advanced score on the MCAS; at least 20% will score in the Advanced category:  
On the math exam, 30% of City on a Hill sophomores achieved a proficient score and 9% of students achieved an advanced score. On the English exam, 46 % of students earned a proficient score and none achieved an advanced score. The tutoring program described above will be used to improve on this indicator.
- Average scores on the SAT will rise above 1000 by 2010, improving at a rate of 50 points per year:  
The average SAT score was 834. To improve on this score, an SAT prep class was offered for all students who took the SAT in June 2006 and will take the SAT in the fall of 2006. All freshmen were required to attend tutoring during the 2005-2006 school year. This will continue and will help SAT scores improve as City on a Hill students will “catch-up” to grade level at a faster rate. (Most City on a Hill students enter 9<sup>th</sup> grade with 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> math and reading skills).
- All of City on a Hill’s graduates will be admitted to college:  
All graduates of the Class of 2006 were admitted to college.  
Please see Appendix I, which lists the schools at which City on a Hill Class of 2006 graduates were accepted.
- The number of students admitted to selective four-year colleges, as defined by US News and World Report, will increase each year from the year before.  
In 2005-2006 54% of students were admitted to selective four-year colleges. In 2004-2005 64% of seniors were admitted to selective four-year college.

- City on a Hill Graduates will complete college  
City on a Hill, with other Boston charter schools, has received a grant to study and track whether or not its graduates are still in college or have graduated from college. City on a Hill is in contact with approximately 60% of its graduates. Indications are that approximately 90% of students that City on a Hill is still in contact with have graduated from college or are still enrolled in college.

### **Faithfulness to Charter**

*City on a Hill will prepare students to exercise their rights and responsibilities as American citizens.*

- All freshmen will pass the US citizenship exam  
77% of City on a Hill freshmen passed the US Citizenship exam
- All students will possess competent analytical skills and oral presentation abilities as assessed by juries or peers, teachers, and community members according to pre-determined rubrics.  
85% of English students who were given an oral proficiency passed the oral proficiency  
62% of Math students who were given an oral proficiency passed the oral proficiency  
77% of History students who were given an oral proficiency passed the oral proficiency
- All seniors will have competently moderated a Town Meeting, as determined by their advisor.  
All seniors have successfully facilitated Town Meeting.
- 100% of eligible students will register to vote  
100% of eligible students registered to vote.

### **Organizational Viability**

*City on a Hill's teachers will demonstrate excellence and will shape the school's program and policies.*

- 100% of teachers will be licensed and highly qualified by the end of their 2<sup>nd</sup> year as teachers at City on a Hill.  
77% of City on a Hill teachers are licensed and 96% of City on a Hill teachers are highly qualified.
- In an annual survey given to all teachers 85% will agree or strongly agree with the statement, "City on a Hill is a school that values teacher leadership."  
85% of City on a Hill teachers agreed or strongly agreed with that statement. On last year's survey, 65% of City on a Hill teachers agreed or strongly agreed with that statement.

*City on a Hill will create substantial parental satisfaction with the school.*

- In an annual survey given to all parents 85% or more of respondents will agree or strongly disagree with this statement, “City on a Hill offers a high quality educational program.  
92% of parents agreed or strongly agreed with that statement. On last year’s survey, 84% of parents agreed or strongly agreed with that statement.
- The ratio of applicants available seats at City on a Hill will exceed five to one.  
City on a Hill’s lottery included 407 applicants. The ratio of available applicants to available seats is 4.5 to one. City on a Hill will increase its application visibility in the coming year as it attempts to recruit 500 applicants.
- The percentage of students returning to City on a Hill each year will exceed 85%.  
92% of non-graduating students who finished the 2004-2005 school year at City on a Hill began the 2005-2006 school year at City on a Hill.

*City on a Hill students will come to school daily and on time.*

- Attendance for the student body will average no less than 95%; the number of tardies will average no more than five per month per advisory.  
Attendance for the student body averaged 93.5%. The number of tardies fell dramatically from last year but still did not reach our goal. Changes in school culture have been put in place for the coming year that will hopefully positively affect the current tardy situation.

*City on a Hill will be soundly governed by an active and prudent Board of Trustees.*

- The Board will achieve 85% of its annual goals; members will attend 90% of Board meetings.  
The Board achieved substantially all of its annual goals set at its retreat in the summer of 2005. Board members average attendance was at 77%.
- Yearly audited financial statements will show a balanced budget, success in securing outside funds and an unqualified audit opinion.  
In fiscal year 2006 City on a Hill showed a healthy surplus of more than \$100,000 and its financial statements received an unqualified audit opinion. Having started a capital campaign in June of 2005, City on a Hill raised more than \$1,200,000 in outside funds in FY 06.



SCHOOL PROFILE:

**Summary of external MCAS results**

Math

Advanced 04-05	9%
Advanced 03-04	3%
Proficient 04-05	30%
Proficient 03-04	39%
Needs Improvement 04-05	52%
Needs Improvement 03-04	38%
Failure 04-05	9%
Failure 03-04	20%

English

Advanced 04-05	0%
Advanced 03-04	0%
Proficient 04-05	46%
Proficient 03-04	41%
Needs Improvement 04-05	50%
Needs Improvement 03-04	55%
Failure 04-05	4%
Failure 03-04	4%

City on a Hill achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), a requirement for all schools under the No Child Left Behind Act.

**Summary of internal assessment results**

The school does not have an internal assessment system that provides data for external purposes.

**Number of instructional days for the 2005-2006 school year**

There were 185 instructional days in the 2005-2006 school year. The first day of school was September 6, 2005. The last day of school was June 25, 2006. Students are in class from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. every day and most students remain after school until 4 p.m. to receive tutoring or work with teachers.



STAFF PROFILE:

**Name of school leader(s), including instructional leader(s)**

Michael Duffy: Executive Director

Erica Jamison: Principal

**Summary of classroom teacher qualifications**

FTE teachers: 20

FTE aides: 3

Average years of teaching experience of classroom teachers: 5.06

Average years of service at the school: 3.4

Percentage of teachers highly qualified: 96%

Average class size at the school: 18

**Teacher attrition**

Percentage of teaching faculty employed by the school who have left since the beginning of the year: .04% (1 teacher)

Percentage of teaching faculty employed by the school who have left since the beginning of the year but are not planning on returning next year: 24%





## GOVERNANCE PROFILE:

### **Board of Trustees:**

A twelve member Board of Trustees governs City on a Hill Charter Public School. The Board meets 10 months a year.

**Stephen Kraus, Chair:** Stephen Kraus is the Director of the Ironwood Equity Fund. Board member since 2001; term expires May 2006. Re-election anticipated within the next three months. Member: Finance, development committees.

**Bobbie Knable, Vice-Chair:** Bobbie Knable served as the Dean of Students at Tufts University for close to two decades before retiring in 2000. Board member since 1999; term expires May 2008. Chair: Academic Performance committee.

**Joe Cali, Treasurer:** Joe Cali is the Executive Vice president of Product and Marketing for the Grand Circle Corporation. Board member since 2003; term expired in May 2006. Re-election anticipated within the next three months. Chair: Finance Committee.

**Dave Lane, Secretary:** David J. Lane is the Chairman of NetCare Services, a risk management firm. Board member since 2000; term expires May 2008. Member: Real Estate task force.

**Maurice Wright:** Maurice Wright is the METCO Director for the town of Belmont. Board member since 2002; term expires May 2008. Member: Real Estate task force.

**Elisabeth B. Reynolds:** Elisabeth B. Reynolds is a doctoral student at MIT's Department of Urban Studies. Before devoting herself to her studies full-time, Reynolds was a Senior Vice-President at the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City (ICIC) a national non-profit founded by Harvard Professor Michael Porter. Board member since 2002; term expires in September 2008. Chair: Trustees Committee.

**Jane Willis:** Jane E. Willis is a partner at the law firm of Ropes & Gray LLP specializing in business litigation and dispute resolution. Board member since 2004; term expires May 2007. Member: Development committee.

**Lee Delaney:** Lee Delaney is a partner in Bain & Company's Boston office. Board member since 2004; term expires May 2007. Chair: Real Estate task force.

**Kevin Mohan:** Kevin Mohan is a general partner at the venture capital firm Summit Partners. Board member since 2005; term expires May 2009. Member: Academic Performance committee.

**Rukia Ali:** Rukia Ali is employed as an outreach program coordinator for the Whittier Street Health Center in the lower Roxbury neighborhood of Boston. Board member since September 2005; term expires September 2008. Member: Community Advocacy task force.

**Michael Grossman:** Michael Grossman is an equity research analyst for MFS Investment Management. Board member since September 2005; term expires May 2008. Chair: Development committee.

**Bob Mazzarella:** Bob Mazzarella worked for more than 18 years at Fidelity Investments. Before he retired from Fidelity Investments in February 2002 he was president of Fidelity Brokerage Services LLC. Board member since April 2006; term expires April 2009. Member: Finance committee.

**Orson Watson Ph.D. :** Orson Watson is a Boston-based independent consultant specializing in economic and workforce development. Board member since May 2006; term expires May 2009.

**Summary of major policy decisions made by the Board of Trustees:**

The Board approved the purchase and renovation of the former St. Joseph's property in Roxbury from the Archdiocese in Boston. City on a Hill plans to begin the 2007-2008 school year in its new state of the art home.

**Charter amendments approved by the Commissioner or the Board of Education**

None

**Summary of official complaints received by the Board of Trustees**

None





DISSEMINATION:

**Please describe what the school has done to define best practices and disseminate them to the public.**

City on a Hill prides itself on public accountability. The school is open to the public and there is an open invitation for all teachers and school leaders to learn about City on a Hill's best practices. City on a Hill is a member of a group of Boston Charter Schools whose leaders meet regularly to discuss best practices, both at an academic and management level. The school was heavily researched for a book on study skills that was published by the Project for School Innovation.

City on a Hill has also partnered with Simmons College to create the Community Teachers Institute (CTI). The CTI, which is facilitated by City on a Hill staff, gives the opportunity for teachers in high-poverty, high-minority schools to receive their MAT at a significantly reduced rate. Teachers from Boston charter schools as well as Boston Public schools have taken advantage of this unique program.

Appendix I



CLASS OF 2006 ACCEPTANCES

Albright College  
American International College  
Bay State College  
Becker College  
Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology  
Bethune Cookman  
Bridgewater State College  
Bryant University  
Bunker Hill Community College  
Centre College  
Clark Atlanta University  
Cheyney University of Pennsylvania  
College of the Holy Cross  
Collins College  
Curry College  
Elmira College  
Emmanuel College  
Fisher College  
Fitchburg State College  
Fort Valley State University  
Framingham State College  
Franklin Pierce College  
Georgian Court University  
Gibbs College  
Hampton University  
Hilbert College  
Howard University  
Johnson and Wales  
Lane College  
Lasell College  
Lock Haven University  
Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts  
Mitchell College  
Mount Ida College  
Newbury College  
New England College of Art

New Jersey City University  
New York Institute of Technology  
Oakwood College  
Northeastern University  
Pace University  
Penn State University  
Purdue University  
Regis College  
Salem State College  
Spelman College  
Sojourner Douglass College  
Springfield College  
Suffolk University  
SUNY Canton  
Tuskegee University  
University of Maryland  
University of Massachusetts Amherst  
University of Massachusetts Boston  
University of Massachusetts Dartmouth  
University of New Haven  
University of Southern Indiana  
University of Vermont  
Virginia Commonwealth University  
Wentworth Institute of Technology  
Western New England College  
Westfield State College  
Wheelock College  
Woodbury University  
Worcester Polytechnic Institute  
Worcester State College

Appendix II



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

**(Unaudited)  
STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSE**

<b>Revenues</b>	
State Funds	2,770,471
Federal Funds	237,260
Grants and Contributions	200,304
Other Revenue	30,518
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>3,238,553</b>
Salaries and Human Resources	1,967,233
Operations	426,596
Programs and Activities	388,840
Facilities	323,959
Technology	23,356
Depreciation	1,800
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>3,131,784</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>106,769</b>

**BALANCE SHEET**

<b>Assets</b>	
Cash and Equivalents	702,291
Scholarship Funds	17,870
Accounts Receivable	137,067
Pre-paid Expenses	12,793
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>870,021</b>
Equipment	9,339
Accumulated Depreciation	-1,800
<b>Total Equipment</b>	<b>7,539</b>
Total Current Assets	<b><u>877,560</u></b>
<b>Liabilities and Fund Balance</b>	
Accounts Payable	34,479
Accrued Payroll	156,220
Other Liabilities	2,398

<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	193,097
<b>Restricted Net Income</b>	114,812
Total Liabilities and Restricted Net Income	307,909
Fund Balance	569,651
Total Liabilities, Restricted Net Income and Fund Balance	<b><u>877,560</u></b>

### **BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007**

<b>Revenues</b>	
State Funds	2,966,290
Federal Funds	236,280
Grants and Contributions	355,000
Other Revenue	3,000
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>3,560,570</b>
Salaries and Human Resources	1,954,984
Operations	378,241
Programs and Activities	265,500
Facilities	771,000
Technology	4,000
Depreciation	10,000
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>3,383,725</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>176,845</b>