



Plan for Charter School Improvement

Uphams Corner Charter School
7 Elkins Street
South Boston, MA 02127

Submitted by Edward M. Cook, Head of School

Approved by the UCCS Board of Trustees: June 28, 2007

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Overview

About This Plan

This Plan for Charter School Improvement was created in the spring of 2007, and reflects the work of the Uphams Corners community in four areas:

- ❖ Our analysis of current and future MCAS improvement targets
- ❖ Our analysis of school performance to date
- ❖ Our assessment of the conditions required for academic success, and the improvement strategies we have implemented in 2006-07 to address them
- ❖ Our plans for continued improvement and the improvement strategies we have designed for implementation in 2007-08 and 2008-2009

Four groups were central to the development of this School Improvement Plan: administrators, teachers, the Board of Trustees, and parents. It was the first time that the entire community had a role in developing a school-wide plan.

Student & Parent Input: School-wide discussion began with the re-chartering process in the fall of 2006. The student senate hosted the Renewal Inspection Team during its visit, and when the Team's report was released, the senators met to develop strategies for renewal and school improvement. In student senate meetings and Friday Forums, students discussed the areas of student achievement (ELA and math strands) needing improvement, as well as how to engage the student body in making improvement (attention in class, completing homework, etc.). They made presentations and led discussions in each class in order to make clear to students their role in improving the school and renewing the charter. In monthly parent meetings, the parent council also discussed and analyzed student test data, MCAS preparation, and the planning for school improvement, including the school's response to charter renewal conditions.

Staff Participation: Staff members participated in the creation of this plan in a variety of ways. Teachers reviewed and analyzed achievement data, discussed school culture, identified issues and needs, and designed improvement strategies via the following:

- ❖ Weekly faculty meetings.
- ❖ Weekly Math and English Department meetings, which were devoted almost entirely to analysis of MCAS and MPSPPP data.
- ❖ The staff's spring retreat in March. (UCCS staff participates in retreats twice each year, fall and spring, devoting one full day and one half-day to assessing performance, planning changes, and exploring the school's most pressing needs from the staff perspective.)
- ❖ The Committee on Teaching and Learning, a group of teachers who have been leaders in the development of school culture and expectations. (The committee's core members are four key teachers: two who have been at UCCS for three years, one for two years, and one new teacher.)

The Committee on Teaching and Learning met weekly between late March and the end of May with the Principal, and provided staff leadership in the development of this plan (focusing on assessment data and designing strategies). This committee worked closely with the curriculum departments and updated the whole faculty on progress at the weekly faculty meetings.

Administrative Leadership: The Principal, Assistant Principal, and Student Support Service Coordinator met weekly to discuss the Committee on Teaching and Learning's recommendations and develop recommendations of their own. The Principal then met weekly with the Head of School to review progress and recommended strategies. The administrative team also reviewed progress and strategies at weekly administrative meetings.

Consultant Support: The school also hired three consultants to help improve the school's leadership and planning. One of these consultants was hired before charter renewal and has met monthly since the fall of 2006 with the administrative team, focusing on improving communications among team members. The second consultant first met with the Head of School in the fall of 2006 to discuss a model for aligning the school's Accountability Plan and mission with the functions of the staff and Board, in order to focus on student learning outcomes. This consultant then became a member of the school's Advisory Committee, and was hired in June to review and help revise this School Improvement Plan. The third consultant was hired in April 2007 as one of the conditions for charter renewal, and is currently working with school administration to improve leadership and management practices in the school. He has met with focus groups of students, parents, teachers and administrators as well as with the Head of School and Principal. During the summer of 2007, all three of these consultants will meet to discuss additional ways to integrate and coordinate their work with the school.

Board of Trustees' Oversight: The UCCS Board of Trustees has been integral to the creation of this plan, participating in analyzing, strategizing, writing and editing at all stages. The UCCS Board worked on the charter renewal materials given to the Board of Education, the Accountability Plan, this Plan for School Improvement, and the charter amendments for the new charter term. The Board's work began in the early spring of 2006 and continues to the present. The Board has voted on all of these plans (in draft and final versions), and has approved this plan for submission.

Monitoring Progress: The Head of School will monitor the school's progress on the initiatives and goals of this plan, and report monthly to the Student Achievement Committee, a subcommittee of the Board. The committee will hear reports on MCAS results, other standardized test results (GRADE and IOWA Math) and MPSPP assessments. In addition, the committee will hear reports on plans for addressing on-going challenges such as making Adequate Yearly Progress goals. This committee will report on progress to the Board of Trustees monthly, during committee reports at Board meetings.

School History

Uphams Corner opened as a Commonwealth charter school in the fall of 2002 with 80 students, and reached its full 5-8 grade span in the 2005-2006 school year. Now in its fifth year of operation, Uphams Corner received a second charter in January 2007, with conditions. One of these conditions is the Board of Education's approval of this Plan for Charter School Improvement.

Mission: The Uphams Corner Charter School offers an academically rigorous, rhetoric-centered education in the liberal arts and sciences, leading to sound understanding, earnest reflection, self-discipline, integrity, and action.

Our community is devoted to outstanding student performance and whole character formation. We will graduate all our students as powerful, articulate, moral citizens, working for the benefit of all.

Self-Analysis

Uphams Corner's School Improvement Process

Uphams Corner is in the midst of a school improvement process that began in 2004-05, with the Board's reorganization of school administration. At that time, the Board hired Edward M. Cook, an experienced urban middle school principal who also has behavior management expertise, to lead the school. Mr. Cook was charged with analyzing the school's current performance and designing and implementing strategies to improve what was, at that point, low student achievement and a troubled school culture.

Upon entering, Mr. Cook assessed the quality of the administrative and teaching staff, as well as the school's curriculum in light of its mission, charter, and Accountability Plan goals. The guiding principle for the Head of School in this analysis was the question: Are UCCS's current practices addressing the learning needs of its students as reflected in their MCAS assessment? As part of his evaluation, the Head of School held lengthy discussions with individual teachers and subject department teams, administrators, and the Board of Trustees, and assessed student achievement data.

This analysis by the Head of School served both as a starting point and a foundation for an aggressive school improvement process that has been underway since 2004-05. Several school improvement strategies have been implemented since this administrative reorganization, including the following:

1. 2004-05, a year focused on stabilizing the school's structure and procedures
 - Improving school culture and classroom management: creating and staffing the Student Referral Center, hiring a Student Service Coordinator, adding individual student counseling, revising the Code of Conduct
 - Creating a Parent Council with structure and regularly scheduled meetings
 - Identifying MCAS-aligned curricula
 - Adding members to the Board of Trustees
 - Planning for the addition of a fourth grade level (8th grade) in 2005-06
2. 2005-06
 - Implementing new curricula
 - Systematizing the connections between curriculum frameworks, school benchmarks, teacher planning, and student grades using the Veracross database program (installed by the Breuer Corporation)
 - Implementing an 8th grade program
 - Hiring Literacy and Math coaches for ELA and Math teachers
 - Hiring staff and teachers to expand the school's capacity
3. 2006-07
 - Successfully rechartering the school.
 - Implementing the MPSPP program to increase the quality and frequency of internal assessments.
 - Implementing the MPSPP program to provide professional development in ELA and math, as well as increase teachers' capacity to use data meaningfully.
 - Developing an individual student tutoring program for ELA and Math, that was aligned with the school's curricula and served as preparation for MCAS.

The remainder of this section describes:

- A. Performance targets for math and ELA.
- B. Data analysis for math and ELA.
- C. Hypotheses for problems in academic performance.
- D. Assessment of necessary conditions for overcoming problems.

A. Performance Targets

Uphams Corner did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in math or English language arts in 2005 and 2006. During the 2006-07 school year, it was designated as a school in need of improvement according to No Child Left Behind regulations. UCCS is currently designated as a school in:

- ❖ Needs Improvement for Math
 - For All Students, Year 2+
- ❖ Needs Improvement for English Language Arts
 - For All Students, Year 1

Based on its 2007 baseline numbers, Uphams Corner has calculated the math and English language arts improvement targets it must meet in order to make Adequate Yearly Progress every year, for all students and all subgroups. According to No Child Left Behind, all schools are required to achieve a Composite Performance Index (CPI) of 100 in ELA and math by May 2014. UCCS targets for both ELA and math are presented below; more detailed information about performance targets in each curriculum area is included in the sections that follow.

2007 CPI Baselines and Gain Targets

	2007 Baseline	Gain Target Every Year
ELA	67.2	4.1
Math	35.5	8.1

CPI Targets 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
ELA	71.3	75.4	79.5	83.6	87.7	91.8	95.9	100
Math	43.6	51.7	59.8	67.9	76	84.1	92.2	100

Math

As of 2006-07, Uphams Corner was designated as a school in Needs Improvement for All Students, Year 2+.

Math: 2007 CPI Baselines and Targets

	2007 CPI Baseline	2007 Gain Target	2007 CPI Target
All Students	35.5	8.1	43.6
African American	34.5	8.2	42.7
Low Income	37.1	7.9	45.0

Math: CPI Targets for All Students, Second Charter Term

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
State Performance Target	76.5	76.5	84.3	84.3	92.2	
UCCS Improvement Target	43.6	51.7	59.8	67.9	76	84.1

Math: CPI Targets 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
All Students	43.6	51.7	59.8	67.9	76	84.1	92.2	100
Low Income	45.0	52.9	60.8	68.7	76.6	84.5	92.4	100
African American	42.7	50.9	59.1	67.3	75.5	83.7	91.9	100

English Language Arts

As of 2006-07, Uphams Corner was designated as a school In Needs Improvement for all students, year 1.

ELA: 2007 CPI Baselines and Targets

	2007 CPI Baseline	2007 Gain Target	2007 CPI Target
All Students	67.2	4.1	71.3
African American	66.1	4.2	70.3
Low Income	68.8	3.9	72.7

ELA: CPI Targets for All Students, Second Charter Term

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
State Performance Target	85.4	85.4	90.2	90.2	95.1	
UCCS Improvement Target	71.3	75.4	79.5	83.6	87.7	91.8

ELA: CPI Targets 2007-2014

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
All Students	71.3	75.4	79.5	83.6	87.7	91.8	95.9	100
Low Income	72.7	76.6	80.5	84.4	88.3	92.2	96.1	100
African American	70.3	74.5	78.7	82.9	87.1	91.3	95.5	100

B. Data Analysis

Math

MCAS Math Results

Year	N	Adv.	Prof.	NI	W/F	Prof. or Adv.
FIFTH GRADE						
2006	18	0%	6%	39%	56%	6%
SIXTH GRADE						
2004	65	3%	11%	51%	35%	14%
2005	42	0%	2%	38%	60%	2%
2006	53	0%	4%	26%	70%	4%
SEVENTH GRADE						
2006	51	0%	4%	31%	65%	4%
EIGHTH GRADE						
2006	63	0%	2%	29%	70%	2%

On the 2004 6th-grade math MCAS, 14% of students reached proficiency and 35% scored in the Warning category. We attribute this level of achievement to two factors: 1) the use in the first two years of the school of the TERC curriculum, which was inappropriate for our students' fundamental math needs; 2) a faculty of only two math teachers, one of whom provided weak instruction and left the school.

On the 2005 6th-grade math MCAS, 2% of students reached proficiency and 60% scored in the Warning category. We attribute this level of achievement to two factors: 1) the instability of the school as a result of administrative changes, which adversely affected school culture and student behavior and the instructional capacity of teachers new to the school and the profession; 2) insufficient development of a school-created math curriculum aligned with the Frameworks and student needs. One class in particular had three different math teachers in the course of one year.

On the 2006 6th-grade math MCAS, 4% of students reached proficiency and 70% scored in the Warning category. The 2005-2006 school year was marked by greater stability in management and governance, but instruction remained weak. We attribute this level of achievement to two factors: 1) the failure of one teacher, who taught all sixth grade math sections, and of the administration to adequately supervise her. The administration read weekly lesson plans and observed classes, all of which seemed on track, and focused greater attention on the eighth grade sections, which seemed in more precarious circumstances. The school did not have on-going, regular, and objective assessments in place to verify teachers' results. (This teacher was not renewed.) 2) The new math curriculum, Connected Math, did not address lower level skills for students, most of whom were new to the school and almost all of whom were weak in fundamentals, and the school did not provide enough remediation.

On the 2006 8th-grade math MCAS, 2% of students reached proficiency and 70% scored in the Warning category. We attribute this level of achievement to two factors: 1) the newness of our use of Connected Math; and 2) weak instruction. Though the school intervened at many points (e.g. professional development, class observations, model lessons, administrators teaching the

classes), these interventions were not enough to bring students, most of whom had fundamental weaknesses in numeracy and were not intensively served by the Connected Math curriculum, to proficiency in one year.

All subgroups have performed at low levels. Therefore, we believe the problems lie in broad, school-wide curricular and instructional issues, rather than the emergent needs of any particular subgroup.

English Language Arts

MCAS English Results

Year	N	Adv.	Prof.	N.I	W/F	Prof. or Adv.
FIFTH GRADE						
2006	18	0%	11%	50%	39%	11%
SIXTH GRADE						
2006	54	0%	22%	65%	13%	22%
SEVENTH GRADE						
2005	39	3%	38%	59%	0%	41%
2006	52	0%	25%	54%	19%	25%
EIGHTH GRADE						
2006	63	0%	49%	41%	10%	49%

On the 2005 7th-grade English Language Arts MCAS, 41% of students reached proficiency and no students scored in the Warning category. We attribute this level of achievement to two factors: 1) the majority of students had been at the school for three years, and 2) the class had been taught by three well qualified and experienced teachers who, implementing the Reciprocal Teaching strategy, led the students to this level of success. In the spring of 2005 these classes were given intensive teaching with the lead teacher assisted by another teacher in each class.

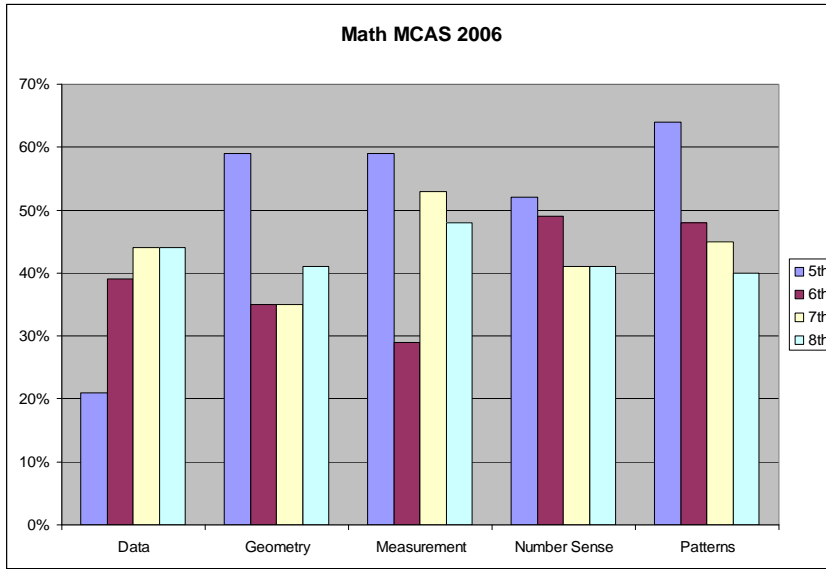
On the 2006 7th-grade English Language Arts MCAS, 25% of students reached proficiency and 20% scored in the Warning category. We attribute this level of achievement to three factors: 1) a large influx (more than 50%) of new students at the 7th-grade level, due to low enrollment in the lower grades; 2) the behavioral and learning needs these students presented and which the school, at that time, was not sufficiently prepared to address; 3) the departure of a 7th-grade English teacher mid-year, and the lack of experience of the replacement teacher.

The school's ELA CPI, therefore, declined from 2005 to 2007. The subgroups with more than 40 students in Cycle IV were the 2006 African-American subgroup in 2006, attaining a CPI of 70.6, and the low-income subgroup, attaining a CPI of 73.8.

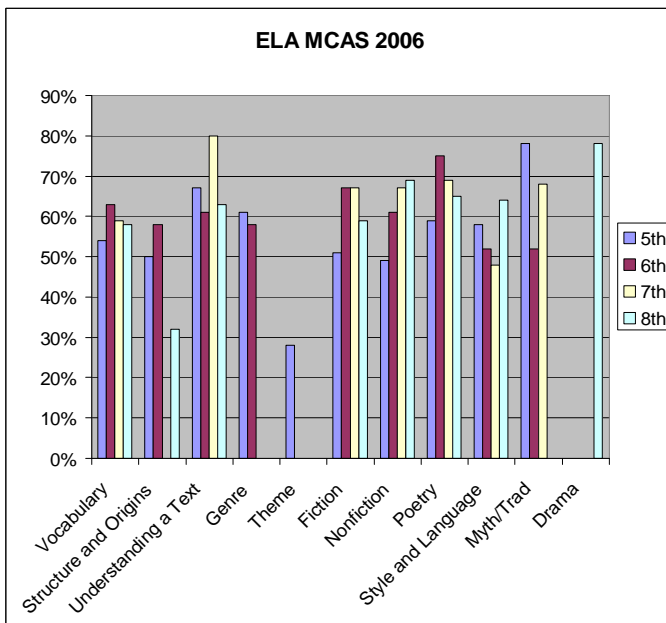
Strand Analysis: ELA and Math

Our analysis of MCAS data by strand shows, in almost all areas, a low and consistent pattern of performance in each of the standards. In math, apart from fifth-grade data analysis, the performance levels were rather close to the mean. In other words, there were no peaks and troughs in performance. Instead, students were consistently weak in all the areas. Deeper analysis of the actual items showed what we have maintained elsewhere in this document: a lack of fundamental skills and fluency in math prevented students from making strong gains in any area;

they were consistently hampered by basic computation.



The pattern in English is similar. With the exception of fifth-grade "theme" (of which there was only one test item), each grade in each standard performed close to their mean. Our analysis of these data, along with MPSPP data and professional development, showed students lacking the skills to cope with items of "basic fact." Most students were better at analyzing interpretive questions about style, language, and inference, for example, than returning to the text to find the answers to basic-fact questions. This year, the English department developed a common, department-wide strategy for teaching this skill. The social studies department adopted the strategy not long after, and next year, the entire school will implement the strategy.



What is perhaps most important is the large fraction of students who simply skipped questions,

particularly the short answer and open response items. In sixth-grade math, for instance, 62% of students skipped item 31, an open response item. In fifth-grade math, 94% skipped item 30, a short answer item. This pattern lowered each student's score significantly, and was common in all tests. In 2006-07, we placed an extra focus on such questions, and every three weeks, in the MPSPP exams, students were required to answer such questions, then examine their responses in class.

Subgroup Performance: ELA and Math

An analysis of MCAS performance at the subgroup level, in both English Language Arts and math, shows a general consistency in performance for all subgroups. As seen in the chart below, each subgroup's variation from the mean is, in most cases, a matter of only a few points. The small sample sizes in every category are an important factor to consider.

By Ethnicity: 2006 MCAS

	Class	African-Am		Latino		Asian		White	
	<i>Avg.</i>	<i>Avg.</i>	Δ	<i>Avg.</i>	Δ	<i>Avg.</i>	Δ	<i>Avg.</i>	Δ
5 th Math	222	221	-1	216*	-6	248*	+26	n/a	
6 th Math	218	219	+1	214	-4	n/a		217	-1
7 th Math	219	218	-1	230	+11	246*	+27	222*	+3
8 th Math	218	217	-1	221	+3	225	+7	n/a	
5 th English	225	224	-1	220*	-5	244*	+19	n/a	
6 th English	229	229	0	230	+1	n/a		220	-9
7 th English	231	230	-1	228	+7	242*	+11	234*	+3
8 th English	235	235	0	238	+3	239	+4	n/a	

*n=1

As African-Americans make up the bulk of our population, their variations from the mean are small.

Our relatively small Latino population (n=6) contained some strong students—one with a score of 238, another with 232. The other four were slightly below the mean.

Our small Asian population (five students school-wide) skews these results; most of these students were exceptionally well prepared for school.

Our small white population also performed close to the mean, with the exception of sixth-grade English; two of the three white students received scores of 212 and 222.

By Special Education Status: 2006 MCAS

	Class	Special Ed.		Regular Ed.	
	<i>Avg.</i>	<i>Avg.</i>	Δ from Class Avg.	<i>Avg.</i>	Δ from Class Avg.
5 th Math	222	215	-7	224	+2
6 th Math	218	211	-7	220	+2
7 th Math	219	215	-4	220	+1
8 th Math	218	210	-8	219	+1
5 th English	225	226	+1	225	0
6 th English	229	222	-7	230	+1
7 th English	231	222	-9	233	+2
8 th English	235	220	-15	237	+2

Special education students' averages are significantly lower than the regular education students.

This discrepancy in performance led the school to increase its special education staffing, organize it under a head special education teacher, and include special education teachers in all MPSPP professional development in 2006-07.

By Gender: 2006 MCAS

	Class	Boys		Girls	
	<i>Avg.</i>	<i>Avg.</i>	<i>Δ from Class Avg.</i>	<i>Avg.</i>	<i>Δ from Class Avg.</i>
5 th Math	222	219	-3	229	+7
6 th Math	218	215	-3	221	+3
7 th Math	219	218	-1	220	+1
8 th Math	218	219	+1	216	-2
5 th English	225	223	-2	230	+5
6 th English	229	226	-3	231	+2
7 th English	231	232	+1	229	-2
8 th English	235	237	+2	233	-2

Girls slightly outperformed boys on a number of tests, especially fifth-grade math and fifth grade English. The issue of small sample size is especially salient here: the fifth-grade class was small, with many behavioral problems among the boys. The few girls in the class were particularly strong in their behavior and school readiness.

The remaining variations from the mean are 3 points or fewer.

By Entrant Year

Perhaps the most important factor in MCAS achievement has been our admission of students at every grade level. The student's entrant year is the most important determinant of his or her performance on the MCAS. In short, the longer a student is with Uphams Corner, the better he or she performs.

In the aggregate, therefore, we have many students who have been with the school for as little as a few months prior to testing.

This admissions pattern stemmed from lower enrollment numbers in the early grades. We had originally planned to admit students only in the fifth and sixth grades; when enrollment patterns changed, we welcomed students in all grade levels, along with their different learning backgrounds and levels of achievement.

See the chart below for an analysis of MCAS achievement by entrant year.

Percent Passing MCAS by Entrant Year

		Number of Students	MCAS: Math Passing Rate	MCAS: English Passing Rate	Months at UCCS Prior to Testing
Fifth Grade					
	SY 05-06 Entrants	18 (100%)	44%	61%	8 months
Sixth Grade					
	SY 05-06 Entrants	19 (35%)	16%	89%	8 months
	SY 04-05 Entrants	35 (65%)	37%	86%	18 months
Seventh Grade					
	SY 05-06 Entrants	33 (63%)	30%	77%	8 months
	SY 04-05 Entrants	15 (29%)	40%	100%	18 months
	SY 03-04 Entrants	4 (8%)	50%	50%	28 months
Eighth Grade					
	SY 05-06 Entrants	26 (41%)	19%	88%	5-8 months
	SY 04-05 Entrants	1 (2%)	0%	0%	18 months
	SY 03-04 Entrants	5 (8%)	20%	80%	28 months
	SY 02-03 Entrants	31 (49%)	42%	94%	38 months

As this table shows, the longer a student stays at Uphams Corner, the more successfully he or she performs. For instance, the passing rate of our seventh graders rises substantially with each entrant year.

C. Hypotheses

Identified Causes for Academic Performance to Date

The UCCS community has identified numerous causes for the school's level of academic performance to date. (UCCS Site Visit Reports in the third and fourth years of the first charter term, early and late 2005, also reflect some of these concerns.) Some of these issues have been resolved; some are still in process. A brief history of each issue, including the school's response and current status, is included below.

- 1) An incomplete curriculum in math and English language arts until 2005-06.*
- 2) Internal assessments did not sufficiently assess student performance in a timely way so that classroom instruction could be informed and changes made.*
- 3) Discipline issues in classrooms and in the school as a whole often interrupted instruction and adversely affected school culture and academic achievement.*
- 4) Administrative changes over the course of the first charter term made oversight inconsistent.*
- 5) While the year four and five schedules doubled student time on ELA (by splitting ELA into two separate classes for Literacy and Rhetoric), math did not receive the additional instructional time needed to prepare students for MCAS level skills.*
- 6) High teacher turnover has led to the loss of expertise, the need for training and mentoring at more basic levels, and a decreased focus on higher-level instruction.*
- 7) Enrolling a high number of new students each year, particularly at the upper grades, adversely affected MCAS performance and school culture.*
- 8) An increasing number of students require special education services, which UCCS has been challenged to provide as effectively as possible.*
- 9) An increasing number of students are in need of counseling and support services, which UCCS has been challenged to provide.*

More information about each of these identified causes is provided in the following section.

Identified Causes: History and Current Status

1. An incomplete curriculum in math and English language arts until 2005-06.

The Issue: In the first three years of the first charter period, the school followed the structure outlined in the charter application: a combined math/science curriculum and a humanities curriculum that combined ELA and social studies. These curricula were not commercially available and were being developed by the school faculty. In addition to this curriculum program, the classes were being taught in mixed grade classes: fifth/sixth and seventh/eighth. These curriculum and grouping practices were not providing an MCAS-aligned program or enough attention to math at various grade levels, nor enough individual instruction. In addition,

the faculty did not have the expertise, resources or experience to generate complete, high level curricula or translate the curricula into high level instruction.

School Response: Starting in January 2005, the original curricula were evaluated by the Head of School and staff in terms of functionality and MCAS alignment, and this evaluation resulted in plans for changes in curricula for 2005-06. Specific improvement strategies UCCS implemented included the following:

- ❖ Curricula organization of humanities (ELA and social studies taught as one subject) and math/science (taught as one subject) was changed by the Head of School (with Board approval) to four separate subjects taught separately for 2005-2006: not enough time and emphasis were being given to ELA and math. In addition, the original curricula were being developed in-house and this process was not realistic given the lack of experience and expertise of the staff and the lack of MCAS alignment that resulted.
- ❖ Coaches were hired for ELA and math for 2005-2006.
- ❖ ELA was divided into Literacy (emphasis on reading skills) and Rhetoric (emphasis on writing skills) with Readers’/Writers’ Workshop adopted as the literacy model.
- ❖ The Connected Math Program (CMP) was adopted as the math curriculum beginning in 2005-2006.

Selecting the Math Curriculum: Beginning in January 2004, the math curriculum was found to be inadequate as it was being taught as part of science and in classes of mixed grades (grades 5/6 and 7/8). The Head of School sought input from the math/science teachers and Director of Studies, and the consensus was that math instruction would improve if mixed grades were eliminated, math were taught by grade level, and math were taught separately from science. A search began for a replacement curriculum and three were studied in the spring of 2005. CMP was chosen because it offered high standard curricula that were aligned with the MCAS and because the structure of the program included requirements for student self-expression and writing that were aligned with the mission of the school. The Head of School had also been a school administrator in the Framingham and Boston Public Schools when CMP was adopted by those systems and had a high level of confidence in this system and a first hand knowledge of its weaknesses as well.

Current Status: In year five, the Renewal Inspection Team found a curriculum that is complete, fully documented, aligned with the Frameworks and the school’s mission, and college preparatory: “UCCS provides a well-developed, academically rigorous, college preparatory curriculum that is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the school’s mission to provide a rhetoric-centered education and to promote whole character formation” (p. iii, Charter Renewal Inspection Team Report, Oct. 2006).

2. Internal assessments did not sufficiently assess student performance in a timely way so that classroom instruction could be informed and changes made.

Issue: The school did not have assessments other than those prepared by teachers or supplied by curriculum materials. Although departments met to compare data, this was not effective as teachers did not share grade assignments and so their data comparisons were weak. In addition, there were several new teachers who were working with the Director of Studies/Principal and coaches to learn the curriculum.

School Response: The most important strategy to address the lack of effective and timely assessment of student progress and effective instruction has been the introduction of the Massachusetts Public School Performance Project (MPSPP) program. The school was invited to

join MPSPP for the 2006-07 school year, through funding by the Mifflin Foundation. With MPSPP, students complete an MCAS-aligned assessment every three weeks, in both ELA and math. This constant stream of MCAS-aligned data, provided to the faculty, students, Board, and parents, has helped UCCS address specific needs and focus resources and energy on MCAS improvement. MPSPP also provides excellent professional development by training staff in the skills necessary to understand, analyze, and implement the data at the classroom level. Within three days of the assessment, teachers attend professional development meetings focused on MPSPP-guided data analysis. Finally, MPSPP provides links to a network of schools, most of whom are highly successful on the MCAS, to get expertise to the classroom level.

The Head of School oversees the school's participation in this project and reports on student achievement as measured by MPSPP in his monthly Board reports. The Principal is the point person in working with MPSPP and supervising implementation of action plans based on the data analysis. In weekly department meetings, teachers analyze MPSPP and MCAS data and develop action plans based on their findings; the Principal and Assistant Principal attend weekly department meetings and visit classes daily to observe how the plans are implemented. Action plans are posted in the front office and distributed to all staff, as are the team's notes on the effectiveness of the action plan in the classroom.

In staff meetings, the faculty and staff discuss the progress of individual students, using internal assessment data (from the benchmarks) and MPSPP data. All such discussion is documented and shared with the staff. Crew leaders (homeroom teachers) call families at least twice per month to inform them of their children's progress, to give specific feedback about a child's strengths and weaknesses, and to inform them of tutoring opportunities during and after school.

The Student Achievement Committee of the Board has begun tracking MPSPP progress as well, and visits the school regularly to interview administrators and staff regarding progress along Accountability Plan goals.

Current Status: MPSPP is a program specifically designed to provide timely data and analysis (coaching and study for teachers) that is proscriptive for effective curricula and instructional interventions. This program is unique in this regard and the school plans to continue participation for the foreseeable future.

3. Discipline issues in classrooms and in the school as a whole often interrupted instruction and adversely affected school culture and academic achievement.

Issue: The primary factors that contributed to this problem over the years have been inconsistent implementation of school rules by some staff and supervision of teachers weak in this area by the administration.

Additional contributing factors included the following:

- ❖ The unexpected need for the school to make facility changes twice in the first three years
- ❖ The challenge of adding a new grade level each year as the school evolved (adding students, curricula, staff, teachers, materials, etc.)
- ❖ Inexperience of administrative and teaching staff
- ❖ Turnover of students, making it difficult to sustain progress and successes
- ❖ Teacher turnover (in years 2-3) that led to greater numbers of teachers unfamiliar with school culture and code of conduct.

School Response: It should be noted that this issue was the most dramatic presenting problem by year three of the school's first charter period – and that the charter renewal inspection team reported this problem was no longer presenting at all by the fall of 2006. Improvement in this area has been significant and steady, occurring in two phases over the past three years. Site visit teams in year three and four highlighted this problem, in year four noted some improvement, and by year five did not see evidence of this issue.

First Phase: A key response to this issue in year three was the recruitment of the current Head of School as part of the Board's reorganization of the school administration. Mr. Cook is an experienced urban middle school principal with behavior management expertise. He immediately created a program for disciplinary office referrals centered on the Student Referral Center and staffed by the Dean of Students, who is experienced and effective in dealing with students who are off task and with their parents. Changes were made to the arrangement of offices so that the Head of School office and the Dean of Students' SRC were next to each other. Initially, the Head of School was involved in direct discipline on a daily basis.

Later that year the Head of School hired a consultant on classroom management to lead a review and revision of the school's code of behavior and to provide professional development for the staff as part of the spring faculty retreat. He organized a staff Discipline Committee to oversee the implementation of the revised code. This revised code, distributed to parents and students, has been slightly revised every year during the August faculty trainings sessions. New faculty members are included in this process as part of their initiation into the school.

At the end of that year the Head of School added the administrative position of Student Support Services Coordinator. Along with other duties this administrator researched and eventually secured the services of an agency (now two agencies) that provided on site individual and group counseling for students. This program has addressed many of the underlying problems that students bring with them and that contribute to their inability to attend to school work and socialize appropriately, as well as giving teachers and staff a wealth of information about individual students.

Second Phase: In year four the Head of School added an administrative assistant to the Student Referral Center to assist the Dean of Students (now Assistant Principal) in the management of that program and freeing the Dean to begin supervisory classroom visits whose focus was classroom management.

The Principal began to add disciplinary issues to the list of topics discussed with students in the Student Senate and Friday Forum. This has given a voice to the students who are proud of their school and are offended by poor behavior on the part of their peers. One of the outcomes of this involvement has been the forming of teams of student volunteers who work to clean and make repairs on weekends. The Student Senate has debated portions of the school code and related topics such as the school's dress code, and has proposed changes to the administration and Board.

The Head of School also created other staff positions that have been supportive in the supervision of students and in improving the school's culture. With the addition of a full time custodian, there was a responsible adult always present in the halls, making repairs, and cleaning up areas affected by student misbehavior. The custodian painted the entire school with bright pastels in the summer between years three and four, and students no longer refer to the school as "ghetto" (meaning in poor physical condition). With the addition of a Food Service Coordinator, lunch and breakfast offerings have been improved and students' individual food preferences known. With students well fed and nurtured, behavior has improved. Similarly, upgrading the nurse's

position from half to full time and upgrading the part time receptionist to full time administrative assistant have had positive effects. There are more people to know each student and help them with issues and crises outside of their studies.

In addition to building a larger staff that supports students and interacts with individual parents, the Head of School focused on the steady growth of the parent council, to provide parents with a venue to voice concerns and learn about the structures of the school. Applying his extensive experience in creating and sustaining parent involvement, the Head of School provided school resources to the council such as producing mailings, organizing phone banks, and providing agendas and staffing to support the growth of the council. As a result, the council has met for the past two and a half years on a monthly basis. He added the council to the administrative duties of the Dean of Students so that there is a single point of accountability for this group. The school provides refreshments, venues and organization and recently has added a parent council email address to the school's email list, a parent council phone extension and a parent council page on the school's website. The council executive committee has taken responsibility for these and for the production of a monthly school newsletter.

Current Status: Staff, student, and parent reflections of satisfaction indicate that the school culture has been stabilized. More parents have become involved as volunteers in school activities and in the parent council. The parent council has developed a leadership structure of an executive committee that meets monthly and chairs council meetings. Parents indicate in conversation and on annual surveys a greatly increased loyalty to the school and satisfaction with the management. The number of parents who list dissatisfaction as the reason for withdrawing from the school has almost disappeared. Referrals to the SRC have changed from issues like violence, leaving school, fire-setting and other dangerous activities to issues like non-compliance with the dress code, talking in class or talking while filing to class. The school culture is not dealt with by the Head of School on a daily basis except when he serves as the hearing officer for a student expulsion hearing. The program is entirely managed by the operational team: Principal and two Assistant Principals (formerly Dean of Students and Student Support Service Coordinator).

Our infrastructure is now in place: the code of discipline, Student Referral Center, support staffing, student/parent and staff handbooks, staff training, and the effective involvement of parents and students. The remaining area for improvement in student behavior, classroom management and school culture is the consistent implementation by staff of the UCCS approach. In daily supervision of teachers, the administrative team will provide more feedback and evaluation of teachers' classroom management and consistent enforcement of the UCCS code of conduct. We will also implement additional strategies in 2007-08 to continue improving school culture, ranging from school uniforms, to a program providing weekly counseling sessions for each class section and its teacher, to a "prefect" program through which student leaders will provide an example during the school day of responsibility and maturity.

4. Administrative changes over the course of the first charter term made oversight inconsistent.

Issue: In the summer of 2004, the Board decided to change the school's organizational structure, adding the position of Executive Director who would systematize school procedures and supervise the Headmaster. An interim director was hired who left the school after only two months. As school leadership struggled to respond to this departure and the change in organizational structure, administrators' focus on teacher development and instruction to students suffered.

School Response: The Board of Trustees hired a new Head of School in December 2004. He directed the UCCS staff to make the following changes:

- ❖ Director of Studies position created to substitute for Headmaster and concentrate on teacher development and student performance (title changed to Principal in 2006-2007). The Head of School retained many operational functions and decision making in curricula and professional development.
- ❖ New administrative organizational chart developed in January 2005.
- ❖ The organizational chart was amended for 2006-2007. As many operational issues had been resolved by the end of 2005-2006, the positions of Principal and Assistant Principal replaced Director of Studies and Dean of Families and Students, and school operations were transferred to these positions. Final decisions in hiring, curricula, and professional development remain with the Head of School.

Current Status: The administrative and organizational structure of the school now adequately supports curriculum development, teacher supervision and training. This structure will be evaluated for effectiveness during the summer of 2007 with regard to teacher supervision and the development of excellent professional development.

5. While the year four and five schedules doubled student time on ELA (by splitting ELA into two separate classes for Literacy and Rhetoric), math did not receive the additional instructional time needed to prepare students for MCAS level skills.

Issue: While UCCS's new curriculum, the Connected Math Program, provides an MCAS-aligned curriculum in math, more time and individual instruction were also needed for our students to deal with this level of instruction and to overcome learning deficits.

Principal-led discussions with the UCCS math teachers and analysis of internal assessments, MPSPP data and MCAS results showed that students were able to consistently apply algorithms and solve complex problems but failed to compute correctly. The conclusion was that the students were learning the higher order skills from CMP but were stumbling on the skills that CMP supposed were in place: multiplication tables, fractions, order of operations, etc. The conclusion was that our students needed supplemental remediation to accompany MCAS level instruction.

School Response: In the current year, the overall response was to provide individual and small group tutoring in every grade and to increase time in math in grades five and six. These programs, approved by the Board of Trustees, began in January 2007:

- ❖ The creation of a tutoring program: A part time staff position was increased to provide for a Coordinator of Tutors who recruited, scheduled and supervised tutors during and/or after school. The Board raised \$10,000 to support the tutoring program. UCCS tutors included:
 - Community Service volunteers from Boston College High School
 - Paid tutors from Boston Latin Academy
 - Paid college students and UCCS parents
 - Stipended UCCS teachers
- ❖ Fifth and Sixth Grade: Two science periods each week were dedicated to instruction in math fundamentals. Three periods of Study Skills were dedicated to math fundamentals. Pull out tutoring was provided in each of these periods as well.
- ❖ Seventh and Eighth Grade: Nearly all seventh and eighth graders (prioritizing those with math deficits) received small group tutoring after school at least once each week.

- ❖ February vacation week math camp: UCCS served 60 students from all grades, supervised by UCCS staff and using Boston Latin Academy tutors.
- ❖ Parent tutoring at home: study guides and materials were provided to parents for extra math help at home.

The Principal meets weekly with teachers in the math programs to monitor student attendance, improvements in student performance, and MPSPP results. These findings become part of the weekly math action plan, which is updated and published weekly.

Current Status: We will continue the programs outlined above, and also have plans in place to double the math faculty for 2007-2008.

6. High teacher turnover has led to the loss of expertise, the need for training and mentoring at more basic levels, and a decreased focus on higher-level instruction.

Issue: The charter application and subsequent structuring of the school depended heavily on teacher retention, professional development, and modifications of school-developed curriculum based on teachers' experience with it. The school's mission and charter application also call for a strong school culture based more on informed professional judgment, collaboration, and family relationships, following the lead of on-staff child psychologists rather than a more traditional cause-and-effect system disciplinary system. Teacher turnover led to the loss of expertise, the increased need for training and mentoring at the more basic levels of the teaching continuum, and a decreased focus on higher-level instruction. The replacement of these teachers has been difficult, and we did not have access to a large pool of applicants with expertise.

School Response: The school has implemented numerous strategies in the past to address this issue. The school has offered additional salary for critical teachers to retain teachers. The school has also implemented numerous strategies to support rigorous instruction among new teachers, including teacher training, co-norming the curriculum, adding extra time in schedule. The Head of School reorganized the school administration so that the instructional leader (the principal), as well as the assistant principal, have as their primary focus the continuous improvement of instruction at the school. To recruit new teachers, the school has used newspapers, teacher hiring services, outreach to other schools and contacts, Craig's List ads, the school website, etc.

Current Status: Teachers as well as administrators are driven to improve their practice, and say they value this school for its culture of teacher learning. We cite this only to emphasize our understanding that attainment of AYP goals happens at the classroom level. The Renewal Inspection Team cited "above-average instruction" throughout the school. Future strategies to increase teacher retention include more teacher-specific incentives rather than across-the-board treatment.

One of the math teachers who began 2006-2007 was unable to finish the school year due to medical problems. The replacement teacher, although very experienced and credentialed, provided very weak instruction in grades six and eight for the remainder of the year and will not return next year. While good prospects have been offered positions for two of the four positions for next year, two remain unfilled and all will be new to the school.

7. Enrolling a high number of new students each year, particularly at the upper grades, adversely affected MCAS performance and school culture.

Issue: UCCS, unlike some charter schools, has historically admitted new students at every grade level in the school. Cohort analysis of MCAS and other assessments consistently show that the achievement of students who are new to the school is significantly lower than that of students who have been in the school for more years.

With low enrollment levels at the start of year three, we admitted a high number of new students. In year four, we had an abundance of seventh grade applicants but a dearth of fifth grade applicants. Therefore, we admitted a large number of these seventh and eighth grade students; one seventh-grade class, populated almost entirely by students new to the school, had 28 students. The combination of large class sizes and a high percentage of first-year students in these upper grades adversely affected student achievement.

School Response: The school has greatly increased enrollment procedures to attract students in the lower grades and retain them throughout. Strategies have included more staffing, use of parents as recruiters, more advertising in newspapers and in community agencies. The reliance on new admissions has decreased and the retention of current students has increased. The policy of admission to fifth grade will be reviewed when the school is in a Dorchester facility. Our current location seems to detract from our attractiveness at this grade level in particular, and is particularly problematic in combination with what can be parents' reluctance to change school at this grade level.

Current Status: This issue has been partially resolved. As of the writing of this plan, we anticipate smaller class sizes. Enrollment for the fifth grade is much stronger, and the upper grades will be composed largely of veterans—lessening the need for new students, and new seats, at these grades. We currently have a waiting list, and have admitted very few students (10 total) in the seventh and eighth grades.

8. An increasing number of students require special education services, which UCCS has been challenged to provide as effectively as possible.

Issue: Though our special education population was largest, at 29%, in our fifth year, our special education needs have been great since the first year of the school. A growing population of students receiving special education services has affected UCCS as follows:

- ❖ Training of new faculty: All staff must be able to deal with special needs so that students can succeed. New faculty must receive training about IEP accommodations, the instructional strategies for meeting IEP goals, and the need to coordinate with SPED staff. The school has been challenged keeping new teachers informed and monitoring student success.
- ❖ The high numbers of SPED services has required UCCS to allocate additional staff and resources in this area. For a school with limited funding, this allocation has had an impact on the school's budget and ability to fund improvements in other areas.

School Response: In the first three years of the school, our special education coordinator marshaled a series of consultants to provide services. In year four, when UCCS reached its full grade span, we hired two full-time special education teachers. The need still exceeded the services of two teachers, and we hired a team of consultants to provide further services. All IEPs were met.

Current Status: Year five saw a further increase in special education needs. We hired additional permanent staff in 2006-07 and continued to work with a smaller team of consultants. Our

current team of four full-time teachers, plus consultants, provides a stable, if still strained, delivery of services. The four full time teachers provide more consistent services for students and meet the requirements of students' IEPs with inclusion and pull-out services; we have a dedicated teacher for a substantially separate classroom as well. The Renewal Inspection Team cited our special education service as “well-organized” and “appropriate.

9. An increasing number of students are in need of counseling and support services, which UCCS has been challenged to provide.

Issue: A majority of our students present with serious trauma history. During the first charter term, we did not have the staffing or access to resources needed to meet these students' emotional needs well. The behavior of some of these students in school took a toll on our capacity for teaching and learning.

School Response: The Head of School hired a Student Support Service Coordinator in the spring of 2005, who immediately began researching counseling services. Beginning in 2005-06 and continuing today, the Boston Institute of Psychotherapy has provided on-site individual and group counseling as a fee-for-service program that charges student's family insurance. Twenty percent of our students are served this way, at no cost to the school. In 2006-07 a second agency, Arbour Counseling Service, offered services to our students, increasing the numbers of counseling slots available. Linked services outside of school have also increased.

Current Status: Teachers report that students who receive counseling are more likely to improve in class, and referrals to the Student Referral Center for major behavioral problems have been markedly reduced. We will continue to offer services in this area and in 2007-08 will expand our work with these agencies to offer a model of class-based group counseling. Counselors will work with students *in situ* on issues like bullying, friendships, gossip, etc.

D. Assessment of Necessary Conditions

Improvement Strategies Implemented in 2006-07

Since Uphams Corners is in the midst of a school improvement process, the school has already implemented a number of strategies to address the hypotheses identified in the “Self Analysis” section of this plan. These strategies will be discussed more fully throughout this section; a brief summary of all strategies implemented in the 2006-07 school year follows.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

- ❖ Reconfiguration of school leadership, with the implementation of a new organizational structure and new job descriptions for the Head of School and Principal.
- ❖ Hiring of a consultant, Ron Walker, to assist school in assessing and improving school leadership (in response to charter renewal condition).
- ❖ Creation of the Student Achievement Committee, a subcommittee of the Board of Trustees: This committee, chaired by two veteran educators, works directly with the Head of School to monitor school plans and progress, and provides monthly updates on progress toward school goals (Accountability Plan and School Improvement Plan) at Board meetings.
- ❖ Recruiting of new members for the Board's Development Committee and planning of fundraising events to support the allocation of resources necessary to support school improvement.
- ❖ Increased staffing for tutorial instruction: The Board of Trustees agreed to raise \$10,000 to support a tutoring program, which allowed us to create the position of Coordinator of Tutors, hire high school and college tutors, and stipend UCCS teachers for tutoring after school, three days per week.
- ❖ Increased staffing in Special Education: With the addition of another full-time special education teacher, UCCS now has a team of four full-time special education teachers.
- ❖ Development of an evaluation system for members of the administrative team that will be implemented in 2007-08. (Evaluation system for Head of School, administered by Governance Committee of Board of Trustees is already in place.) This administrative system is being developed by the school's leadership consultant, Head of School, and Board.
- ❖ Improved process for balancing enrollment by grade: In the spring 2007 lottery, we created lotteries by grade, allowing us to improve the distribution of students.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND DATA

- ❖ An improved approach to assessment: Working with the Massachusetts Public School Performance Project (MPSPP) to assess student progress in math and ELA at regular points throughout the year. MPSPP provides a constant stream of MCAS-aligned data which is used to assess alignment of curriculum with frameworks, drive improvements to instruction, and assess individual student progress.
- ❖ Professional development for teachers and administrators in using data to improve instruction: MPSPP trains staff in the skills necessary to understand, analyze, and implement the data at the classroom level.

INSTRUCTION

- ❖ Additional math fundamentals instruction for 5th and 6th grade students: Two science periods each week were dedicated to instruction in math fundamentals. Three periods of Study Skills were dedicated to math fundamentals. Pull out tutoring was provided in each of these periods as well.
- ❖ Creation of an in-house math tutoring program: With fundraising support from the Board of Trustees, UCCS created a tutoring program for students, hiring high school and college tutors and stipending UCCS teachers. Nearly all seventh and eighth graders (prioritizing those with math deficits) received small group tutoring after school at least once each week. (Implemented January)
- ❖ February vacation week math camp: UCCS served 60 students from all grades, supervised by UCCS staff and using Boston Latin Academy tutors.

Standards-Based Teaching and Learning

1. Curricula are aligned to State Frameworks in core content areas.

Implementation Status: This condition is now in place and implementation is complete. Our curricula are complete and aligned with the Frameworks (as observed by the Renewal Inspection Team). The benchmarks are aligned with the Frameworks; the scope and sequences provide for full coverage of the benchmarks; the unit plans indicate how the benchmarks will be taught and assessed at a particular time; lesson plans indicate which benchmarks are addressed and assessed on a given day; and the “objectives” posted daily in the classroom inform students which benchmarks will be addressed and assessed that day. Weekly progress reports inform students and families of each student’s progress in each benchmark. The curricular materials themselves are aligned with the Frameworks; as described above, the school is increasingly supplementing these materials, most significantly in math, with a new “fundamentals” class next year.

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 2 (Important)

2. Two full-time ELA and math subject area coaches provide faculty with consistent classroom observation and feedback on the quality of instructional practices.

Implementation Status: This condition is in place to the extent that budgetary resources allow. In 2006-07, a Boston Public Schools literacy coach and a Connected Math Program expert from the Framingham Public Schools worked as part-time consultant coaches. They provided professional development to staff in August and were on call to teachers for 1:1 coaching throughout the year. A similar model will be in place for 2007-08. In addition, the Principal is primarily responsible for classroom observations and feedback, as well as ensuring that teachers fulfill their obligation to perform formal, written peer observations at least ten times per year.

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 2 (Important)

Informing Practice with Data

3. Interim assessments aligned to state standards are conducted 4-6 times per year in ELA and math.

Implementation Status: This condition is now in place and implementation will continue. UCCS meets this condition through participation in MPSPP, which assesses students every 3 weeks, as well as by continuing to administer the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the GRADE reading test. We believe we are gathering the data we need to assess and inform our instruction. The use of MPSPP has also transformed our internal assessments—they are much more aligned in form and content with the MCAS.

We continue to administer the Iowa Test of Basic Skills and the GRADE reading tests because they provide value-added data the MCAS does not, and they analyze a wider range of skills than the MCAS does. The ITBS and GRADE assess fundamental skills as well as higher-level skills, allowing teachers and administrators to understand where exactly a student's weakness may lie. The Principal leads the faculty as a whole (in data-analysis meetings) as well as the math and English departments in creating action plans based on these data.

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 2 (Important)

4. Assessment results are tracked and analyzed and used to inform curriculum, instruction, and individual interventions.

Implementation Status: This condition is now in place. We use the previous year's MCAS data and ongoing internal-assessment achievement to inform all three items: curriculum, instruction, and student interventions. We revise math and ELA curricula in August, based on the previous year's data. We allocate more time, resources, and training to our weak areas (e.g., inference [non-fiction]). We then monitor progress throughout the year via our MPSPP assessments, which are aligned to MCAS. Data from each MPSPP administration is reviewed by staff in meetings devoted to data analysis, curricular analysis, and professional development for instruction.

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 3 (Most Important)

Time for Teachers and Students

5. There is adequate time for student learning for ELA and math on a daily/weekly basis.

Implementation Status: Students now receive 120 minutes of instruction in ELA each day. Until January 2007, students had received only 60 minutes of math instruction each day. Starting in January, we added significant time for math instruction; starting in the fall of 2007, we will devote 120 minutes to math instruction each day, along with 120 minutes of ELA. We believe that two hours of English instruction per day is sufficient.

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 3 (Most Important)

6. Students who are not yet proficient receive at least 90 minutes daily of ELA and math instruction.

Implementation Status: See above. We will meet this condition in the fall of 2007.

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 3 (Most Important)

7. After-school tutoring and homework assistance is provided for students who need supplemental instruction and focused skill development.

Implementation Status: Developing a tutoring program and offering supplemental instruction has been a high priority for UCCS over the past year. The school offered an academic summer school program in 2006, a tutoring program in the winter and spring, and a math camp over the February school vacation. As of January 2007, we have provided after-school tutoring to students three times per week (60% of seventh graders receive this assistance) and during school pull-out for one-on-one tutoring (at the moment, 50% of eighth graders receive this assistance).

Therefore, as of March, students had math class and tutoring at the following levels:

- ❖ All fifth graders: 10.5 hours of math per week
- ❖ All sixth graders: 10.5 hours of math per week (with 13 students getting small-group instruction two of those hours)
- ❖ Most seventh graders (89%): 6 hours of math per week (with 1 of those hours being small-group instruction). The remaining 11% got 5 hours per week of class.
- ❖ Half of eighth graders (50%): 6 hours of math per week (with 1 of those hours being small-group instruction)

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 3 (Most Important)

8. There is adequate weekly and annual time for teachers to discuss student progress, curriculum issues, instructional practice, and improvement efforts—in general no less than 1 hour/week of leadership-directed collaborative work and 5 days/year professional development and planning.

Implementation Status: During the 2006-07 school year, UCCS staff has met to discuss these issues as follows:

- ❖ *For student progress:* One example of such meetings is the Student Support Team, led by our Student Support Service Coordinator, which meets once per week for an hour to discuss student progress and needs. At these meetings, staff members discuss students who have been referred for screening for possible SPED learning issues. The meetings are attended by referring teachers, SPED Coordinator, Student Support Service Coordinator, teachers, and the Principal or Assistant Principal. Student progress is also discussed in the various staff meetings listed below.
- ❖ *For curriculum issues:* Each department meets with the Principal for at least one hour per week to discuss progress on curricular goals, to analyze data regarding that progress, and to create strategies for improvement. They also discuss instructional practice among their team.
- ❖ *For instructional practice:* The faculty meets weekly for an hour to discuss instructional practice more generally, largely using *The Skillful Teacher* as its frame. Peer observations provide rich information about instructional practice as well. Observations by the Principal and Assistant Principal are followed by weekly meetings with all teachers to discuss instructional practice.
- ❖ *For school improvement:* We devote three full days per year to these issues in faculty/staff retreats. The Principal's and Assistant Principal's weekly meetings with teachers always include conversation about school improvement, which lead to discussions at administrative team meetings (at least one hour per week) of school improvement.
- ❖ *For professional development and planning:* Finally, we devote two full weeks in August to all of the above issues, in addition to five half-days at the end of the school year.

Although our current meeting schedule provides time that exceeds the minimums outlined, we believe the time currently available to discuss student progress has been insufficient for UCCS and has had a direct impact on our ability to address student needs. As a result, we plan to include more time for grade-level meetings to discuss individual student progress in the 2007-08 schedule.

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 2 (Important)

Instructional Leadership

9. The school leader/principal has the authority to select and assign staff without regard to seniority or other factors.

Implementation Status: This is the case at Uphams Corner—the Head of School, in consultation with the Principal and full administrative team, has this authority. The Head of School hires all staff, signs all contracts, and is responsible for the supervision of all staff. The Board supports the Head of School’s authority in this area.

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 1 (Least Important)

10. The right personnel are on hand to do the needed work.

Implementation Status: Although the school has made significant improvements in terms of staffing and resources available to serve students, particularly in special education, we believe there is still more work to be done in this area. We particularly require more resources around instruction; our tutorial staff was formed just this January, and our class sizes remain larger than ideal. The Head of School has discussed staffing levels with the Board (at Finance Committee meetings and monthly Board meetings), and the Board has agreed to support the proposed staffing goal of hiring two additional math teachers in 2007-08. The addition of these math teachers will reduce our student:teacher ratio by half for the teaching of math, substantially improving our instructional capacity.

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 3 (Most Important)

11. The school leader/principal periodically evaluates faculty, including direct evaluation of relevant content knowledge and annual evaluation of performance tied in part to growth in student learning and commitment to school’s strategies.

Implementation Status: The Principal and Assistant Principal administer the Teacher Performance Evaluation System to all faculty at least once per year. This system evaluates all areas of teacher performance, including growth in student learning and the teacher’s demonstrated commitment to the school’s strategies. Just as importantly, the Principal and Assistant Principal visit classes at least once daily and provide constant feedback to teachers. The Principal attends all department meetings, and teachers are evaluated on their skilled participation in these meetings.

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 3 (Most Important)

Governance

12. The Board of Trustees has conducted a self-analysis to determine if appropriate expertise is present and has proactively moved to add expertise as needed.

Implementation Status: The Board conducted its first self analysis in 2005-06 and is in the process of conducting its second self analysis in 2006-07. The Board has consistently recruited for skill sets. In the past year, the Board recruited three new members: a lobbyist/consultant, a high school administrator, and a non-profit director of development. The Board is currently recruiting members with legal and financial/real estate expertise. Four of the Board's ten members live in the Uphams Corner community. The Board began a strategic planning process in 2006-07 and has a new contract with Executive Service Corps to continue Board development work in 2007-08.

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 1 (Least Important)

13. The Board of Trustees receives frequent information regarding progress on the school's Improvement Plan and Accountability Plan, including student achievement, and uses this information to set policy, make appropriate personnel decisions, and allocate resources.

Implementation Status: The Head of School monitors the school's progress on the initiatives and goals of this plan, and reports monthly to the Board's subcommittee, the Student Achievement Committee. The committee hears reports on MCAS results, other standardized test results (GRADE and IOWA Math) and MPSPP assessments. In addition, the committee hears reports on plans for addressing on-going challenges such as making Adequate Yearly Progress goals. This committee reports on progress to the Board of Trustees during committee reports at Board meetings.

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 2 (Important)

14. School leadership is evaluated annually against established goals.

Implementation Status: The Board evaluates the Head of School annually, against goals established the previous year. Members of the administrative team (i.e. Principal, Assistant Principal, Business Manager, and Director of Student Support), however, have not been evaluated formally against established goals to date, and a process for this evaluation has not been defined. The school had identified this weakness as an area of improvement, and the Head of School is working with Ron Walker, the leadership consultant UCCS has contracted with in order to meet one of its charter renewal conditions, to develop procedures and goals for the evaluation of each member of the administrative team. This work is currently underway, and administrative evaluations will be completed in 2007-08.

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 2 (Important)

15. Resources are allocated to serve the needs of students.

Implementation Status: The Head of School, with the support of the Board of Trustees, has consistently directed resources to meet the greatest needs of students. Examples include staffing additions to support a positive school culture, to provide more comprehensive and consistent special education services, to create a tutoring program, and to provide coaching support. Fifty-three percent of the UCCS budget goes toward program, while forty-seven percent goes toward overhead and institutional support.

Significance of this Factor: In assessing significance and prioritizing factors for the next year, school leadership rates this factor (on a scale of 1-3) as: 3 (Most Important)

Planned Improvements

This section includes detailed plans for improvement. Planning began even before the Department of Education renewal vote in January, 2007. Therefore the specific actions are divided into three time frames: Spring 2007, year 2007-2008, and year 2008-2009 (where planning has progressed that far).

We have categorized areas for improvement as follows:

- ❖ Assessment, curriculum, and instruction
- ❖ Professional development, supervision, and evaluation
- ❖ Student support and remediation
- ❖ School culture
- ❖ Family outreach and development
- ❖ Leadership and governance

All these categories are interdependent and actions in one often affect actions in others. However, we believe this categorization provides important focus for proceeding with measurable improvements.

ASSESSMENT, CURRICULUM, AND INSTRUCTION

Goal 1: Meet AYP in Math. Bring students at “needs improvement” to proficient. Meet proximal MPSP goals.

Spring 2007

Success measurement: N = Not Completed P = Partial Completion C = Complete

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Project Manager organizes weekly department meetings; co-norming monthly	Stipend	Weekly reports to Principal and to Faculty P
Study hall: All math prep, especially basic (old math units)	MCAS prep materials; in-class support	Improved MPSP data for students served P
Math open-response MCAS during math and upper-house science Do Now	MCAS prep materials	Improved MPSP data for students served C
Using current MPSP data, estimate current status vis-à-vis AYP goals; identify students for remediation; construct individual support plans.	MPSP data; training for Crew leaders	Improved MPSP data for students served P

Saturday Sessions for 2006 Needs Improvement and/or current MPSP borderline students	MCAS prep materials	Improved MPSP data for students served P
Science and math in first house; science one day, math the next	MCAS prep materials, based on MPSP data	Improved MPSP data for students served C
End-of-Term Comps (written exam assessing benchmarks thus far)		Improved passing scores in math classes P
Excellent math unit plans for 6th and 8 th	Stipend	Excellent plans filed on server N

2007-2008

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Project manager ensures excellent revision of benchmarks, scope and sequence, and unit plans—all based on previous year's benchmark achievement and MCAS performance	Technology (secured)	Principal's sign-off regarding excellence of all materials
Continue to teach science/math in First House	MPSP/MCAS data	Continuously improving MPSP data for students served
Introduce use of Math Notebooks	Training	Continuously improving MPSP "open response" data for students served
Introduce a second math course for the Second House (120 minutes total per day)	Curricula from similar programs at other schools, emphasis on math fundamentals; budgeted two additional math teachers.	Continuously improving MPSP data and benchmark achievement for students served
Continue to use First House Study Hall for math MCAS study	MPSP/MCAS data	Continuously improving MPSP data for students served
Implement "vertical vocabulary" strategy, analyzing MCAS-related vocabulary in all grades	MCAS data	Continuously improving MPSP data for students served
Continue to use math open-response questions during science Do Nows at least once/week	MCAS data	Continuously improving MPSP data for students served

Implement math technology plan, targeting specific MCAS/MPSP needs	Technology (computers in each classroom, secured; relevant software, funding required)	Continuously improving MPSP data for students served
Implement cross-curricular use of agenda books, with clear consequences for completing (and not completing) homework	Agenda books	Consistent use of agenda books; homework completion rate above 90% each week
Build schedule with room for grade-level meetings during the day	Bus logistics	Continuous data stream regarding student achievement and common practices and strategies at the grade level
Implement plan for "Multiplication Day"—all students must know multiplication tables by Halloween; public exams and performances	Manipulatives, flash cards, etc. for students and families	90% of students pass public exam
Implement "January Term" as complement to June Term; students identified for math improvement study benchmarks and MCAS material for the (week-long) term	Current staff, tutors	Improved MPSP data for students served
Math Camp for 2006 Needs Improvement and current MPSP borderline students	Year-round staff, tutors, MCAS prep materials	Improved MPSP data for students served
Saturday Sessions for 2006 Needs Improvement and/or current MPSP borderline students	Staff, tutors, MCAS prep materials	Improved MPSP data for students served
End-of-Term Comps (written exam assessing benchmarks thus far)		Improved passing scores in math classes
Administrators will use daily, written teacher evaluation feedback to emphasize classroom management.	School's evaluation instrument	Improved student focus on class work and improved MPSP data

2008-2009

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Project manager ensures excellent revision of benchmarks, scope and sequence, and unit plans—all based on previous year's benchmark achievement and MCAS performance, and on advice of math consultant	Technology (secured); math consultant	Principal's sign-off regarding excellence of all materials
Continue to teach science/math in First House	MPSP/MCAS data	Continuously improving MPSP data for students served
Continue to use First House Study Hall for math MCAS study	MPSP/MCAS data	Continuously improving MPSP data for students served
Continue "vertical vocabulary" strategy, analyzing MCAS-related vocabulary in all grades	MCAS data	Continuously improving MPSP data for students served
Continue to use math open-response questions during science Do Nows at least once/week	MCAS data	Continuously improving MPSP data for students served
Continue to implement math technology plan, targeting specific MCAS/MPSP needs	technology (computers in each classroom, secured; relevant software, funding required)	Continuously improving MPSP data for students served
Revise cross-curricular use of agenda books, with clear consequences for completing (and not completing) homework	agenda books	Consistent use of agenda books; homework completion rate above 90% each week
Continue "Multiplication Day"—all students must know multiplication tables by Halloween; public exams and performances	manipulatives, flash cards, etc. for students and families	90% of students pass public exam
Improve use of "January Term" as complement to June Term; students identified for math improvement study benchmarks and MCAS material for the (week-long) term	Current staff, tutors	Improved MPSP data for students served
Math Camp for 2006 Needs Improvement and current MPSP borderline students	Year-round staff, tutors, MCAS prep materials	Improved MPSP data for students served

Saturday Sessions for 2006 Needs Improvement and/or current MPSP borderline students	Staff, tutors, MCAS prep materials	Improved MPSP data for students served
End-of-Term Comps (written exam assessing benchmarks thus far)		Improved passing scores in math classes

Goal 2: Meet AYP in ELA. Bring students at “needs improvement” to proficient. Meet proximal MPSP goals.

Spring 2007

Success measurement: N = Not Completed P = Partial Completion C = Complete

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Project Manager organizes weekly department meetings; co-norming monthly	Stipend	Weekly reports to Principal and to Faculty P
Two- to three-week batteries of weakest MPSP areas	MPSP data, analyzed in English meetings	Improved scores in the targeted area C
MCAS Reading in Social Studies	Trainings with Principal	Improved scores on English MPSP in targeted areas (e.g., Basic fact) P
Teach the process of skimming	Research	Improved scores on English MPSP in targeted areas (e.g., Basic fact) P
End-of-Term Comps (written exam assessing benchmarks thus far)	Trainings with Principal	Improved passing scores in literacy and rhetoric classes N
Long Comp Assessment (co-normed by faculty)	Wed. training in state rubric	Provides baseline data for remediation in rhetoric; improved composition scores on MCAS P

2007-2008

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Establish excellent classroom libraries with efficient loan system	funds for program (\$6K)	Consistently improving reading rates in Accelerated Reader program
Project Manager organizes weekly department meetings; co-norming monthly	Stipend	Weekly reports to Principal and to Faculty
MCAS Reading in Social Studies	Training in non-fiction reading competencies	Improved scores on English MPSP in targeted areas (e.g., Basic fact)
Two- to three-week batteries of weakest MPSP areas	MCAS/MPSP data	Improved scores in the targeted area
Implement Accelerated Reader program	funds for program	Consistently improving reading rates

End-of-Term Comps (written exam assessing benchmarks thus far)		Improved passing scores in literacy and rhetoric classes
Long Comp Assessment (co-normed by faculty)	Wed. training in state rubric	Provides baseline data for remediation in rhetoric; improved composition scores on MCAS
Implement Bread Loaf School of English integration into Writer's Workshop	Bread Loaf consultation	At least one unit-long BLSE exchange per grade
Launch literary magazine for Boston middle schoolers; UCCS students are editors; used for dissemination	Bread Loaf consultation; funding	At least two issues per year
Administrators will use daily, written teacher evaluation feedback to emphasize classroom management.	School's evaluation instrument	Improved student focus on class work and improved MPSP data

2008-2009

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Project Manager organizes weekly department meetings; co-norming monthly	Stipend	Weekly reports to Principal and to Faculty
End-of-Term Comps (written exam assessing benchmarks thus far)		Improved passing scores in math classes
Long Comp Assessment (co-normed by faculty)	Wed. training in state rubric	Provides baseline data for remediation in rhetoric; improved composition scores on MCAS
MCAS Reading in Social Studies		Improved scores on English MPSP in targeted areas (e.g., Basic fact)
Two- to three-week batteries of weakest MPSP areas	Staff	Improved scores in the targeted area
Literary magazine for Boston middle schoolers hosts Writers' Conference at UCCS during January Term	Funding for project	Satisfaction reported by students in survey

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, SUPERVISION, AND EVALUATION

Goal 1: Teachers meet expectations for collegiality and joint work.

Spring 2007

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Excellent lesson plans submitted weekly	Internet access	All teachers email lesson plans on time (Sunday)
Excellent unit plans are filed on server	CDs	All teachers have filed unit plans

Peer observations are on track—seven by end of Winter Term.	P.O. forms	All teachers have filed seven P.O.'s by February 16
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2007-2008

2008-2009

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Excellent unit plans are filed on server	August Residency	Principal's sign-off regarding excellence of all materials
Excellent lesson plans submitted weekly		All teachers file lesson plans on server on time
Peer observations are on track		All teachers make four observations in Fall Term; three in Winter; three in Spring
Implement cross-curricular literacy coaching	Funding for project	Constantly improving MPSP reading data
Secure MPSP for ongoing teacher development, at the classroom level, based on MCAS achievement data	Funding for project	Use of MPSP data and training at the classroom level
Expand professional training to two hours per teacher per week.	Math and ELA coaches, MPSP, faculty trainings	Improve MPSP and MCAS scores
Add time for grade-level meetings to discuss individual student progress in this year's schedule	Administrative staff, SST weekly meetings	Improve instruction for individual students, target students for tutoring

Goal 2: 20-35% of teachers meet the “Exceeds Expectations” level of the Teacher Performance Evaluation System.

2007-2008 (20%)

2008-2009 (35%)

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Continue to issue semi-annual evaluations of faculty, to remediate weakness and recognize successes	Teacher Performance Evaluation System; constant observation, conversation, and professional development	20% of teachers receive "exceeds expectations" in end-of-year review (2008) 35% of teachers receive "exceeds expectations" in end-of-year review (2009)
Hire consultant from Research for Better Teaching to lead training during August Residency	funding for project	Successful program evaluation by teachers; manifestation of PD in classroom practice
Administrative walk through of classrooms every with written feedback to teachers	Triple “magic paper” memo forms	Timely feedback to teachers, corrective actions by teachers documented, problems documented

Increased supervision of teachers	Evaluation system, daily feedback, conferences	Uniform teacher performance in classrooms and other duties.
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Goal 3: Adjust teaching staff effectively to meet needs.

2007-2008

2008-2009

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Let go ineffective teachers; keep effective teachers	Teacher Performance Evaluation System; budget for high performers	Improved student performance, analyzed by classroom; improved retention of higher-performing teachers
Add teachers as required by education needs	Budget	Improved student performance based on perceived curriculum demands (i.e. additional math teachers this year)

STUDENT SUPPORT AND REMEDIATION

Goal 1: Students at Needs Improvement (or analogous status) have enough support to enter Proficient status

Spring 2007

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Math Camp for 2006 Needs Improvement and current MPSP borderline students	MCAS prep materials; in-class support to ensure rigor	Improved MPSP data for students served
Weekly regatta for 7th and 8th grade, based on targeted skills		Successful, public recognition of winning teams; MPSP improvement
Afterschool tutoring for students in Needs Improvement (or analogous MPSP status)	Raised money outside of budget	Monitoring of MPSP data and benchmark achievement of students served
Tutoring during school day	Raised money outside of budget	Monitoring of MPSP data and benchmark achievement of students served
Saturday review sessions (NI and MPSP) (becomes incentive for students to pass)	Raised money outside of budget	Monitoring of MPSP data and benchmark achievement of students served

Grade-level meetings after school		Weekly meetings that produce data for Student Support Team, Principals' Team, and grade-level teachers
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2007-2008

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Weekly regatta for all grades, based on targeted (school-wide) skills	MCAS/MPSP data	Constantly improving MPSP reading and math data
Mandatory afterschool tutoring for students in Needs Improvement (or analogous MPSP status)	Funded through budget	Constantly improving MPSP reading and math data
Tutoring during school day	Weekly meetings with principal	Monitoring of MPSP data and benchmark achievement of students served
Saturday review sessions (NI and MPSP) (becomes incentive for students to pass)	Funded through budget	Constantly improving MPSP reading and math data
Art program during elective period	Funding for project	Excellent art hung throughout school
Hire high-school placement Director (also volunteer coordinator; 1 FT)	Funding for position	All 8th graders well placed in high school; volunteer corps evaluated by Principal as effective
Hire half-time on-site counselor	Seek funding for position	All students referred to counseling and who receive family permission receive services; students report satisfaction
Weekly, whole-class counseling with teacher present	Boston Institute of Psychotherapy counselors	Address classroom management issues like bullying, improve MPSP data
Introduction of Outward Bound leadership program in partnership with Thompson Island Program	Seek funding	Development of leadership, maturity and socializing skills, improvement in MPSP scores

2008-2009

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Weekly regatta for all grades, based on targeted skills	MCAS/MPSP data	Continuously improving MPSP data for students served
Mandatory after school tutoring for all students in Needs Improvement (or analogous MPSP status)	Funded through budget	Continuously improving MPSP data for students served

Tutoring during school day	Funded through budget	Monitoring of MPSP data and benchmark achievement of students served
Mandatory Saturday review sessions (NI and MPSP) (becomes incentive for students to pass)	MCAS/MPSP data; funding for tutors	Continuously improving MPSP data for students served

SCHOOL CULTURE

Goal 1: Improve behavior and commitment to a culture of learning

Spring 2007

Success measurement: N = Not Completed P = Partial Completion C = Complete

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Reward system: Merits, class points, Humanitas, Libertas, Felicitas, Most Improved on MPSP, Above 80% on MPSP; Math Competition; Math Regatta Award	Templates	Regular, weekly updates on student rewards; increase in targeted MPSP areas C
Continuing Review responds to the top 10 SRC referral cases weekly	Accurate Breuer records (maintained by staff)	Decrease in number of SRC referrals C
Absent students are called in the morning by the front office		Consistent, accurate data on absent students; increased attendance rate P
Excellent relationship building in Crew; Crew leaders supported with curricular and instructional help	TRIBES, etc.	Satisfactory evaluations of Crew P
Students violating attendance policy receive prescribed support		Consistent application of policy; increased attendance rate C

Administer School Climate Survey	Survey (Principal)	2007 survey reveals more positive climate at the school than previous survey did C
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2007-2008

2008-2009

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Excellent relationship-building in Crew; Crew leaders supported with curricular and instructional help	TRIBES, etc.	Satisfactory evaluations of Crew
Absent students are called in the morning by the front office		Consistent, accurate data on absent students; increased attendance rate
Students violating attendance policy receive prescribed support		Consistent application of policy; increased attendance rate from previous year
Increase the efficacy of Friday Forum with improvements in acoustics and seating	Funding for acoustics and seating	Students and teachers report greater efficacy of Forum
Absent students are called in the morning by the front office		Consistent, accurate data on absent students; increased attendance rate
Excellent relationship building in Crew; Crew leaders supported with curricular and instructional help	TRIBES, etc.	Satisfactory evaluations of Crew
Students violating attendance policy receive prescribed support		Consistent application of policy; increased attendance rate
Administer School Climate Survey	Survey (Principal)	2007 survey reveals more positive climate at the school than previous survey did

FAMILY OUTREACH AND DEVELOPMENT

Goal 1: Increase family involvement

Spring 2007

Success measurement: N = Not Completed P = Partial Completion C = Complete

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Academic reporting system (Veracross/Breuer) is clarified for parent understanding	Assistance from Principal, Student Support Coordinator	Families report greater ease of use; benchmark achievement rises week to week P
School website is updated weekly with school news, student work	Assistance from Principal, teacher	Visits to website markedly increase; families report ease and frequency of use P
Parent Council meetings focus on academic achievement and support for children's success	Assistance from Assistant Principal	Families report greater understanding of academic program and means to support children academically C

2007-2008

2008-2009

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Monthly breakfasts with parents for open discussion re curriculum, parent involvement, and parenting issues	Budget for catering, consultants, etc.	Parent surveys reveal satisfaction with the breakfast series; increase in Parent Committee membership
School website is updated weekly with school news, student work	Assistance from Principal, teacher	Visits to website markedly increase; families report ease and frequency of use
Parent Committee meetings focus on academic achievement and support for children's success	Assistance from Student Support Coordinator	Families report greater understanding of academic program and means to support children academically
Institute Mothers' Reading Group and Fathers' Reading Group	Budget for books and stipend for discussion leaders	increasing attendance at Reading Group and Parent Committee meetings; satisfaction reported by participants; ELA scores rise

Goal 1: Improve recruitment and retention of students

Spring 2007 (for year 2007-2008)

Success measurement: N = Not Completed P = Partial Completion C = Complete

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Early start to the recruitment program, increased use of parent contacts, full time Student Support Coordinator, increased advertising	School staff and budget	Increased waiting list, increased fifth grade enrollment, enrollment at cap C

2007-2008 (for year 2008-2009)

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Increase current parent participation	Assistant Principal, Student Support Coordinator. Time, Parent Council contact list	Increased waiting list, increased fifth grade enrollment, maintain enrollment at cap, insure tuition income

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Goal 1: Find a permanent facility in Uphams Corner

Spring 2007

Success measurement: N = Not Completed P = Partial Completion C = Complete

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Negotiated full-year lease with current landlord	HOS	Do not need to move out by December, 2007, as expected P (Interrupted by the death of the landlord)
Engaged Meredith and Grew to find interim and permanent home.	HOS	Identified 4-5 lease or purchase sites in the Uphams Corner area C
Move forward with proposal to Columbia Sq owners	Board	Get agreement with owners on a proposal. (Not completed by end of school year) P

2007-2008

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Identify short-term Uphams Corner home for occupancy 2007-2008	HOS, board	Have lease for next year
Identify and make proposal for long-term lease or ownership	HOS, board	If lease, suitable site and terms for remainder of the second charter term; if purchase, have financing (purchase and renovation) in place, and have work commence this year.

2008-2009

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
If purchase, complete renovation.	Board, external financing	Move in.

Goal 2: Develop new school leadership evaluation tools.

Spring 2007

Success measurement: N = Not Completed P = Partial Completion C = Complete

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Engage an outside consultant to evaluate school leadership	HOS, board	Hired Ron Walker C

2007-2008

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Develop a performance evaluation for the Principal, Assistant Principal, Business Manager, and Director of Student Support.	HOS, modeling on other charter school admin evaluation plans	Completed evaluations, including goals and objectives for succeeding year.
Carry out outside evaluation of school leadership	Ron Walker	Evaluation with recommendations

Goal 3: Expand fund-raising capacity to meet supplemental needs

Spring 2007

Success measurement: N = Not Completed P = Partial Completion C = Complete

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Raise \$11,000 to support tutoring which was not included in budget	Board	Raised ~ \$10,000 from board and from fundraiser C
Expand grant-writing	Grant-writer	Completed year with higher grant total than previous year N

2007-2008

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Hire development director	Double budget item	Development director in place
Increase grants and fundraising	Board, development director	At least double 2006-2007 combination of grants and donations.

Goal 4: Continue board development

Spring 2007

Success measurement: N = Not Completed P = Partial Completion C = Complete

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
New contract with Executive Service Corps	Board	Signed contract C

2007-2008

Action Steps	Resources	Success Indicators
Expand board recruitment	Board, ESC	At least three new board members, at least one each from finance/real estate and law.
Expand foundation board recruitment and	Board, ESC	At least five members, at least three from outside of board of trustees; independently active
Resume strategic planning	HOS, board, ESC	Complete strategic plan

Reporting On Outcomes

UCCS will report annually on the progress we are making toward both our Accountability Plan goals and the planned improvements outlined in this document, through our Annual Report.