



Massachusetts Department of
ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY
EDUCATION

Gloucester Community Arts Charter School Year Three Site Visit Report

Gloucester, MA
October, 2012



This document was prepared by the
Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education
Mitchell D. Chester, Ed.D.
Commissioner

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School Profile

| <i>Gloucester Community Arts Charter School (GCACS)</i> | | | |
|---|--------------|-----------------------------|------------|
| Type of Charter | Commonwealth | Location | Gloucester |
| Regional/Non-Regional | Non-Regional | Districts in Region | NA |
| Year Opened | 2010 | Current Enrollment | 123 |
| Maximum Enrollment | 240 | Students on Waitlist | 0 |
| Chartered Grade Span | K-8 | Current Grade Span | K-8 |

Mission

“The mission of the Gloucester Community Arts Charter School (GCACS) is to use the arts and community life to energize the learning of Gloucester’s students. GCACS seeks to graduate students who are academically accomplished, intellectually curious, civically engaged, and prepared to succeed in higher education and contribute actively in the community.”

Demographics

The school reports the following racial and ethnic composition and percentages of selected populations of the student body as of the date of the site visit:

Racial and Ethnic Composition and Selected Populations

| | Number of Students | Percentage of Student Body |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|----------------------------|
| African American | 0 | - |
| Asian | 0 | - |
| Hispanic | 2 | 2% |
| Native American | 0 | - |
| White | 113 | 91% |
| Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander | 2 | 2% |
| Multi-race, non-Hispanic | 6 | 5% |
| Special education | 21 | 17% |
| Limited English proficient | 0 | - |
| Low income | 54 | 44% |

The following participants conducted the site visit on October 18, 2012:

- Alison Bagg, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE), Charter School Office (CSO)
- Barry Barnett, ESE, CSO
- Stephanie Callahan, Salem Academy Charter Public School
- Joanna Laghetto, ESE, CSO
- Diana Lam, Conservatory Lab Charter School
- Puja Garg, ESE, CSO
- Jane Haltiwanger, ESE, CSO
- Claire Smithney, ESE, CSO

Before the visit, the site visit team reviewed the school's 2011-12 annual report, the 2011-12 Year Two Site Visit Report, the school's accountability plan, board materials, and recent internal and external assessment data. On site, the team reviewed curricular documents and other information provided by the school. The team conducted approximately 16 classroom observations and interviewed trustees (5), administrators (7), teachers (9), families (5), and students (12).

The site visit had the following purposes:

1. to corroborate and augment the information contained in the school's annual report,
2. to investigate the school's progress relative to its accountability plan goals,
3. to collect information that will help the Commissioner and Board of Elementary and Secondary Education make a renewal recommendation for the school's charter, and
4. to review the progress that the school has made in meeting the conditions imposed.

Site visits focus on the three central areas of charter school accountability: faithfulness to the terms of the school's charter, academic program success, and organizational viability. The team's findings in each of these areas are presented below.

I. Faithfulness to the Terms of the Charter

Are the school's mission, vision, educational philosophy, and pedagogical approach, as articulated in the charter application and subsequent amendments, implemented in the day-to-day operations of the school?

Finding: All stakeholders echoed a school wide goal to create a common language, understanding, and goals around school culture and community. This work is informed by the adoption of Responsive Classroom and the vision of the new director of education.

Impelled by the community aspect of the mission and a desire to improve the learning environment at GCACS, the new director of education and administrative staff have begun an effort to define community expectations and create a school culture in line with GCACS's vision. Board members, teachers, and administrators noted that the newly hired director of education has brought a focus on community and culture-building to the school. The director of education outlined in written materials provided to the site visit team and reported that in order for the school to accomplish its mission, the faculty must create a collaborative culture. The director of education has outlined goals for her own performance in three areas: teaching and learning, school culture, and effective management. Goals relating to culture and community building which have already been accomplished, or are in the process of being implemented, include: providing professional development to staff about Responsive Classroom and Project Adventure; the implementation of Monday Memos to families; implementation of a new website; establishment of effective communication with parents; a restart of the Parent Teacher Organization; and development of a Child Study Team. Additionally, the director of education has established school wide goals for teachers. These goals include: building Responsive Classroom practice, inviting parents into the classroom, building a collaborative culture, create/review curriculum mapping documents, and document two units of study that include art integration and community building. Teachers have met with the director of education to create benchmarks for measuring their attainment of school wide goals.

Teachers reported that the majority of professional development so far has been the development of school culture. During August, GCACS staff members attended nine days of professional development / teacher preparation time at the school. Two of those days were devoted to learning the routines and philosophy behind Responsive Classroom, which is a classroom management technique and pedagogical approach to instruction. The school's daily schedule contains a morning meeting for all classrooms, which is an element of the Responsive Classroom model. The director of education reported that a future goal will be to create weekly community meetings of two combined classrooms. Beyond the use of morning meeting, site visitors did not see pervasive evidence that teachers are implementing the Responsive Classroom model as a management technique. The GCACS staff also attended a full day training at Project Adventure (PA) to learn how to foster a strong culture. With the help of a PA facilitator, the GCACS staff came up the following norms for school behavior: "be here, be safe, be honest." While board members, teachers, and administrators reported that the norms of "be here, be safe, be honest" are upheld by all staff members, site visitors did not see evidence of those norms being communicated to students. In one classroom, site visitors noted that the teacher had posted: "work hard, be nice" in another classroom the teacher had implemented the "bucket filling" model of classroom management. Further, the 2012-13 middle school expectations document, provided to students and families, does not include any references to the "be here, be safe, be honest" norms.

Finding: Stakeholders reported that arts are integrated into instruction to a greater degree than last year. However, the school is still working to implement many elements as outlined in its charter.

During the second year site visit, GCACS stakeholders identified a strong commitment to three aspects of the charter: integration of the arts into the curriculum, connection to the local and global community, and individualized learning. This year, school stakeholders all identified integration of the arts and a commitment to the community as highlights of the school's mission. Stakeholders cited an improvement in the practice of integrating arts into the curriculum. The director of arts integration is serving her second year in that role and meets biweekly with grade level groups in order to facilitate arts integration. The school has instituted a guest artist series. Parents and students reported that music, acting, dance, and visual arts are often part of class lessons. Additionally, teachers and administrators reported that the seven habits of mind used to teach visual arts are being used during classroom instruction as a way to teach concepts. Teachers reported that they endeavor to integrate arts into their daily instruction. In half of all classrooms observed, site visitors viewed the use of some form of art. The observations are described more fully below. Teachers and administrators also noted that the school was working to connect learning to the Gloucester community. At a recent Saturday school (not part of the school's charter) multiage groups of students participated in workshops presented by teachers. They learned about various aspects of Gloucester and completed thematic art projects.

Many elements outlined in the charter application have yet to materialize as well integrated aspects of the educational program. Site visitors did not see pervasive evidence of: thematic learning, a humanities curriculum, the use of constructivism and differentiation in the classroom, outreach into the community, service learning, or the realization of strong academic results. Some of these aspects were noted as school wide goals, and some were not mentioned at all by stakeholders. Site visitors did see instances that thematic learning continues to be a goal for the school. Teachers noted that they informally plan curriculum with the goal of integrating arts and establishing interdisciplinary themes. During the day of the site visit, the fourth/fifth grade

classrooms were engaged in an immigration simulation which took place during morning meeting and was the basis for a math lesson which integrated the arts. Grades two/three were engaging in a lesson which integrated science and social studies. As last year, the humanities program has not yet materialized. Curriculum documents consistently referred to English language arts and social studies as separate areas of study. Written materials provided to the team, and reports from the director of education, indicated that the use of constructivism and differentiation remain goals for the school and that professional development will be provided to teachers in these areas. Administrators noted that outreach into the community is also a goal. While GCACS has begun the process of establishing community partnership with four outside organizations, this was noted as an area of improvement. Service learning was not mentioned by any stakeholders.

As explained in a later section of this report, the realization of strong academic results is still in process. GCACS's 2012 MCAS results showed improvement from the school's first year, with greater gains in ELA scores. However, in 2012 only 17 percent of GCACS students reached proficiency in mathematics.

Is the school's governance/leadership structure implemented as articulated in the charter application and subsequent amendments?

Finding: The school's executive director has resigned effective October 20, 2012. The newly hired director of education will serve as the school leader and receive help with school administration from three volunteer GCACS board members.

For the second year, GCACS September enrollment has been significantly below the April pre-enrollment estimate. GCACS pre-enrolled 212 students in April 2012; currently 123 students attend the school. Similar to last year, the reduction in expected tuition has strained school finances. During the 2011-12 school year, when faced with lower than expected enrollment, GCACS cut staff positions and leveled a five percent pay reduction for all staff. This year, staff members reported that the executive director has resigned his position in order to protect teacher salaries and program funds. Board members and the executive director reported that as a member of the board, the executive director plans to finish his term as a trustee, which ends in April 2013. The executive director has been serving as a full member of the board rather than an ex-officio member since his hire in 2010.

Board members reported that they do not plan to hire a new executive director for the current school year. Instead the newly hired director of education will report to the board and will assume the role of school leader. In order to help the director of education with administrative duties, three board members with prior school experience are planning to volunteer, each serving one day a week. One board member will co-lead the behavior support team, participate as a member of the child study team, provide student support, and supervise lunch. One board member will assist with teacher observation, communicate with families, assist with administrative decision making, and help with recess duty. The third board member will help with written reports, student discipline, and school visitors. A fourth board member will also volunteer at the school, as the director of the theater program, but not involve himself with school administration. When asked how the board would maintain the line between governance and managing the day to day operations of the school, board members acknowledged that it was, "odd in a way for a board to be this involved in the day to day." They noted that it would not work in many schools, but stated that the GCACS board had gotten "well educated about oversight and more sophisticated" in their governance duties. The board members who are

planning to volunteer at the school stated that they would be operating as “consultants”, “sounding boards”, and would “defer to teachers” and to the director of education when decisions about the school program needed to be made. Administrators corroborated the plan for board members to assist the new director of education with administrative duties.

The board stated that the school’s part time business manager would also begin to report directly to the board to provide them with updates on the school’s finance.

Has the school met, or is it making progress toward meeting, the faithfulness to charter objectives set out in its accountability plan?

Finding: A majority of the measures related to faithfulness to charter contained in the school’s accountability plan cannot be assessed.

GCACS has not yet finalized its accountability plan. All charter schools are meant to have an approved accountability plan by the end of their first year of operation. Nearly a year and a half after this deadline, GCACS is still operating with a draft accountability plan. In its 2011-12 annual report, GCACS reported its progress on measures contained in a draft accountability plan. The draft accountability plan contains two objectives and six measures related to faithfulness to the charter. One measure was partially met and five cannot be assessed, either because GCACS did not provide information or because the measure will be assessed in the 2012-13 school year. More information about the school’s success in meeting the objectives and measures contained in its accountability plan can be found in Section VI, Accountability Plan Performance, of this report.

II. Academic Program Success

A. Curriculum

What is included in the documentation of the curriculum and what form does it take?

Does it articulate skills and concepts that each student should know?

Is the school’s documented curriculum aligned with state standards?

Finding: GCACS does not have a documented curriculum. Site visitors were unable to determine if curriculum materials were aligned with state standards.

GCACS is in the process of creating its curriculum. The director of education reported that she has begun to introduce expectations around curriculum. She has provided teachers with the Teaching for Understanding lesson plan template. She has also introduced an expectation that the school will review last year’s mapping documents and align them to state standards and that each teacher will create and document two inquiry-based and experiential units of study by the end of the year.

Site visitors were presented with sample lesson plans and course syllabi from each teacher that included references to the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks (MCF). Site visitors learned that teachers are not expected to create lessons every day and that the samples provided were the first created for the current school year. While all the lessons created for the site visit used the Teaching for Understanding template and included references to the MCF, course syllabi varied in format.

Teachers and administrators reported that curriculum documents, such as school wide mapping documents and unit plans, have yet to be created. The director of education reported that the goal

is to create maps and realign last year's maps by January or February 2013. However, grades Kindergarten and one were added this year and do not have any prior map documentation.

From the small sample of curriculum documents provided to site visitors and the incomplete status of curriculum documentation, site visitors could not determine if the school's curriculum is aligned to MCF or if it delivers skills and concepts appropriate for each grade level.

Additionally, the director of education was not able to articulate a strategy to deliver curriculum in the multiage classrooms.

How is the curriculum reviewed and revised to ensure quality and effectiveness?

Finding: Teachers and administrators reported an informal review and revision of curriculum based on weekly meetings with either the director of education or director of arts integration. Teachers reported that at the beginning of October, teachers began to share lesson plans at their weekly meetings. These meetings are grouped by grade level and alternately include the director of education or the director of arts integration. Additionally, teachers also stated that they are able to submit their lesson plans to the director of education if they want their work reviewed.

B. Instruction and Learning

Is the observed instructional practice consistent with what the school describes, either verbally or in writing?

Finding: Site visitors did not see a consistent application of school wide instructional or behavioral expectations. Administrators reported that the school is in the process of instituting many of the expectations.

Both in written material, and verbally during the visit, the director of education told site visitors that instruction is "evolving" and that site visitors should see teachers beginning to provide inquiry-based learning which included experiential education and the integration of arts in every class. The director of education told site visitors to expect a multiage environment, the use of thinking routines, the use of constructivism, and an engaging curriculum. Additionally, the school expects teachers to use the Responsive Classroom model. True to the stated expectations, site visitors did see the emergence of some of these practices, but not consistently in all classrooms. Each of the expected elements is discussed below in detail.

Inquiry-based learning/constructivism/use of thinking routines: The director of education defined an inquiry based classroom as students and teachers uncovering the curriculum together and teachers helping to make student voice and thinking visible in the classroom. She further defined thinking routines as the use of protocols to elicit students' prior knowledge. In approximately half of all classes observed, site visitors saw teachers asking questions in order to elicit student thinking. In some cases students were asked to recall information, in others they were asked to explain their answers. In one classroom, a lesson required students to use manipulatives to develop an alternative representation of the data on a bar graph; however, students were not consistently required to explain their thinking. One inquiry lesson asked students to "find textual evidence of morality."

Experiential education: Site visitors observed three instances of emerging experiential education. The immigration simulation observed in the 4/5 grade classes asked students to dress up and assume the identity of immigrants. Additionally, a music classroom involved listening to and analyzing the instruments heard in a piece of music. The 2/3 grade class made hard tack as part of their exploration of the experience of immigrants on ocean crossings.

Integration of arts: In approximately half of all observed classes, site visitors noted the use of art. In a math class students were asked to create a mosaic relating to the immigration simulation. Other examples included: drawing maps in social studies, singing a song about pumpkins, the construction of an atomic model, and a movement class that integrated the seven habit of mind used in art classes. Furthermore, site visitors observed evidence of art work posted in the school hallways: gesture drawings, pictures of triangles, and illustrated definitions. However, site visitors could not always determine the purpose of the connection between art and content. Site visitors did not see specific goals for arts integration, or use of the seven habits of mind, in all classrooms.

Multiage environment: All classrooms, except for two, include two grade levels: K/1, 2/3, 4/5, 6/7. There is one Kindergarten class and one grade 8 class.

Engaging curriculum: Evidence of student engagement is discussed further below, but overall site visitors saw low (6 classes) to average (6 classes) engagement in three quarters, and high engagement in a quarter (4 classes), of all observed classes. Site visitors noted that a slow pacing of instruction and low academic rigor contributed to low engagement.

Responsive Classroom: The use of Responsive Classroom was further defined by the director of education to be a focus on the community. Site visitors observed that morning meeting is a common practice for all classrooms. As for the use of a common language and positive framing, site visitors observed little evidence that teachers have built these practices into their classrooms. Out of the 16 classroom observations conducted, site visitors observed the use of Responsive Classroom practice and language in two. Site visitors did note that the 4/5 classrooms were using the “bucket filling” tool of classroom management/community building. As noted above, site visitors did not see consistent evidence of the “be here, be safe, be honest” school wide expectations.

Is the classroom and school environment orderly, and does it support student learning?

Finding: In a majority of classrooms site visitors did not see an orderly environment. Off task and mildly disruptive behavior negatively impacted student learning.

In three-quarters of classes, site visitors observed a classroom environment that was not orderly. Site visitors observed that a lack of appropriate behaviors and lack of teacher follow up negatively impacted student learning. Such behaviors varied from class to class, but included: students not following directions, holding side conversations, yelling, running around in class, placing their feet up on desks, putting their heads down on desks, and a lack of response to teacher redirection. Most commonly, site visitors observed off task behavior and student disengagement. Teachers were not seen to respond, or respond effectively, to such behavior. In some cases student behavior disrupted only the individual student’s learning, in other cases it disrupted the entire classroom and hindered learning for all.

Hallways were also found to be quite casual, with students congregating and talking during class time.

Is instruction effectively delivered and are students engaged in meaningful learning?

Finding: Teacher ability to effectively deliver instruction was hampered by disorderly classrooms. Classroom time was not maximized for learning.

As noted above, site visitors noted that off task and disruptive student behavior interfered with learning in a majority of classrooms. Site visitors also noted that a lack of rigor and slow pacing

of lessons led to wasted classroom time. Often the opening activity in the class would take nearly 15 minutes and the teacher was not on track to accomplish the list of activities planned. Site visitors observed a few inaccuracies in instruction that led to student misunderstanding, particularly in math classes. Additionally, class activities did not always support the lesson objective. In approximately half of all classes observed, students were asked to complete activities that appeared to be below grade level or the activity was not of sufficient challenge to fully engage students.

Finding: Student engagement varied during observed lessons, but for most of the observed lesson time, students were not fully engaged in learning.

As noted above, site visitors saw that a majority of classes elicited low to average engagement. Site visitors attributed the loss of student attention to the slow pacing of classes and at times low level of rigor. For example, students were given 15 minutes to respond to the question “What is a star” at the beginning of one of the classes. In another class, students were asked to work in groups to complete charts using examples from the text of a book. After 20 minutes, few students had more than one example written down. Examples of low rigor included: a sixth and seventh grade classroom using play-dough to model mountains for an extended time; eighth grade students making simple atomic models from candy; and fourth and fifth grade students playing with mosaics pieces without a connection to an academic concept. Students were more interested and engaged when challenged by the lesson content. Rather than showing active engagement, such as participating in the task at hand, many students displayed behavior that is described in the above finding: holding non-academic conversations, writing notes to each other, calling out, and heads down on desks.

Do the school’s instructional practices include the implementation of strategies that address the needs of diverse learners, including special education students?

See Section IV of this report for the Federal Programs Site Visit Report

How and from whom do teachers receive feedback, guidance, supervision, and evaluation to improve instructional practice and student achievement?

Finding: The school has a plan to deliver formal and informal observation and feedback to teachers. Informal observation has begun.

Teachers and administrators both reported that teachers will receive three formal observations this year: two planned and one unannounced. GCACS has a formal observation tool which outlines expectations for instruction in the areas of: curriculum, planning for instruction, classroom management, effective instruction, promotion of high standards, and the promotion of equity/diversity. The observation includes a pre- and post-observation meeting. The observation tool is based on the Saphier model for classroom observation and feedback. The director of education has created a schedule in order to observe all teacher three times a year.

Additionally, teachers and administrators reported that the director of education is regularly in classrooms. At this point, the director of education provides informal feedback in a variety of ways: email or conversations after the brief observation. The director of education would like to develop a one page feedback form for informal observations.

How is qualitative and quantitative data used to inform planning and improve student achievement?

Finding: For a second year, GCA has identified the use of data to inform instruction as an area for school improvement. The school has not established school wide external or internal assessments.

The school has yet to define and administer any external assessments, other than the MCAS, to monitor student performance and use the results to improve the academic program. Teachers and administrators noted that the school plans to put assessments in place this year such as the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS) and the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA). Teachers also reported that the school plans to use the data from these assessments to identify at-risk students in need of Title I interventions. Last year, the school planned to contract with Achievement Network to administer regular ELA and mathematics benchmark assessments. However, the school did not have adequate funds to purchase the assessments. Focus groups did not articulate any systems or structures for the analysis and use of MCAS data to improve instruction. Notes from the board’s program committee show that in early October, GCACS still had not conducted an analysis of the 2012 MCAS results.

While the use of portfolio assessment is outlined in the school’s charter as a “gateway” requirement for promotion from certain grades, this has yet to be instituted. Teachers and administrators reported that the school needed to develop a portfolio system. All focus groups noted that data use remains an area for school improvement.

C. Student Achievement

Are students reaching Proficiency on state standards, as measured by the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)?

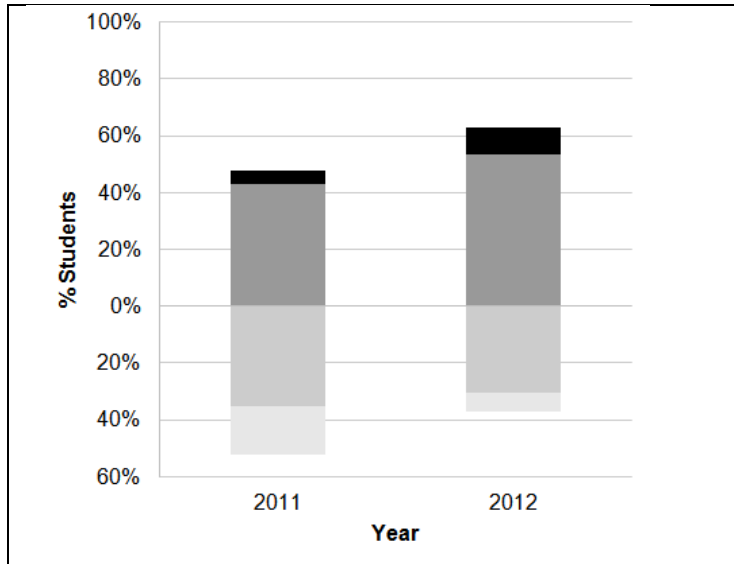
Finding: English language arts MCAS scores for GCACS students showed improvement in 2012. Mathematics scores have been weak for two years.

All MCAS results for ELA and mathematics that are available from the last two years are presented below. This data includes the Composite Performance Index (CPI), a 100-point index that measures the extent to which students are progressing towards proficiency and which reflects the distribution of student scores over the four MCAS performance categories. The data also includes the median student growth percentile (SGP) for the school and each grade level. A student growth percentile (SGP) is a measure of student progress that compares changes in a student’s MCAS scores to changes in MCAS scores of other students with similar achievement histories. The model establishes cohorts of students with similar performance profiles by identifying all students with the same (or very similar) MCAS scores in prior years. To report student growth at the subgroup, grade, school, or district level, individual student growth percentiles are aggregated, and the median student growth percentile is reported for that group.

English Language Arts MCAS Scores

Key: N = # of students tested; CPI = Composite Performance Index

Warning/Failing %
 Needs Improvement %
 Proficient %
 Advanced/Above Prof. %



| All Students -- ELA | 2011 | | 2012 | |
|---------------------|------|---------|------|---------|
| | GCA | State | GCA | State |
| Advanced | 5% | 17% | 9% | 19% |
| Proficient | 43% | 52% | 53% | 50% |
| Needs Improvement | 35% | 23% | 31% | 22% |
| Warning/Failing | 17% | 8% | 7% | 9% |
| N Students | 88 | 497,258 | 118 | 497,549 |
| CPI | 73.3 | 87.2 | 82.8 | 86.7 |
| Median SGP | 33.0 | 50.0 | 53.5 | 50.0 |

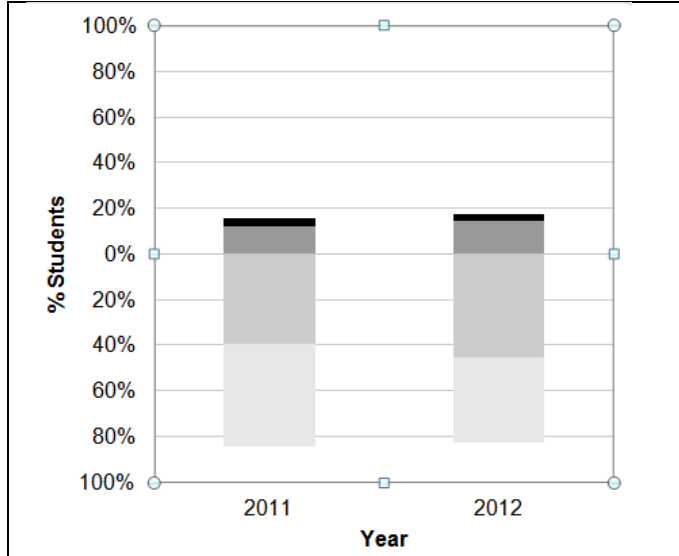
As shown in the table above, GCACS’s 2012 ELA MCAS scores showed improvement from the school’s initial MCAS administration in 2011. When compared to the initial 2011 administration of the MCAS, the 2012 scores show that a majority of students (62 percent) achieved proficiency. Proficiency improved in grades four and six, was level in grade five, and declined slightly in grade seven. GCACS’s median student growth percentile (SGP) also improved from 33.0 in 2011 to 53.5 in 2012. The tables below show GCACS student progress toward proficiency at each grade level.

| ELA Performance by Grade Level | | | | |
|--------------------------------|------|--------|------|--------|
| Grade 3 ELA | 2012 | | | |
| | GCA | State | | |
| Advanced | 12% | 15% | | |
| Proficient | 35% | 46% | | |
| Needs Improvement | 47% | 30% | | |
| Warning/Failing | 6% | 9% | | |
| N Students | 17 | 70,709 | | |
| CPI | 76.5 | 84.1 | | |
| Median SGP | | | | |
| Grade 4 ELA | 2011 | | 2012 | |
| | GCA | State | GCA | State |
| Advanced | 0% | 10% | 14% | 13% |
| Proficient | 24% | 43% | 29% | 44% |
| Needs Improvement | 41% | 35% | 43% | 30% |
| Warning/Failing | 35% | 12% | 14% | 14% |
| N Students | 17 | 70,920 | 14 | 70,264 |
| CPI | 55.9 | 79.4 | 75.0 | 80.0 |
| Median SGP | | 51.0 | | 50.0 |
| Grade 5 ELA | 2011 | | 2012 | |
| | GCA | State | GCA | State |
| Advanced | 5% | 17% | 0% | 17% |
| Proficient | 38% | 50% | 43% | 44% |
| Needs Improvement | 33% | 24% | 43% | 28% |
| Warning/Failing | 24% | 9% | 14% | 11% |
| N Students | 21 | 71,394 | 21 | 71,423 |
| CPI | 70.2 | 86.0 | 70.2 | 82.5 |
| Median SGP | | 50.0 | | 50.0 |
| Grade 6 ELA | 2011 | | 2012 | |
| | GCA | State | GCA | State |
| Advanced | 11% | 17% | 14% | 18% |
| Proficient | 37% | 51% | 67% | 48% |
| Needs Improvement | 41% | 23% | 14% | 22% |
| Warning/Failing | 11% | 9% | 5% | 11% |
| N Students | 27 | 71,491 | 21 | 71,589 |
| CPI | 75.0 | 86.6 | 91.7 | 84.8 |
| Median SGP | | 50.0 | 70.0 | 50.0 |
| Grade 7 ELA | 2011 | | 2012 | |
| | GCA | State | GCA | State |
| Advanced | 0% | 14% | 8% | 15% |
| Proficient | 70% | 59% | 60% | 56% |
| Needs Improvement | 26% | 21% | 32% | 21% |
| Warning/Failing | 4% | 6% | 0% | 7% |
| N Students | 23 | 72,260 | 25 | 71,749 |
| CPI | 87.0 | 89.5 | 87.0 | 88.1 |
| Median SGP | | 50.0 | 54.0 | 50.0 |
| Grade 8 ELA | 2012 | | | |
| | GCA | State | | |
| Advanced | 10% | 18% | | |
| Proficient | 75% | 63% | | |
| Needs Improvement | 10% | 14% | | |
| Warning/Failing | 5% | 6% | | |
| N Students | 20 | 72,756 | | |
| CPI | 92.5 | 91.8 | | |
| Median SGP | | 50.0 | | |

Mathematics MCAS Scores

Key: N = # of students tested; CPI = Composite Performance Index

Warning/Failing %
 Needs Improvement %
 Proficient %
 Advanced/Above Prof. %

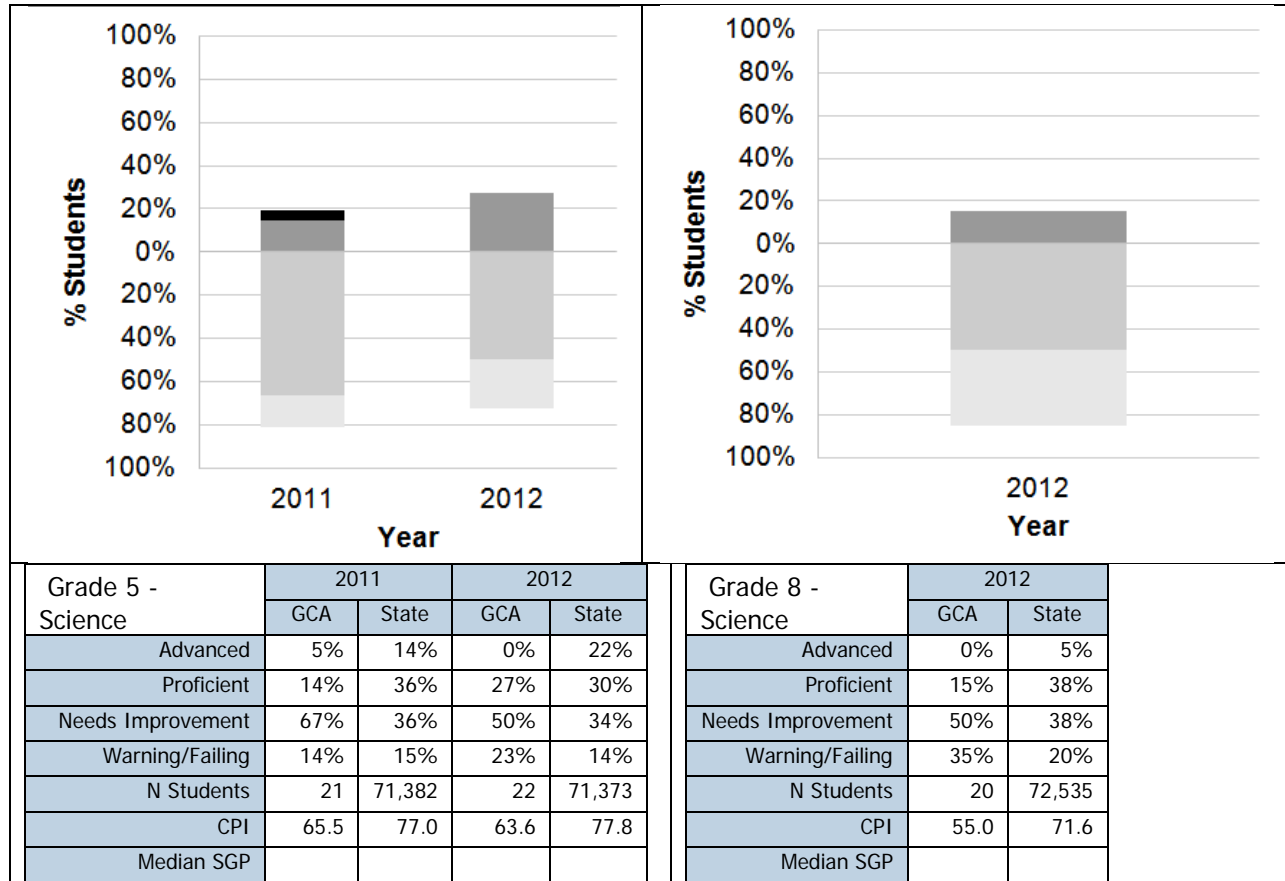


| All Students - mathematics | 2011 | | 2012 | |
|----------------------------|------|---------|------|---------|
| | GCA | State | GCA | State |
| Advanced | 3% | 24% | 3% | 27% |
| Proficient | 12% | 34% | 14% | 32% |
| Needs Improvement | 39% | 27% | 45% | 26% |
| Warning/Failing | 45% | 15% | 37% | 15% |
| N Students | 89 | 497,712 | 119 | 497,984 |
| CPI | 49.7 | 79.9 | 55.5 | 79.9 |
| Median SGP | 17.0 | 50.0 | 31.0 | 50.0 |

GCACS's mathematics MCAS scores showed slight improvement from 2011 to 2012. However, in the aggregate, GCACS's proficiency levels are far below state averages with only 17 percent of students reaching proficiency and 37 percent scoring in the Warning/Failing category. From 2011 to 2012 student scores increased in grades four and slightly in seven. Student scores fell in grades five and six. In grade 8 only 10 percent of students reached proficiency in math. In terms of growth, the median SGP increased in 2012, but is still low at 31.0. The tables below show GCACS student progress toward proficiency at each grade level.

| Mathematics Performance by Grade Level | | | | | |
|--|------|--------|------|--------|--|
| Grade 3 math | 2012 | | | | |
| | GCA | State | | | |
| Advanced | 18% | 27% | | | |
| Proficient | 18% | 34% | | | |
| Needs Improvement | 41% | 25% | | | |
| Warning/Failing | 24% | 14% | | | |
| N Students | 17 | 70,763 | | | |
| CPI | 69.1 | 80.9 | | | |
| Median SGP | | | | | |
| Grade 4 math | 2011 | | 2012 | | |
| | GCA | State | GCA | State | |
| Advanced | 0% | 15% | 0% | 16% | |
| Proficient | 6% | 32% | 29% | 35% | |
| Needs Improvement | 61% | 42% | 43% | 36% | |
| Warning/Failing | 33% | 11% | 29% | 12% | |
| N Students | 18 | 71,101 | 14 | 70,425 | |
| CPI | 50.0 | 78.4 | 64.3 | 79.2 | |
| Median SGP | | 50.0 | | 50.0 | |
| Grade 5 math | 2011 | | 2012 | | |
| | GCA | State | GCA | State | |
| Advanced | 5% | 25% | 0% | 25% | |
| Proficient | 24% | 34% | 18% | 32% | |
| Needs Improvement | 24% | 26% | 36% | 26% | |
| Warning/Failing | 48% | 15% | 45% | 17% | |
| N Students | 21 | 71,463 | 22 | 71,484 | |
| CPI | 51.2 | 79.8 | 47.7 | 78.4 | |
| Median SGP | | 50.0 | | 50.0 | |
| Grade 6 math | 2011 | | 2012 | | |
| | GCA | State | GCA | State | |
| Advanced | 7% | 26% | 0% | 27% | |
| Proficient | 11% | 32% | 10% | 33% | |
| Needs Improvement | 37% | 25% | 43% | 24% | |
| Warning/Failing | 44% | 16% | 48% | 16% | |
| N Students | 27 | 71,536 | 21 | 71,640 | |
| CPI | 52.8 | 79.6 | 51.2 | 80.5 | |
| Median SGP | | 50.0 | 19.0 | 50.0 | |
| Grade 7 math | 2011 | | 2012 | | |
| | GCA | State | GCA | State | |
| Advanced | 0% | 19% | 0% | 20% | |
| Proficient | 9% | 32% | 12% | 31% | |
| Needs Improvement | 39% | 27% | 52% | 30% | |
| Warning/Failing | 52% | 22% | 36% | 18% | |
| N Students | 23 | 72,495 | 25 | 71,952 | |
| CPI | 44.6 | 73.8 | 54.0 | 75.4 | |
| Median SGP | | 50.0 | 36.0 | 50.0 | |
| Grade 8 math | 2012 | | | | |
| | GCA | State | | | |
| Advanced | 5% | 22% | | | |
| Proficient | 5% | 30% | | | |
| Needs Improvement | 55% | 28% | | | |
| Warning/Failing | 35% | 19% | | | |
| N Students | 20 | 72,705 | | | |
| CPI | 52.5 | 75.5 | | | |
| Median SGP | | 50.0 | | | |

Science MCAS Scores



In 2012, more GCACS fifth grade students achieved proficiency on the science MCAS (27 percent), but no students scored in the Advanced category and more students scored in the Warning/Failing category, thus decreasing overall CPI in 2012. In 2012, only 15 percent of all eighth graders achieved proficiency on the science MCAS.

Are students meeting accountability targets in order to meet the goal of halving proficiency gaps by 2017?

Finding: In 2012, GCACS met all proficiency gap targets for ELA, partially met targets for mathematics, and did not meet targets for science.

Beginning with the 2012-13 school year, accountability reports have changed significantly as a result of Massachusetts' waiver of certain No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirements: the NCLB goal of 100 percent proficiency is replaced with a new goal of reducing proficiency gaps by half by 2017; the NCLB accountability status labels of improvement, corrective action, and restructuring are eliminated; only state accountability and assistance levels are used for districts and schools, including charter schools; Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is replaced with a new performance measure (the Progress and Performance Index, or PPI) that incorporates student growth and other indicators, including science and dropout rates; and reports show a new "high needs" subgroup, an unduplicated count of all students in a school or district belonging to at least

one of the following individual subgroups: students with disabilities, English language learners (ELL) and former ELL students, or low income students.

In 2012, the school met English language arts (ELA) proficiency gap narrowing targets in the aggregate. All subgroups met ELA proficiency gap narrowing targets. The school’s 2012 ELA MCAS performance was above target for all students, the high needs subgroup, the low income subgroup, and the white subgroup.

In 2012, the school met mathematics proficiency gap narrowing targets in the aggregate. All subgroups did not meet mathematics proficiency gap narrowing targets. In 2012, the high needs subgroup performance improved below target, the low income subgroup was on target, and the white subgroup was above target. However, the performance percentiles show that GCACS students are performing the lowest in their grade span for mathematics.

In 2012, the school did not meet science proficiency gap narrowing targets in the aggregate. Science performance declined from 2011 to 2012.

A summary of the school’s 2012 Accountability data is below. Detailed data can also be found in Section V of this report.

**Massachusetts School and District Profiles
 Gloucester Community Arts Charter School**

2012 Accountability Data - Gloucester Community Arts Charter School

| Organization Information | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------|--------------------------|
| District: | Gloucester Community Arts Charter (District) (04480000) | School type: | Elementary-Middle School |
| School: | Gloucester Community Arts Charter School (04480205) | Grades served: | 02,03,04,05,06,07,08 |
| Region: | Northeast | Title I status: | Title I School (TA) |

| Accountability Information | | About the Data |
|---|---|-------------------|
| Accountability and Assistance Level | | |
| Insufficient data | | Insufficient data |
| This school's overall performance relative to other schools in same grade span (School percentiles: 1-99) | | |
| All students: | - | |

| This school's progress toward narrowing proficiency gaps (Cumulative Progress and Performance Index: 1-100) | | | View Detailed 2012 Data |
|---|---|---------------|-------------------------|
| Student Group (Click group to view subgroup data) | On Target = 75 or higher ■ | | |
| | Less progress | More progress | |
| All students | | | - |
| High needs | | | - |
| Low income | | | - |
| ELL and Former ELL | | | - |
| Students w/disabilities | | | - |
| Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat. | | | - |
| Asian | | | - |
| Afr. Amer./Black | | | - |
| Hispanic/Latino | | | - |
| Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat. | | | - |
| Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl. | | | - |
| White | | | - |

Has the school met or is it making progress toward meeting the academic success objectives set out in its accountability plan?

Finding: A majority of the measures related to academic success contained in the school's accountability plan cannot be assessed

GCACS's draft accountability plan includes four objectives and ten related measures concerning academic success. GCACS met two measures and partially met a third. The remaining seven measures could not be assessed due to insufficient data. More information about the school's success in meeting the objectives and measures contained in its accountability plan can be found in Section VI, Accountability Plan Performance, of this report.

III. Organizational Viability

Does the school have systems and structures in place to review the effectiveness of the academic program and guide its improvement?

Finding: The school does not have formal systems and structures to review the effectiveness of the academic program. The board of trustees noted that this is an area for improvement.

Administrators reported that establishing systems and structures for program evaluation was an area for school improvement. At the end of the school's first year, GCACS hired an independent consultant to evaluate the school and provide a report. During the year two site visit, administrators reported that this would be completed again at the conclusion of the school's second year. Due to insufficient funds, this evaluation was not completed. When asked how they had evaluated the academic program for the past school year, administrators pointed to the increase in ELA MCAS scores and the return rate for students as indicators that the program was successful.

The board reported that they "don't have a great system for academic review" and that this was "not a very strong" aspect of their governance practice. Over the past year MCAS results have been an agenda item for two board meetings: September 2011 and October 2012. Only the September 2011 meeting minutes are available and contain a presentation of the scores by the executive director. The board did not engage in a data driven discussion, nor did they ask for administrators' plans to improve the 2011 scores. The board's program committee, which is tasked with oversight of the academic program, met nine times during the 2011-12 school year and reported to the full board three times. Like the full board meeting, the program committee notes do not contain discussion of academic data or evaluation of the results. Board members reported that the program committee was mostly interested in helping the school recruit and retain effective teachers. The board did state that the director of education had created goals in three areas (academics, culture, management) and that they would evaluate her in terms of these goals and her reports to the board.

Finding: The school has not developed a plan to address two years of low mathematics MCAS scores.

As outlined above, GCACS's first two years of mathematics MCAS results have been poor. All stakeholders acknowledged that mathematics was an area of concern, but did not articulate any plan to address the school's large proficiency gap. The board noted that they were very concerned about the scores and that they hoped a change in school culture, as effected by the new director of education, would lead to higher scores. In order to address math scores, the administration pointed to hour-long, twice-monthly meetings with the staff that had a math

focus, a plan to bring an external professional development provider to teach math best practices, and a plan to target math instruction with Title II funds.

Site visitors had concerns about the math program. The middle school math program is delivered by two teachers, one of whom also teaches science, and the other who primarily teaches social studies. Site visitors intended to observe five math classes. In one observed class there was a lack of clarity in the objective, which was to “better understand the numbers” and there was no explicit connection between the construction of a mosaic and math concepts. In a second observed math class, students did not understand the task or objective and the teacher did not check for understanding. Site visitors found that students do not have math daily, or when scheduled. One site visitor purposefully went to attend a math class and it was cancelled soon after her arrival. In another class, meant to be math, students were heard to remark at the beginning, “are we having math today?” In another math class, only attended for a few minutes, site visitors observed the teacher incorrectly moving a decimal during a demonstration, which led to student confusion that was not corrected by the teacher. A lack of time management further hampered the teacher’s ability to instruct the class. Of further concern, site visitors heard or saw no evidence that the school was providing targeted instruction, extra help, or any academic support for students who are struggling in mathematics. The school has a once weekly homework club for 30 minutes; it does not have a math focus.

How does the board of trustees provide oversight and leadership in key areas of the school, including academic achievement and fiscal planning?

Finding: The board of trustees has a committee structure that monitors aspects of the school. However, board reports and board minutes do not demonstrate that committees are discussing data.

Currently, the board of trustees has four active committees: program, facilities, finance, and governance. The committees meet and post their notes on the school’s website. Much of the board’s focus during the past few board meetings has been devoted to a review of the executive director’s performance and discussions about his contract. As noted above, board meeting and committee meeting notes lack discussion about data, particularly concerning the school’s academic program and performance.

Finding: With lower than expected enrollment, the school is again faced with budgetary constraints. The executive director has resigned such that the school can be financially solvent. In April 2012, GCACS pre-enrolled 212 students in grades Kindergarten through eight. On the first day of school, 132 students attended school. As of October 18, 2012, the day of the site visit, 123 students were enrolled at GCACS. The lower than expected enrollment has placed financial strain on the school.

With strained finances cited as the reason, the executive director resigned from his post effective October 20, 2012. The school developed a new budget based on the actual enrollment numbers in October 2012. Administrators reported that more cuts are expected, but could not clarify what areas of the budget would be trimmed.

Is the school environment physically safe and free from harassment and discrimination?

Finding: Parents and students reported a safe school environment.

Parents reported a safe school environment that was free from harassment and discrimination. Parents noted that teachers worked to create a safe and inviting environment. Students noted that they felt safe, but a few reported that their classes were not in control and that teachers could not effectively manage student behavior.

Are the physical facilities adequate for the program of the school?

Finding: The physical facilities meet the needs of the school community. The building is safe and clean. Space is available to implement the arts integration vision of the school.

The school facility was built to house GCACS. The school leases the facility. It is a bright, attractive building with adequate classroom space for the current academic program. Classrooms are clean, neat and provide ample space for students. The center of the facility is a large, well supplied art room. The school facility also houses a music room, a gymnasium, and office spaces for administrative staff.

Are professional staff members qualified by training and/or experience in the areas to which they are assigned?

Finding: GCACS teachers have a range of professional experience. The majority of GCACS teachers are new to the school.

A majority of GCACS’s teachers have more than six years of teaching experience. During the 2011-12 school year (the most recent year for which data are available), 71 percent were licensed in the area they taught and 100 percent of classes were taught by highly qualified teachers. As further discussed below, a majority of GCACS teachers are new to the school.

Years of Teaching Experience for Lead/Core Subject Teachers 2012-13

| | 1 Year | 2 Years | 3-5 Years | 6-10 Years | 11+ Years |
|--|---------|---------|-----------|------------|-----------|
| Teachers with this number of years teaching | 2 (16%) | 1 (8%) | 2 (16%) | 4 (33%) | 3 (25%) |
| Teachers with this number of years teaching at GCACS | 8 (67%) | 4 (33%) | - | NA | NA |

N = 12 (includes core academic teachers as well as arts teachers)

Finding: GCACS has experienced significant turnover of the teaching and administrative staff since its inception.

As noted in the table above, two-thirds of GCACS teachers are new to the school this year. None of the school’s founding teaching staff remain at the school. Feedback provided through the 2012 parent survey cited teacher turnover as a parental concern. When asked about teacher attrition, focus groups noted a few reasons such as: long commutes, a poor match, performance issues, or the negative press surrounding the school. Additionally, at the beginning of the 2011-12 school year, GCACS employed 18 teachers, this year with reduced enrollment (9 fewer students than last year), GCACS is currently employing 12 teachers.

In terms of administrators, since its inception, GCACS has employed three different individuals to serve as the head of school/director of education, three different individuals to serve as the special education administrator, and two different individuals to serve as the dean of students/director of students family and community.

Are school community members satisfied with the performance of the school?

Finding: School community members all reported that school efforts to communicate with parents have vastly improved this year. The school sends home weekly memos.

Parental feedback gathered by a 2012 survey showed that a majority of GCACS parents noted that communication was very weak during the 2011-12 school year. The parent focus group reported that communication had greatly improved during the current school year. They cited a new school website that accurately reported the school schedule and the Monday memo sent home by the director of education that gave adequate notice of school events and policies. Additionally, this year, GCACS has implemented EDLINE to communicate homework assignments via the internet.

Has the school met or is it making progress toward meeting the organizational viability objectives set out in its accountability plan?

Finding: GCACS met a third of the measures related to organizational viability contained in its accountability plan.

GCACS's draft accountability plan includes 6 objectives and 15 related measures concerning organizational viability. GCACS met three, partially met two, and did not meet five measures. The remaining five measures were not assessable due to lack of accurate data provided by the school. More information about the school's success in meeting the objectives and measures contained in its accountability plan can be found in Section VI, Accountability Plan Performance, of this report.

IV. Federal Programs Site Visit Report

Introduction

A federal programs review was conducted at the school on October 18, 2012 as part of the Charter School Office's ongoing accountability and review procedures for charter schools. The purpose of the visit is to gather information about current program operation and practices in regard to special education and English language learner education (ELL) and do develop background data in anticipation of the school's application for renewal of its charter at the conclusion of its current five year term. The federal programs component of the site visit activity consisted of a review of school IEP documentation, a focus group meeting with special education staff, including two teachers and the special education director, participation in a broader teacher focus group meeting, administrator interviews, and classroom observations.

Documentation reviewed prior to the start of the visit included:

- the special education and related services staff roster,
- the school's 2011-2012 Annual Report,
- the Year Two Site Visit Report from the Charter School Office and
- the state Commissioner's December 9, 2011 Memorandum detailing the Report on Conditions for the GCA charter.

Documents relevant to special education and ELL services made available at the time of the site visit included:

- the schedules of both special education teachers,
- the school's District Curriculum Accommodation Plan (DCAP);
- documents related to the Child Study Team process (Referral Checklist, parent notification letter, description of CST, referral forms, Classroom Intervention Checklist, and Student History);
- copies of multiple Title 1 reading assessment tools in four out of five core reading skill areas;
- copies of Parent and Teacher Special Education Survey tools used by the school; and
- teacher lesson plans.

A focus group teacher panel was convened that included eleven teachers drawn from the general and special education program at the school. A total of thirteen instructional spaces were observed, including eight general education inclusion classes (all grade levels) and five one-to-one pullout sessions where special education instruction was taking place. The federal programs site visitors for this review were Barry Barnett, Coordinator of Federal Programs in the charter school office, and Jane Haltiwanger, Federal Programs Specialist.

Special Education

Overview

GCACS is presently in its third year of operation, presently serving 24 students with special needs out of a total of 124 students, or 19% of the total population of the school. The program is led by a part time special education director who is a licensed special education administrator,

who oversees the staff and program operation. The needs of special education students are addressed by two full time special education instructional staff, and three aides who work in classrooms to provide support for students with high levels of need. In each case these paraprofessional services were part of the IEPs received for these students from the sending district. Related services are provided to 8 students who require speech and language services, as well as to 5 students who receive occupational therapy, and 4 students on IEPs receive counseling. Related services are provided in after school hours. No students require use of assistive technology or specialized transportation. The school has not held an extended school year summer program in the past, but is providing compensatory services now, and will be operating a summer program in the future. Some use of functional behavioral assessments and behavioral intervention plans was reported.

GCACS has just begun to implement a Child Study Team process and has not yet completed any initial evaluations resulting in the identification of disabilities. The disabilities of students on IEPs which are addressed through the school's special education support program include disabilities involving reading, language, communication, visual impairment, specific learning disabilities and health disorders, including attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder.

An additional six students with disabilities affecting a major life function who do not require special educational services receive accommodations under Section 504 disability accommodations plans developed pursuant to the requirements of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. The 504 accommodations plans developed at GCACS address conditions involving health issues (attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder), emotional impairments and anxiety. The school facility is fully programmatically accessible to persons with disabilities, as all facilities are located on the ground floor.

Findings

Finding: Regular and special education supports are available to support learning and success in the general education program.

A variety of educational supports is available for all students, and an inclusion model of education maintains diverse learners in the general education classroom to the maximum extent possible. Student needs are addressed through multiple layers of support. Special education teachers join general education teachers in the classroom two to four days per week in grades 4-8 for either math, reading or English instruction. Once each week "Homework club" meets for 30 minutes at midday to provide extra help in a small group setting, usually in math. Students may receive homework help during Wednesday afternoon "Question time" sessions. Parents and students access EDLINE as a means of online communication regarding homework assignments and grading. All students, including those with disabilities, benefit from a classroom environment that includes common elements of a blackboard configuration, (organized differently across classrooms). Social and emotional support groups are operated by the school's counselor who is licensed school adjustment counselor. Summer school services will become available in 2013, including special education services when specified in a student's IEP.

Finding: Faculty and administration report ongoing frequent communication in multiple venues, including active informal contact; structured co-planning time for special education and general education teachers was not included in teacher schedules.

A variety of forums exist for teacher collaboration and sharing of information, providing the opportunity to raise concerns about specific students as the needs arise. Meetings include grade level teams, which are the primary venue for teachers to seek assistance and input from their colleagues regarding curriculum planning, and weekly faculty meetings each Wednesday afternoon. Staff uniformly reported that communication between general and special education staff was good, and regular meetings facilitated ongoing information sharing amongst staff and between staff and administrators. Prep times for special education teachers and general education teachers are not coordinated to facilitate co-planning.

Currently GCACS has plans to use the DRA as a regular reading assessment. It was not clear whether teachers are collecting any formative assessment data on an ongoing and organized basis. Plans are progressing toward implementation of the DIBELS assessments as well as a set of assessments for the five reading components, (phonics, phonemic awareness, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension) in order to develop a Title 1 layered instructional system. Student portfolios of work have been collected, but were taken home by students in the past. In future portfolios will be maintained at school as an ongoing record of student progress.

Staff reported that lesson plans created for our visit were written using a common Teaching for Understanding template from Project Zero. Teachers reported that they select which lesson plans to submit to instructional leaders for review, and discuss lesson plans weekly in their team meetings. They also reported that during weekly team meetings regular and special education instructional staff have opportunity for coordination in lessons and implementation of accommodations. Instructional staff indicated that beyond weekly grade level team meetings, (the co-planning time available through the regular schedule) additional efforts need to be made at the individual teacher's initiative (before or after school) in order for coordinating to be accomplished.

Finding: GCACS operates a program of special education designed to promote individualized and effective instruction to all students with special needs. The program director and director of education provide oversight and feedback regarding teacher performance.

General education instructors and students services support staff reported that supervision of their performance in the classroom occurs as often as several times per week, with observer comments generally provided in written form. Teachers indicated that the feedback they receive is effective in supporting and improving their instructional techniques and classroom management skills. For the 2012-2013 school year, a part time special education director (.4 FTE) position has been filled with an experienced administrator. Two qualified special education teachers and three aides provide special education services. Classroom observations and student record reviews provide evidence that special education services are being appropriately delivered. Special education teachers generally provide inclusion support in a "one teach, one support" instructional model, instead of co-teaching. Special education teachers provide pull-out instruction for one to three students at a time, focused largely on ELA or reading instruction (two teachers with a 2:1 and 5:1 ratio of ELA to Math sessions). All pull-out sessions observed had a 1:1 teacher-student ratio. In general education classes, some classroom management issues were observed, which can affect special education students disproportionately when their accommodations specifically list limiting distractions, and the need for regular routines and structures.

Finding: Program self-evaluations have not yet been conducted for the special education or the ELL program.

The ELL program currently consists of use of the Home Language Survey to screen for need, and plans to build staff capacity to provide Sheltered Immersion Instruction and English Language Development, (neither currently needed). Because no ELL students are presently enrolled, a broader analysis of program operations and outcomes cannot be performed. Self-study plans for special education include a teacher and parent survey of program effectiveness. The planned self-evaluation does not currently include student performance data, nor an analysis of whether or not students have achieved the goals set forth in their IEPs.

English Language Learner education

GCACS operates identification and assessment systems to identify limited English proficient students. No ELL students presently attend GCACS. GCACS does not presently identify any staff member as a coordinator of the ELL program. The part time special education director is a MELA-O qualified instructor, and some staff has completed one or more Category trainings for ELL, though none has completed all four. There is no staff certified as an English as a Second Language teacher.

Finding: Procedures are in place to identify students who are potentially ELLs, however no ELL students have yet been identified. The school has not yet developed plans to implement ELD instruction, when needed, or to translate school notices and documents for parents who may need this service. No licensed ESL teacher is on staff.

ELL identification and screening mechanisms are in place at GCACS. At enrollment, parents are asked to complete a home language survey online which asks key questions regarding a student's language background and use. Currently all responses indicate only English in use in student homes, so that no further assessment of language proficiency has yet been required. The lack of program means there is no program coordinator to provide oversight ensuring that programmatic and administrative requirements are being met. The school has no teacher on staff who holds an ESL license, who would be available to provide English language development instruction as needed should an ELL students become enrolled.

Finding: Staff training in sheltering English language instruction for English language learners has not been completed. Plans are needed to train staff in use of the new state assessment, and for all staff to receive the SEI endorsement training.

It is not known which staff may have completed Category training in four areas of sheltering English language content instruction (SEI) for second-language learners needed to operate a program of sheltered English immersion. GCACS and Gloucester Public Schools are in the Year 2, 3, and 4 state cohort for receiving the new mandated SEI training, therefore plans to schedule this training have not yet been developed. Training in the new assessment, *Access for ELLs*, will be available in coming months, and GCACS will need to send a staff member to participate.

V. Detailed 2012 Accountability Data

Massachusetts School and District Profiles Gloucester Community Arts Charter School

2012 Accountability Data - Gloucester Community Arts Charter School

| Organization Information | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|-----------------|--------------------------|
| District: | Gloucester Community Arts Charter (District) (04480000) | School type: | Elementary-Middle School |
| School: | Gloucester Community Arts Charter School (04480205) | Grades served: | 02,03,04,05,06,07,08 |
| Region: | Northeast | Title I status: | Title I School (TA) |
| Accountability and Assistance Level: | Insufficient data | | |

[Summary > 2012](#)

| 2012 English Language Arts Proficiency Gap Narrowing | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|------------|-------------|----------|--------------------------|-----|------------|-----------------------|
| | 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 | 6 Year Goal | 2011 CPI (Baseline) | CPI Change | 2012 Target | 2012 CPI | Percentile in Grade Span | N | PPI Points | About the Data Rating |
| All Students | | 86.7 | 73.3 | 9.5 | 75.5 | 82.8 | 52 | 118 | 100 | Above Target |
| High needs | | 81.4 | 62.8 | 10.9 | 65.9 | 73.7 | 42 | 56 | 100 | Above Target |
| Low income | | 82.5 | 65.0 | 11.2 | 67.9 | 76.2 | 50 | 41 | 100 | Above Target |
| ELL and Former ELL | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Students w/disabilities | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 25 | - | - |
| Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat. | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Asian | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - |
| Afr. Amer./Black | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Hispanic/Latino | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | - | - |
| Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat. | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | - | - |
| Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl. | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| White | | 85.4 | 70.7 | 11.0 | 73.1 | 81.7 | 21 | 108 | 100 | Above Target |

| 2012 Mathematics Proficiency Gap Narrowing | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|------------|-------------|----------|--------------------------|-----|------------|-----------------------|
| | 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 | 6 Year Goal | 2011 CPI (Baseline) | CPI Change | 2012 Target | 2012 CPI | Percentile in Grade Span | N | PPI Points | About the Data Rating |
| All Students | | 74.9 | 49.7 | 5.8 | 53.9 | 55.5 | 6 | 119 | 100 | Above Target |
| High needs | | 71.0 | 41.9 | 2.3 | 46.7 | 44.2 | 5 | 56 | 50 | Improved Below Target |
| Low income | | 72.1 | 44.2 | 4.6 | 48.9 | 48.8 | 7 | 41 | 75 | On Target |
| ELL and Former ELL | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Students w/disabilities | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 25 | - | - |
| Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat. | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Asian | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 2 | - | - |
| Afr. Amer./Black | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Hispanic/Latino | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 4 | - | - |
| Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat. | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 3 | - | - |
| Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl. | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 1 | - | - |
| White | | 74.2 | 48.4 | 6.4 | 52.7 | 54.8 | 1 | 109 | 100 | Above Target |

[Summary > 2012](#)

| 2012 Science Proficiency Gap Narrowing | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|----------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|------------|-------------|----------|--------------------------|----|------------|-----------------------|
| | 0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 | 6 Year Goal | 2011 CPI (Baseline) | CPI Change | 2012 Target | 2012 CPI | Percentile in Grade Span | N | PPI Points | About the Data Rating |
| All Students | | 82.8 | 65.5 | -6.0 | 68.4 | 59.5 | 35 | 42 | 0 | Declined |
| High needs | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 19 | - | - |
| Low income | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 13 | - | - |
| ELL and Former ELL | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Students w/disabilities | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 11 | - | - |
| Amer. Ind. or Alaska Nat. | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Asian | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Afr. Amer./Black | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Hispanic/Latino | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Multi-race, Non-Hisp./Lat. | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Nat. Haw. or Pacif. Isl. | | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| White | | - | - | - | - | - | - | 42 | - | - |

VI. Accountability Plan Performance

| <u>A. Faithfulness to Charter</u> | 2011-12 Performance | Notes |
|---|----------------------------|---|
| Objective: The school is faithful to the mission, vision and educational philosophy defined in the charter application and any subsequent approved amendment(s). | | |
| Measure: Annually, a minimum of 75% of students will respond that they agree or strongly agree with positive statements about their academic engagement on the Academic Engagement Survey. | NA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school’s 2011-12 annual report states that surveys were not completed during the 2011-12 school year. |
| Measure: Annually, a minimum of 75% of teachers will respond that they agree or strongly agree with positive statements about the quality of student discussion on the Quality of Student Discussion Survey of the instructional section of the Consortium on Chicago School Research , 2007. | NA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school’s 2011-12 annual report states that surveys were not completed during the 2011-12 school year. |
| Measure: Annually, 75% of all students in grades 2-8 will participate in at least one service learning project and document their experiences and its personal and academic relevance. | Partially Met | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school’s 2011-12 annual report states that all students in grades 2-8 participated in community service at the school and a limited number of activities in the Gloucester community. |
| Measure: Starting in 2012-2013, 70% percent of returning students will have a service learning project assessed at a level 3 or above on the Utah Education Network Service Learning Rubric. http://www.uen.org/Rubric/rubric.cgi?rubric_id=359 | NA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This measure will be assessed during the 2012-13 school year. |
| Measure: Annually, a minimum of 75% of students will respond that they agree or strongly agree with positive statements to the following surveys: Peer Support for Academic Work, and Student Sense of Belonging taken from the Learning Climate Sections of the, Consortium on Chicago School Research 2007, as applied to their experience at GCA. | NA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school’s 2011-12 annual report states that surveys were not completed during the 2011-12 school year. |
| Objective: The school establishes an academic program that includes the pedagogical approach, curriculum, assessment, and other unique elements defined in the charter application and any subsequent approved amendment(s). | | |

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| <p>Measure: Starting in 2012-2013, student portfolios will be reviewed every two years by the Director of Education and Portfolio Review Committee and, in the aggregate, indicate that 70% of student projects demonstrate: cross-disciplinary learning, arts integration, and demonstrate proficiency or mastery on the rubrics established for the given content area.</p> | <p>NA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ This measure will be assessed during the 2012-13 school year. |
| <p><u>B. Academic Program</u></p> | <p>2011-12 Performance</p> | <p>Notes</p> |
| <p>Objective: Students at the school demonstrate proficiency, or progress toward meeting proficiency targets on state standards, as measured by the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) exams in all subject areas and at all grade levels tested for accountability purposes.</p> | | |
| <p>Measure: Using the 2011MCAS scores as the baseline, each cohort of GCA students' MCAS scores will improve each year in relation to the cohort's previous years performance.</p> | <p>Partially Met</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ From 2011 to 2012, ELA proficiency improved in grades four and six, was level in grade five, and declined slightly in grade seven. ▪ In mathematics, from 2011 to 2012 student scores increased in grades four and slightly in seven. Student scores fell in grades five and six. |
| <p>Measure: For each annual administration of the MCAS, students enrolled at the school for 2 years or more will achieve a score on Math and ELA MCAS equal to or better than the scores for demographically equivalent peers in the state and Gloucester district schools.</p> | <p>NA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GCACS did not provide the data to assess this measure. |
| <p>Objective: The school achieves and maintains a median student growth percentile (SGP) of 40 or higher in the aggregate and for all statistically significant sub-groups in all subject areas tested for accountability purposes.</p> | | |
| <p>Measure: For students enrolled at the school for 2 years or more the aggregate median growth percentile will be 50 or higher in ELA and math on the MCAS.</p> | <p>NA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GCACS did not provide the data to assess this measure. |
| <p>Objective: Student performance is strong and demonstrates improvement on internally developed assessments of academic achievement.</p> | | |

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| <p>Measure: By the end of the 2011-2012 school year 75% of all returning students who have been with the school for a least two years will earn a proficient or master achievement rating in 75% of their academic areas, including English, mathematics, science, and social studies.</p> | <p>NA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GCACS did not provide the data to assess this measure. |
| <p>Measure: By the end of the 2012 school year at least 75% of all returning students will earn a proficient or master achievement rating in 70% of their academic areas on their report card.</p> | <p>Met</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school’s 2011-12 annual report states that 75% of students met this measure. |
| <p>Objective: Teachers are provided with feedback and guidance that leads to improved instructional practice and student achievement. The school implements a professional development plan that effectively addresses the needs of teachers. Teachers are provided with structures for collaboration. The school establishes a professional climate resulting in a purposeful learning environment and reasonable rates of retention for school administrators, teachers and staff.</p> | | |
| <p>Measure: At least 75% of staff working at the school for two years or more have improved instructional practices and student achievement as measured by annual teacher evaluations and an annual increase in the median Student Growth Percentile (SGP) in ELA, math, and/or science for grades 4 and above who have been enrolled in the school for at least two years.</p> | <p>NA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GCACS did not provide the data to assess this measure. |
| <p>Measure: For grades 3 and below (students who do not get an SGP), students will see a 10% improvement on guided reading level as measured using the Developmental Reading Assessment (DRA).</p> | <p>NA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school has not yet administered the DRA. |
| <p>Measure: At least 75% of teachers indicate on the annual survey that the professional development plan effectively addresses their professional needs.</p> | <p>NA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ GCACS reports that 70% of teachers indicated the professional development addressed their needs. However, the teacher survey provided to site visitors did not contain a question that matched the measure. It is |

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| | | unclear where GCACS obtained their data on teacher satisfaction with professional development. |
| Measure: At least 85% of teachers indicate on an annual survey that they have collaborated with other members of the faculty. | NA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The teacher survey provided to site visitors did not contain a question that matched the measure. It is unclear where GCACS obtained their data on teacher rates of collaboration. |
| Measure: By 2012 at least 30% of staff that receive good or outstanding evaluations are retained for 2 years or more. By 2014 at least 40% of staff who receive good or outstanding evaluations are retained for 2 years or more. By 2015 at least 50% of staff who receive good or outstanding evaluations are retained for 2 years or more. | Met | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Of the 12 staff that received good ratings, 5 were retained, a rate of 42%. |
| <u>C. Organizational Viability</u> | 2011-12 Performance | Notes |
| Objective: The school develops an annual budget that can be sustained by enrollment and is in support of student academic achievement. The school demonstrates a history of positive net assets, adequate cash flow to sustain operations and support the academic program, and consistently operates within budget. The school's annual independent audit is free of material or repeated findings. | | |
| Measure: The school's annual budget is sustained by its enrollment. | Partially Met | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For the 2011-12 school year, as well as the 2012-13 school year, the school's budget had to be amended to sustain operation. |
| Measure: Each year, the school demonstrates a history of positive net assets, adequate cash flow to sustain operations and support the academic program, and consistently operates within budget. | Not Met | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Personnel cuts in FY10 and FY11 hampered the school's ability to support the academic program as intended in the charter application. |

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| <p>Measure: There is an absence of material or repeated audit findings in annual audits by qualified independent auditor</p> | <p>Not Met</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The FY11 audit contained material findings and weaknesses pertaining to MTRS contributions and the school's monthly closing checklist. |
| <p>Objective: The board of trustees and school leadership implement effective structures and systems to enable responsible fiscal oversight of the school. The board of trustees demonstrates long-term fiscal oversight through appropriate planning processes.</p> | | |
| <p>Measure: Minutes of relevant subcommittees of the board demonstrate quarterly review of the school's financial status</p> | <p>Met</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The board's finance committee reviewed financial reports nine times during the 2011-12 school year. |
| <p>Objective: The school implements the student recruitment, retention, and enrollment process intended in the charter, in the school's recruitment and retention plans, and as defined by statute and regulations.</p> | | |
| <p>Measure: A wait-list of at least 10% of the target enrollment for any given year is maintained.</p> | <p>Not Met</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school did not have a waitlist during the 2011-12 school year. |
| <p>Objective: The school defines and delineates clear roles and responsibilities among board and staff.</p> | | |
| <p>Measure: All trustees and school leadership (Executive Director, Director of Education) will participate in an annual orientation that includes a review of best practices in the critical partnership in leadership between the board and school leaders.</p> | <p>Met</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The board engaged an external consultant to evaluate the board and provide a workshop for board members in November 2011. School leaders did participate. |
| <p>Measure: The partnership in leadership between the board and the Executive Director will be evaluated annually. The evaluations of the board's effectiveness (completed by each member of the board and the Executive Director) will indicate that a majority of the board and the Executive Director agree (a rating of 4 or higher) with positive statements evaluating the key areas of board work including communication, collaboration, decision-making, sound financial management, and strategic planning.</p> | <p>Not Met</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school did not evaluate the partnership in leadership between the board and the executive director. |

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| <p>Measure: The annual evaluation of the Executive Director will indicate that a majority of the board rate the Executive Director's performance in the areas defined has met or exceeded expectations (a rating of 3 or better) in a majority of the areas evaluated.</p> | <p>NA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school's annual report did not report on this measure. |
| <p>Objective: The board of trustees makes use of best practices to hire (an) effective school leader(s). The board of trustees regularly and systematically assesses the performance of (the) school leader(s) against clearly defined goals and makes effective and timely use of the evaluations. The board of trustees operates with a clear set of goals for the school and has developed a set of tools for understanding progress toward meeting those goals. The board of trustees manages the school in a manner that ensures academic success, organizational viability, and faithfulness to the terms of its charter.</p> | | |
| <p>Measure: At the beginning of each school year new and returning board members will participate in a Trustee Orientation to review and discuss best practice in governance and Open Meeting Law.</p> | <p>Met</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As noted above, all board members participated in an orientation and review of OML in November 2011. |
| <p>Measure: The annual surveys completed by all members of the Board and the Executive Director indicate that they have reviewed, understand, and agree with statements identifying current best practice in governance and Open Meeting Law.</p> | <p>NA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school did not provide evidence to assess this measure. |
| <p>Measure: At the beginning of each academic year, annual goals will be agreed for the Executive Director and for the Board. The Executive Director and the Chair of the Board will provide quarterly updates on progress.</p> | <p>Partially Met</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The annual report states that in November 2011 the executive director and the board agreed upon goals. There is no evidence that these goals were systematically tracked throughout the school year. |
| <p>Measure: In the annual year-end evaluations completed by board members and the Executive Director, the majority of the board and the Executive Director agree that 80% of the goals defined for the ED, and board) have been achieved.</p> | <p>NA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school did not provide evidence to assess this measure. |

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| <p>Objective: The school involves parents/guardians as partners in the education of their children. Families and students are satisfied with the school's program.</p> | | |
| <p>Measure: Annually, at least 80% of parents or guardians with students eligible to return, indicate an intent to return to the school.</p> | <p>NA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school did not provide evidence to assess this measure. |
| <p>Measure: Results of the annual Parent Survey will indicate that at least 80% of parents are satisfied or very satisfied with the program offered by the school.</p> | <p>NA</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The school did not provide evidence to assess this measure. |
| <p>Measure: Results of the annual parent survey will indicate that at least 80% of parents are satisfied or very satisfied with the level of communication with parents.</p> | <p>Not Met</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Results of the annual parent survey overwhelmingly pointed to communication as an area of weakness for the school in 2011-12. |