



Massachusetts Department of
ELEMENTARY & SECONDARY
EDUCATION

Global Learning Charter Public School Year Six Site Visit Report

New Bedford, MA
June 2013

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School Profile

<i>Global Learning Charter Public School (GLCPS)</i>			
Type of Charter	Commonwealth	Location	New Bedford
Regional/Non-Regional	Non-Regional	Districts in Region	NA
Year Opened	2007	Current Enrollment	485
Maximum Enrollment	500	Students on Waitlist	211
Chartered Grade Span	5-12	Current Grade Span	5-12

Mission

“The mission of Global Learning Charter Public School is to ensure that all students achieve academic excellence, are ready for the rigors of higher education, and master essential skills that prepare them for the economic, social, and civic challenges of a 21st century, global society. Our central mission is to teach and inspire the mind, body, and spirit of our students so that they can succeed in any cultural or academic setting.”

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	66	14%
Asian	3	0.6%
Hispanic	120	25%
Native American		
White	274	56.5%
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander		
Multi-race, non-Hispanic	22	4.5%
Special education	70	14%
Limited English proficient	6	1%
Low income	354	73%

The following participants conducted the site visit on June 6, 2013:

- Alison Bagg, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (ESE)
- Barry Barnett, ESE
- Shay Edmond, ESE
- Joanna Laghetto, ESE
- Jim McAuliffe, Class Measures
- Ellie Rounds, ESE

Before the visit, the site visit team reviewed the school’s 2011-12 annual report, the 2012 Summary of Review, 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 25 classroom observations and interviewed trustees (6), administrators (9), teachers (6), families (0), and students (8).

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. Review of Progress Made Towards Meeting the Conditions Imposed

In January 2012, the Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education (Commissioner) renewed the charter of GLCPS with conditions. This section of the report lists the conditions and GLCPS's progress towards meeting the conditions.

Condition 1: By December 31, 2013, Global Learning Charter Public School must demonstrate academic success in mathematics and English language arts (ELA) by:

- a. meeting academic growth targets in mathematics and ELA, as established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education,
- b. by demonstrating improvement in absolute CPI scores, and
- c. by meeting academic goals and objectives established in the school's accountability plan.

Status: In progress. As detailed below, in Section III C of this report, GLCPS did not meet academic growth targets in 2012; it is classified at Level 3: among the lowest 20 percent of Massachusetts schools. In comparison with 2011, the school's 2012 MCAS CPI scores declined in ELA and increased only slightly in Mathematics. Science scores increased with a nearly five point gain between 2011 and 2012. As discussed in the Academic Success section of this report, in 2012 GLPCS did not meet a majority of the measures related to academic success in its accountability plan.

Administrators told the site visit team (team) that many students entered GLPCS from the New Bedford Schools with significant skill deficits and background weaknesses. Administrators said that they regarded GLCPS as a Level 3 school in a Level 4 district. They said that during the summer of 2013 the school would attempt to address this by enrolling students entering grade 5 in a summer academy. The academy program staff would assess students' strengths and needs in order to inform their grade 5 teachers. Administrators and teachers said that while the school could do nothing to change the prior education of its students, the longer students remained at GLCPS the better they performed, as demonstrated

by the improving trends in MCAS tests proficiency rates from grade 5 to grade 8 and from grade 8 to grade 10.

Condition 2: By December 31, 2012, Global Learning Charter Public School must establish and operate a program of English language learner education in a manner consistent with the requirements of Massachusetts General Laws chapter 71A and all other applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

Status: In progress, not met by deadline

Progress has been made towards the establishment of an ELL program.

According to documentation and stakeholder interviews, in 2012-2013 the school hired a part-time (.60) ELL teacher whose licensure is pending. At the time of the site visit the ESL teacher had taken and passed the MTEL but had not yet received licensure from the Department. Subsequent to the visit, school administrators reported that the teacher had obtained her licensure. The teacher works three days each week under the supervision of the director of student, family and community life. The ELL teacher renders 60 to 90 minutes of English language development instruction each week to identified students during their focus periods and assisted ELL students in their content area classes “to make the content accessible to their language levels.” Interviewees told the team that because the position was only part-time, the ELL teacher tried to merge English language development with sheltering English immersion instruction. The ELL teacher will work approximately 80 hours during the summer of 2013. This time will be devoted to curriculum development with other teachers, program planning and student assessment. The school reported that in the 2013-14 school year it intends to make the ELL teacher a full-time position and place it under the supervision of the director of curriculum. This year, the ELL teacher met with grade level teams weekly to discuss students’ progress and needs and consult with the teachers on appropriate modifications of content or requirements. In addition, during one period each week the ELL teacher co-taught a grade 5 mathematics class in which ELL students were enrolled. Interviewees expressed the view that the New Bedford Schools had not identified some students requiring ELL services and released others from the ELL program who did not meet exit criteria. They said that they some former ELL students were found to require services when GLPCS teachers referred them for re-assessment.

According to a checklist of requirements, while GLCPS now maintains records for ELL students, but the school’s documentation is incomplete. The school has not yet developed an ELD curriculum and is still in the process of writing policies and procedures for the program. Further, the school has not yet conducted a self-evaluation of the effectiveness of the program based on student outcomes. Seven GLCPS teachers were participating in an SEI endorsement course at the time of the review.

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: Focus group interviews and classroom observations demonstrated that the school is implementing the educational model as outlined in its charter.

The mission and vision of GLPCS is as follows:

The mission of Global Learning Charter Public School (GLCPS) is to ensure that all of our students achieve academic excellence, are ready for the rigors of higher education, and master essential skills that prepare them for the economic social and civic challenges of a 21st century, global society. At GLCPS essential skills include: technology, literacy, public speaking, global citizenship and arts exploration.

Our vision is to create a unique educational environment in which student success is measured beyond standardized tests so that students demonstrate academic excellence and mastery of essential skills. We have created a school where the development of standards and frameworks for school accountability are matched by:

- preparing young people for the new global multicultural technology-rich society and economy;
- teaching methods that ensure that the learning needs of students are met;
- a school culture that promotes personal qualities of initiative, responsibility, and community connectedness.

Additionally, we intend to share our best practices with colleagues in New Bedford and beyond through a variety of dissemination opportunities.

In interviews with the team, trustees, administrators and teachers articulated essential components of the mission and vision statements, expressed the school’s pedagogical approach and described the manner of implementation. One trustee said that the school’s mission was to make students successful by preparing them for college and further education and to achieve the highest possible success rate. Another added that learning at GLPCS was for “a purpose meaningful to the individual student” and rooted in the community. The trustees were clear that while the school addressed core subject proficiency as measured by the MCAS tests, its 21st Century curriculum encompassed life, career, communication, creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, innovation, media and technology skills. One trustee said that the board did not consider the MCAS tests the sole measure of the school’s success and questioned the use of curricular time for MCAS tests improvement. However, neither the trustees nor school administrators were specific about how the school measured student acquisition of 21st Century skills. The trustees said that they looked at graduation rates, SAT scores, grades 8 to 9 attrition rates, parent and teacher survey results and digital portfolios as indicators of success, but they did not articulate a clear process for analysis and use of these data for program improvement.

Trustees and administrators told the team that GLPCS was committed to arts education and described the school’s programs. They noted that the physical education program included instruction in Tang Soo Do in keeping with the school’s global perspective. Trustees,

administrators and teachers pointed to the Presentations of Learning (POLs) as culminating activities that embodied many key elements of the school's mission including literacy, technology, and public speaking. GLPCS referred to POLs as the hallmark of the educational program in its 2011-2012 Annual Report. In most classes observed by the team, students were preparing for their final POLs. According to interviewees and documentation, GLPCS shared its best practices extensively, through workshops, presentations and graduate level courses.

Administrators characterized technology as "truly embedded" in the curriculum and the team saw students using laptop computers for learning purposes in all of the classrooms observed. Administrators also referred to civic engagement as an important aspect of the curriculum and described student internships and service projects that they said built community awareness and responsibility. Teachers said that the mission of the school was to teach all students and described how individualized instruction, cooperative learning, and project-based learning accommodated a variety of student learning styles and needs. They added that students also received targeted instruction based on their needs during a daily focus period.

GLPCS students interviewed by the review team were less clear about the mission of the school. In a focus group, one student said that the school prepared students for public speaking. Another said, and others agreed, that the school tried to help each student meet college entry requirements and have a successful career. Administrators told the team that the first cohort of GLPCS would graduate from college in 2013 and there was a staff member responsible for conducting a follow-up study to determine how well the school had prepared them for college.

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

Finding: In January 2013, GLPCS was granted an amendment to alter its organizational structure to allow both the executive director and business manager to report directly to the board of trustees. A number of other school level positions were also created prior to the 2012-13 school year.

In an interview with the team, the trustees said that they had been preoccupied with financial concerns in 2011-2012 because of poor accounting by the former business manager. According to the minutes of the July 2012 board of trustees meeting, financial reports "contained many errors, were disorganized, changed dramatically from one month to the next and were often not received by the chair or the board until the night before the day of the board meeting."

According to interviewees and documentation, the board established a subcommittee to hire a new director of business and finance. The position was posted twice before it was finally offered to a candidate in July 2012. When this candidate rescinded acceptance of the offer, the board offered the position to the assistant to the director of business and finance who had been acting as interim director. Because this person was the son of the executive director, the board sought legal advice to avoid a conflict of interest. On advice of counsel, the board voted that the director of business and finance would report directly to the board, specifically the treasurer, who would be responsible for evaluating his performance. The board submitted this change as an amendment to its organizational charter which was approved in January 2013. In an interview with the team, the board treasurer described the process for supervision and evaluation of the director of business and finance: The treasurer meets monthly with the director to review procedures and accounts. The director's evaluation consists of a mid-year and an end-of-year review. These reviews are based on data submitted by the director to the treasurer and

information solicited by the treasurer from others. The trustees said that while the evaluation was not currently based on goals, school finances had gone from “dire and disturbing” to “orderly and controlled” under the new director.

The leadership structure of the school includes middle school and high school principals, a director of instructional technology and a director of student, family and community life all of whom report to the executive director. According to documentation and interviews, the school eliminated department heads and instituted the position of director of curriculum in 2012-2013. When asked, the trustees said that this change was intended to put one person in charge of both the new educator evaluation model and the entire curriculum, spanning grades 5 through 12. Administrators said that the position would ensure curricular consistency and teachers said that it would keep “everyone on the same page.” The team found that the responsibilities of the curriculum director were many and wide-ranging. According to administrators, these responsibilities included curriculum design and revision, assessment, Response to Intervention, Title I, professional development and supervision of the mathematics coach and some other staff members, and teacher evaluation. They added that beginning in 2013-2014 the curriculum director would also take charge of the ELL program.

In 2012, the school also instituted the position of director of education and community outreach. As described by administrators, the role includes maintaining and creating relationships with other schools and the larger community, public relations and development. In July 2012, the school changed the title of the special education coordinator to director of special education and converted the role to an administrative position under the jurisdiction of the executive director.

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

Finding: GLCPS has not met a majority of the measures related to faithfulness to charter in its accountability plan.

GLCPS has reported against an accountability plan that was approved in June 2008. The accountability plan contains five objectives and five measures related to faithfulness to charter. The school has met one out of five measures. GLCPS met the measure related to sharing of best practices and partially met the measures related to public speaking, proficiency in the standards in the Massachusetts History and Social Sciences Frameworks, and course requirements in the arts. The school was unable to assess the measure related to knowledge and use of technology because of a change in the mode of technology instruction. More information about the school’s success in meeting the objectives and measures contained in its accountability plan can be found in Section V, 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: The curriculum is stored in physical binders and consists of scope and sequence documents, unit plans, and supporting materials. Curriculum documentation was either aligned

to the Common Core or the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework. True to the school's philosophy to allow teachers authority over curriculum, the format and content of curriculum varied.

According to administrators, allowing teachers authority over the curriculum ensures their investment and commitment. Teachers told the review team that they developed units using an Understanding by Design (UBD) process, beginning with the learning outcomes and working backwards to the learning experiences. When asked, teachers said that the curriculum binders contained a mixture of "inherited, revised and newly created" units that they used to plan their daily lessons. High school teachers said that they mapped out their own courses, since no two teachers taught the same course.

In an examination of the contents of the curriculum binders by grade and domain, the team found some common elements and many inconsistencies. For example, grade 5 mathematics contained a scope and sequence for the entire year and was aligned to the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework (MCF), but not the Common Core; grade 6 mathematics was similar in content to grade 5, but aligned to both the MCF and the Common Core; and grade 7 mathematics was aligned to the Common Core, but did not have a scope and sequence. Grade 5 ELA had a pacing guide, a scope and sequence for the entire year and was aligned to the MCF, but not the Common Core; grade 7 ELA had a scope and sequence and was aligned to the Common Core and contained well-organized, detailed lessons and notes for teachers; grade 8 ELA had unit plans and lesson support materials, was aligned to the Common Core and addressed the eight traits of writing in embedded lessons; and grade 10 ELA had a scope and sequence, was aligned to the Common Core and contained well-organized unit plans.

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

Finding: Teachers and administrators reported that curriculum is updated in an ongoing basis. The director of curriculum reviews documentation that is submitted weekly and provides teachers with feedback.

Administrators described curriculum review and revision as a continuous, fluid process conducted primarily by teachers. Administrators determined the process, format and the standards to be addressed, and teachers were primarily responsible for determining the content and learning experiences. Interviewees told the team that teachers submitted lesson plans consisting of topics, objectives, and assessments weekly to the curriculum director. According to teachers in a focus group, the curriculum director provided detailed comments and suggestions which they considered helpful.

B. Instruction and Learning

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

Finding: In a majority of classrooms observed, the instructional practices were consistent with the school's description. A majority of classes observed were student centered, integrated technology, and included project based, collaborative and independent learning.

Administrators described the school's instructional practice as student-centered and said that the team would observe pedagogical approaches including differentiation of instruction, project based learning and integrated technology. In the majority of the 25 classes observed by the team, students were working independently or in pairs or groups on POLs, using laptop computers as a

tool and resource. Students demonstrated skill and ease with Google Docs, webquests and flashdrive/smartphones. In classes not devoted to POLs, students were sometimes observed to be working in pairs and cooperative groups, but most of these classes were teacher-led. Students in these classes usually worked on the same tasks using the same materials and the expectations for participation and work were uniform.

The team observed a total of 25 classes, 20 at the middle school level and five at the high school level. In interviews, administrators described the learning environment for the POLs as “controlled chaos,” explaining that the noise and activity levels corresponded with the task requirements and demonstrated high student engagement. In the classes observed by the team where students were completing their POLs, learning was student-centered and project based, but instruction was differentiated only to the extent that students were working at their own rates on self-selected topics. The role of the teacher determined the effectiveness of these instructional practices. In seven of twelve observed classes which were focused on POLs, teachers actively monitored students and made them accountable for the using their time purposefully. The teachers rotated around the room asking students to explain what they were doing and what they planned to accomplish during the period, answered their questions, redirected students who strayed from task, offered suggestions, and periodically gave time checks. In one class, students practiced presenting their POLs and the teacher rated their presentation according to a rubric, giving praise and constructive suggestions.

Teachers provided little or no structure in nine of the classes observed. All nine of these classes were at the middle school level. It should be noted that not all of these classes were devoted to preparation for the Presentations of Learning. For example, one teacher stood in an area of the room silently observing during the entire observation time, even when some students appeared to be using their computers for other than leaning purposes. Another teacher chatted amiably with students about school events and activities, distracting them from their work. In these classrooms students had independence, but accomplished little.

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

Finding: Based on classroom observations, the school and classroom environment is orderly. There were a few observed examples of student non-compliance or disruptive behavior in the middle school. The high school campus had a quiet and respectful atmosphere.

The school environment was orderly, without being regimented and most students appeared to be self-regulating, responsive to teachers’ requests and instructions and considerate of each other. Students used materials and equipment, including technology, appropriately and in 16 of 20 classes productively. Middle school students were observed to be talking animatedly with each other as they ate lunch at long tables in the cafeteria. Three adults supervised by walking from table to table and pleasantly interacting with the students. The students seemed to know and abide by the routines for disposing of trash, cleaning of the tables and lining up to leave. Students at the high school campus demonstrated seriousness of purpose, politeness and maturity. In one observed high school class, students responded thoughtfully to the teacher’s questions and posed questions of their own, demonstrating curiosity and insight.

Students were observed to be non-compliant and disrespectful in three middle school classes observed by the team. Two of these classes were focus periods which the school has designed to provide students daily targeted instruction in ELA and mathematics based on their strengths and

needs. In one focus period, students were observed to be shouting at each other and the teacher, listening to music, conversing about topics unrelated to learning and leaving the room to collect in the hallway. In another focus period, many students were off-task and loud and the teacher did little to redirect them. The four or five students who were attempting to complete assigned work under these conditions appeared distracted and annoyed.

Finding: Most observed student to student and teacher to student interactions were cordial and respectful.

Students were observed to be respectful to each other in both structured and unstructured situations. Students proceeding down the stairways quickly moved over to accommodate students ascending and often smiled at them in greeting. Students held the doors for each other and one student was observed asking another if she needed some help carrying a load of books and folders. In the middle school, students celebrating classmates' successes and helped each other in focus groups. High school students had collegial relationships with their peers and teachers.

Teachers addressed students by name and listened attentively to what they said. Requests and instructions were delivered clearly and neutrally by most teachers and redirection was given without personalizing. In six middle school classrooms, teachers did not exert appropriate control or provide sufficient structure and students tested the limits with escalating misbehavior such as shouting, using the computer to play games or check websites and leaving the room without teacher permission.

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

Finding: A range of student engagement was observed. In the majority of classes observed instruction was student centered and self-directed, but it was noted that not all students were engaged in a meaningful way. The expectations for student independent work were not always explicit. Teacher monitoring of independent work varied, and did not always result in a purposeful and productive classroom.

Students were observed to be actively engaged in learning in 10 of the 25 classes visited by the team. These classes ranged from grade 5 to grade 11. In these classes, teachers provided guidelines, expectations and structures for collaborative and cooperative work and discovery learning. For example, in one observed class, students worked in small groups to define vocabulary words, then shared their definitions with the whole class. In another class, students worked cooperatively according to a plan and shared tools to construct a birdhouse. In a third class, students wrote answers to comprehension and opinion questions based on an article they had read, shared their responses in pairs and finally with the whole class. In one class, the teacher asked students how they would show that we were good audience members and discussed their responses before the students made practice POL presentations. In all of these classes, the teachers closely monitored students' independent and group work, reminded them of time limits and expectations and quickly redirected students who were off-task.

In the 11 classrooms where student engagement was found to be moderate, teachers, delivered instruction without involving students, or required them to work independently on the same task. In one such class, the teacher lectured without pausing to pose or ask for questions while the students passively took notes. In another class, the teacher solved a complex problem at the board without soliciting student participation at each stage of the solution. In a third class, students completed a worksheet at their desks while the teacher circulated to answer individual

questions. Many students with questions stopped working until the teacher was able to reach them.

In the four classes where student engagement was found to be low, teachers formed student groups without providing guidelines and expectations or did not closely monitor students' self-directed, independent project work. In these classes, many students were neither purposeful nor held accountable and they accomplished very little. In one observed class the teacher allowed students to work on their POLs independently and waited for students to raise their hands when they needed help. Students in this class were observed to be talking to each other about social plans and getting on to websites unrelated to their work. In another class, the teacher instructed students to turn and talk to each other about a question the teacher had posed, but it was clear that the students did not know how to do this appropriately because their conversations quickly drifted to other topics.

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

Finding: GLPCS offers a range of supports for diverse learners; however, provisions beyond the school day and year are limited and the daily focus period at the middle school did not appear to be effective according to the team's observations.

The school has a full-time director of special education, four full-time special educators and three paraprofessionals at the middle school level, one full-time special educator and a paraprofessional at the high school level and a part-time ELL teacher who works mostly at the middle school level. Administrators and teachers told the team that students receive specially designed instruction in accordance with their Individualized Educational Programs in the resource room at the middle school during the daily focus period time or during study periods at the high school.

In interviews, administrators referred to in-class accommodations for students enrolled in special education or under the provisions of 504 plans. It was difficult for the team to ascertain the extent to which classroom accommodations were being provided to students on account of the fact that the team's visit coincided with the final Presentation of Learning preparations activities and many students were working independently and at their own levels. The team did observe paraprofessionals assisting in several classes, and some students were using assistive devices such as a bouncy ball seat and a rocking chair.

The ELL teacher offers both in-class assistance and pull-out language development classes for identified students. After a planning workshop in 2012-2013, GLPCS instituted a co-teaching model at the middle school level with the ELL teacher and a regular education mathematics teacher. Interviewees said that the feedback had been positive.

GLPCS offers a daily focus period at the middle school where, according to interviewees, students are grouped for targeted instruction according to their assessed needs. The focus period is devoted to ELA and mathematics on alternating weeks. The team was concerned that observed focus group sessions appeared to be unstructured and unproductive for the students enrolled. Both the student expectations and the role of the teachers were unclear.

GLPCS offers a summer school program to help students remediate skill weaknesses in reading and mathematics. The school also offers a voluntary after-school tutorial program from 4:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. using high school students as tutors and a voluntary before-school peer tutorial

program from 7:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. where students tutor other students. Transportation to these programs is the responsibility of parents and families.

GLPCS began a looping program through which students remain with their classmates and teachers for a second year. The program was in effect in 2012-2013 for students moving from grade 5 to grade 6 and from grade 7 to grade 8. According to administrators, looping is intended to increase consistency, build relationships and position teachers to use instructional time more effectively and efficiently in the second year based on their prior knowledge of students' learning styles' and needs.

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

Finding: The school is fully implementing the Massachusetts model of evaluation for teachers, administrators, and the executive director. The evaluation system is well understood by all stakeholders and was reported to be labor intensive, but ultimately useful in providing feedback about instructional practice.

According to administrators and teachers, GLPCS is fully implementing the Massachusetts educator evaluation model for teachers and administrators. The process began in August 2012 during the staff orientation with a presentation to teachers on the new teacher evaluation procedure and continued with an in-service presentation on SMART goals conducted by school administrators in September. Teachers subsequently formulated their SMART goals for administrative approval. According to the process, teachers were observed frequently through informal walkthroughs and at least three times formally, including a summative evaluation. Teachers also prepared a portfolio which was submitted in June for administrative review. The team examined several teacher portfolios and found that they were extensively documented and filled with detailed administrators' comments on Post-it notes. Administrators and teachers described the process as exhausting, but useful. They added that the new evaluation model had helped to improve instruction by motivating teachers to become more student-centered. One teacher said that the process had helped her to become more reflective and better organized.

According to the calendar, GLPCS offered monthly professional development on six half-days from September 2012 through April 2013. The topics included a series on Writing Across the Curriculum in mathematics, science and social studies and a series on Differentiation of Instruction. The university-based presenters of the Differentiation workshop offered additional embedded professional development by coming on site to coach teachers. Teachers said that this has been helpful. The school's other professional development topics included Developing POLs, Diversity Resources for the Advisory Program, and Urban Learners Workshop. In addition, seven GLCPS teachers were invited to participate in an SEI teacher endorsement class offered by the New Bedford Public Schools. In a focus group, teachers told the review team that they were well-supported with professional development opportunities.

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

Finding: The school noted that the GMADE and Gates-McGinitie are administered twice each year and used to place students in their focus period. However, it is unclear how the data from the two assessments noted above are used to improve student achievement.

GLCPS administers the Gates McGinitie Reading Tests to all students in grades 5 through 12 and the Group Mathematics and Diagnostic Assessment (GMADE) to all students in grades 5 through 10 twice each year in the fall and spring. Administrators told the review team that the fall Gates McGinitie and GMADE results and the MCAS tests results are used to identify students' instructional needs in reading and mathematics. The school forms instructional groups based on students' common identified needs and provides them targeted instruction during the daily focus period at the middle school. Students from different grades are sometimes combined in one instructional group. ELA and history teachers instruct the ELA focus groups and mathematics and science teachers instruct the mathematics focus groups. ELA and mathematics are addressed on alternating weeks.

Administrators were unclear about the measures used to assess students' incremental progress toward proficiency on the MCAS tests between the administrations of the Gates MacGinitie and GMADE. They said that these tests were not predictive of student performance on the MCAS tests. One teacher said that grade 7 students were asked to assess themselves by checking the Common Core standards they believed they had mastered in mathematics. Another said that grade 8 teachers had developed some informal paper and pencil tests in mathematics based on the Common Core standards and that the school also used chapter and unit tests to some extent to assess student progress, but not as part of a systematic process.

Administrators said that the school did not yet have benchmarks and benchmark assessments, but was moving toward this as a goal. Teachers said that they were not routinely using any formative measures to plan and evaluate their instruction. One administrator spoke about developing "objective specific grading sheets" that students could take with them to focus groups as an interim measure and added that the school needed to solidify the "end of the period accounting" for the use of the focus period.

Interviewees told the review team that the POLs were evaluated by rubrics created by grade level teams. The review team examined some POL rubrics and found that they emphasized compliance with task requirements and surface attributes such as neatness more than the quality of the presentation and the underlying cognitive tasks.

C. Student Achievement

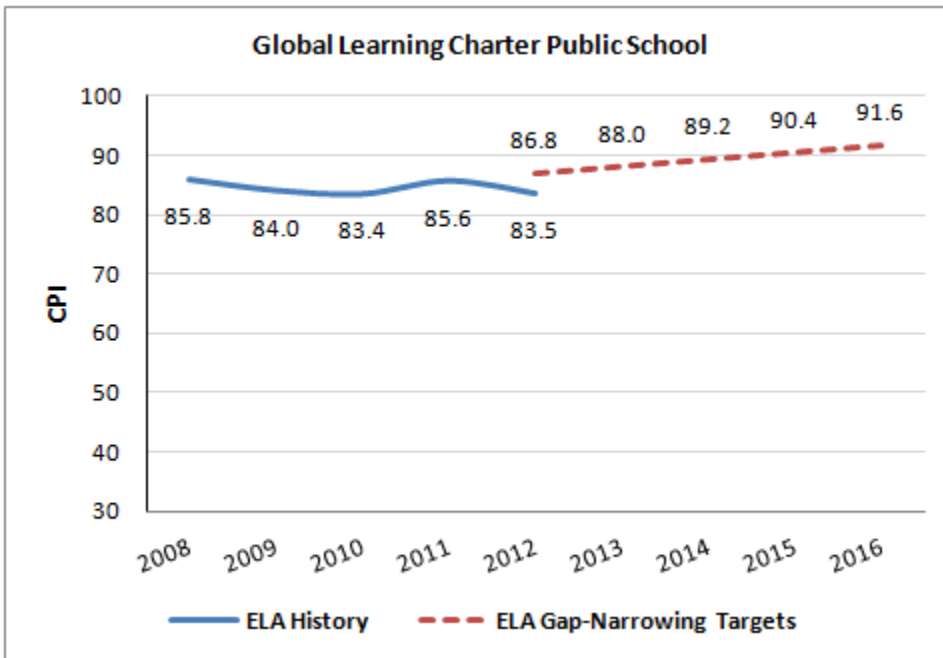
Are students reaching Proficiency on state standards, as measured by the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)?

Finding: English language arts and mathematics MCAS scores for GLCPS students have been relatively flat for the past five years, with some slight improvement in mathematics in 2011 and 2012.

All MCAS results for ELA and mathematics that are available from the last five 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

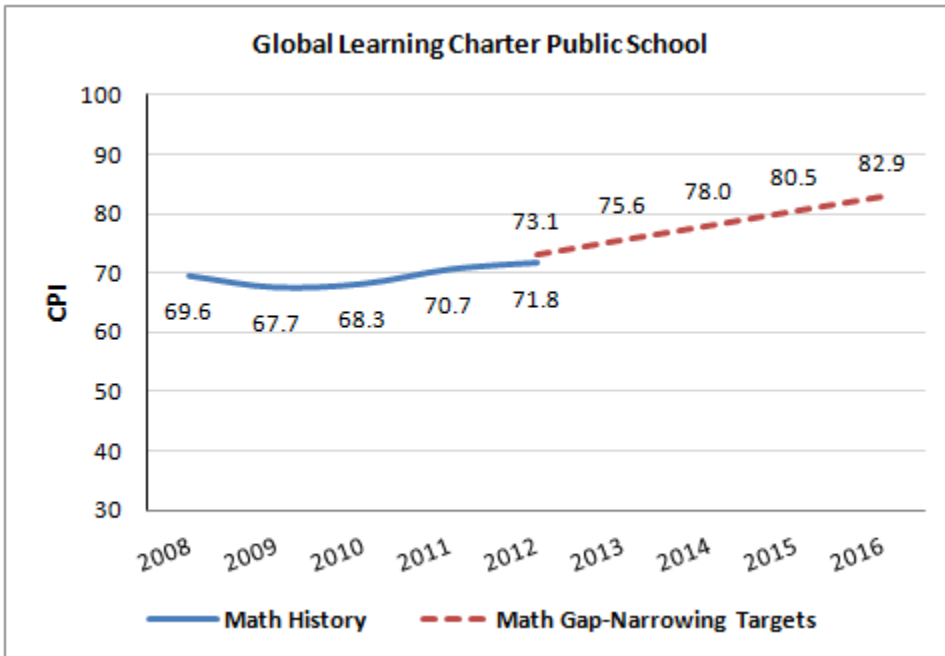


The solid line in the chart above displays GLCPS aggregate CPI scores from 2008 to 2012. The dotted line indicates the Department determined goals for CPI scores in order for GLCPS to halve its achievement gap by 2017. As shown above, aggregate ELA CPI scores declined in 2012 and the school did not meet its target for ELA performance. Below are the median student growth percentile scores (SGP) from the past four years. In 2012, GLCPS median SGP for ELA was not “on target” (defined as above 51). GLCPS’s 2012 MCAS performance by grade level, subgroup, and subject area for the 2012 MCAS can be found here:

<http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/reportcard/rc.aspx?linkid=37&orgcode=04960305&fycode=2012&rgtypecode=6&>

GLCPS Median Student Growth Percentile				
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012
English Language Arts	42.0	43.0	44.0	44.0

Mathematics MCAS Scores

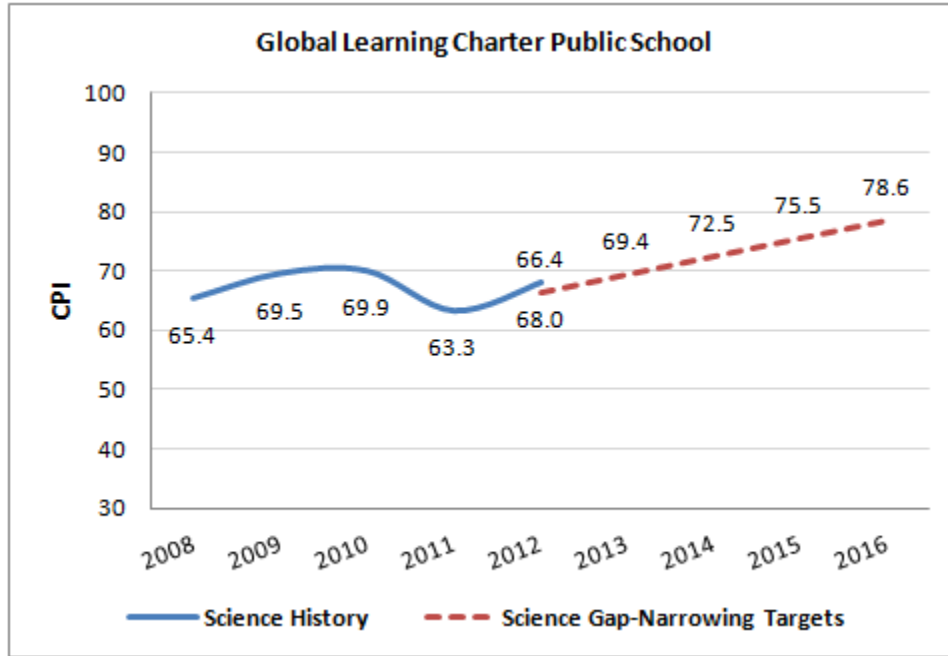


The solid line in the chart above displays GLCPS aggregate mathematics CPI scores from 2008 to 2012. The dotted line indicates the Department determined goals for CPI scores in order for GLCPS to halve its achievement gap by 2017. As shown above, aggregate CPI scores improved in 2012 but the school did not meet its target for mathematic performance. Below are the median student growth percentile scores (SGP) from the past four years. In 2012, GLCPS median SGP was not “on target” (defined as above 51). GLCPS’s 2012 MCAS performance by grade level, subgroup, and subject area for the 2012 MCAS can be found here:

<http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/reportcard/rc.aspx?linkid=37&orgcode=04960305&fycode=2012&rgtypecode=6&>

<i>GLCPS Median Student Growth Percentile</i>				
Year	2009	2010	2011	2012
Mathematics	39.0	42.5	44.0	46.0

Science MCAS Scores



The solid line in the chart above displays GLCPS aggregate science CPI scores from 2008 to 2012. The dotted line indicates the Department determined goals for CPI scores in order for GLCPS to halve its achievement gap by 2017. In 2012, GLCPS science CPI increased to 68.0 and the school met its gap narrowing target. GLCPS's 2012 MCAS performance by grade level, subgroup, and subject area for the 2012 MCAS can be found here: <http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/reportcard/rc.aspx?linkid=37&orgcode=04960305&fycode=2012&rgtypecode=6&>

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

Finding: In 2012, GLCPS has an Accountability and Assistance level of 3.

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.

GLCPS status of a level 3 school places it in the lowest performing 20 percent of schools statewide. When compared to other middle-high schools statewide, GLCPS performance places it in the 15th percentile. In the aggregate and for subgroups, GLCPS did not meet any of its gap narrowing targets in 2012.

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

Finding: GLPCS did not meet a majority of the measures related to academic success contained in its accountability plan.

GLPCS's approved accountability plan includes two objectives and three related measures concerning academic success. GLCPS met one out of three measures. GLCPS met the measure related to exceeding the New Bedford Public Schools' average CPI in all domains on the MCAS tests for comparable grades. The school partially met the measures related to all students showing improvement by performing above grade level in reading and mathematics, and all students achieving grade level in reading and mathematics. More information about the school's success in meeting the objectives and measures contained in its accountability plan can be found in Section V, Accountability Plan Performance, of this report.

VI. Organizational Viability

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

Finding: While the school has a draft accountability plan, a strategic plan, and a school improvement plan, it was unclear to the team how these documents are tracked, monitored, or ultimately work together toward the goal of academic programmatic improvement.

Administrators stated that the school improvement plan was created during the 2012-13 school year by the administrative team and is linked to the accountability plan. They said that they reviewed the school improvement plan weekly at their administrative council meetings and that certain administrators were assigned to track progress on the plan goals according to their roles. When asked about the progress to date, administrators characterized the plan as fluid, ongoing and a work in progress, adding that it might be most useful for projecting enrollment needs.

The board of trustees told the team that they did not monitor the school improvement plan, although it was discussed at a board meeting, and were uncertain how it was related to the accountability plan and strategic plan. Board members said that they tracked the progress of the school using indicators such as graduation rates, SAT scores, scholarships awarded, digital portfolios, grades 8 to 9 retention rates, college acceptances and parent and student satisfaction surveys. However, it was not clear to the team that the board collected and analyzed data on these indicators using a formal process.

Administrators and the board told the team that the school was at a critical juncture: With a significantly higher grades 8 to 9 retention rate that resulted in part from the attractiveness of the new high school satellite campus, the school had either to increase its enrollment from 500 to 550 or perhaps 600 students, or face having to reduce the classes entering grades 5 and 6. An amendment request submitted by the board to increase the enrollment to 550 students was denied by the Commissioner in December 2012.

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 is composed of members all but one of whom joined within the past three years. The board has worked to address emergent issues and restored the financial health and oversight responsibilities of the board. Less clear to visitors is the manner in which the board monitors progress or changes made to the school's academic program.

The board of trustees currently consists of nine members. The officers include the chair, vice chair, treasurer, and clerk. Two members have served for less than one year; three members have served for one year; one member has served for two years; two members have served for three years; and one member has served for four years. A tenth member is awaiting ESE approval. According to the bylaws and interviewees, the board has four standing committees: Governance, Development, Education and Finance. According to the trustees, the Governance committee met infrequently; the Development and Education committees met jointly, but infrequently; and the Finance committee, which has been actively functioning for only the past three months, was now meeting monthly. The board has also appointed ad hoc subcommittees to oversee tenth anniversary planning, staff and parent surveys, capital planning and facilities.

In an interview with the team, board members were conversant with the school's mission, vision and philosophy and said that they understood that the role of the board was to be faithful to the mission and manage the executive director. They went on to describe how they had acted to improve financial oversight by hiring a new director of business, selecting a new financial software program and renovating space at the downtown Explorium to establish a satellite campus for the high school program. They said that these initiatives had been successful: Finances were now orderly and under control and the school had rectified the problems cited in a fiscal year 2012 audit. The new campus had resulted in the highest grade 8 to 9 retention rate in the school's history. They added that they had acted to revise the merit pay system by basing it on school rather than individual teacher performance in response to teachers' concerns that the prior system was competitive and decreased collegiality. The board had also recruited new members with the credentials and experience to address critical needs. For example, one new member was a tax title attorney.

When asked how the board was monitoring progress on the two conditions for renewal of the charter, board members cited the institution of an ELL program, but said that that they had been too preoccupied by financial and space issues to closely monitor the accountability plan, which had been "on the back burner." They went on to say that they regarded success on the MCAS tests as only one indicator of the success of the school and went on to describe components of the school program including integrated technology, public speaking, community involvement and global citizenship. They explained that although students entered GLPCS from the New Bedford schools with significant skill deficits, the longer they remained at GLCPS the better they performed. Board members serving on the Education subcommittee said that looping and creation of the director of curriculum position were efforts to improve student achievement, but the subcommittee did not formally analyze student performance data according to a process and had not met frequently.

Board members expressed concern that denial of the enrollment increase to 550 students might force the school to reduce grade 5 and grade 6 enrollments to offset high school enrollment increases. They were unaware that they could amend their enrollment policy to admit students in grade 9.

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

Finding: Students reported feeling physically and emotionally safe. Focus group reports and team member observations indicated that GLCPS is a safe environment for students. Student conduct was observed to be respectful toward both school staff and among students in classrooms and in common areas.

Students in a focus group told the team that the school had a “community and family feeling” and that all of the staff, including the secretarial and janitorial, knew the students well and cared for them. They described their teachers as respectful, enthusiastic, encouraging and willing to provide extra help. All of the students interviewed said that the school was a safe environment for teaching and learning.

The team found that all doors are locked once school begins and all visitors must be buzzed into the school through the main office. The team observed adults present at entrances and exits during the start of school as buses arrived and at dismissal time. The campus is closed once school begins and no student is allowed to leave the building without permission. The team reviewed the student handbook and found the following policies in place: non-discrimination, non-harassment, anti-hazing and anti-bullying and cyber-bullying. Students interviewed told the team that there is no bullying at their school. According to documentation, the school held an anti-bullying training for staff and informational sessions for students in 2011-2012. GLCPS has two full time social workers and a full-time nurse to assist students with emotional and health-related problems. The school offers conflict resolution and mediation to promote healthy interpersonal relationships.

Based on observations of students in their classrooms and in the common areas of the school, the team found that the school functions in an orderly manner. Students have internalized routines and procedures that ensure safe transitioning within classrooms and movement within the building. Students were observed to be using materials and equipment appropriately. The school culture and philosophy foster courteous interactions and a positive learning disposition.

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

Finding: The facilities are well-maintained and adequate for educational purposes. The trustees and administrators hope to purchase a facility which will unite the school on one campus and meet a number of space needs.

The main school building is over 100 years old. The team found that it was clean and well maintained and that the classrooms were of adequate size and well-illuminated. The satellite campus is located on the second floor of the downtown Ocean Explorium. The team found that these facilities were clean, modern, and attractive, resembling a research center or college environment.

Interviewees expressed the desire for a single facility which would unite the school and provide increased space for physical education, laboratory science, outdoor activities and capacity for a larger enrollment.

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

Finding: GLPCS teachers are qualified and have a range of teaching experience.

According to ESE data, during the 2011-12 school year (the most recent data available) 88.6 percent of core GLPCS teachers are licensed for their teaching assignments. Ninety-seven percent of core academic classes are taught by teachers who were highly qualified. Over one-third of the staff has been teaching at the school for six or more years and nearly half of the staff have 11 or more years of total teaching experience.

Years of Teaching Experience for Lead/Core Subject Teachers 2012-2013

	1-2 Years	3-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-20 Years	20+ Years
Teachers with this number of years teaching	1 Year: 7 2 Years: 2	6	11	16	5
Teachers with this number of years teaching at GLPCS	1 Year: 14 2 Years: 5	11	15	2	0

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

Finding: Stakeholders reported pride in their educational model and stressed the importance of providing a choice to families of New Bedford. Students were very happy with GLCPS.

Students in a focus group said that they enjoyed the school community and culture at GLPCS, were challenged by their classes and thought they were being well-prepared for post-secondary education. When asked, they said that the school uniform policy and lack of some supplies were the only areas of dissatisfaction. The students said that students transferred to another high school program for sports and the opportunity to meet new people and not because the high school was academically weak.

According to documentation, 90 percent of parents responding to a 2011-2012 parent satisfaction survey reported that they were satisfied overall with their child’s educational experience at GLPCS. Teachers and board members expressed pride in the school model, especially its emphasis on 21st Century skills. According to school data, over one-third of the staff has been at the school for six or more years. Teachers said that the atmosphere was collegial and they were supported with appropriate supervision and professional development.

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

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

GLPCS's approved accountability plan includes two objectives and seven related measures concerning organizational viability. GLCPS met five out of seven measures. GLCPS met the measures related to annual board evaluation of the bylaws, development of a five-year strategic plan, passing a financial audit with no material deficiencies, parent satisfaction and staff retention. The school met the student retention goal in grades 5 through 8, but not in grades 9 through 12. GLCPS did not meet the measure related to securing a reserve fund in 2011-2012 in large part because of the costs associated with the new satellite campus. More information about the school's success in meeting the objectives and measures contained in its accountability plan can be found in Section V, Accountability Plan Performance, of this report.

V. Accountability Plan Performance

A. Faithfulness to Charter	2011-12 Performance	Notes
Objective 1: Students will show evidence of technology literacy using the digital portfolio as a core tool.		
<p>Measure: All students will demonstrate increased use and knowledge of current software and technology by creating and maintaining a digital portfolio. Portfolios will be evaluated based on the Massachusetts Technology Literacy Standards rubrics for grades 6-8 and 9-12. Students will show increased proficiency each year and 100% of students will meet these standards by the end of grades 8 and 12.</p>	Not Assessed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 2011-12, the school changed the mode of technology instruction from a separate class to embedded instruction. Technology instruction was delivered by classroom teachers in consultation with the technology specialist. • Given this change, the school was unable to assess this measure.
Objective 2: Students will show evidence of continuous improvement in public speaking by completing a minimum of two Presentations of Learning (POLs) per year.		
<p>Measure: All students will demonstrate improvement in public speaking by satisfying the requirements for each grade level's POL rubric. Students will show growth in their Presentations of Learning as measured by the GLCPS POL Master Rubric. Students will achieve a minimum of 30% mastery (5th grade) 50% mastery (8th grade) and 90% mastery (12th grade).</p>	Partially Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to school records, all grade 5 and grade 8 students achieved or exceeded the minimum mastery percentages for their grades. • However, only 95 percent of grade 12 students achieved the minimum mastery percentage of 90 percent.
Objective 3: Students will participate in at least one field study, research project or community/service learning program focusing on global citizenship each year.		
<p>Measure: All students will write a reflection piece that demonstrates an increased awareness of their connection to the world as global citizens. in each grade. These reflections will be guided and graded according to rubrics based on the Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Frameworks (Concepts and Skills for: A. Civics and</p>	Partially Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to school records, all students participated in at least one field study, research project or community/service learning program in 2011-2012. • Grade 7 students wrote a research paper on the causes and

<p>Government and/or B .History and Geography). 100% of students will meet Massachusetts proficiency standards at the end of each grade.</p>		<p>effects of the Neolithic agricultural revolution and grade 8 students wrote a “This I Believe” reflection as a component of their ten-year plans.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • However, the school reported that fewer than 100% of students achieved proficiency in the standards of the Massachusetts History and Social Science Frameworks.
<p>Objective 4: Students will participate in at least one arts exploration course each year.</p>		
<p>Measure: All students will fulfill course requirements each year in arts exploration.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to school records, all students fulfilled course requirements in arts exploration in 2011-2012 with the exception of grade 9 students. • Grade 9 students were enrolled in two science courses at the new campus in 2011-2012 as the school augmented the science engineering and technology aspects of the high school program. They were therefore unable to subscribe an arts exploration course. • The school plans to develop an affiliation with Artworks! in order to provide all high school students access to arts education.
<p>Objective 5: The school will disseminate best practices in teaching, learning and school design, which may include curriculum & pedagogy; organizational governance; policies and procedures; and leadership development.</p>		
<p>Measure: The school will demonstrate that it is actively sharing best practices by maintaining a log of dissemination activities, showing a</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school’s dissemination log for 2011-2012 documents more

minimum of five initiatives per year.		than 30 initiatives, including graduate level courses.
B. Academic Program	2011-12 Performance	Notes
Objective 1: Students will demonstrate continuous improvement in all required academic disciplines as measured by MCAS.		
Measure: The school will meet the minimum Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement for NCLB.	Not Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to 2012 ESE data, the school did not reach the target of 75 in narrowing proficiency gaps for all students. The school scored 56. According to 2012 ESE data, the school did not reach the target of 75 in narrowing proficiency gaps for any of its statistically significant subgroups. The scores ranged from 48 to 60.
Measure: The school, as an aggregate, will have MCAS scores that exceed the New Bedford district average in all required tests.	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to 2012 ESE data, the school exceeded the New Bedford average CPI for all comparable grades on the MCAS tests in all domains. The school exceeded the new Bedford CPI at every comparable grade in every domain, except for grade 6 Mathematics (66.9 versus 71.7)
Objective 2: Students will show yearly academic improvement in reading and mathematics.		
Measure: All students will show improvement in reading and mathematics as measured by the percentage of students performing at or above grade level on the Gates MacGinitie and the GMADE for math in grades 5-12.	Partially Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to school records, grade 8 and grade 12 students did not demonstrate overall growth from the fall to the spring administration of the Gates MacGinitie tests: Both grades declined by nearly seven percentage points from the fall of 2011 to the spring of 2012. All grades showed improvement in total scores on the GMADE

		from the fall to the spring administration in 2011-2012.
Measure: Students who are below grade level will show improvement towards grade level as measured by beginning-of-the-year and end-of-the-year assessments. 90% of all students will attain grade level in reading and mathematics by 8 th grade.	Not Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to school records, fewer than 90 percent of grade 8 students were at grade level in reading and mathematics in 2011-2012.
C. Organizational Viability	2011-12 Performance	Notes
Objective 1: The Board of Trustees will promote continuous improvement in effective school management.		
Measure: Execution of the bylaws will be evaluated each year during the board's annual meeting. Amendments will be proposed and adopted at this time, if necessary.	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The board evaluated its by-laws at its annual meeting in August 2012. No amendments were proposed.
Measure: The board will develop a five-year strategic plan with a completion goal of June 30, 2009.	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The board developed a five-year strategic plan in January 2011. The plan has a term from 2012 to 2016
Measure: The board will complete an annual financial audit, as presented by the finance committee, which will pass all standard accounting practices and not have any material deficiencies.	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The fiscal year 2011 audit was reviewed and approved by the board in December 2011. There were no material deficiencies.
Measure: The board will strive to secure an annual reserve fund from its yearly estimated budget at 3-5%.	Not Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school was unable to secure an annual reserve fund in 2011-2012. According to the school, this was because of increased costs associated with a new satellite campus and a decrease in per pupil funding
Objective 2: The school will maintain a high level of stakeholder satisfaction.		
Measure: On a yearly basis, the school will show that at least 85% of parents are satisfied with the experience of their child at GLPCS. An annual survey instrument will be employed to collect data which will also include an open-response section that will allow parents to offer input and recommendations.	Met	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> According to school records, 90 percent of the parents who responded to a 2011-2012 parent survey expressed overall satisfaction with the experience of their child at the school.

<p>Measure: On a yearly basis, the school will maintain a 90% return rate (excluding students moving out of district or graduating). This will be measured independently for grades 5 through 8 and independently for grades 9 through 12. Student retention will be assessed annually.</p>	<p>Partially Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to school records, 90 percent of grades 5 through 8 students returned in September 2012. • However, 89 percent of grades 9 through 12 students returned in September 2012.
<p>Measure: The school will retain 85% of its staff (of those who meet GLCPS teaching standards).</p>	<p>Met</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • According to school records, 85 percent of staff who met GLCPS teaching standards returned in 2012-2013.