

Codman Academy Charter School
Annual Report 2003-2004
"To Learn, to Lead, and to Serve"

Our Mission:

Codman Academy Charter School's mission is to prepare students for full participation in the intellectual, economic and civic life of our society, by ensuring their preparation for and access to further education, the skills and vision to undertake a rewarding career, and the motivation and character needed to engage deeply and productively in community life. We view parents and community members as integral partners in this endeavor.

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**Codman Academy Charter School
Annual Report 2003-2004**

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July 22, 2004

David Driscoll, Commissioner of Education
The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Department of Education
350 Main Street
Malden, Massachusetts 02148-5023

"Codman is a model of the small school that is the new blueprint for urban high schools."

Sarah Rimer, *The New York Times*, December 17, 2003

Dear Commissioner Driscoll:

Codman Academy Charter School (CACS) completed an impressive third school year. **100% of the Class of 2005 passed the English/Language Arts MCAS exam on their first try.** This is an extremely favorable passage rate compared to our peer Boston Public Schools in the Dorchester area, where the percentage of failing students crested 28% (Boston District), 47% (Dorchester High) and 45% (Burke High). All but one student in the class of 2005 has passed the Math MCAS exam.

We hosted over 100 visitors, some of who came from as far as Ireland and South Africa. The Irish Minister of Education, Noel Dempsey, visited the school this past November. Upon his visit he remarked, "what we can learn from a place like Codman Academy here is that we shouldn't be afraid to push out the barriers to promote change" (Dorchester Reporter, November 28, 2003).

CACS continues to push the barriers that constrict education and our students' futures, despite many hurdles. 79% of our students are eligible for free or reduced lunch, 97% are students of color and 18% of our students have special needs. Five primary languages are spoken at home: English, Haitian Creole, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Cape Verdean Creole. Students primarily reside nearby in Codman Square / Four Corners, one of the most challenged neighborhoods in the entire region, where many households are headed by single parents and the unemployment rate of 14% is five times the city's average. Despite the challenges that these statistics often bring, our students have made tremendous progress.

CACS students and families demonstrated their commitment to their educations by achieving an average daily attendance for our six day per week (Monday – Friday 9 am – 5 pm, Saturdays 9 am – noon) program of 97%. Over three years, our attendance rate has steadily increased from 96% to 97% for two consecutive years. 100% of our parents / guardians attended teacher / student / parent conferences. 100% of incoming parents / guardians attended a one hour individual meeting with their child and Codman Academy Charter School staff, establishing a relationship of mutual respect and communication.

CACS administers the Degree of Reading Power Test (DRP) annually to all students as a means of measuring students' ability to comprehend increasingly difficult prose. Most newspapers and high school texts have a DRP of 65. Having completed 3 full years at CACS, 68% of the Class of 2005 have earned a score of 60 or greater on the Degree of Reading Powers test (DRP). Most importantly, in just three years the average score for this class has risen nearly twenty points, from 48 to 67.5.

As reported in the 2002/03 report, the Champion of Arts Education Award from the Massachusetts Cultural Council was a major accomplishment in our second year. The Award confirmed our belief in our work with the Huntington Theatre and generated great enthusiasm for this year's program. We continued to strengthen our partnership and our literacy curriculum around theater immersion.

Technology to support teaching and learning is ever expanding. Two additional mobile laptop carts made daily use in classes possible. We hired a full-time Director of Technology who will, in addition to infrastructure support, oversee the implementation of Virtual High School (VHS) classes for upperclassmen and teach a technology competency course. Additionally, we strive to continuously improve our Web site and use it as our primary dissemination tool: (www.codmanacademy.org).

In a December 17, 2003, **New York Times** article, reporter Sarah Rimer describes Codman Academy Charter School as "one of the models for the new schools in New York" funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. This NYTimes feature article not only thrust Codman Academy Charter School into the national spotlight but also validated our position as a leader in urban high school reform. News of our work as a small urban college preparatory school caught the attention of news mediums a total of 19 times, five of which were major feature articles on Codman Academy Charter School. Press coverage included Boston area TV stations, the *Boston Globe*, the *Boston Herald*, *Colby College Alumni Magazine*, *Christian Science Monitor*, *Common Wealth*, the *Dorchester Reporter*, *Massachusetts Alliance for Art Ed*, and *True North* (the official newsletter for Outward Bound).

Our partnerships with Codman Square Health Center, Epiphany School, Sportsmens Tennis Center, the Huntington Theatre Company, the Museum of Fine Arts and Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound all continue to thrive as integral parts of our program. This year we added a new valued partner, Simmons College, who opened their physics and language labs to us one day a week.

Our annual evaluation by Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound observed the following: "Codman has a strong school culture that has been built and nurtured through vigorous and consistent attention to character, academic achievement, post secondary goal setting, and 'working as crew, not passengers'" (see www.codmanacademy.org for a complete text of our ELOB review). CACS hosted and mentored numerous ELOB visitors throughout the year who are beginning new ELOB schools across the country, including Florida, New York, and Washington, DC. Faculty members spoke at several conferences, including the National ELOB conference in Seattle, WA and the National Charter School conference in Miami, FL.

The DOE site visit further affirmed our work at CACS and observed many thriving aspects of our program. Upon conclusion of their site visit, members of the DOE, noted that "CACS' accomplishments to date provide a strong foundation for the school's argument that it is an academic success, a viable organization, and that it is faithful to the terms of its charter." (see full report at www.codmanacademy.org)

In keeping with our belief in shared voices, the Class of 2007 concluded the year with "Letters to the 9th Graders," a publication which describes life at CACS and prepares incoming students for their new adventure. This year, one female 9th grader painted an endearing picture of the life of the school: "We are a community and we care about each other, so you will feel at home when you come to Codman Academy. Kids complain about the hours, but when 5:00 comes people want to stay even longer. This school is important to a good amount of people, so we are really looking forward to you coming here and bringing something to the table." One of the greatest challenges of starting a new school is establishing a healthy culture and a sense of

community. In our third year, we noticed a new sense of pride in our students. Traditions have been established, among them an expectation that members of this community respect one another and the school. We are pleased to see that our foundation has been built and that we are prepared for the challenges that await us in our next phase of growth.

None of our accomplishments would be possible without the enormous dedication, skill and hard work of our faculty, adjunct faculty, interns, volunteers and donors. We thank each one of them for their imagination, kindness, compassion, patience and sense of humor.

We look forward to welcoming the Class of 2008 and reaching full capacity this fall.

Sincerely,

William J. Walczak
President, Board of Trustees

II. Executive Summary

Mission:

Codman Academy Charter School's mission is to prepare students for full participation in the intellectual, economic and civic life of society, by ensuring their preparation for and access to further education, the skills and vision to undertake a rewarding career, and the motivation and character needed to engage deeply and productively in community life. We view parents and community members as integral partners in this endeavor.

History: Codman Academy Charter School opened in September 2001 on the site of its primary partner, Codman Square Health Center in Dorchester. This is Dorchester's first charter high school.

Students served 2002-2003: 79 students completed the year (33 ninth graders, 23 tenth graders, 21 11th graders, 4 students in un-graded Learning Institute), ages 14-18.

Gender: Boys: 37 (48%), Girls: 40 (52%)

Ethnicity: African-American: 53 (70%), Caucasian: 1 (1%), Haitian-American: 11 (14%), Cape Verdean: 4 (5%), Asian: 2 (2%), Latino/a: 6 (8%)

Student Applications for the 2003-2004 school year:

(Codman Academy only accepts students in the ninth grade)

83 applications received for grade 9, all from Boston

2 applications per opening

20 students on wait list for grade 9

School hours/days: Monday through Friday, 9 am - 5 pm and Saturday, 9 am - noon.

Number of school days: 197 including Saturdays

Faculty/Adjunct Faculty: All core academic teachers have advanced degrees. Faculty holds degrees from Boston College, Boston University, Brown University, Colby College, Columbia Teachers College, Emory University, Harvard University, Princeton University, UMASS-Amherst, University and Wheelock College. Special Education Director has twenty years experience.

Curriculum Design & Teaching Method: College preparatory courses which are project based and interdisciplinary informed by Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound comprehensive school design and philosophy. Strong fieldwork with off campus work one day per week. Unique partnership developing drama-based Humanities program with The Huntington Theatre included 20 on site days and a culminating Showcase Performance in a theatre at Boston University's Huntington Theatre Company.

Indicators of success:

- o 97% daily average attendance
- o Significant class percentile gain on Degree of Reading Powers test
- o 100% parent participation in Teacher/Student Conferences.

Student Turnover Data:

Total number left during the school year: 9

Total number completed year, but not returning for 2003-2004 school year: 5

Suspensions:

In-school suspensions: 0

Out-of-school suspensions: 21 (data includes students who were suspended more than once)

Expulsions: 0

III. Academic Program Core Curriculum Requirements

“Answers in the Toolbox,” a report by the U.S. Department of Education notes that particularly for African American and Latino students, a strong academic curriculum is the most significant predictor of success in college. A strong academic curriculum is more significant than class rank, test scores, grade point average or socio-economic status. Based on these research findings, we require our students to fulfill the following requirements or their equivalent for graduation credit: All Codman Academy Charter School students must complete these core academic requirements by demonstrating their mastery of content through portfolios, exhibition/performances and passing MCAS tests. Learning expeditions are consistent with Massachusetts Curriculum State Frameworks for the secondary level.

In order to receive credit for any course, students must attain a grade of 70 which is equivalent to a C-. Any grade lower than a C- will be marked as No Credit (NC). Any students not achieving a 70 or above upon the final exam must complete a mandatory summer session with core academic teachers. Academic subjects are the only courses offered for a letter grade. Other courses (Wellness, Saturday courses, etc.) will be offered as Pass/No Credit.

Graduation Requirements

- 4 years Humanities (History and Literature)
- 4 years Mathematics
- 3 years Laboratory Science
- 2 years of a Foreign Language
- 2 Advanced Placement/college level courses
- 4 years of Physical Education
- 1 year of Studio Art
- 2 summers of approved enrichment program with documentation
- 30 hours Learning Through Internship
- Completion of Passage Portfolio to be promoted to the Senior Institute and Graduation Portfolio for graduation

Passage Portfolio

In order to graduate to the 11th grade at CACS all students must engage in a portfolio assessment process that simulates the tasks and process that students will be asked to engage in during the 11th and 12th grades (Senior Institute).

We call this the “Passage” Portfolio because it is a gateway to being a Senior Institute student. Students who are capable of fulfilling the requirements for the Passage Portfolio will demonstrate that they are capable of success at the next level here at CACS. Successful completion of the Passage Portfolio (both written and presented work) and a Statement of entry into the Senior Institute are prerequisites for promotion to the 11th grade.

Students are expected to complete 1 major project for each core academic course (Humanities,

Math, Science). They then present 1 of the 3 projects – presumably their best work - to a panel, including a teacher, member of the community and a ninth grader.

Students must successfully complete all core academic courses with a grade of C or higher, as well as complete the Passage Portfolio in order to be promoted to the Senior Institute. Students who complete one and not the another will not be promoted.

Performance goals

1. By graduation, students should increase reading proficiency as assessed by Degree of Reading Powers (DRP) to read at or above grade level.

Instrument: Degree of Reading Power Test for all incoming students and every spring thereafter for all students. The DRP measures student improvement in the ability to process and understand increasingly difficult prose materials. DRP unit scores are reported in accordance with the most difficult text the student can read on his or her own.

Data: DRP test results compiled twice annually for ninth graders and annually thereafter for students in grades ten through twelve to gauge progress. 85 % students at graduation shall complete goal of achieving a score of 65 or higher on the DRP.

Current Status:

In Spring 2004, CACS juniors had a class average DRP of 67.5, (64th percentile). These students entered Codman Academy Charter School in Fall 2001 with a class average DRP of 50 (36th percentile). After three years, 68% of our Juniors have scored 60 or above on the DRP. (see Chart 1)

This spring, our sophomores had a class average DRP of 60 and an average percentile of 51. These students entered Codman Academy Charter School in the of Fall 2002 with a class average DRP of 49 (35th percentile). After two years, the Class of 2006 had made impressive gains, increasing their class average by 11 points. (see Chart 2)

The Class of 2007 (freshmen) began the school year with an average DRP score of 41.5 and average percentile of 44%. The class finished the year with an average score of 44.5 with an average percentile of 23.5%. (see chart 3). The Class of 2007's entering average DRP of 41.5 was considerably lower than our first two entering classes who had average scores of 50 and 49. Upon analyzing our data this year, we recognize the need to address this weakness in the Class of 2007 with increased literacy efforts and reading instruction during their 10th grade year.

Usually, in high school, most students increase their DRP score by 1 to 2 DRP points during the school year, whereas many Codman Academy students showed gains of 6 or 7 DRP points per year. Increases in average percentage score and continued movement out of the lowest quartile demonstrate gains among all ability levels, not simply the highest achieving students. In short, all students at CACS are making gains in literacy (see Charts 4, 5, and 6).

Chart 1 – Junior DRP Gains Over Time

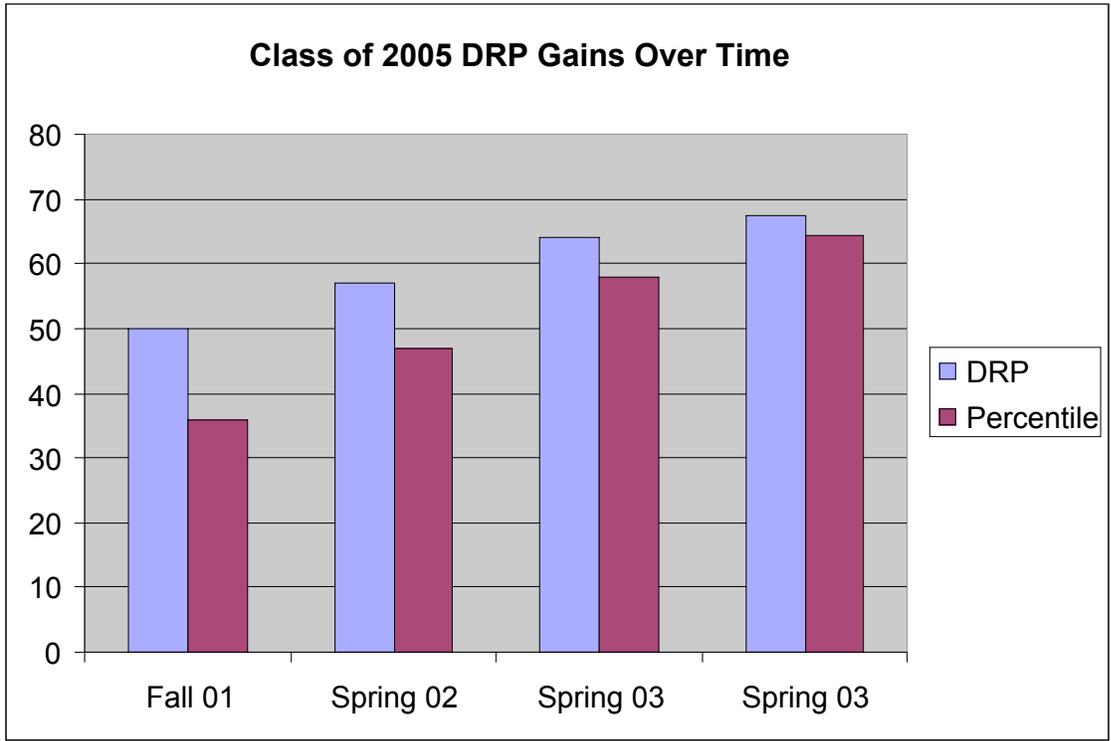


Chart 2 – Sophomore DRP Gains over Time

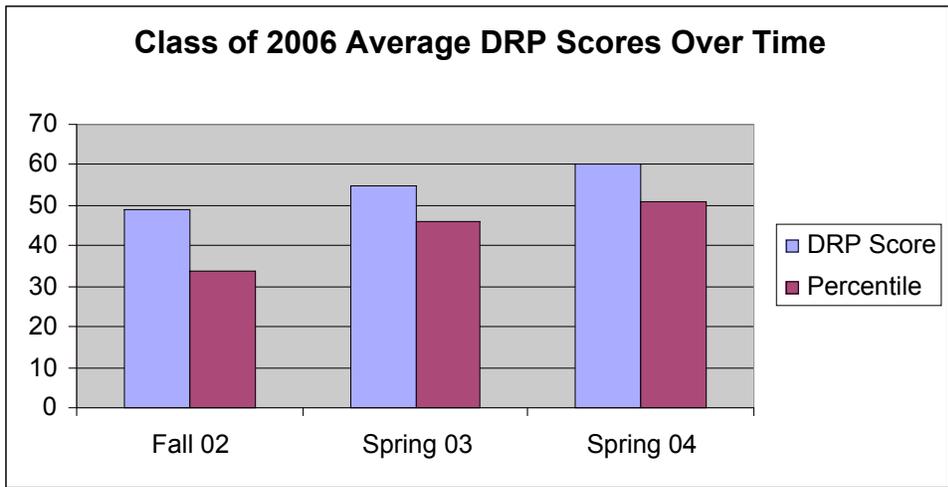


Chart – 3 Freshmen Gains Over Time

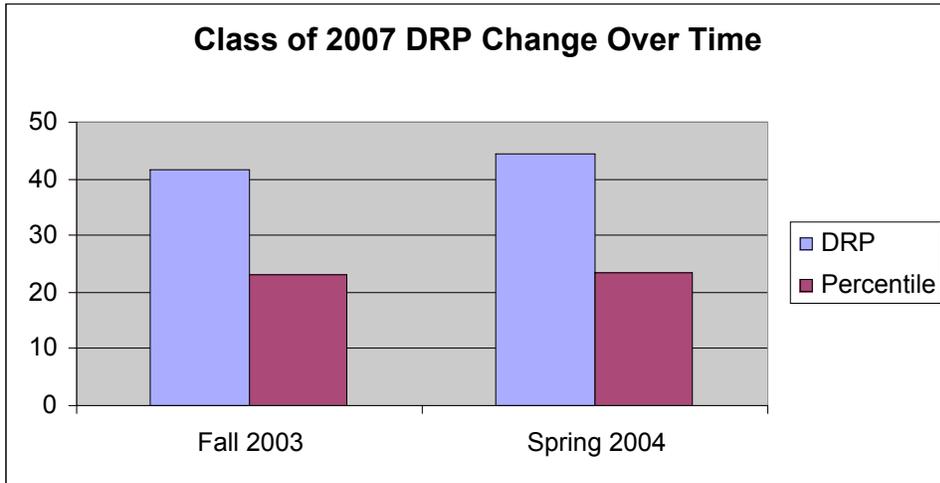


Chart 4 – Juniors DRP/Quartile gains over time

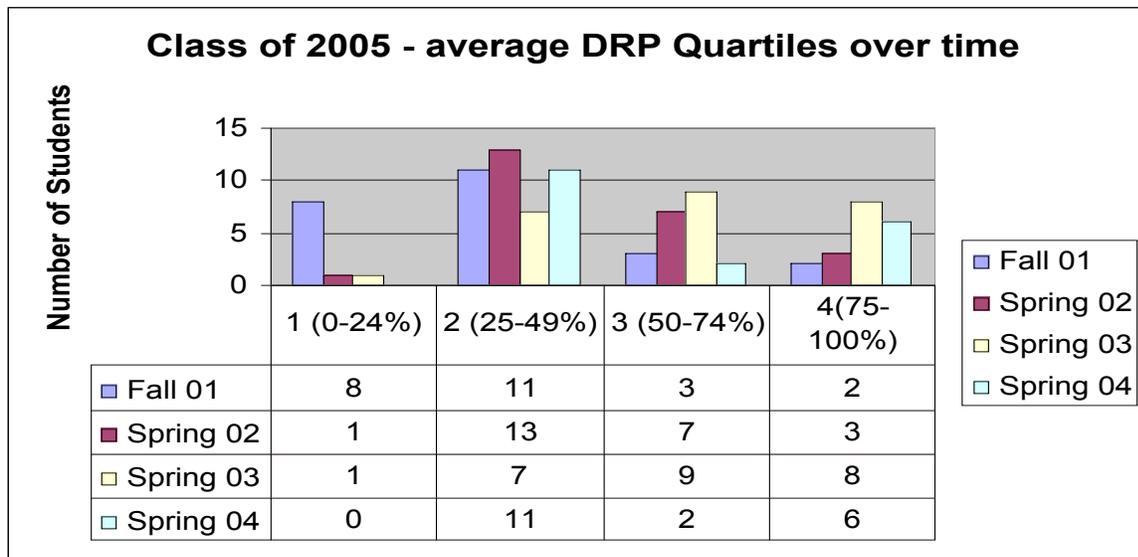


Chart 5 – Sophomores DRP/Quartile gains over time

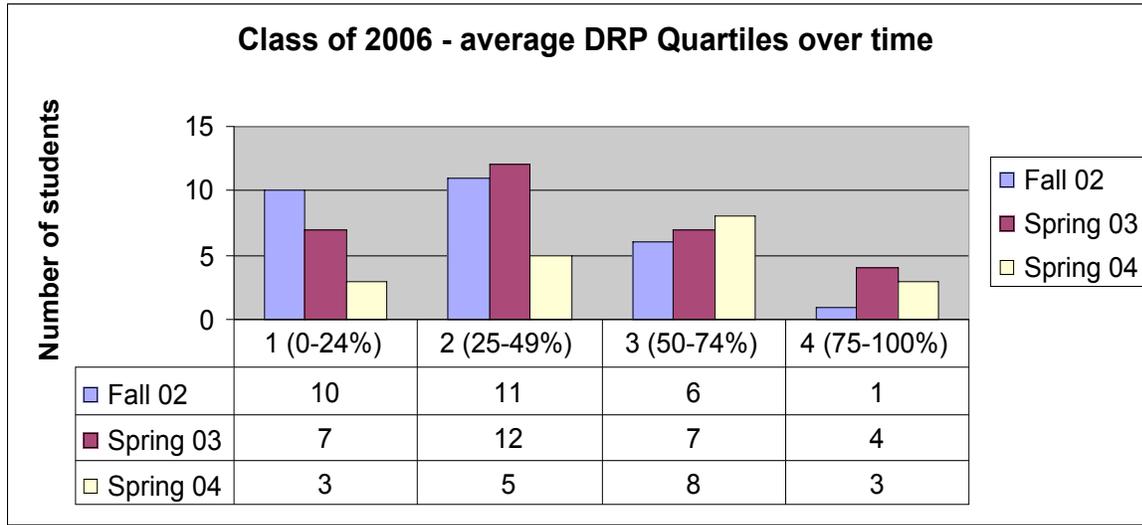
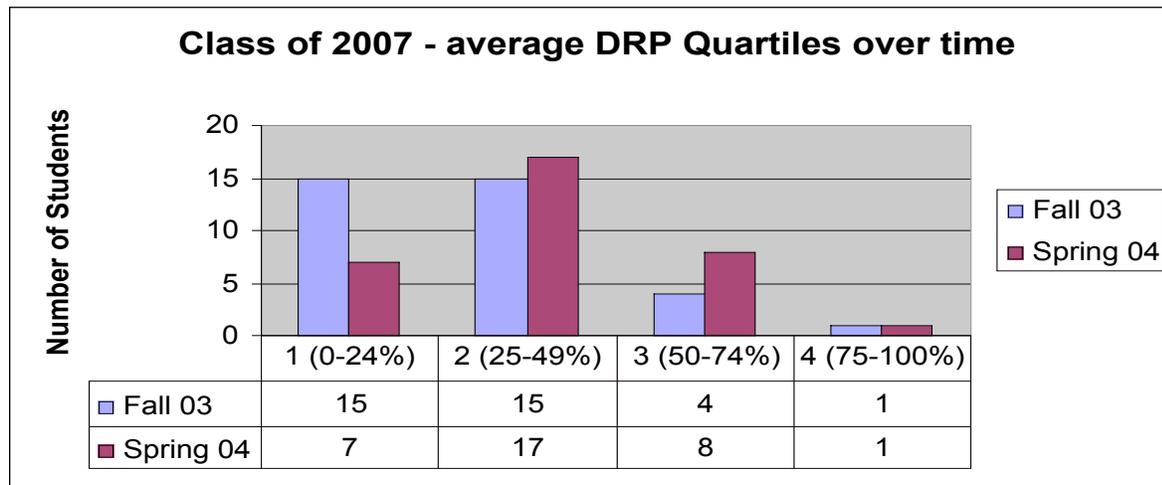


Chart 6 – Freshmen DRP / Quartile gains over time



The Math MCAS continues to be our main barometer for Math achievement. In the class of 2005 only one student has yet to pass the Math MCAS.

2. Each student shall complete with a satisfactory grade or higher the required academic curriculum requirements in order to graduate.

Data: Promotion and graduation rates.

Instrument: Student report cards and portfolios.

Current status: 97% of the 9th grade class earned promotion to the 10th grade, while 95% of the 10th grade earned promotion to the 11th grade. 95% of the 11th grade achieved promotion to the Senior year and will comprise our first graduating class.

This year, six students participated in a substantially separate classroom called the Learning Institute. All were over-age for grade, having repeated at least one year prior to entering CACS and having failed to achieve promotion at least once at CACS. Students received intense instruction with one full-time faculty member who oversaw a highly individualized academic program for each student. Two of these students earned one year of promotion. Yet the real triumph of this program is that two students earned double promotion. Next year the Learning Institute will continue to function as a classroom for 4-6 students who have not earned promotion in the regular classroom and/or need more individualized attention due to learning disabilities.

Freshmen who were retained did not pass Humanities (History and English) and/ or Algebra I. Sophomores who were retained did not successfully complete the Passage Portfolio in addition to core academic requirements. Juniors who were not promoted did not pass Humanities (History and English), Physics, and Algebra 2.

94% of students will return to Codman Academy in the fall.

3. Each Senior shall complete with a satisfactory self-evaluation and supervisor's evaluation a Learning Through Internship (LTI) of at least 30 hours as well as two summers of approved enrichment programming such as internships or courses. LTI's are apprenticeships focused in an area of student interest and career exploration. Their purpose is to connect academic learning and service by deepening both. (The term LTI comes from The Big Picture Company Initiative).

Instrument: Submission of Internship Report in loose-leaf notebook. Report shall include: (Adapted in part from Boston University College of Communications CM 471 Internship Report Format)

- Brief profile of the agency: company or organization where student worked, organizational chart of where student worked, type of business, number of employees, geographic location, etc.
- Narrative of what student did and learned: may be either chronological by project or kinds of tasks performed, describe chores/ duties in detail.
- Self-Evaluation: Student takes a good hard look at the experience and tells the good and bad of it. Writing is specific and detailed in describing experience.
- Evaluation by Intern's Supervisor with recommended Passing/No Credit.

Data: 100% of students shall complete Learning Through Internship Reports at a satisfactory level in order to graduate.

Current status: This year 5 students were eligible to receive credit for successfully completing their LTI requirement.

4. MCAS:

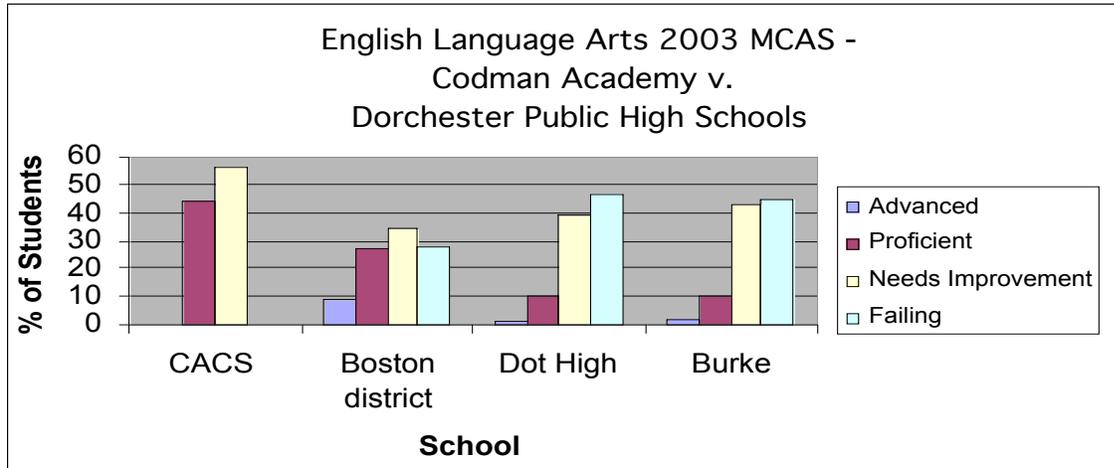
Rationale: State requirement for diploma.

Goal: 75% students pass MCAS on first try.

Current status: **100% of the first class to take the English /Language Arts MCAS passed on their first try in spring 2003** and compares very favorably to our peer high schools in Dorchester. (see chart 1) 68% of the Class of 2005 passed the Math MCAS on their first try. (see chart 2) All but one student passed the Math MCAS on their second try. Again, this passage

rate demonstrates significant gains compared to our peer high schools in Dorchester. Only one student in the Class of 2005 has yet to pass the Math MCAS as of the end of the 2003-2004 school year. We will receive results for the Class of 2006 in September 2004.

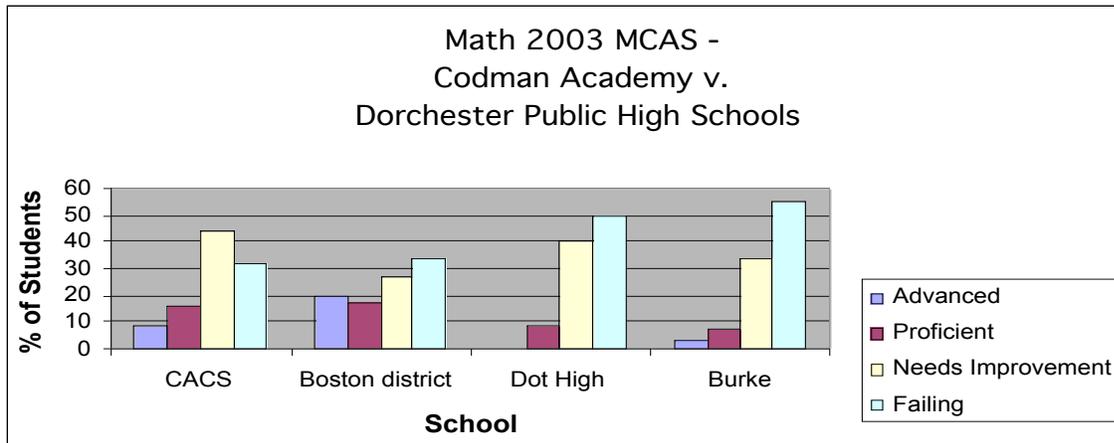
Chart 1 – English/Language Arts MCAS Results



English Language Arts – 2003 MCAS (percentage of students at each performance level)

	CACS	Boston District	Dot High	Burke High
Advanced	0	9	1	2
Proficient	44	27	10	10
Needs Improvement	56	34	39	43
Failing	0	28	47	45

Chart 2 – Math MCAS Results



Math - 2003 MCAS (percentage of students at each performance level)

	CACS	Boston District	Dot High	Burke High
Advanced	8	20	0	2
Proficient	16	17	8	10
Needs Improvement	44	27	40	34
Failing	32	34	50	55

IV. Organizational goals

1. The Board of Trustees shall function in an effective manner to carry out the mission of the school and provide oversight of its academic and organizational goals.

Instrument: Board minutes. Observation and feedback by outside evaluator annually. Annual board retreat to set goals.

Current status: The one official complaint during the 2003-2004 school year was from a student seeking promotion to the next grade, despite having not met the school's clearly outlined academic requirements for promotion. No action was taken. An independent evaluation was conducted by Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound with a favorable review. (The report is available at www.codmanacademy.org). Board Members are as follows:

- o□ George Brackett, PhD. – Board Treasurer
- o□ Dorothea Engler, Educational Consultant
- o□ John Finley, IV, Head of Epiphany School – Board Clerk
- o□ Alveta Haynes, Executive Director of Sportsmen's Tennis Club
- o□ Peggy Kemp, Head of School, Fenway High School
- o□ Dawn Lewis, Co-Director, Boston Pilot School Network, Center for Collaborative Education
- o□ Jane Tewksbury, General Counsel of the office of Public Safety
- o□ Bill Walczak, Executive Director of Codman Square Health Center – Board President
- o□ Meg Campbell (ex-officio), Head of School, Codman Academy Charter School

Additional goals for 2004-2005

- Develop more learning expeditions across all curriculums
- Continue to improvement in mathematics performance; develop strong physics curriculum for 9th and 10th grades to support Math achievement.
- Expand upon the Learning Institute's pilot year by continuing to offer a un-grade, multi-age option for students with highly individualized needs; hire Special Education teacher for this group of students.
- Increase access to intranet information from home for families without computer access.
- 97% attendance or better for 2004-2005.
- Articulate mission of Capital Campaign to be launched in FY06, whose primary goal is to develop a common shared space in partnership with the Codman Square Health Center at our main building at 647 Washington Street.
- Raise \$250,000 from individuals and competitive grants.
- Have 100% college attendance rate for first graduating class

2. The school shall raise necessary funds and manage cash flow to meet expenses.

Instrument: Independent audit annually.

Data: Budget reports to Board of Trustees.

Current status: Alexander, Aronson, Finning & Co., P.C. completed the audit in August 2003, and we received favorable review by the State Auditor.

3. Facilities shall be obtained to carry out the school's mission. The school opened in September 2001 in a renovated space at 637 Washington Street. We also lease space from the Codman Square Health Center at 450 Washington Street.

Current Status:

Codman Academy currently occupies space at 637 Washington Street and 450 Washington Street. For the upcoming year, additional space will be used in the Codman Square Health Center buildings while we raise the necessary funds to begin construction on facilities expansion.

4. Attract outstanding faculty and support their professional development.

Instrument:

- a. Monthly faculty development meetings with Special Education Director
- b. Staff developer from the Harvard Graduate School of Education
- c. Use of funds for travel and professional development courses for faculty in 2004-2005.
- d. Annual Performance Review includes self-review

Data: Rate of contracts offered to faculty and management

Current status: All faculty returned for the 2003-2004 school year as full-time or adjunct faculty, as well as the addition of two core academic teachers. One Codman fellow and one graduate student intern from the 2003-2004 school year were hired as full-time faculty for the upcoming school year. One Humanities teacher will leave CACS to pursue her Ph.D. at the University of Pennsylvania. She will conduct her research on the literacy rate of male students at CACS. We received a Comprehensive School Reform Design federal grant to work with Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound and were awarded \$50,000 specifically focused on professional development. 5 of 6 core academic teachers as well as both full-time administrators attended

the ELOB National Conference in March 2003. We have worked closely with Angela Jolliffe, ELOB Field Director, throughout the year. Ms. Joliffe will run an ELOB workshop for all new staff during staff training for the upcoming school year.

Full-time 2003/04 Staff (Administrators and Core Academic Teachers)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Position/Title</u>	<u>Years Teaching</u>	<u>Years @ CACS</u>	<u>Degree</u>
Jessica Aaronson	Physics/ Algebra 2 teacher	4	1	Ed.M.
Nancy Blasi	Biology Teacher	3	1	B.A.
Thabiti Brown	Humanities	6	3	M.S.
Lori Delale-O'connor	Humanities	2	1	M.Ed.
Karen Crouse	Algebra/Geometry	7	2	M.Ed.
Janet Ferone	Dir. Of Special Education	22	3	M.Ed.
Ain Grooms	Dean of Enrichment	n/a	3	B.A.
Kim Parker	Humanities	4	2	M.S.
Meg Campbell	Head of School	17	3	M.S., C.A.S.

* The student-to-teacher ratio is approximately 14 to 1.

V. Are we true to our mission?

“Codman Academy Charter School's mission is to prepare students for full participation in the intellectual, economic and civic life of society, by ensuring their preparation for and access to further education, the skills and vision to undertake a rewarding career, and the motivation and character needed to engage deeply and productively in community life. We view parents and community members as integral partners in this endeavor.”

Indicators of success:

1. Annual independent evaluation and/or school review.

Rationale: Structured outside evaluation affords Codman Academy Charter School the opportunity to identify areas of strength as well as areas which need improvement.

Goal: Complete annually, report to Board.

Current status: Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound completed a Year End Assessment in April 2004. Evaluators observed classes, faculty meetings, school-wide meetings, and met individually with students, faculty and other key stakeholders in the school.

“When we visited we were pleased to see that many of the highlights we noted in last year’s report were still flourishing. Students continue to meet visitors with a firm and friendly handshake and a look you in eye, “Welcome to Codman Academy” greeting. Upon entering, there is always an inspirational quote of the day, selected and posted by a student that sets the tone for all who enter...it seems important to recognize in this introduction the ever vigilant attention that this school places on welcoming outsiders to its community.”

- Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound Year End Assessment

Full report available online at www.codmanacademy.org.

2. Offer rich interdisciplinary Expeditionary Learning education steeped in innovative literacy program, liberal and performing arts.

Rationale: Preparation for lifelong learning includes structured experiences and competency in core academic subjects but also mastery in performing arts, athletics and wellness, and leadership and service.

Goal: Offer rich interdisciplinary curriculum based on Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound design principles.

Current status: All ninth graders are required to take science, Algebra I and Humanities. Tenth graders are required to take science, Geometry and Humanities. The Humanities course for ninth and tenth graders includes a unique field-based literacy through drama program at The Huntington Theatre with twenty on-site days. This year, we continued our Huntington Theatre partnership with 20 on-site fieldwork days and a culminating Showcase performance. Huntington and field work aligns with Massachusetts curriculum frameworks.

We received the 2003 Massachusetts Alliance for Arts Education Award for Outstanding Arts Collaborative for our partnership with the Huntington Theatre. We received this award for outstanding support of arts education and for providing artistic and educational leadership in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. We received recognition for this award from both the Massachusetts State Senate and the Massachusetts House of Representatives.

Our students use technology daily. Our school currently has five desktop computers open to students, as well as three carts of wireless iBooks for a total of 31 student laptops. Students use laptops in classes regularly and have access to email in our college guidance room before and after school and during study halls. Upperclassmen have access to the computer lab in our classroom at 450 Washington Street, space that we lease from the Codman Square Health Center. In addition, Juniors have access to computers and advanced science technology during their field days one day a week at Simmons College, where they use the physics and foreign language labs. Students are encouraged to use the computers for writing papers and for doing research. We have a school website, www.codmanacademy.org, that is updated daily, including a password-protected intranet site for parents, students and staff. Parents and students may check our on-line grading system daily for information relating to attendance, grading, projects and daily school-wide announcements, as well as for extracurricular activities and sports schedules.

Incoming ninth grade students received free home delivery of *The Boston Globe*, encouraging students and families to read throughout various parts of daily life. Field site learning this year included visits to the following: Boston Public Library (Copley Branch), The Cloud Foundation/Cloud Place, John F. Kennedy Library, Harvard Graduate School of Education, American Youth Foundation's Camp Merrowvista in New Hampshire, Dorchester Courthouse, Museum of Science, Forest Hill Cemetery, Arboretum, eight college campuses, the Boston Ballet, Deer Island, City Lab, and an open mic poetry event at a local community organization.

On Saturdays, students also had the opportunity to choose from among 15 different elective courses offered Pass/No Credit by Adjunct Faculty. These ranged from Studio Art to SAT Prep to a course entitled African Diaspora taught by UMASS-Boston Professor Robert Johnson. French and Spanish I was also offered for academic credit.

Our partnership with Codman Square Health Center afforded students the opportunity to participate in single sex Talking Circles with a licensed social worker. We have hired a full-time school social worker for the 2004-2005 to respond to the needs of our growing community. Our Athletic program grew significantly under the leadership of a full-time Director. We continued to offer tennis instruction through our Partnership with Sportmen's Tennis Center, and our partnership with the Epiphany School provided space for basketball instruction. Students walk at least six miles per week to and from P.E. and classes. Both our girls and boys basketball teams competed in local leagues, and we plan to start a cross-country team in 2004-2005.

3. Student attendance:

Rationale: Research indicates student attendance is a good predictor of student achievement.

Goal: 94% daily average attendance for 6 day school week.

Current status: 98% daily average attendance 6 days a week during the 2003-2004 school year.

4. Students develop positive attitude towards college:

Rationale: Motivation key predictor of completion of academic requirements.

Goal: 100% students apply for and are accepted to college.

Current status: Students this year made ten college campus visits. Freshmen visited Boston College, Emerson College, and Emmanuel College. Sophomores visited Clark University, Dartmouth College, Suffolk University, and Tufts University. Juniors held Codman Academy classes on-site at Simmons College campus. Both freshmen and sophomores completed common applications as practice. Juniors researched and requested catalogs and applications from at least five schools of their choice in consultation with our Dean of Enrichment. We will partner with the Bottom Line in 2004-2005, an organization that provides one-on-one counseling with students on issues surrounding the financial aid and application process. All students are required to complete a SAT prep course during their Junior year. This year 100% of Juniors completed a Saturday SAT prep course at the Olin Center or Dorchester Higher Education Resource Center.

5. Parent/Family members are active partners with Codman Academy Charter School

Rationale: Research shows students perform better who have parents or other significant family members who value education and also encourage and support their children's academic achievement.

Goal: 100% participation in Faculty/Student/Parent Conferences.

Data: Attendance at parent conference

Current status: All parents participated in student conferences with faculty members and students. Increasing parent involvement in the school was marked by the formation of a Parent Advisory Board, which arose out of the monthly on-site parent meetings. This group of parents will meet in addition to the regularly scheduled monthly meetings to strengthen parent leadership and facilitate a more active parent voice in school policy making and governance.

6. Strong community partners

Rationale: Strong community partnerships extend our capacity to offer students and their families rich learning opportunities.

Goal: Maintain strong partnerships with *The Boston Globe*, Codman Square Health Center, Museum of Fine Arts, The Huntington Theatre, Epiphany School and Sportsmen's Tennis Center.

Current Status: Incoming students will receive free home delivery of The Boston Globe for the year. Our expanded Wellness program enjoyed a strengthened relationship this year at Sportsmen's Tennis Club and the Epiphany School. Our Humanities curriculum continued to include bi-monthly fieldwork visits to the Huntington Theatre. We forged a very successful partnership with Simmons College with the help of our science teacher, Jessica Aaronson, and we will continue to use their facilities next year. All of our partnering organizations have renewed contracts with us for the 2004-2005 school year.

VI. Dissemination

"While our core mission is the education of our students and their families, we also aspire to serve as an innovative laboratory for rethinking urban secondary education, particularly for new small high schools that are affiliated with community-based organizations. To the best of our knowledge, there is no existing small urban community based high school which provides a serious academic and character development program through a combination of on-line courses, academic learning expeditions and intensive family and community partnerships. Codman Academy Charter School's unique design is a template for replication by other community-based organizations which are exploring starting charter schools and by existing districts seeking bold alternatives. As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, Codman Academy Charter School also plans to develop a professional development center for the preparation of new urban teachers."

- *Codman Academy Charter School original Charter*

1. Document our learning as we go

Instrument: Video/DVD

Current status: Rhonda Henderson, an intern from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, documented student fieldwork at the Huntington Theatre, college visits, and other field trips. Her work, entitled "Building Community at Codman Academy Charter School," charted their journey throughout the spring semester. The video/DVD will be taken on visits to schools and conferences throughout the upcoming year.

2. Sharing Best Practices beyond our school

Instrument: Faculty participation and leadership in local and national educator networks.

Data: Documentation of participation type and extent: All publications of faculty are listed on our Web site in full at www.codmanacademy.org. All feature articles on Codman Academy Charter School in major news mediums are also posted on-line at our Web site.

Current status: 6 academic teachers attended the Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound. In addition, faculty members presented the numerous papers and received several honors this year:

- Using Information Technology to Enhance Teaching and Learning, presented by Head of School Meg Campbell and Board Member George Brackett, Ph.D. at the Massachusetts Charter School Association meeting
- Kim Parker was also awarded a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship to study at the Folger Shakespeare Library for a month. She will be joining 24 other teachers from around the country to develop curriculum which will be posted to Folger Library.
- Head of School Meg Campbell was invited to speak on a panel at the 2004 National Charter School Conference in Miami, FL on the subject of "Creating a Culture of Achievement."

Visitors are on site frequently, and students regularly lead campus tours for a myriad of guests: reporters from the Boston Globe and NYTimes, members of South Africa Partners, educators from Ireland, faculty from the Harvard Graduate School of Education, staff from the Massachusetts Charter School Resource Center, members of Harmony Sings (a South African singing group), staff from the Boston Public Library, international speakers during our school-wide Model United Nations, as well as educators from high schools in New York, Washington, DC, Maine and California. Several students participated in a video-conference with students at the Barnes school in South-Africa. This relationship continues to strengthen as we approach our first annual Senior class trip to South Africa. Seniors will travel to South Africa in February 2004 as part of their AIDS awareness project. In a post card following the televised exchange, President of the Board of Trustees Bill Walczak, who was present in South Africa at the time, wrote home to say that, "The dozens of officials present jaws dropped when they realized that the projected images on the wall were really people 9,000 miles away. The story made national television, 2 radio programs, and two newspapers. It's a tremendous achievement, and Codman Academy Charter School is well known here."

Additionally, we offered technology support to various other schools, including educators from the Mission Hill School, the new Boston Public Pilot School, Murdoch Charter Middle School, and the Media and Technology Charter High School (MATCH).

3. Teacher and Administrator Preparation and Education

Instrument: Field Experience Placements (FEP) through Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Data: Documentation by Harvard Graduate School of Education (HGSE) students of their work at Codman Academy Charter School.

Current status: 4 HGSE students completed Field Experience Program courses for academic credit from Harvard for their work at Codman Academy Charter School. Additionally, 1 Harvard Law School student volunteered but did not seek academic credit. One graduate student from Simmons College worked full-time at the school as a teaching fellow. We hope to continue partnering with Simmons College to build a strong teacher preparatory program. Next year we will also mentor one student teacher from Tufts University.

Codman Academy Charter School
Balance Sheet
As of June 30, 2004

	<u>Jun 30, 04</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Citizens Checking	185,450.51
Savings-Citizens	<u>213,237.30</u>
Total Checking/Savings	<u>398,687.81</u>
Total Current Assets	398,687.81
Other Assets	
A-R Comm of Mass	20,842.00
A-R Foundation	73,235.00
Computer Software	7,000.00
Computer Software Acc Dep	-5,833.28
Computers	71,618.62
Computers Acc Dep	-32,170.00
Equipment	19,042.66
Equipment Acc Dep	-6,797.80
Furniture	25,866.71
Furniture Acc Dep	-9,776.27
Leasehold improvements	239,893.34
Leasehold Improvements Acc Amor	-70,827.80
Prepaid Expenses	<u>11,609.91</u>
Total Other Assets	<u>343,703.09</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>742,390.90</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
2000 · *Accounts Payable	<u>17,992.11</u>
Total Accounts Payable	17,992.11
Other Current Liabilities	
Accrued Expense	24,649.03
Accrued Payroll	32,958.59
Deferred Grant Revenue	<u>120,888.00</u>
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>178,495.62</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>196,487.73</u>
Total Liabilities	196,487.73
Equity	
3900 · Retained Earnings	473,968.30
Net Income	<u>71,934.87</u>
Total Equity	<u>545,903.17</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>742,390.90</u>

Codman Academy Charter School
Profit and Loss
July 2003 through June 2004

	<u>Jul '03 - Jun 04</u>
Income	
Grants	
Grants-Federal	148,435.00
Grants-MA	26,768.00
Total Grants	<u>175,203.00</u>
Interest Inc	4,073.16
Other Income	2,146.58
Private Support	
Contributions-Corporate	100.00
Contributions-Indiv	289.71
Grants-Fndn	56,112.00
Total Private Support	<u>56,501.71</u>
School Lunch	13,576.75
Tuition Revenue	786,215.00
Total Income	<u>1,037,716.20</u>
Expense	
Alarm Services	751.50
Assessment	241.50
Audit Fees	8,415.00
Bank Charge	0.00
Benefits	
Health Insurance	17,950.04
Benefits - Other	0.00
Total Benefits	<u>17,950.04</u>
Benefits Admin	180.00
Books	18,490.28
Consultants	
Coach & Ref	1,738.00
Computer	1,120.00
Contracted Services	77,890.68
Instructional	32,804.00
Non-Instructional	27,680.41
SPED	47,338.00
Total Consultants	<u>188,571.09</u>
Copy	1,225.28
Depreciation & Amortization	31,742.48
Development	204.83
Dues and Subscriptions	5,616.44
Equip	
Classroom	4,577.51
Office	4,964.17
Technology	499.93
Total Equip	<u>10,041.61</u>
Fees & Licensing	300.00



Expeditionary Learning Implementation Review Summary Report Codman Academy Charter School

June 17, 2004

Introduction

This report is from the Expeditionary Learning Review Team that visited Codman Academy on April 5-6, 2004. It is written for the faculty, directors and board of Codman Academy, as well as others interested in the progress of the school. The purpose of the report is to provide an outside perspective on the work the school is doing to implement the Core Practice Benchmarks of Expeditionary Learning. It also provides feedback and recommendations that are intended to lead to further inquiry and reflection by the faculty as they consider their specific school improvement goals.

The report is not based exclusively on our two-day review visit. It is also informed by our ongoing work with the school and the professional development that we have delivered to the faculty. We believe we know the school and its faculty well. The review team was comprised of three EL staff members, all of whom work nationally with Expeditionary Learning schools. Two of the site review members are not involved on a regular basis with the ongoing work of Codman Academy so served as the outside perspective to the review. One works closely with the school and has spent numerous hours in classrooms, attended many schoolwide community/ staff meetings and attended school events and performances that served to both appraise and honor the work of Codman students and faculty.

We were given many school documents: the annual report, board documents, student faculty handbooks and teacher/ student notebooks and portfolios. Review and discussion of this information was very helpful and used as supporting evidence for this report. The school's website also provides a detailed view of the school, its mission and on going work.

The school has undergone many professional reviews this year from outside evaluators. The Massachusetts Department of Education completed a formal site review in March 2004 and has submitted its final report to the school. The school is currently undergoing another rigorous review through its nomination/consideration as a CES (Coalition of Essential Schools) /Gates Foundation mentor school program. This distinction means that Codman would support and advise other small, urban high schools throughout the country. Expeditionary Learning has also requested the school's assistance to support another Gates small high school recipient, the Bronx School of Expeditionary Learning, opening in the fall of 2004. After review, Codman was nominated and then selected by the US Department of Education to present its work at the National Charter School Conference (Miami FL) in June 2004.

When we visited, we were pleased to see that many of the highlights we noted in last year's report were still flourishing. Students continue to meet visitors with a firm and friendly handshake and a look you in the eye, "Welcome to Codman Charter School!" greeting. Upon entering, there is always an inspirational quote of the day, selected and posted by a student that sets the tone for all who enter. Although school culture will be addressed more specifically in the next part of this report, it seems important to recognize in this introduction the ever vigilant attention this school places on welcoming outsiders into its community.

A challenge this year has been space. Adding another grade level and issues with the adjacent wooden building used for classroom space/ teacher workrooms, have forced the school to be creative with scheduling and using the community as classroom. This year, juniors and their teachers held physics and foreign language classes at Simmons College, using the labs and other college resources. Students still walk daily to a local private school or tennis club for PE classes and the school's innovative drama/literacy program takes place at the Huntington Theater every Friday. The Codman Square Health Center supports the school in lending additional space that is used for classrooms and cafeteria. Although the school's director has been resourceful in finding adequate solutions to space issues, the need for a plan and funding to address long term facility needs is evident. The head of school informed us that the school board has set this as a priority.

The next section will provide detailed information on the school's implementation of Expeditionary Learning. It has two parts: a one page, graphic summary report that indicates overall scores and a distribution pattern for each rating along with a more detailed section that provides information on each Core Practice.

This section also offers commentary and feedback from the review team. Although the school draws on and uses the practices associated with Expeditionary Learning, there is not an explicit, connected link of Expeditionary Learning to the work and culture of the school. Each Core Practice section will end with some recommendations and a few guiding questions to frame the work towards deeper implementation of the Expeditionary Learning design.

Respectfully submitted by:

Angela Jolliffe, East Coast Field Director, Expeditionary Learning

Doug Kilmister, Director of Research and Evaluation, Expeditionary Learning, Cambridge MA

Scott Hartl, Northeast Regional Field Director, Expeditionary Learning

**Expeditionary Learning Implementation Review
2003-2004 Pilot**

School Name: Codman Academy Charter School

May 28, 2004

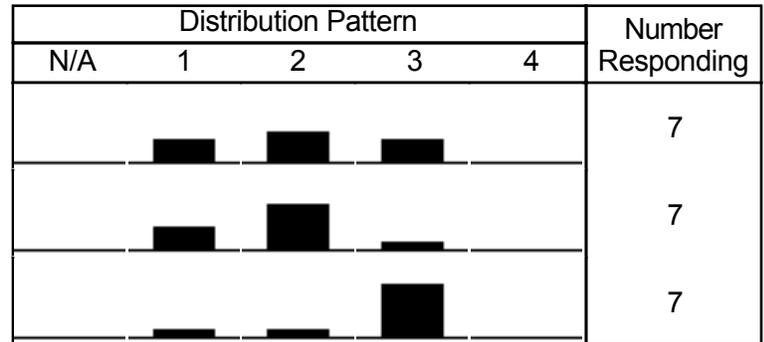
Principal/Director: Meg Campbell

Year with EL: 2nd

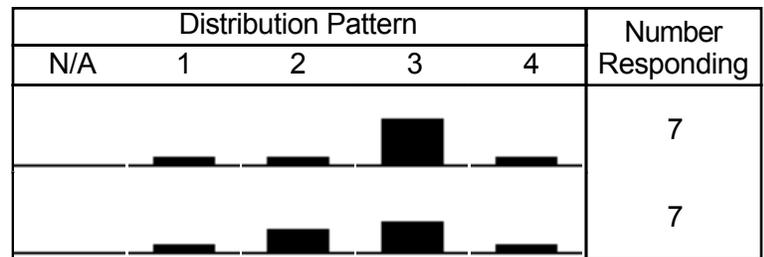
Field Director: Angela Jolliffe

School Designer: Angela Jolliffe

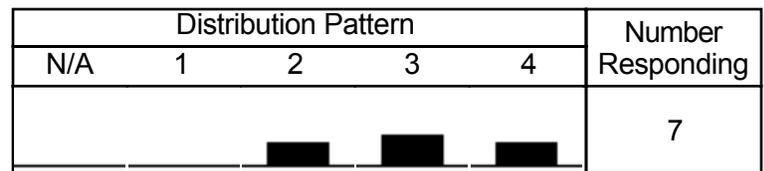
<u>Learning Expeditions</u>	School Score
1. Quality of Learning Expeditions	2
2. Frequency and Scope of Learning Expeditions	2
3. Quality & scope of investigations & projects outside of expeditions	3



<u>Active Pedagogy</u>	School Score
4. Effective instructional practices across the school	3
5. Literacy across the school	3



<u>School Culture and Character</u>	School Score
6. Culture & character at the classroom level	3
7. Professional learning community	3
8. Culture & character schoolwide	3



Benchmark Implementation Goals for 2003-2004

- See Implementation Review Summary Report

<u>Leadership and School Improvement</u>	School Score
9. Leading for school improvement	3

<u>Structures</u>	School Score
10. Creating and making best use of structures	4

CORE PRACTICE ONE: Learning Expeditions

Learning expeditions were rated in two areas: **Quality** (compelling topics, guiding questions, products and linked projects, fieldworks/experts/service, and high quality student work) and **Frequency**. A frequency score of 2 indicates that 25-50% of the school day/ year is spent on well-defined learning expeditions. Learning expeditions seem to be an area where there is still variation in terms of implementation and definition. In general, some units referred to as “expeditions” at the school lack the depth and scope as defined in our benchmarks (see pages 8-17 in benchmarks booklet).

It is clear that many teachers use various components of expeditions as they design in depth, content specific units/lessons and plan activities to engage students. (See Frequency/Scope of investigations and projects outside of expeditions). 96% of students reported in the classroom survey that “almost always” (51%) or “sometimes” (44%): “topics we study are challenging”. These investigations are thoughtful, well planned and appear to challenge students but do not, in and of themselves, fall into the category of a learning expedition.

Fieldwork and using community resources is apparent. A student intern documented Codman field experiences this year and interviewed students on their impact. She shared her findings with our review team and it was compelling. Most teachers authentically integrate this fieldwork into their curriculum.

Projects and reports are regularly assigned in all classrooms. Teachers provide students with written expectations, time lines, supporting materials and rubrics. Passage portfolio requirements were updated this year and showed attention to increased rigor. Teacher self-assessments and our observations /conversations with students noted challenges around the level of support /direction students receive as they complete required assignments.

Guiding Questions: What strategies will help teachers plan learning expeditions that work? How does critique promote intellectual development and best work?

Recommendations: Develop and document learning expeditions

- Consider learning expeditions as the primary way of organizing curriculum. Some collaborative discussion amongst faculty on the current mini-expeditions, subject specific investigations and related projects would develop many of the positive ideas we saw into true expeditions. Use the terminology associated with learning expeditions.
- Curriculum mapping: Develop a four year scope and sequence of curriculum for each subject area; Use this mapping to address adherence to required standards, college requirements and development of specific learning expedition plans.

Recommendation: Supporting students to ensure consistent, high levels of quality completion of required work.

- Continue to foster rigorous schoolwide focus on ongoing assessment, drafts, revision; Teacher input/help throughout the process. Monitor use of student friendly rubrics/rating sheets as students self assess along the way. Save student samples to provide models and exemplars for next year's students.
- Scaffolding: Structure the process so students gradually develop the coping skills, persistence, disciplined work habits, ethic to do quality work independently. Regular, ongoing feedback on how they are doing with this.
- Assess students on content, process and final product so they see that all three are important and related. Students should be expected to show progress in all these areas.
- Collective examination of student work in all subject areas to analyze content, skills development, literacy and higher order thinking. Any assessments-- performances, demonstrations, written work, final products, portfolio pieces, etc. -- could collectively be analyzed using protocols to determine what specific student learning goals were mastered

Recommendation: Motivating all students

- Harness the power of relevancy. The Huntington work is powerful because students have an opportunity to present their work to a real audience. Create authentic projects so students have a high stake in completing them. This will help them to get through the more tedious or uninteresting parts of an assignment (example: editing/revising text) because they know it has to be good since it is going beyond the school. It may also help to address student engagement. (See Culture and Character.)

CORE PRACTICE 2: Active Pedagogy: Instructional Practices and Literacy

Our active pedagogy benchmarks support teaching and learning that helps to make content come alive and ensure that all students think and participate. Lessons are structured so that teachers talk less and students talk more; the students do the thinking and the work. The most common modality of instruction we observed was whole class discussion/mini lesson and individual work. Teachers are skilled at asking probing questions and leading classroom discussions that encourage controversial views, defending positions and consideration of multiple perspectives. As engaging as these sessions are, not all students stay “with it” for the whole period and there appears to be minimal student empowerment in leading these discussions.

Students read and write daily in every class. Teachers go beyond the textbook— trade books, primary sources, discipline related articles, etc are used along with or instead of textbooks. One hundred percent of last year's 10th graders passed the English Language Arts portion of MCAS scores on the first try. A few teachers explicitly teach and use specific comprehension strategies

with students to discuss their reading. In these classes, we noted students were very metacognitive and enjoyed sharing their ideas through structured literature circles or other formats. Schoolwide use of these strategies would give a common vocabulary for reading that could be used in every classroom.

Writing is assigned to promote and assess understanding and reflection in all content areas. Humanities classes take on the major responsibility for teaching the writing process. Students often write for audiences within the school community and this year an electronic school newspaper was started as part of a Saturday class.

Math is inquiry based and goes beyond computation and practice. One math teacher is developing a scope and sequence of math learning expeditions. In this class students are expected to show the thinking behind their answers and are encouraged to find multiple ways to solve a problem.

Guiding Questions: What does Active Pedagogy look like in EL schools? How are our classrooms practices supporting students to become independent learners?

Recommendation: Highly focused, consistent schoolwide literacy practices

- Schoolwide use of the comprehension strategies (as noted in the 10th grade English class) would be beneficial to everyone. These strategies are user friendly across all content areas.
- Encourage writing for authentic audiences beyond the school community.

Recommendation: Responsibility for Learning

- Shift the onus from teacher to student through a gradual release of responsibility. Use collaborative groupings, student led discussions, critique protocols, etc to provide opportunities for all students to do the hard work of thinking.

CORE PRACTICE THREE: School Culture and Character

Codman has a strong school culture that has been built and nurtured through vigorous and consistent attention to character, academic achievement, post secondary goal setting and “working as crews, not passengers.” Visitors are encouraged and welcomed via a genuine open door policy. These visitors regularly comment on the school’s overall tone, everyone’s ability to work in a civilized fashion despite the constant comings and goings, and the “can do” attitude of faculty and students. As noted in the introductory section, all students are well trained as greeters and school ambassadors. During our two- day review visit, students engaged in many conversations with us while reviewing the tasks and projects they were completing. They also completed schoolwide and classroom based surveys (aligned with applicable EL Core Practice benchmarks) that were used for this report.

The school encourages high expectations through its overall mission and day-to-day work leading to the goal of college for everyone. Revisions to the passage portfolio system were made this year to address increased attention to quality work and evidence of student learning that reflected more in depth applications of content and skills. There are supports to help students who need additional attention but teachers report that this is an ongoing challenge. Another issue is student retention/promotion. The staff struggles with the negative impact of retention on older students but as a school that promotes readiness for college, it rejects the notion of social promotion as well. A step was taken this year to address this. The Learning Institute was established to support a small group of students who are two years over age for grade. Visits to this classroom were inspiring. It is clear that the level of academic and social support these students receive is bolstering student confidence and having an impact beyond the classroom and school.

The school’s handbook clearly articulates a code of conduct this is consonant with the EL design principles. Rituals and traditions associated with EL (community meetings, inspirational readings, team building, etc) are used. Students have opportunities for service through crew expectations and classroom projects. The students manage the school’s lunch program and take responsibility for clean up each day.

Most classrooms are managed well. This year some common classroom practices were instituted to address issues that were identified last year around student engagement, homework and accountability. These include: a “Do Now” activity that gets students engaged at the very beginning of each class, homework posted and collected in a specific location in each classroom and new binders with a consistent schoolwide setup and accountability system. The 9th grade

students were a challenging group for everyone. We observed behaviors in those classrooms not evidenced at other grade levels. They are isolated most of the time from the older students which limits their interaction with peer role models. (Crews are multi grade level.) There are teachers with excellent classroom management who model the standard for the school. We'd suggest some considerations around having the strongest teachers work with this group.

On the EL survey, students were asked to give feedback on the following: (In this class) "Students behave respectfully and stay engaged in productive work."

Schoolwide scores/distribution indicated the following:

14% Almost Always

62% Sometimes

20% Rarely

4% Never

One would expect some obvious variation in how a particular student might answer this type of a question on any given day. However, our observations as noted above and the student responses verify the range in how individual teachers enforce misbehavior and monitor student engagement. It should be noted that the school's leadership is aware of this and is committed to providing staff development next year that will support any teachers who need support with classroom management issues. She has offered a consulting contract to a staff member (leaving her classroom for doctoral studies) to specifically work with teachers around classroom management issues.

The school's advisory program, called crew, ensures that students and their parents are known well by an adult; crew leaders provide ongoing communication between home and school. Almost 100% of students indicated they were well known by the adults in the school (survey). Crew sessions run the gamut from structured/ planned to somewhat informal. The school enlists and receives on and off site support from many community partnerships, board members, etc and provides internships for local college interns. These relationships foster additional role models for all students; the Learning Institute program at the school provides mentorships and monitored internships for a small group of students who need additional support in this area.

Fitness and an emphasis on a healthy lifestyle are promoted. Students walk approximately two miles daily to get to offsite gym classes. The school lunch is specially catered to offer a nutritious lunch that includes salad and fresh fruit. Six students will go on Outward Bound Courses this summer.

Since many of the benchmarks overlap, school culture goals are imbedded in other sections of this report.

Guiding Questions: How can the Codman staff and students work together to promote and sustain an identifiable EL culture? What practices at our school support or hinder this?

Recommendation: Provide Professional Support (See Leadership and School Improvement)

Recommendation: Revisit crew (See School Structures)

Recommendation: Scaffolding Instruction (See Active Pedagogy)

Recommendation: Grade 9 Immersion Plan

- Consider Ground School concept for the first month of school for incoming students.
- Opportunities for freshman to work in classroom situations with older students.

Recommendation: Student Leadership

- Train school ambassadors and guides to use the language of EL when they speak with visitors; (See other related goals in section titled: Codman as an EL school.)

CORE PRACTICE FOUR: Leadership and School Improvement

This core practice defines how school leadership uses Expeditionary Learning as the central means for school improvement and professional development goals. The principal works regularly with the EL school designer and assumes responsibility for coordinating professional development. She met with our review team and completed a written assessment. Each staff member also completed a similar self-assessment as part of this review.

The faculty and school leadership participate enthusiastically in all Expeditionary Learning on and off site opportunities. However, Expeditionary Learning is not viewed at Codman as the engine that's driving the train. A recommendation made in last year's report was: *thinking about Codman as an Expeditionary Learning School*. As this report indicates, the school uses many EL practices consistently but there is not a real connection to these practices as "EL."

There is no formal Leadership team but the staff meets on a regular basis to participate in decision making, discussion of school issues, etc. Teachers report a need for more job imbedded

professional development support and supervision. A mentoring program was started this year but teachers gave mixed reviews in terms of its effects or changes in classroom practice. There is a continued need for the faculty to find ways to develop more formal collegial practices that support classroom teaching. The faculty has begun conversations on this and the head of school is working on an action plan to support professional collaboration and instructional support.

The Codman staff is highly committed to developing their content and pedagogical knowledge. There is an impressive list of professional development experiences that Codman staff will attend this summer. Four teachers were awarded scholarships through very competitive national programs. New and current staff have registered for national Expeditionary Learning offerings including OB courses, summits and institutes focusing on literacy. Two teachers were selected to participate in PBS documentaries.

Guiding Questions: What does it look like when a school makes progress in implementing Expeditionary Learning's design principles and core practices? What is the role of school leadership in establishing and institutionalizing these practices?

Recommendation: Provide Professional Support

- Head of school creates and communicates a plan / timeline for regular teacher observation and coaching. Determine roles and responsibilities, documentation guidelines and process for monitoring and accountability.
- Keep curriculum and instruction front and center of school improvement goals; Limit competing priorities for time and school resources.
- Revise the school's schedule to provide time for common planning, professional support and opportunities to give and receive feedback.
- Take time at every staff meeting to reflect upon your shared work in this area.

Recommendation: Codman as an Expeditionary Learning School

- EL 101 for Board members and new staff (summer 2004).
- Use crew time to develop students' understanding of the roots and practices of Expeditionary Learning and the vocabulary associated with the design.
- Create visual or other references within the school that represent EL at Codman.

CORE PRACTICE FIVE: School Structures

The school has organizational structures that work well for general day-to-day operations and a system for knowing students well. There is some common planning time for teachers but limited use of this time for actual collaboration around practice. A schedule supports fieldwork, large uninterrupted blocks of time, and flexibility for needed schedule changes, etc. Students are grouped heterogeneously and classes remain small. Some gender separate (all male) classes have shown very positive results. The 10th grade Humanities teacher has designed her doctoral research around the effects of this grouping.

Students are known and supported by faculty, staff members, and other adults through crew and looping structures. Mixed grade level Crews meet daily. There are opportunities for parents to participate in conferences, family focus groups and other school events.

Guiding Questions: How can we maximize our schedule for greatest impact on student and adult learning? What constitutes crew at Codman Academy?

Recommendation: Revisit Crew

- Examine and refine the crew concept and decide upon a few consistent components that are doable and provide purpose/meaning for everyone. Everyone adheres to these expectations.
- Crews in EL schools focus on the following:
 - Student academic and emotional support
 - Post secondary options/Goal setting
 - Service learning opportunities
 - Adventure
 - Literacy (Ex: book clubs to foster reading in an enjoyable, non threatening way)
 - Ongoing monitoring of academic work (Ex: Supporting portfolio work/presentations)

Recommendation: Redesign Schedule Professional Support

- As noted in another section, make time for job imbedded, shared professional learning experiences for teachers that occur during the school day