



# **SOUTH BOSTON HARBOR ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT**

**2001-2002**



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## **SOUTH BOSTON HARBOR ACADEMY'S MISSION:**

- to provide an academically rigorous college preparatory public education to students from the City of Boston, with an emphasis on math and science;
- to integrate into the school's educational program its Boston Harbor campus, drawing particularly upon the resources of the school's waterfront location and Greater Boston area;
- to create a thriving school community that makes students feel they are part of something larger than themselves and that encourages families to be proud and active partners with the school;
- to develop in students qualities associated with strong character and many of the new, basic skills necessary in today's academic and professional world; and
- to instill in students a desire to pursue independent academic inquiry and a lifelong understanding of the value and importance of education.

*“My child never showed any particular interest in school until fifth grade at SBHA. This year her attitude toward school completely changed. She talks about what goes on in each class, she is putting so much effort into doing her homework well... Her experience with this school has been excellent.”*

*-SBHA Parent*

*LETTER FROM THE CHAIR*  
*South Boston Harbor Academy Charter School*  
*Board of Trustees*

August 1, 2002

Dear Friends of South Boston Harbor Academy Charter School:

As Chairperson of the Board of Trustees of South Boston Harbor Academy Charter School (SBHA), I am pleased to present to you this Annual Report highlighting our fourth year in operation.

In a city in which college preparatory education is often associated with private institutions, SBHA is a public school committed to preparing all of its students for college. The school seeks to develop replicable educational and operational programs that can be shared with the public education system; to provide parents and students with greater options in choosing schools; and to hold teachers and administrators accountable for students' educational outcomes.

I am delighted to report on the school's early success in meeting these objectives. Academically, SBHA claimed the third highest total MCAS score in the city of Boston for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade, behind only two exam schools, Boston Latin and Latin Academy. For the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grades, SBHA scored the third and fourth highest MCAS scores in the city, respectively. Enthusiasm from the Boston community for the school's program continues to be strong – our new 5<sup>th</sup> grade class attracted five applications for every available seat, and our waiting list numbers over 540. Moreover, since our inception, the program is increasingly recognized in more of Boston's neighborhoods. This year, SBHA attracted 298 applications from 14 Boston neighborhoods. We continue to develop partnerships with other charter schools ranging from those still being planned and developed to those that have been around as long as or longer than us.

This past year has seen a number of important organizational changes. To meet the needs of our growing student population and staff, we are modifying our organizational model for the 2002-03 school year by creating an Executive Director position, which will be filled by Brett Peiser, our founder who has served as Principal since the School's inception. We are pleased to welcome Susan Walsh, who joined us for the 2001-02 school year as our Curriculum Coordinator, as our new Principal. In addition, for the first time, we will have a Middle School Director—Tobey Jackson. He joins Eileen Callahan, who has served as High School Director for the past year. Both are founding teachers and will work together with Mr. Peiser and Ms. Walsh to ensure that SBHA's evolution into a full middle and high school meets the needs of all our students and staff.

This spring, in response to strong MCAS results, a long waiting list, and our desire to expand the opportunity to other families, we applied to the Department of Education to increase our fifth year enrollment total from 280 students to 300 students. The growth in student body comes in our fifth grade, which will now enroll 60, rather than 40 students. We hope to receive approval for a second expansion in our sixth year.

Since the school's founding, our mission has served us well; however, to clarify our goals for students, families, and prospective students, we voted to change the mission to a simpler statement

that reflects our most basic objective – to prepare every student for college. We await the Department of Education’s approval of this change.

This year brought us steps closer to reaching that most basic objective of preparing students to enter, succeed in, and graduate from college. Our high school grew to include its first sophomore class and began several traditions including an SBHA Chapter of the National Honor Society. As an alternative to summer school, our teachers and administrators led Saturday School this spring for students who were in danger of failing one or more classes. The school began a mentoring and tutoring program for exceptional high school students to work with middle school students who needed academic support. In addition, SBHA continued its college preparatory traditions such as College Day and college visits and added new traditions such as the naming of Advisories after their teachers’ alma maters.

Our early success and enthusiastic response from the Boston community prompted our staff to apply to start another charter school, the Edward Brooke Charter School, which will open in Boston this August to 88 fifth grade students. Each year, it will expand one grade until it is a 5-8 middle school with approximately 320 students by 2005. The school will focus on preparing students for post-secondary education. We look forward to working in partnership with the Edward Brooke to ensure that all its students are prepared to attend college preparatory high schools.

As we conclude our fourth year, we also are pleased to submit our application for renewal to the Massachusetts Department of Education for a second five-year charter.

I take this opportunity to thank our faculty, administrators, and staff for their hard work and seemingly tireless efforts in creating this wonderful academic program that has made SBHA a public school of academic excellence. As we embark on our fifth year, I invite others to learn what South Boston Harbor Academy offers Boston’s students.

*Susan Fortin, Co-Founder and Chairperson, Board of Trustees*

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

South Boston Harbor Academy Charter School received its charter in February 1998, and opened to 120 students in grades 5-7 only six months later. Since then, the school has expanded to include grades 5-10 and 234 students, and will expand one grade each year – continuing with grade 11 in 2002-03 – until it is a full middle and high school by 2003.

Our fourth year brought the following successes:

- **Student and School Performance.** With the school having established clear curriculum objectives, performance standards, and assessment tools in the five core academic areas, SBHA students:
  - ✓ made excellent gains on all sections of the Stanford-9 Achievement Test, including an average 30 percentile point increase from students' initial enrollment to this past spring on the math section;
  - ✓ achieved the third or fourth highest MCAS scores in the city, with 100% passing the 8th grade English Language Arts section for the second year in a row;
  - ✓ were admitted into exam schools this year, with 12 accepted into Latin, 3 into Latin Academy, and 2 into the O'Bryant—an acceptance rate of 81%.
- **Integrating the Community and the City.** With dozens of trips around the City, regular guest speakers and visitors at the school, and several local partnerships to further the school's educational program, SBHA made great strides in accessing outside resources to better educate the school's students, and improving the school's overall operations.
- **Student Support and Parent Involvement.** SBHA provides a strong and supportive environment for all of its students, and has instituted required afterschool tutoring, Homework Club, and Saturday School to provide comprehensive help for students facing particular academic challenges. From maintaining the school's library to signing each of the eight progress reports and report cards sent home with students, parents have been integral to our students' success.
- **Character and Responsibility.** By agreeing to our Contract of Mutual Responsibilities, students, parents, teachers, and the Principal alike sign an understanding outlining each other's responsibilities as educational partners. With a strict, disciplinary policy that is enforced consistently across the school, SBHA addresses each and every incident of inappropriate behavior, fostering in students the real connection between actions and consequences. Students spend time giving back to the community, from a winter clothing drive to working on an organic farm that feeds the homeless.
- **Lifelong Learning and Inquiry.** From parents and community leaders speaking with students about their professions, to College Day for high school students, and our annual trips to local universities, SBHA instills in students the expectation of college attendance and the lifelong importance of education.

- **Teachers.** Having received over 1000 applications for the 8 open positions we are filling for the 2002-03 school year, we have continued to hire a talented and experienced staff who work countless hours before, during, and after school to provide the educational enrichment students need. With an average teaching program of 80 students, 2 subject preparations, and their own classrooms, teachers have the tools, time, and resources they need in order to be effective educators.
- **Technology.** Technology plays a strong part in our educational program. Every staff member – part- or full-time – has his or her own computer, e-mail, voice mail, T1 Internet access, and workspace. Parents can contact the Homework Hotline, 24 hours each day, to check on students' class assignments. Lesson plans are inputted weekly on the school's internal computer network for cross-referencing and interdisciplinary planning, leaving a legacy for future teachers for years to come.
- **Students.** With 234 students currently enrolled, another 537 are on the waiting list. SBHA students come from 13 different neighborhoods from around the city, with a majority of students residing in South Boston and Dorchester. With parents called within the first period of each school day if their child was absent from school, daily attendance for the year averaged 95%.
- **School Program.** With a longer school day and a longer school year, students have been able to spend a great deal more time in class mastering a growing set of educational expectations. With an average class size of 20, teachers are able to provide as individualized an educational program as possible for students, providing a variety of classroom activities and discussions to continuously inspire student interest.
- **Governance.** With leadership from an expanded Board of Trustees and Advisory Board, the school has continued its campaign to address operating costs associated with a new school, and capital funds for its eventual permanent facility.

Above all else, what we have provided for students is a safe environment in which they can learn and develop. Our students continue to grow as young leaders. This year brought the introduction of a tutoring program where high achieving high school students worked with middle school students afterschool. We also inducted our first group of National Honor Society members. We are so proud of our students as they continue to work hard to reach their goal of going to college.

**Brett Peiser, Principal**

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# FULFILLMENT OF MISSION



## History Success Story

On the third day of school, the Do Now activity was to read an article from *The New York Times*. The article was about Israeli and Palestinian students going to their first day of school. The Israeli student's account mentioned how her mother drives her to school, because she feared riding the bus. She feared the possibility of a suicide bomber and felt much safer riding to school with her mother. The Palestinian student's account spoke of a closed school that was rundown and damaged from previous bombings. She did not know when she would be starting school, because the schools for Palestinians were closed the year before and had yet to reopen.

My students had a very open and honest conversation about how these two accounts differed from their own. We also talked briefly about why the situation in Israel is the way it is. The students knew very little about the conflict and its background, so I planned to refer back to this reading several times during this unit of study.

Not three school days later, September 11<sup>th</sup> took place. On September 12<sup>th</sup>, we met for class and immediately upon circling up for a class discussion, one student in class took out the previous reading and began reading excerpts from it. She then spoke about a new understanding of life in Israel that she had not had three classes before and that this "new" understanding was not something that she wanted to understand. She spoke about fear and uncertainty, terror and revenge, distrust and prejudice. Most students in both 10<sup>th</sup> grade classes that day and for many days after shared similar feelings and insight into a "culture of terror" that they had not previously related to.

Sadly, this success story came at the expense of many lives. It also came at the expense of my students' innocence. We, as a class, had once sat on the outside of the fishbowl looking in at Israel and had tried to contemplate why and how people could live their lives that way. Now, we understood firsthand and this gave us a whole new perspective on our Global Studies class and the Arab-Israeli Conflict.

-Sheila Connors, History Teacher

## ***PART I: STUDENT AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE***

### **Curriculum Design and Performance Objectives**

If there is one current that runs through each part of our curriculum, it is that students must master a core set of basic, academic skills, before they can move on to master higher-level, abstract material. Students cannot master algebra without knowing their times tables. Students cannot discuss historical events without knowing the basic historical facts surrounding those events. Students cannot study science without knowing the basic safety and operational procedures surrounding scientific experiments. Before anything else, we at South Boston Harbor Academy Charter School ensure that all students can move toward the same high academic standard.

Given the Massachusetts Curriculum Assessment System (MCAS) exams, and given that we are a public school, we pay particularly close attention to the topics, sequence, and examples covered in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. This ensures that SBHA students are held to the same learning standards and curriculum guidelines as other students in the Commonwealth. At the same time, we trust teachers to adapt the subject topics and performance standards in the state's framework according to their own professional expertise. With this as the basis, students in grades 5 through 10 study:

*98% of parents say they are very satisfied or satisfied with SBHA's academic standards.*

- 7-10 hours per week of English and Science
- 5 hours per week of Math and History
- 5 hours per week of French (grades 6-10 only)
- 2 hours per week of Health and Physical Education
- 1 hour per week of Art and Computer

To maintain close collaboration among classes, teachers enter into the school's internal computer network, and keep track in comprehensive curriculum binders, daily and unit lesson plans from each of their classes. By the end of the year, the school not only has a record of what happened in each class, but teachers have a convenient and effective resource around which to plan future classes. Teachers can simply search on the staff shared drive – or browse through the readily accessible binders – for a list of topics covered in each class, an agenda of class events, and particular assessments of student learning. For the future of the school and future teachers who join our school, this serves as an excellent foundation for the development of the school's curriculum.

Below is an example of such a unit lesson plan:

South Boston Harbor Academy Charter School						
Math Unit Lesson Plan						
Grade 6						
Unit Topic	Geometry	Week	5	of	5	Dates: 4/22/02 to 4/26/02
Weekly Objectives		Assessment of Objectives			Comments	
1.	Students will be able to measure angles using a protractor and to determine by sight whether angles are larger than, smaller than, or equal to 90 degrees.	x	Homework		Q & A	See daily summary.
			Quiz		Oral Assess.	
		x	Test		Wrtg. Exerc.	
			Essay		Lab Report	
			Project	x	Prac. Probs.	
			Rsch. Paper		Oral Prsntn.	
		x	Group Work		Other	
2.	Students will be able to give definitions for the radius and diameter of a circle.	x	Homework		Q & A	See daily summary.
			Quiz		Oral Assess.	
		x	Test		Wrtg. Exerc.	
			Essay		Lab Report	
			Project	x	Prac. Probs.	
			Rsch. Paper		Oral Prsntn.	
		x	Group Work		Other	
<b>Unit Narrative/Unit Agenda</b>						
<p>This is the fifth and final week in the geometry unit. There are two odds and ends which we are covering this week which students still need to cover – 1) measuring angles and 2) the definitions of radius and diameter of circles. Rather than build a week-long unit around these concepts, this week we are doing a house-building project to incorporate these concepts as well as the other geometric concepts we have learned. This project came together very nicely at the end of the week (Thursday and Friday) after a rather hectic start. For each day this week, I will write what we actually did, followed in italics by what I now know we should have done:</p> <p><b>Monday</b> – Students will be able to give possible dimensions of a rectangle where the area is known. The DO NOW asks some line of symmetry review questions (almost all students did very well on letter symmetry but not as well on shape symmetry) and also asks students to find possible dimensions of a rectangle where the area is known. Students are told about the house-building project. They are shown a model house. They are told that on their house plans for today, the only requirement is that the front and back walls have an area of 120 square inches and that the side walls be squares. They are to write the dimensions on their papers and then finish working on their packet. <i>The idea was for kids to draw the plans and then build the house. However, this makes it difficult for them to visualize the final product. It would help if they built it as they went. The assignment for today should be to plan and cut the four walls, paper clip them in a stack, and then start working on tonight's assignment. Also, they didn't learn as much as they could have by designing side walls that are squares; perhaps next time, the side walls should have a given dimension.</i></p> <p><b>Tuesday</b> – Students will be able to measure angles using a protractor. The DO NOW includes review and then asks students to determine which of these two houses has a steeper roof. Then they are asked to determine how much steeper. This leads to a discussion of angles and the ability to measure slope by measuring angles. Students are given protractors and a worksheet and asked to measure several angles. (This part went very well.) Students are then given plans for their roof. Their roof pieces are 2 triangles and 2 rectangles. The triangles will have the same width as the front and back of the house, but they are drawn by measuring equal angles on either side which connect at the upper vertex of the triangle. Students began to cut today. Their homework was to finish their packets. <i>Today, they started to build the houses. However, this was too much for one day. What I should have done was give them their packets with their protractors and had them start. After everyone had enough time to finish the first page, then I should have passed out their walls from yesterday, had them lay them out in front of themselves, and then tape them together as a class (10 rolls of tape would be required). Then, once everybody's house was up, I could explain how to construct the triangle pieces of their roof so they could start cutting those.</i></p>						

And an example from our curriculum binders:

**GRADE 6: UNIT # 7 – GEOMETRY**

FOCUS	SKILLS	MA STANDARDS
<p>Dates: 3/18/02 – 5/3/02</p> <p>From the MA Curricular Frameworks:</p> <p>“In middle school and high school, students solve problems in other areas of mathematics using geometric concepts, including coordinate geometry, perspective drawings, and projections of three-dimensional objects. They use mechanical and electronic tools to construct common geometric shapes and patterns, and to develop the idea of geometric similarity, which can be integrated with the ideas of ratio and proportion.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying lines, planes, angles</li> <li>• Defining, identifying, and drawing parallel, intersecting, and perpendicular lines</li> <li>• Defining and identifying obtuse, acute, and right angles</li> <li>• Measuring angles with a protractor</li> <li>• Finding missing supplementary and complementary angles</li> <li>• Defining, identifying, and describing rectangles, squares, quadrilaterals, trapezoids, rhombuses, parallelograms, triangles, pentagons, hexagons, and octagons</li> <li>• Understanding that the sum of the measures of the 3 angles in a triangle always equals 180 degrees and finding measure of missing angles in a triangle</li> <li>• Understanding that the sum of the measures of the 4 angles in a quadrilateral always equals 360 degrees and finding measure of missing angles in a quadrilateral</li> <li>• Determining the sum of the measures of the angles of multi-sided figures by breaking them down into more familiar shapes (quadrilaterals and triangles).</li> <li>• Calculating the perimeter of multi-sided figures</li> <li>• Calculating the area of multi-sided figures by counting units</li> <li>• Calculating the area of squares, rectangles, parallelograms, and triangles</li> <li>• Using the concepts of area and perimeter to solve applied problems</li> <li>• Identifying kinds of symmetry (including line and rotational)</li> <li>• Understanding and defining various kinds of transformations: reflections, rotations, and translations</li> <li>• Defining and understanding the relationship between radius and diameter</li> <li>• Calculating, understanding, and remembering the relationship between the diameter and the circumference of a circle</li> <li>• Using the formula for the area of a circle in order to calculate its area and using that formula to solve applied area problems</li> <li>• Understanding the concept of surface area and calculating the surface area of simple 3-dimensional figures</li> <li>• Understanding the concept of volume and calculating the volume of rectangular prisms by using the counting method</li> </ul>	<p><b>6.M.1</b> Apply the concepts of perimeter and area to the solution of problems. Apply formulas where appropriate.</p> <p><b>6.M.2</b> Identify, measure, describe, classify, and construct various angles, triangles, and quadrilaterals.</p> <p><b>6.M.3</b> Solve problems involving proportional relationships and units of measurement, e.g., same system unit conversions, scale models, maps, and speed.</p> <p><b>6.M.4</b> Find areas of triangles and parallelograms. Recognize that shapes with the same number of sides but different appearances can have the same area. Develop strategies to find the area of more complex shapes.</p> <p><b>6.M.5</b> Identify, measure, and describe circles and the relationships of the radius, diameter, circumference, and area (e.g., <math>d = 2r</math>, <math>\pi = C/d</math>), and use the concepts to solve problems.</p> <p><b>6.M.6</b> Find volumes and surface areas of rectangular prisms.</p> <p><b>6.M.7</b> Find the sum of the interior angles in simple polygons (up to eight sides) with and without measuring the angles.</p> <p><b>6.G.1</b> Identify polygons based on their properties, including types of interior angles, perpendicular or parallel sides, and congruence of sides, e.g., squares, rectangles, rhombuses, parallelograms, trapezoids, and isosceles, equilateral, and right triangles.</p> <p><b>6.G.2</b> Identify three-dimensional shapes (e.g., cubes, prisms, spheres, cones, and pyramids) based on their properties, such as edges and faces.</p> <p><b>6.G.3</b> Identify relationships among points, lines, and planes, e.g., intersecting, parallel, perpendicular.</p> <p><b>6.G.4</b> Graph points and identify coordinates of points on the Cartesian coordinate plane.</p> <p><b>6.G.5</b> Find the distance between two points on horizontal or vertical number lines.</p> <p><b>6.G.6</b> Predict, describe, and perform transformations on two-dimensional shapes, e.g., translations, rotations, and reflections.</p> <p><b>6.G.7</b> Identify types of symmetry, including line and rotational.</p> <p><b>6.G.8</b> Determine if two shapes are congruent by measuring sides or a combination of sides and angles, as necessary; or by motions or series of motions, e.g., translations, rotations, and reflections.</p>

On the following pages, we offer an overview of our school's curriculum, the topics and sequence covered in our classes, and the performance standards we expect students to master.

## ***SCIENCE***

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### **Curriculum Overview**

The goal of SBHA's science curriculum is to develop scientific literacy and the skills necessary to design and carry out science investigations. At the middle school and high school level, this curriculum provides a rigorous background in the major scientific disciplines: earth and space science, physical science, and life science.

In grade 5, the main focus of the curriculum is to equip students with basic science skills and terminology. These skills are learned in the context of major thematic units.

In grade 6, the science curriculum reinforces basic science skills by using a survey of major scientific disciplines. The purpose of this course is to provide students a framework for future science courses.

In grade 7, students study earth and space science, and environmental science. There is a particular focus on the use of diagrams to learn, communicate, and demonstrate understanding of information.

In grade 8, the science curriculum covers fundamental concepts in the life sciences. Students come to understand the relationships among cells, organisms, and the nonliving environment.

In grade 9, students are introduced to basic physics concepts. Students investigate, make calculations, problem solve, observe, measure, make predictions and explain phenomena in the physical world.

In grade 10, students take a basic chemistry course. Students learn atomic structure,

chemical bonding, basic thermodynamics, and

behavior of gases. Weekly lab activities reinforce curricular topics.

### **Curricular Topics**

#### **GRADE 5**

Introduction to Science  
Oceanography  
Motion and Forces  
Natural Resources

#### **GRADE 6**

Basic Physics  
Introduction to Chemistry  
Introduction to Biology and Ecology  
Basic Astronomy

#### **GRADE 7**

Environmental Science  
Astronomy  
Plate Tectonics  
Rocks and Minerals  
Weathering and Erosion  
Meteorology

#### **GRADE 8**

Introduction to Science  
Cells and Heredity  
Change over Time: Evolution  
Animals  
Human Biology

#### **GRADE 9**

Probabilities  
Newton's Laws of Motion and  
Universal Gravitation  
Waves, Light, Sound, and Energy  
Magnetism and Electricity

#### **GRADE 10**

History of Chemistry

Atomic Theory  
 Periodic Table  
 Ionic and Covalent Compounds  
 Chemical Reactions  
 Thermodynamics  
 Gas Laws

**Performance Objectives**

By the end of each grade, students will have further developed their ability to:

- Design and carry out a controlled experiment
- Identify variables, constants, and controls in an experiment

- Use measurement equipment and scientific equipment
- Understand and use the metric system of measurement
- Collect, organize, and analyze data
- Draw conclusions based on evidence
- Communicate information effectively in oral, written, and diagram form
- Work cooperatively in a laboratory setting
- Use available information and understanding to develop questions and problem solve independently

**SCIENCE PROJECTS**

**Curriculum Overview**

Students in grades 6, 7 and 8 are required to complete a Science Project on a topic of their own choosing. The projects are experimental in nature; therefore, students design and run experiments independently. Students in grade 6 complete project work as part of their regular Science classes. Students in grades 7 and 8 meet for hour-long classes twice each week, in addition to their regular Science classes, to learn the skills associated with completing a science project. While learning the fundamentals of experiment design, students work on writing their own plans for experiments. In class, students present their

ideas for experiments, while the rest of the class completes design critiques. Students present the body of their work at end-of-semester SBHA Science Fairs, where their work is evaluated by outside judges.

**Curricular Topics**

- Introduction and Topic Selection
- Researching Your Topic
- Designing and Conducting an Experiment
- Data Organization and Presentation
- Displays and Written Reports



*Judge's Evaluation Form*  
*SBHA Science Projects*

Student Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Please circle:

- 3 points for very strong
- 2 points for moderately strong
- 1 point for needs improvement

**Scientific Approach**

Purpose and hypothesis are clearly stated	Point Value	3	2	1
Clear procedure for experiment		3	2	1
Data and observations are clear and well organized		3	2	1
The conclusions are supported by the data collected		3	2	1
Can provide an explanation for experiment findings		3	2	1

**Knowledge of Project Topic**

Knowledge of subject matter related to topic	3	2	1
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**Presentation**

Display is attractive and legible	3	2
Explanations and answers to questions	3	2

Comments \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Judge \_\_\_\_\_

## Curriculum Overview

The goal of the SBHA math department is to help our students develop a solid foundation in fundamental mathematics, geometry, and algebra while at the same time meeting the lengthy goals set out in the new and revised Massachusetts mathematics curriculum frameworks.

In grades 5 and 6, the focus of our curriculum is on developing number sense with a heavy emphasis placed on the nature and manipulation of proportional numbers.

In grades 7 and 8, students develop a foundation in fundamental mathematics with more emphasis placed in these years on the basic tenets of geometry, probability, and statistics.

We also set out to expose our 8<sup>th</sup> graders to the basic fundamentals of algebra as covered in the first half of any high school algebra class. In 9<sup>th</sup> grade, students complete their study of basic algebra and, in the second half of the year, move on to the study of the tenets of advanced algebra. The 10<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum combines a rigorous geometry block with an eye toward continuing to build upon the strong foundation in algebra.

## Curricular Topics

### GRADE 5

Place value  
Whole numbers and basic operations  
The nature of fractions  
Addition, subtraction, and multiplication of fractions  
Decimals and place value  
Addition, subtraction, and multiplication of decimals

### GRADE 6

Division of whole and proportional numbers  
Percents  
Properties of lines, angles, and shapes  
Area and perimeter  
Volume and Surface Area  
Properties of circles including area and circumference  
Introduction to Probability and Statistics

### GRADE 7

Ratio, proportion, and scale  
Advanced 2-D and 3-D geometry  
Integers  
Algebraic expressions, equations, and relationships

### GRADE 8

Expressions, equations, and functions  
Rational and irrational numbers  
Linear equations  
Graphing relations and functions  
Inequalities

### GRADE 9

Equations and inequalities  
Solving and graphing linear functions  
Best fit lines  
Systems of equations  
Quadratic functions  
Polynomial functions

### GRADE 10

Constructions  
Coordinate Geometry  
Triangles and Word Problems  
Circles  
Measurement and Solids  
Triangles and Trigonometry  
Properties of lines, angles, and shapes  
Properties of polygons  
Probability and Statistics  
Data Analysis, Charts, and Graphs

## Performance Standards

By the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> grade students were expected to be able to:

- Express whole numbers, fractions, and decimals in a variety of formats
- Add, subtract, multiply, and divide whole numbers
- Add, subtract, and multiply fractions and decimals
- Solve applied problems using all of the above skills and concepts

By the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, students were expected to be able to do all of the above, plus:

- Divide whole numbers, fractions and decimals
- Convert fractions, decimals, and percents back and forth
- Find a percentage of another number
- Solve applied problems using all of the above skills and concepts
- Classify and identify basic properties of simple shapes
- Find the area, perimeter, volume, and surface area of simple shapes

By the end of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade, students were expected to be able to do all of the above, plus:

- Set up and solve a proportional equality
- Find the probability of a simple event
- Find the mean, median, and mode of a set of numbers
- Read and interpret a variety of graphs
- Add, subtract, multiply, and divide integers
- Represent expressions algebraically
- Solve basic equations
- Solve applied problems using all of the above concepts and skills

By the end of the 8<sup>th</sup> grade students were expected to be able to do all of the above, plus:

- Represent variables and expressions

- Simplify variables and expressions
- Solve linear equations involving one variable
- Use the above concepts to solve applied problems in which they are required to determine the variables, represent those variables, and solve for them.

By the end of the 9<sup>th</sup> grade students were expected to be able to do all of the above, plus:

- Solve multiple equations involving more than one variable
- Graph linear equations, quadratic equations, and polynomials
- Use the quadratic function to solve quadratic equations
- Factor and simplify polynomial expressions and equations

By the end of the 10<sup>th</sup> grade students were expected to be able to do all of the above, plus:

- Create and analyze geometric shapes using a compass, straightedge, and protractor
- Identify geometric properties and derive formulas utilizing the coordinate plane
- Fully describe the properties of all types of triangles and finding their particular identifiers embedded within word problems
- Identify and manipulate the properties of angles and lines associated with circles
- Relate the dimensions of geometric solids to the appropriate formulas and demonstrate a facility with the manipulation of dimensions and the resulting volumes and surface areas
- Articulate the specific properties and trigonometric formulas associated with right triangles
- Relate the rudiments of probability and statistics to appropriate graphical representations
- Use rules of logic to create and analyze elegant proofs and theorem

## **FRENCH**

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### **Curriculum Overview**

In French I, students are introduced to a variety of vocabulary-based cultural units in order to develop basic skills in the four major areas of communication: speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

The two areas most emphasized during the first year are speaking and listening comprehension, which are primarily achieved by daily intensive question-answer sessions and lectures in the target language. After the first half of the year, all students are expected to be able to answer simple personal questions, identify and describe their surroundings, express feelings about various topics, and respond to classroom commands. During the second half of the year, students are encouraged to initiate communication by working in groups, preparing oral presentations, and playing games in which they are required to initiate conversations. In French II and III the study of the four basic skills are expanded, to ensure that students have a solid foundation upon which to build further study.

Reading and writing skills are developed primarily by daily writing assignments, projects based on new vocabulary, guided reading activities of French magazine articles, and individual projects. Grammar is presented more formally in the second year of study. Students begin to build more complex sentences using both regular and irregular verbs along with idiomatic expressions and themed vocabulary.

In addition to communication skills, students are also introduced to various cultural elements, which typically are presented at the beginning of each new unit and often interspersed throughout the unit. Authentic materials, cultural readings, films, and lectures

based on the teachers' experience in Francophone countries help provide students with a solid cultural introduction.

In French IV, students begin the year by reading their first book written in French, *Un été pas comme les autres*. This reading provides students the opportunity to review previous grammar structures and vocabulary while acquiring an extensive new vocabulary that prepares them for the rest of the year. Students spend much of their class time reading aloud, acting out scenes, creating and writing new scenes, diagramming, and answering comprehension questions, all while learning about the cultural experiences of a young American girl who spends her summer in France with her pen-pal.

For the remainder of the year, students continue to develop the four basic skills of speaking, listening, reading, and writing, with a strong emphasis placed on grammar. Dictation is a frequently utilized method of learning and assessment, and classes are conducted almost exclusively in the target language. Students are encouraged to write and say more complex sentences and are given more complicated guided writing and reading activities, including writing their own children's book. Current events are also discussed in the target language.

Finally, all 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade French IV students correspond with a pen-pal. Every other letter is written (and received) in French, and students have the opportunity to come up with and discuss general life issues facing French high school students today. Students send and receive at least five letters throughout the year.

## Curricular Topics

### FRENCH I

Introduction to French

Greetings

Numbers 0-60

The classroom

The calendar

Time

Weather

Family

Sports and hobbies

Animals and environment

Food and restaurants

Clothing and fashion

Introduction to Paris

### FRENCH II

Review of French I topics

Buildings in the city

French and American middle schools

Household vocabulary

The Family

Stores, shopping and clothing

Sports and games, leisure activities

Travel, transportation

Animals, domestic and wild

Idiomatic expressions

Restaurant, café, food vocabulary

Geography of France

### FRENCH III

Review of French II topics

Arriving in a new city

Planning a trip

Using the telephone

Meals and marketing

Geography and culture of Martinique

Transportation

### FRENCH IV

Review of French III

Airport vocabulary

Etiquette of staying with French family

French high school

Major cultural sites in Paris

Shopping

Public transportation in France

Making crepes/following recipes

Loire Valley

Sports and health

Maison des Jeunes

Children's literature

Ivory Coast

Québec

## Performance Standards

By the end of French I, students will not only have been exposed to various cultural elements, but more importantly, students will have begun to be able to speak, read, write, and listen in French through a verbal, oral, visual, and aural understanding of the following grammatical elements:

- descriptive adjectives
- some possessive adjectives
- adjective agreement
- definite and indefinite articles
- present tense verb conjugations of regular “er” verbs
- present tense verb conjugation of the irregular verb “être”
- forming affirmative sentences
- forming negative sentences
- forming interrogative sentences
- subject pronouns
- formal vs. informal language

In French II, students continue their study of grammar to include:

- present tense conjugation and meaning of some irregular verbs
- contraction with *de* and *à*
- all possessive adjectives
- interrogative and demonstrative adjectives
- present tense conjugation and meaning of regular *ir*, *er*, and, *re* verbs
- idiomatic expressions with *faire* and *avoir*
- the *partitif* to express quantity
- forming the *futur proche*

In French III, students use skills learned in French I and II, and improve their language skills by learning:

- object pronoun *en*
- direct object pronouns
- relative pronouns
- connectors for sequencing events
- familiarity with past and near future tenses of some irregular verbs
- reflexive verbs in the present tense
- present and past tense verb conjugations of some irregular verbs

By the end of French IV, students are expected to be able to do all of the above, plus:

- use prepositions *à* and *de*

- recognize verbs conjugated in the *passé composé* with *avoir*
- recognize verbs conjugated in the *passé composé* with *être*
- conjugate regular and irregular verbs in the *passé composé*
- conjugate regular and irregular verbs in the *imparfait*
- use the *présent duratif*
- distinguish orally and in writing the difference between *passé composé*, *imparfait* and present tense verbs
- distinguish between *connaître* and *savoir*
- use direct and indirect object pronouns
- use irregular adjectives
- know adjective placement

### French Success Story

Although a very bright and talented person, this student did not pass French the first half of the year due to his complacent attitude about his classes. Motivation was clearly a problem. When the class was introduced to the children's literature unit, suddenly his eyes lit up. An artist himself, he immediately was attracted to the illustrations which are so important in children's literature. Finding that he could use pictures to guide him, he was compelled to volunteer and answer all the comprehension questions about the stories in French. The grammar and vocabulary he didn't think he knew suddenly came alive. At the end of the unit, students were asked to write and illustrate their own children's book. He immediately started working on amazing illustrations and came up with the most original, well-written story among the French IV students. From that point on, he has continued to thrive in class and has managed to raise his overall average to a passing grade.

-Emily Cox, French Chair

## **HISTORY**

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### **Curriculum Overview**

Our goal is to instill in students the historical skills and knowledge necessary for them to become lifelong students of history. Students develop a strong grounding in history through reading, discussions, group work, and independent research projects. Through an analysis of historical and current events, we prepare students with the tools necessary to be active participants in their own communities, as well as in the world around them. Exposing students to local, national, and international issues enables them to participate and make decisions with a responsible, well-informed focus. Rigorous academic exposure to primary and secondary sources provides this foundation while museums, parks, libraries, and historic sites offer students first-hand and tactile experiences, ensuring a fundamental understanding of historical and social events.

### **Curricular Topics**

#### **GRADE 5**

- Human Origins and the Peopling of the Americas
- Native American Cultures
- Wampanoag Culture
- Exploration of the New World
- Early European Settlements in North America
- The American Revolution
- Slavery in America

#### **GRADE 6**

- Slavery and Abolitionism
- The Gilded Age: The Rise of Big Business, Industrialization and Immigration
- “Roaring Twenties”
- The Great Depression and FDR
- World War II and the U.S. Homefront
- Atomic Bomb and the Arms Race

- The Cold War
- Civil Rights Movement

#### **GRADE 7**

- World Geography
- Ancient Civilizations and Pre-History
- Ancient Africa: Ghana, Mali, and Egypt
- Ancient Mesopotamia: The Israelites and Beginnings of Islam
- Ancient Asia: Indus River Valley and China
- Ancient Mesoamerica: Incas, Aztecs, and Mayas
- Ancient Greece
- Ancient Rome

#### **GRADE 8**

- Declaration of Independence
- The American Revolution
- Slavery in America
- Articles of Confederation
- U.S. Constitution
- Early Nationalism: War of 1812
- Westward Expansion
- Antebellum Society
- The Civil War and Reconstruction
- Memorials and Monuments in American History

#### **GRADE 9**

- Geography and Ancient Kingdoms of Africa
- European Colonization of Africa
- Apartheid in South Africa
- Current Issues in Africa
- South Asian Geography and Ancient Kingdoms
- World Religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam
- European Colonization of Asia

- Mohandas Gandhi and Indian Independence Movement
- Current Issues in South Asia
- Geography and Ancient Dynasties of China
- Mao Zedong and the Communist Revolution
- Current Issues in China
- Geography, European Exploration, and Conquest of Latin America
- Independence movements in Latin America
- Current Issues in Latin America

#### GRADE 10

- Geography of the Middle East
- History of the Middle East
- Current Issues in the Middle East
- Geography and History of Russia and the former Soviet Union
- Current Issues in Russia and the former Soviet Union
- Ancient Civilizations of Western Europe
- Geography of Western Europe
- History of Western Europe from the Middle Ages to Post-World War II
- Current Issues in Western Europe

#### Performance Standards

By the end of each grade, students will have further developed their ability to:

- understand the nature, meaning, and importance of history, and identify the relevance of history to students' lives
- identify and compare characteristics and accomplishments of major world civilizations, and interpret historical events and decisions from distinct cultural viewpoints
- distinguish between past, present, and future; identify and construct a sequence of events within a historical narrative, and make the connection between historical cause and effect

- use the processes and resources of historical inquiry to approach a historical question
- interpret historical events and decisions from distinct cultural viewpoints
- locate particular places on earth and describe the physical and human characteristics and processes that shape geographical features
- trace the movement of people, places, and goods around the globe and discuss ways through which this motion continuously defines and connects the world's regions
- describe different economic systems and explain and evaluate how each, along with factors such as technology and geography, addresses such basic economic questions as what is produced, how is it produced, and for whom is it produced
- explain the nature and importance of government, and understand the role of the Constitution in the establishment of the American government
- explain the rights, responsibilities, and privileges of a citizen of the United States, compare those rights, responsibilities, and privileges with those of citizens elsewhere, and identify the influence of government on people's lives, and the impact of political inclusion and exclusion in civic life
- integrate current affairs into students' understanding of American government, identify and evaluate the ways in which citizens gain information through various media, and understand how policy is shaped by civic principles and participation
- compare and contrast the American political system with other world political systems, understand the role of the United States in the global community of nations, and observe the important influence societies have on one another.

## ENGLISH

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### Curriculum Overview

In grades 5 and 6, students improve their abilities to read, write, spell, speak, and listen. Students read literature selections and hone their reading comprehension, analytical skills, and understanding of literary devices such as simile, alliteration, theme, literary allusion, and metaphor. Through their frequent writing assignments, students improve their written organization, focus, content, paragraph development, style, and focus. Students employ a variety of editing and revising skills including prewriting, drafting, revising for clarity, proofreading, and peer editing. An added element of support in the vital areas of reading and writing is found in their second English class, English 2. (See section on English 2.)

In grades 7 and 8, students focus on reading and writing through literature using four fundamental curricular genres: novels, short stories, poems, and Greek mythology and plays. In grade 9, students' writing focuses on creating a thesis and supporting it with evidence through analytical writing. Students increase their ability to read for meaning while incorporating the acquisition of higher-level vocabulary; the understanding of setting, main idea, theme, and character development; and, the proper use of grammar. Through short and lengthy writing assignments, students develop their creative, expository, formal, and informal writing skills while simultaneously practicing editing techniques. Like the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders, 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 9<sup>th</sup> graders take an additional English 2 class in which they continue to improve their reading and writing skills. The 10<sup>th</sup> graders continue to hone their analytical skills and use the five-paragraph essay as their starting point. With constant work on integrating evidence and the clarity of their writing, students are well-prepared for the MCAS in the Spring.

### Curricular Topics

- Prewriting (free writing, clustering, listing, and brainstorming)
- Formal writing (structured paragraphs, reports, and essays)
- Creative writing (stories, poems, and descriptive paragraphs)
- Journal writing (free writing and reflective writing)
- Editing (revising, proofreading techniques, and sentence-combining)
- Grammar (punctuation, parts of speech, fragments and run-ons, subject-verb agreement, capitalization, prepositions, and conjunctions)
- Spelling and vocabulary
- Reading (novels, short stories, poetry, plays, and essays), including:

#### GRADE 5

*The Sign of the Beaver*, Elizabeth George Speare

*The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*, C.S. Lewis

*Number the Stars*, Lois Lowry

*A Stranger Came Ashore*, Mollie Hunter

#### GRADE 6

*Tuck Everlasting*, Natalie Babbitt

*Lyddie*, Katherine Paterson

*Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, Mildred Taylor

*Out of the Dust*, Karen Hesse

#### GRADE 7

*The View From Saturday*, E. L. Konigsburg

*The Outsiders*, S.E. Hinton

*Romeo and Juliet*, William Shakespeare

*Bridge to Terabithia*, Katherine Paterson

*Heroes, Gods and Monsters*, Bernard Evslin

## GRADE 8

*Short Story Collection*, Various Authors  
*The Giver*, Lois Lowry  
*The Crucible*, Arthur Miller  
*Freak the Mighty*, Rodman Philbrick  
*Ethan Frome*, Edith Wharton

## GRADE 9

*Of Mice and Men*, John Steinbeck  
*To Kill a Mockingbird*, Harper Lee  
*The Catcher in the Rye*, J.D. Salinger  
*Othello*, William Shakespeare  
*Short Stories*, various authors

### English Success Story

Halfway through the school year, the 5<sup>th</sup> grade began keeping Reader Response Journals (RRJ's). On Monday mornings, they spend approximately 40 minutes writing in their Journals. They write a half-page summary, and follow it with another half-page responding to one aspect of the story. The responses range from comparisons between themselves and a character to predictions about the ending of the book. At the end of the journal entry, students find a short quotation from the pages they read, copy it into their journal, and write an explanation about why they chose it.

I noticed the effects of RRJ's on one particular student almost immediately. She is a speedy worker and often finishes assignments early. The classroom rule is to read a book if you finish an assignment early. In the first few months of the year she would shuffle papers, check and re-check her organizer, offer to help me, anything that would put off opening a book. She'd jump from story to story, never getting far enough into one to become attached to the plot or characters. When I introduced RRJ's in January, she attacked reading with the same determined and competitive spirit she treats the rest of her school work. She found a book no one else had read and, after every journal entry, set a page goal for herself for the next week. She began exceeding her page goals and quickly finished the book. Since January she's read almost 8 books and now considers herself a "reader."

-Kathleen Sullivan, English Teacher

## GRADE 10

*Lord of the Flies*, William Golding  
*Macbeth*, William Shakespeare  
*All Quiet on the Western Front*, Erich Remarque  
*Night*, Elie Wiesel  
*Poetry of World War One*, various poets  
*Slaughterhouse-Five*, Kurt Vonnegut

By the end of each grade, students will have further developed their ability to:

- understand and use correctly standard grammatical conventions, including sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, parts of speech, and spelling
- acquire and use an advanced vocabulary of English words in writing and speech
- identify and discuss the main idea, characters, facts, and themes of works of literature, poetry, and plays, both read and heard
- identify and analyze tone, imagery, mood, audience, and literary devices such as simile, alliteration, and metaphor in works of literature, poetry, and plays
- write well-organized, well-developed, and appropriately chosen evidence and details in various genres, including informational, persuasive, expressive, and literary writing
- use standard English conventions effectively in editing, revising, and proofreading
- speak effectively in a variety of settings and environments in making oral presentations and dramatic recitations

## ***ENGLISH 2***

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### **Curriculum Overview**

Many fifth graders lack the basic skills needed to become better readers, writers and spellers. Therefore, in grade 5, students receive an additional 5 hours of weekly English instruction throughout the year with a strong focus on phonics, decoding, syllables and syllabication, spelling rules and spelling generalizations, grammar, and the eight parts of speech. Students also concentrate on handwriting. Much of the curriculum is drawn from the Wilson Reading Program, which teaches students to recognize sounds in the English language and decode words by using phonogram cards and activities.

In grade 6, students take an additional 2 hours of English instruction throughout the year. Focus is on reading comprehension and writing. Using short readings, students make inferences, predict outcomes, and identify persuasive techniques. Students practice writing mechanics such as capitalization, punctuation, the comma, spelling, and grammar.

In grades 7 and 8, students take an additional 2 hours of English for half of the academic year. Since reading is key to academic success in all subject areas, students focus upon reading in the content areas of Social Studies and Science. They differentiate between fact and opinion, read between the lines, make hypotheses, and predict outcomes. Students read scientific passages and illustrations such as diagrams, charts, and graphs. Students also focus on test-taking skills such as making logical inferences, deductive reasoning, and contextual clue identification. Students practice writing 5-paragraph essays with direct instruction in

all steps of the writing process provided and reinforced.

In grades 9 and 10, students take an additional 2 hours of English instruction throughout the year. Students focus upon vocabulary development, reading, writing, and research. Students practice decoding contextual clues to define unfamiliar words, and enlarge their vocabulary through the study of groups of words around a central idea. Through short readings followed by highly structured assessments of their reading skills, students define vocabulary using contextual clues, recall specific facts, understand main ideas, draw conclusions, make judgments and inferences, recognize tone, understand characters, and appreciate literary forms. Students respond to short writing prompts, analyzing theme, character, and other aspects of their reading. Students also write two research papers.

### **Curriculum Topics**

#### **GRADE 5**

- Decoding v and c sounds
- Syllables and Syllabication Patterns
- Spelling Rules with Sounds
- Spelling Rules with Doubling, Plurals, and Homonyms
- Parts of Speech

#### **GRADE 6**

- Understanding What You Read
- Organization of Ideas
- Finding Hidden Meanings
- Reading Literature
- Reading Comprehension
- Writing and Writing Mechanics

## GRADE 7

- Understanding What You Read
- Charts, Graphs, and Maps
- Patterns in Social Studies Reading
- Analyzing Social Studies Passages
- Evaluating Social Studies Materials
- Understanding What You Read: Plants and Animals
- Understanding Illustrations: The Human Body
- Analyzing Ideas: Everyday Physics
- Building Vocabulary: Chemistry
- Evaluating Ideas: Earth Science

## GRADE 8

- Reading, Writing, and Thinking in History and Social Science
- Reading, Writing, and Thinking in Technology and Science
- 5-paragraph essay

## GRADE 9

- Defining vocabulary from contextual clues—contrast, similarity, and common sense
- Enlarging vocabulary through central ideas
- Reading for main idea, inference, theme, tone, figurative language and vocabulary
- Research Writing

## GRADE 10

- Defining and using Anglo-Saxon and Latin prefixes and roots
- Defining and applying Greek word elements
- 5-paragraph analytical essay
- Reading for main idea, inference, theme, tone, figurative language and vocabulary

- Decode and encode words accurately
- Read spelling words in context form
- Read and remember spelling strategies
- Correctly spell vocabulary words
- Use meaning clues
- Match spelling words with dictionary respelling
- Proofread a paragraph and their own writing
- Write sentences with spelling words
- Learn and apply keys to legibility
- Define and classify parts of speech

By the end of 6<sup>th</sup> grade, students will be able to:

- Identify main ideas in fictional and non-fictional readings, charts, advertisements, and cartoons
- Identify essential details in readings
- Summarize and paraphrase short readings
- Break words into syllables and pronounce them correctly
- Identify key words in sentences
- Differentiate between and discuss 3 types of organization: cause and effect, comparison and contrast, and sequencing
- Define words using contextual clues as well as an understanding of common prefixes, roots, and suffixes
- Understand and apply basic rules of capitalization, punctuation, comma use, spelling, and grammar
- Respond to short writing prompts effectively in focused paragraphs
- Identify basic elements of plot, characterization, and mood in short stories

## Performance Standards

By the end of 5th grade, students will be able to:

By the end of 7<sup>th</sup> grade, students will be able to:

- Identify topic and main idea and summarize important details in social studies and science passages
- Define words in context
- Read a chart, diagram, and graph
- Differentiate between fact/opinion
- Draw inferences, make hypotheses, and predict outcomes from a passage
- Evaluate the use of propaganda and identify errors in reasoning
- Understand and apply scientific method

By the end of 8<sup>th</sup> grade, students will be able to:

- Make inferences from questions and readings
- Apply the elimination process to logically deduce correct responses
- Identify contextual clues to brainstorm and plan responses
- Self-evaluate/improve short responses with standard-based rubrics
- Understand MCAS grading criteria
- Identify and analyze how an author's choice of words appeals to the senses, creates imagery, suggests mood, and sets tone

By the end of 9<sup>th</sup> grade, students will be able to:

- Decode accurately and understand new words in reading materials, using a variety of strategies and use words

accurately in speaking and writing

- Acquire and use correctly an advanced vocabulary of English words, identifying meanings through understanding of word relationships
- Write compositions with clear focus, logically related ideas, adequate details
- Identify the basic facts and essential ideas in what they have read
- Use open-ended research questions, different sources of information, and appropriate research methods to gather information for their research projects and produce a final research paper with bibliography

By the end of 10<sup>th</sup> grade, students will be able to

- Decode new words in context, drawing on a variety of strategies and use words accurately in speaking and writing
- Acquire and use correctly an advanced vocabulary of English words, identifying meanings through understanding of word relationships
- Use deductive and inductive reasoning to solve multiple-choice questions
- Write 5-paragraph analytical essays on major pieces of literature

## STUDENT ASSESSMENT

While it is important to set academic and performance standards, it is as important to develop meaningful assessment tools to determine whether the standards have been met. In order to gauge the fulfillment of our ambitious objectives, SBHA teachers closely track daily and unit lesson plans in the school's internal database that connect the content and skills covered in class with the standards laid out by the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Over the past three years, we have continued to devise internal and external assessment tools that can meaningfully measure student achievement. For example:

- outside professionals judge student performance on semester-long Science Projects using a detailed rubric and set of criteria;
- pre- and post-tests are administered in students' major academic classes to measure student mastery of SBHA's curriculum over the course of the school year;
- whole-school oral math quizzes are conducted on special assessment days, for example, Times Table Day and F.D.P. Day (Fractions/Decimals/Percents);
- in order to accurately measure students' growth while at SBHA, and to tailor curriculum accordingly, new and returning students take an array of internally developed assessment exams in Math, Reading, Writing, Social Studies, and Science;
- mid-terms and final exams are given in the high school grades to demonstrate mid- and end-of-year mastery;
- all subjects have teacher-developed minimum competency exams for students to successfully complete at the end of any necessary summer remediation program or tutoring; and
- external assessments such as Stanford-9 in grades 5-9 and PSAT and SAT in grades 10<sup>th</sup> and above are used.

Devising assessment tools that match the clarity of standardized exams is always a difficult process. Nevertheless, we see as part of our mission as a Massachusetts charter school to find new and substantive ways to measure the progress of our school. For example,

- Of the 72 total, semester-long Science Projects completed by students in grades 6 , 7, and 8 this year, 70 projects received a passing grade, while 2 projects did not;
- At the beginning and end of the school year, eighth grade students took an unannounced 100-point multiple-choice and short answer science pretest. The test assessed the ability to design a simple experiment, data presentation and analysis skills, basic lab measurement skills, and knowledge of basic concepts in life science. In September, the average score was 53% (Median: 51). 30 out of 35 students scored below 70%. In June, the average score was 80% (Median: 81). 31 out of 35 students scored above 70%.
- After students in grades 6 were tested on similar cumulative math exams at the start and end of the school year, students improved their median performance from 27% on the first test to 85% on the second; and
- On unannounced pre- and post- exams testing students' basic knowledge of geography, history, and culture in grade 9, student performance improved from 41% in September to 73% in June.

As was the case last year, we continued to use the Stanford Achievement Test, 9<sup>th</sup> Edition (Stanford-9) as a primary way to measure student progress. In addition, we use the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) exams to help us gauge student achievement. The Stanford-9 and the MCAS exams serve as excellent complements to comprehensive final exams in each of our core academic subjects, weekly quizzes and tests, daily homework assignments, essays and research reports, oral presentations and group projects, and of course, teacher evaluation of in-class performance.

SBHA also administers two surveys to measure academic and non-academic progress: 1) a mid-year survey of parents, using open-ended questions; and 2) a year-end survey of parents, using closed and open-ended questions. The results of these surveys can be found throughout this Annual Report.

## STANDARDIZED TESTS

### *Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)*

In April and May, 2001, SBHA 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup>, and 8<sup>th</sup> graders took the MCAS exams in English, Math, and History.

No SBHA 8th grader ever has failed the English MCAS exam, with 74% last year and 82% this year scoring Proficient or Advanced. In less than four years of operation, South Boston Harbor Academy claims the third highest total MCAS score in the city of Boston for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade—only the two exam schools, Boston Latin and Latin Academy, performed better—and third and fourth highest MCAS scores in the city of Boston for the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade respectively.

In comparison to students in Boston and Massachusetts, our students had a higher average score on all five exams in all three grades:

#### MCAS – Grade 8 Spring 2001

*Percentage of students scoring at each performance level*

		<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Needs Imp</i>	<i>Warning</i>	<i>Avg Score</i>
<i>English</i>	SBHA	3%	79	18	0	246
	Boston	2	39	37	21	234
	MA	8	59	25	8	242
<i>Math</i>	SBHA	2	29	51	17	233
	Boston	6	14	26	55	225
	MA	11	23	34	31	233
<i>History</i>	SBHA	0	12	66	22	228
	Boston	1	7	25	68	219
	MA	1	10	48	41	224

**MCAS – Grade 7  
Spring 2001**

*Percentage of students scoring at each performance level*

		<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Needs Imp</i>	<i>Warning</i>	<i>Avg Score</i>
<i>English</i>	SBHA	0%	67	31	2	241
	Boston	2	31	40	26	231
	MA	6	49	32	12	239

**MCAS – Grade 6  
Spring 2001**

*Percentage of students scoring at each performance level*

		<i>Advanced</i>	<i>Proficient</i>	<i>Needs Imp</i>	<i>Warning</i>	<i>Avg Score</i>
<i>Math</i>	SBHA	13%	20	45	23	235
	Boston	4	10	23	64	222
	MA	13	23	30	33	233

In comparison to other Boston public schools – including exam, pilot, and charter – SBHA students achieved either the third or fourth highest performance on each exam:

<b>GRADE 8</b>					<b>GRADE 7</b>				<b>GRADE 6</b>	
<u>English</u>		<u>Math</u>		<u>History</u>		<u>English</u>		<u>Math</u>		
1.	Boston Latin	253	Boston Latin	256	Boston Latin	241	Boston Latin	251	Quincy Upper School	238
2.	Latin Academy	249	Latin Academy	246	Latin Academy	233	Latin Academy	243	Lyndon Pilot School	237
3.	Neighborhood House CS	247	O'Bryant School	241	Pacific Rim	229	Neighborhood House CS	243	So Bost Harb Acad CS	235
4.	So Bost Harb Acad CS	246	So Bost Harb Acad CS	233	So Bost Harb Acad CS	228	So Bost Harb Acad CS	241	Roxbury Prep CS	234
5.	Pacific Rim CS	245	Neighborhood House CS	233	Neighborhood House CS	225	O'Bryant School	240	Neighborhood House CS	230

On all five exams, SBHA had an average score of either Proficient (7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade English) or Needs Improvements (8<sup>th</sup> grade History, 6<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade Math). If you add up the three 8<sup>th</sup> grade average scores in English, Math, and History, SBHA's total of 707 was the third highest in the city after only Boston Latin and Latin Academy, and higher than the O'Bryant, another exam school:

1. Boston Latin	750
2. Latin Academy	728
3. So Bost Harb Acad CS	707
4. Neighborhood House CS	706
5. Pacific Rim CS	705

Finally, we showed great improvement in our overall performance in comparison to last year:

		<u>Advanced</u>	<u>Proficient</u>	<u>Needs Imp</u>	<u>Warning</u>	<u>Avg Score</u>
<i>English</i>	2000	0%	74	26	0	242
	2001	3	79	18	0	246
<i>Math</i>	2000	3	15	36	46	225
	2001	2	29	51	17	233
<i>History</i>	2000	0	13	69	18	228
	2001	0	12	66	22	228

### *Stanford-9 Achievement Tests*

Each fall for new students, and each spring for returning students, SBHA administers in grades 5 through 9 exams in Reading, Language, and Mathematics using the aforementioned Stanford-9. The Stanford-9 is used since it is the same assessment exam used to pre- and post- test students in Boston Public Schools (BPS). All students are then subsequently tested each spring, to demonstrate their progress over the course of one academic year, and to compare relative performance versus BPS students.

In Reading, Writing, and Math, the scores of our students are impressive for all five grades as SBHA students continue to show or maintain improvement since their initial enrollment at SBHA.

Please note that in all comparisons, figures are unaudited, with three differences in testing. First, the total number of students at our school who took the exam is of course smaller than that of BPS. Second, while BPS tested all of their students in the spring, our new students are pre-tested in the fall of their enrollment, and then post-tested in the spring with the entire school population. Finally, while SBHA's testing population includes students from .1 to .4 special education prototypes, BPS's results only include .1 and .2 prototypes.

Furthermore, any single test at any one point in time provides only a snapshot of students' mastery of content and skills. While averages rise and fall from year to year, what we truly look forward to is a steady upward movement over time. Nevertheless, on every test, in every grade, significant improvement has been made since students first enrolled at our school, both in absolute terms, and in comparison to BPS. By this measure, we are clearly making progress.

Prior to entering SBHA, our students were performing below the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile in several areas. Over our first four years, our students showed that they are performing above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile in every subject, in every grade, and in some cases, far above. These results confirm what other indicators have shown, that student progress is being made at our school. Whether tracking students by cohort since their initial enrollment, or in comparison to BPS, SBHA students have demonstrated strong achievement in reading and math. As a college preparatory school, we are proud of the great progress we have made.

Please note, BPS never released its students' 2001 performance and did not test students on the Stanford-9 in 2002.

## Mathematics Achievement

### Mathematics Median Percentile Scores

Median percentile scores tell us where the exact middle student falls in mathematical and reading performance. In other words, as many students at SBHA perform above the median scores as below.

**Progress.** In Mathematics, the scores of our students are impressive for all grades as SBHA students continue to show or maintain improvement since their initial enrollment at SBHA.

**South Boston Harbor Academy**  
*Median Percentiles By Class, 1998-2002*

<b>MATH</b>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>Improvement</u>
Class of 2009	-	-	-	44	69	+25
Class of 2008	-	-	62	92	92	+30
Class of 2007	-	42	90	92	75	+33
Class of 2006	33	88	97	82	74	+41
Class of 2005	51	90	74	70	65	+14
Class of 2004	28	75	57	64	-	+38

*Improvement: Percentile point increase from their initial enrollment to the most recent administration.*

**Relative to BPS.** Whether tracking students by cohort since their initial enrollment, or in comparison to BPS, SBHA students have demonstrated strong math achievement:

**South Boston Harbor Academy (SBHA) vs. Boston Public Schools (BPS)**  
*Median Percentiles, 1998-2002*

<b>MATH</b>		<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Grade 5	<i>SBHA</i>	33	88	90	92	69
	<i>BPS</i>	50	50	54	NA	NA
Grade 6	<i>SBHA</i>	51	90	97	92	92
	<i>BPS</i>	45	50	54	NA	NA
Grade 7	<i>SBHA</i>	28	75	74	82	75
	<i>BPS</i>	50	50	53	NA	NA
Grade 8	<i>SBHA</i>	-	-	57	70	74
	<i>BPS</i>	53	59	57	NA	NA
Grade 9	<i>SBHA</i>	-	-	-	64	65
	<i>BPS</i>				NA	NA

*\*BPS never released its students' 2001 performance, and did not test its students using the Stanford-9 in 2002.*

*\*\*At SBHA, 5<sup>th</sup> graders and new students in higher grades are tested during the fall of their initial enrollment. All returning SBHA students are tested each spring. In BPS, all students are tested each spring.*

## Reading Achievement

### Reading Median Percentile Scores

**Progress.** In Reading, the scores of our students are impressive for all grades as SBHA students continue to show or maintain improvement since their initial enrollment at SBHA.

**South Boston Harbor Academy**  
*Median Percentiles By Class, 1998-2002*

<b>READING</b>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>Improvement</u>
Class of 2009	-	-	-	47	62	+15
Class of 2008	-	-	55	72	79	+24
Class of 2007	-	47	55	61	56	+9
Class of 2006	48	63	59	60	53	+5
Class of 2005	58	69	54	56	71	+13
Class of 2004	48	56	55	57	-	+9

*Improvement: Percentile point increase from their initial enrollment to the most recent administration.*

**Relative to BPS.** Whether tracking students by cohort since their initial enrollment, or in comparison to BPS, SBHA students have demonstrated strong achievement in reading:

**South Boston Harbor Academy (SBHA) vs. Boston Public Schools (BPS)**  
*Median Percentiles, 1998-2002*

<b>READING</b>		<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>
Grade 5	<i>SBHA</i>	48	63	55	72	62
	<i>BPS</i>	47	47	49	NA	NA
Grade 6	<i>SBHA</i>	58	69	59	61	79
	<i>BPS</i>	44	47	44	NA	NA
Grade 7	<i>SBHA</i>	48	56	54	60	56
	<i>BPS</i>	46	46	50	NA	NA
Grade 8	<i>SBHA</i>	-	-	55	56	53
	<i>BPS</i>	47	49	49	NA	NA
Grade 9	<i>SBHA</i>	-	-	-	57	71
	<i>BPS</i>				NA	NA

*\*BPS never released its students' 2001 performance, and did not test its students using the Stanford-9 in 2002.*

*\*\*At SBHA, 5<sup>th</sup> graders and new students in higher grades are tested during the fall of their initial enrollment. All returning SBHA students are tested each spring. In BPS, all students are tested each spring.*

## Language Achievement

### Language Median Percentile Scores

**Progress.** On the Language section, which tests students' mastery of writing skills including expression and mechanics, SBHA students have again shown excellent signs of improvement.

**South Boston Harbor Academy (SBHA)**  
*Median Percentiles By Class, 1998-2002*

<b>LANGUAGE</b>	<u>1998</u>	<u>1999</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2001</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>Improvement</u>
Class of 2009	-	-	-	57	69	+12
Class of 2008	-	-	65	73	71	+6
Class of 2007	-	40	61	66	51	+11
Class of 2006	45	61	77	73	66	+21
Class of 2005	47	69	60	50	65	+18
Class of 2004	42	50	64	64	-	+22

*Improvement: Percentile point increase from their initial enrollment to the most recent administration.*

While our students generally came to SBHA performing below the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile, they have since performed consistently above the 50<sup>th</sup> percentile over the past three administrations of the tests.

By any measure, our students have made strong gains in both Reading and Language these past two years, to complement our excellent gains in Mathematics.



### **History Success Story**

For the final project of our Gilded Age Unit in the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, the students researched the Lawrence Mill strike of 1912, also known as the Bread and Roses Strike. After researching the facts, the students put themselves in the place of the strikers, and wrote pamphlets explaining why they were on strike, created slogans, and made signs. They also had to write a protest song or speeches to help keep the strikers motivated. They all put a lot of effort and creativity into the different parts of the projects, coming up with catchy slogans such as “Not another day, until a rise in pay,” and heart wrenching song lyrics such as:

“The machines have stopped their roar  
We will work no more  
Your industry has destroyed my health  
While my un-thanked labor supplies your wealth  
You have seen money by the thousands, yet I have not seen one toy  
This may sound strange, but I am just a boy.”  
- by Dan Duggan

The final part of our project was the re-enactment of the strike at M Street Park. As we walked over, students displayed their strike signs and the cars and trucks that passed honked in their support. At the park they gave their speeches and marched to their chants. We then got the “message” that the mill owners had given in and that they had won! As they walked back victorious, they excitedly talked about the strike, and it was clear that they had truly put themselves in a striker’s shoes for a few moments, and felt the exhilaration of being part a group fighting for cause.

-Kim Everett, History Teacher

## PROMOTION POLICIES

The question of promotion is one that challenges every school, at every grade level. At South Boston Harbor Academy, we know that neither automatic retention nor automatic promotion is the solution for students who do not successfully complete their work. While we will not promote students simply because they are a calendar year older, requiring students to repeat the same material over again, or holding back students who have already been held back once before, is not the desired outcome either. Given the importance of the decision, our promotion policies are implemented so that students have ample opportunities throughout the year to change their fates and the school has enough time to make the soundest educational decisions.

The goal is that all students have the support needed to move forward but in order to move forward they also must evidence satisfactory completion of work in their 5 core courses. Therefore, we have carefully planned out a proactive approach for the prevention of academic failure through a careful monitoring of student performance over time, starting before the first day of class, and continuing with our three tiers of programmatic support. We have also carefully planned out a proactive approach for involving students and families to ensure student success.

86% of parents said they chose SBHA because of its higher academic standards.

Provided with the Student Handbook at family orientation each year, parents know the criteria for academic promotion—passing all core courses with a 70% or better, with summer remediation for students who fail no more than 2 courses. Knowing the expectations, however, is only a piece of the picture. For some students, holding the bar high without solid stepladders along the way will not create academic success or grade-level promotions.

Students newly entering SBHA are tested in reading, writing, and mathematics, with careful review of students' skills, an integral part of the initial support process. Five hours of added instruction in academic skills for all students, morning previewing of materials, and pull-out services for some students—all part of the daily 8:00-3:00 PM schedule—are direct and immediate responses to students' academic needs. With the year underway, and these daily supports in place, SBHA immediately begins to provide three additional tiers of support.

The first tier of support involves mandatory homework completion and mandatory homework support for all students. For so many students, the piece that leads to academic failure is the lack of satisfactory homework completion. Any student who does not complete even one homework assignment must stay for Homework Club. Families who choose SBHA for their children realize that homework is an important piece of a student's educational progress, and that afterschool support is a requirement, not an offering. Requiring time and achievement after school is one way we can ensure that students do not fall through the cracks or are not "mis-promoted" to the next grade.

The next step in the decision-making process, and the implementation of the second tier of support, takes place early in the year as we identify those students in danger of failing a particular subject. While 8:00 AM-3:00 PM is the average day for most students, 25% of our student body is required to stay as late as 5:00 PM each day to complete their homework or

receive additional help. We require those students in danger of failing to stay after school 2-5 days per week, 30 minutes to two hours each day, to work on specific content and skills with their grade-level teachers. While all teachers regularly provide tutoring after school, for any student in danger of retention, this provision becomes a requirement. Teachers and advisors talk with families, and set up a tutoring schedule; many students are also provided a one-on-one tutor from the high school. All of this is done to proactively prevent failure and to ensure, to the best of our ability, progress and promotion for all students.

The third step occurs at the end of the second quarter when the school sends home to some students and families a letter based on the first two quarters of work, indicating that unless work habits, effort, and achievement improve, the student will need to attend Saturday School at SBHA. Saturday School represents yet another proactive approach during the school year to support student achievement and promotion. It is another attempt to avoid summer school and retention.

Saturday School, led by grade-level teachers, 9:00 AM-1:00 PM every Saturday, provides structured time during which students organize their weekly materials, complete required reading, and receive support in the improvement and completion of daily assignments. They also have the opportunity to improve grades on weekly quizzes. It is the school's hope that by identifying early on students in danger of failing, and targeting individual solutions to individual problems, students can avoid spending their summer in school, and/or repeating the current grade next year.

Soon after the third quarter has finished, families of Saturday School students are again contacted regarding their child's progress. It is at this point that the first group of students is notified whether they are required to continue attending Saturday School, or congratulated on the progress they have made since mid-year. Additionally, any other students now in academic danger are also invited into Saturday School.

We wish that we could say that the programmatic attention to students built into the regular school day of 8:00 AM-3:00 PM, the after school Homework Club and tutoring required from 3:00 PM-5:00 PM, and the Saturday School program running 9:00 AM-1:00 PM, were sufficient to allow all students to progress during the regular academic year. However, for some students, the challenge remains, as does the requirement to evidence sufficient skill and knowledge in all subject areas to warrant promotion.

Looking back, in the summer of 1998, before our doors even opened for the first time, we held a summer program for 25 incoming students who had demonstrated particular difficulties with reading. Our second summer program in 1999 was for 25 returning students who had performed poorly or who failed a core academic subject during the 1998-99 school year. Our third summer program in 2000 was for 14 students, half of whom had been at SBHA the year before but had performed poorly on our internally developed assessments, half of whom were new to the school and needed to improve their basic reading, writing, and math skills. This year, we implemented the Saturday School program described above, expressly to avoid the need for summer remediation. Yet the last opportunity for summer school needed to remain an academic option for some students.

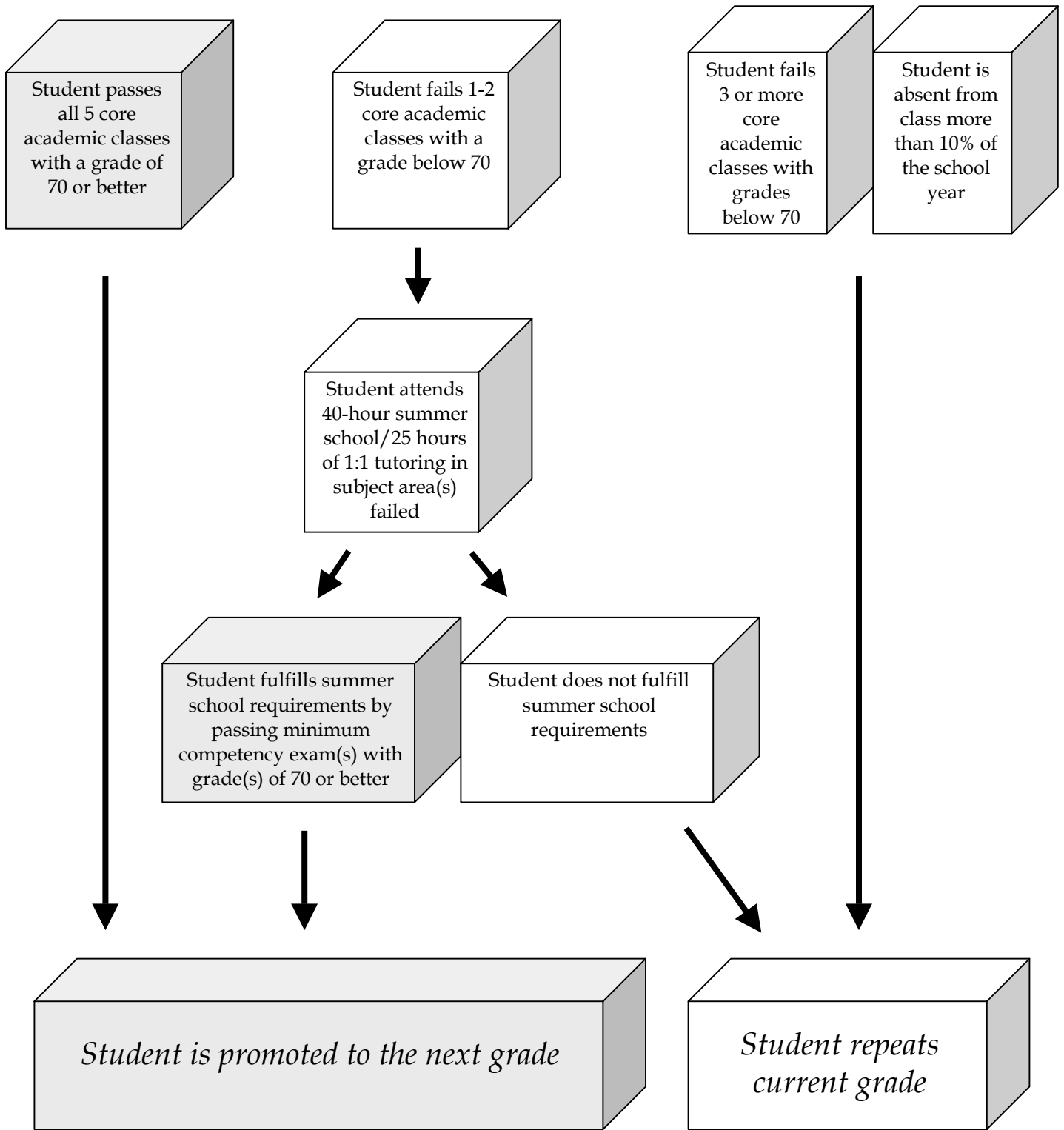
For those students who are at risk of not passing 2 courses late in the year, despite the three tiers of support, SBHA provides families with resources in the local community offering summer remediation and tutoring. Some SBHA teachers were also available for individualized tutoring. These students had to attend an approved summer school or tutoring program, and then had to pass an SBHA teacher-created minimum competency exam(s) in order to be promoted to the next grade. If a student fails to meet either of these requirements, he or she will be retained in his or her current grade. Students who fail 3 or more core classes will be retained, as has always been the case. (For the 2002-03 school year, students who fail 2 or more core classes will be automatically retained, while students who fail 1 will be required to attend summer school.)

By the end of the 2001-02 school year, 23 returning students were required to attend a summer program and pass an SBHA created minimum competency exam (6 from the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, 3 from the 7<sup>th</sup>, 4 from the 8<sup>th</sup>, 8 from the 9<sup>th</sup>, and 2 from 10<sup>th</sup>). Assuming all of our students pass their end-of-summer assessment exams, 14 students will be retained into their current grades (5 in 7<sup>th</sup> grade, 2 in 8<sup>th</sup>, 5 in 9<sup>th</sup>, and 2 in 10<sup>th</sup>).



***“[SBHA has] a group of teachers and administrators who seem to actually care about the children they work with and like what they are doing. The administration seems to support the teachers along with the teachers supporting each other—that positive attitude is what the children most benefit from—a belief by the adults that they can succeed.”***  
***-SBHA Parent***

**SOUTH BOSTON HARBOR ACADEMY**  
**Promotion Policies 2001-02**



## ***PART II. INTEGRATING THE COMMUNITY AND THE CITY***

### **Field Trips**

Incorporating the endless resources afforded by the city of Boston and beyond proves integral to our students' educational experience. Throughout the year, teachers utilize the out-of-school environment to enrich the classroom curriculum. Some of the trips from this year included:

- 10<sup>th</sup> Grade Trip to Washington, DC
- 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Trip to Quebec City, Quebec
- 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Trip to Appalachian Mountain Club's Mountain Classroom at Cardigan Mountain in Alexandria, New Hampshire
- *Archaeology of the Central Artery Project* at the Commonwealth Museum
- Blue Hills Reservation for an All-School Hike
- Castle Island
- College Fair
- College Visits to Amherst, Mt. Holyoke, U-Mass Amherst, and U-Mass Boston
- French class dinners at Metro and Maison Robert
- House of Blues for a Folk Art Tour and History of the Blues through Song
- Lowell Textile Mills
- *Macbeth*
- Museum of Science to view permanent exhibits and to see Omni Film, *Amazing Caves*
- Plimoth Plantation
- Roller-skating Trip
- Six Flags
- Student Council Trip to the Joseph Moakley Federal District Court House for a Mock-Trial
- Thompson Island Beach Clean-Up
- Walden Pond for an Environmental Lesson on Trees



## South Boston Community

Our South Boston locale provides an excellent opportunity for us to take advantage of the many resources provided by the local community. From trips to the Edison Power Plant – where our 9<sup>th</sup> grade learns about different forms of energy - to the M Street Park – where we hold many of our Physical Education activities – students are well-known throughout the community. As a locale for guest speakers at assemblies, at Career Day, and in our classes, we look forward to further strengthening our ties to the community in the years to come.

One of SBHA's most meaningful, longterm partnerships has been with The Boston Harbor Association. Both seventh and tenth grade students partnered with The Boston Harbor Association, in conjunction with their Adopt-a-Class program. The seventh grade took a number of field trips to study the ecosystem of Boston Harbor and learn about the effects of pollution on the harbor. Conducted during October, November, and December, these trips included Peddock's Island, Castle Island, and the Harbor Explorer ship out of U-Mass, Boston. Students also had a clean-up day at nearby Reserved Channel to become aware of solid waste pollution of the harbor and its shores. The tenth grade gathered water samples from Reserved Channel in a month-long unit on water testing (during January). They tested water for temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, biochemical oxygen demand, nitrates, turbidity, and coliform bacteria.

## Visitors to Our School

From the first day of school to the last, SBHA was open to hundreds of visitors from around the city, country, and world. Visitors included teachers and principals from public, parochial, and private schools, think tanks and foundations, charter school founding groups, community members, politicians and policy makers, as well as prospective families interested in exploring their educational options. Some visitors from this past year included:

- Secretary Bob Durand, Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
- U.S. Representative Barney Frank
- Neighborhood House Charter School
- Massachusetts Charter School Resource Center
- Department of Education Charter School Office
- Leadership for Quality Education, Chicago, IL
- Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research
- *The Boston Globe*
- The Harbus Foundation
- Schrafft Charitable Trust



## ***PART III. STUDENT SUPPORT AND PARENT INVOLVEMENT***

### **APPROACH TO STUDENT SUPPORT**

At SBHA, we hold high expectations for all students. We do this by instituting comprehensive supports for all of our students, specific supports to address students' individual needs, and procedures that prevent students from falling through the cracks:

- Class size is limited to 22 students, thus permitting teachers to provide individual attention for students experiencing particular difficulties.
- All students have daily contact – up to 2½ hours each day – with their advisors. This allows for regular monitoring and frequent check-ins.
- Consultation with Director of Student Support is available for parents and teachers.
- Formal and informal counseling is available for all students on an as-needed basis.
- After school tutoring is available for any students having difficulty with a particular subject.
- After school homework support is provided for students who are not able to regularly complete homework at home.
- Regular focus is placed on students' study and organizational skills in all academic classes, particularly in the earlier grades.
- Weekly, two-hour departmental and grade-level meetings are held to discuss issues related to individual students, as well as the school community as a whole.
- Ongoing contact is maintained with all parents to ensure close monitoring of student progress and parental support for programming. Technology – such as e-mail and voice mail – is used to enhance and increase communication with families.
- Detailed progress reports and report cards outlining student achievement are sent home at eight different points in the school year.
- Students who have ongoing difficulty with content material are given the opportunity to preview the material with a teacher prior to class.
- A Saturday School program, which focuses on work completion and skills development, is available to all students.
- Referrals are made and funding provided for gifted students to participate in summer enrichment and leadership programs.

- Individual schedules are altered to allow gifted students to take classes with higher grades, when appropriate.
- Fifth grade students who are reading below grade level receive one-on-one reading support by older students and adult volunteers during the Silent Sustained Reading period each morning.

## **APPROACH TO SPECIAL EDUCATION**

South Boston Harbor Academy is committed to both maximizing the academic and social achievement of all students and providing the least restrictive environment in which this can occur. Toward these ends, we have developed several approaches to assist students within an inclusive model, as well programs outside of the regular education environment. Placement in a more restrictive prototype is only considered when the nature or severity of a child's special need is such that education in a less restrictive prototype with the use of supplementary aids and services cannot be achieved satisfactorily. In addition to the supports listed above, the following supports are currently provided as part of our model of inclusion and are available to all students:

- Small class size allows regular education teachers to make reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities and learning differences.
- Professional development workshops on topics such as learning and behavioral difficulties were provided to teachers prior to the beginning of the school year.
- Consultation with the School Psychologist and other special education staff, Speech and Language Pathologist, and Occupational Therapist, is available for both parents and regular education teachers on an as-needed basis.
- Support is provided by specialists and educational assistants in the regular education classes on an as-needed basis.
- Supplementary aids, such as portable keyboards, are available as needed.
- Educational assistants provide support for identified students in the regular education classroom.

Separate support services are provided when the nature or severity of a student's special needs are such that education in regular classes, with the use of above mentioned supports, cannot be satisfactorily achieved. Learning disabilities and resource room support, occupational therapy, speech and language therapy, and physical therapy are available as needed. Each student's Individualized Education Plan specifies the services necessary for that student's success.

Special education curricula can be regarded in four distinct categories:

- 1) Resource Room support allows students to get extra help in a specific subject area in which they are having difficulty. These sessions are generally held at the beginning of the school day, before regular classes begin, to avoid students missing academic class time. The classes are prepared in coordination with the regular education teacher and can be designed either to prepare students for upcoming lessons, to follow up from lessons that were previously taught, or to help students prepare for tests and quizzes.
- 2) Reading and writing instruction is provided for students who enter SBHA with skills that are significantly below grade level. Many of these students have learning disabilities and benefit from the use of a rules-based phonics program. These classes are scheduled as a supplementary English Program during the English 2 period, or, occasionally, during the regular English class. Students tend to remain in these classes for 1-3 years, before reaching a point where they can read at grade level with minimal support.
- 3) Individualized math instruction is provided on occasion, when a student has been unable to keep up with the pace of the regular curriculum, despite the implementation of appropriate accommodations and modifications. While this can have the effect of helping some students reach the level of their class and return to regular instruction, other students require a slower pace, more frequent review, and a wider range of instructional approaches in order to progress. These students may continue to work in an individualized setting, although the content of their instruction follows the general curriculum as closely as possible, given the educational needs of the child.
- 4) Specialists, such as an occupational therapist, a speech and language pathologist, or the school psychologist, meet with selected students on a weekly or biweekly basis to address specific disabilities or difficulties. Specialists coordinate their work with regular education teachers and support the regular curriculum.

### **Math Success Story**

In 5<sup>th</sup> grade math class, following the Do Now, the student to finish the problem first and accurately is given the job of being the checker of other students' work. As students finish the problem they silently raise their hands and wait for the checker to dot their paper indicating a correct answer. For 5<sup>th</sup> graders, this is really a big deal because they get to be the teacher, the helper, and the authority. They enjoy that.

By April, it is generally the same 7 to 8 kids who get to be the checker, and everyone in the class knows it. There was one boy who struggled all year with math, and never got to be a checker. In his attempts to be the checker, he often made careless mistakes by rushing and so his work was often incorrect. But, in late April, something amazing happened. He was the first one done accurately solving a problem multiplying mixed number fractions—no easy feat for any fifth grader. “Finally,” he exclaimed. He was beside himself, and like a rabbit, he hopped from person to person with his marker, checking each of his classmates' work. He finally got to be the authority in math.

-Dara Ratchford, Math Teacher

## FOCUS ON READING

### *Silent Sustained Reading*

As a college preparatory school, it is critical to our mission that students develop strong reading skills. It is our firm belief that student mastery of all subjects—Science, History, Math, and French—will improve as we improve students’ vocabulary and reading comprehension. By spending meaningful time reading daily, children develop critical reading skills, an essential component of academic success. Therefore, each of our school days begins with 15 minutes of silent reading by everyone at the school, student and teacher alike. The silent reading period serves as an excellent complement to the extensive reading students do in their subject classes, reading works of fiction and non-fiction in English, History, French, and Science.

### *Summer Reading*

In addition, SBHA requires students to read three books in middle school and four books in high school over the summer months, so that we can connect the previous year with the next one, ensuring that nothing is lost, and a smooth transition is made from June to September. At the beginning of each new school year, all students are assessed to measure their comprehension of the summer material. This summer’s selections, the first two of which are required for each grade are:



### Entering Fifth Grade

*The Magician’s Nephew*, by C. S. Lewis  
*My Side of the Mountain*, by Jean Craighead George  
*Julie of the Wolves*, by Jean Craighead George  
*Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, by Roald Dahl

### Entering Sixth Grade

*Slaves Limbo*, by Felice Holman  
*The Watsons Go to Birmingham—1963: A Novel*, by Christopher Paul Curtis  
*So Far From the Bamboo Grove*, by Yoko Kawashima Watkins  
*Park’s Quest*, by Katherine Paterson  
*Zlata’s Diary: A Child’s Life in Sarajevo*, by Zlata Filipovic

### Entering Seventh Grade

*Let the Circle be Unbroken*, by Mildred D. Taylor  
*A Long Way from Chicago: A Novel in Stories*, by Richard Peck  
*Wringer*, by Jerry Spinelli  
*Holes*, by Louis Sachar  
*Walk Two Moons*, by Sharon Creech  
*Joey Pigzka Swallowed the Key*, by Jack Gantos

### Entering Eighth Grade

*An Island Like You, Stories of the Barrio*, by Judith Ortiz Cofer  
*Warriors Don’t Cry: A Searing Memoir of the Battle to Integrate Little Rock’s Central High*, by Melba Patillo Beals  
*Shoeless Joe*, by W. P. Kinsella  
*The Princess Bride*, by William Goldman  
*Hoops*, by Walter Dean Myers

*When Zachary Beaver Came to Town*, by Kimberly Willis Holt

Entering Ninth Grade

*Animal Farm*, by George Orwell  
*The House on Mango Street*, by Sandra Cisneros  
*The Golden Compass*, by Philip Pullman  
*The Chocolate War*, by Robert Cormier  
*Make Lemonade*, by Virginia Euwer Wolff

Entering Tenth Grade

*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, by Maya Angelou  
*The Bell Jar*, by Sylvia Plath  
*A Separate Peace*, by John Knowles  
*The Diary of Anne Frank*, by Anne Frank

*Something Wicked This Way Comes*, by Ray Bradbury  
*Maus I: A Survivor's Tale: My Father Bleeds History*, by Art Spiegelman  
*Maus II: A Survivor's Tale: And Here My Troubles Began*, by Art Spiegelman

Entering Eleventh Grade

*The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, by Malcolm X as told to Alex Haley  
*Ellen Foster*, by Kaye Gibbons  
*The Bluest Eye*, by Toni Morrison  
*The Things They Carried*, by Tim O'Brien  
*This Boy's Life*, by Tobias Wolff  
*Hiroshima*, by John Hersey

### **Reading Success Story**

Several students from the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grades have been reading with younger 5<sup>th</sup> graders since early in the school year. At the change of academic quarters, older students are provided the opportunity to go back to their own silent reading in advisory. Wonderfully, several students have resisted being replaced, and have come to feel like real “mama” and “papa” reading bears with their fifth graders. More particularly, one 9<sup>th</sup> grader who herself had been pulled out for special support in reading in the past, is now providing regular encouragement and support to a 5<sup>th</sup> grader. Together they have become Harry Potter fans, together they have read novel after novel, and together they have begun each morning sharing time with a good book.

-Sue Walsh, Curriculum Coordinator

# **PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

## **Expectations for Parent Involvement**

South Boston Harbor Academy expects every parent to work in partnership with the school to create a thriving school community in which every child can reach his or her potential. Before a family applies to the school, both parents agree to begin their partnership before their child matriculates by:

- attending at least two mandatory information sessions before the school year begins; and
- signing, along with their child and a teacher, the Contract of Mutual Responsibilities, which outlines the respective responsibilities of the students, parents, and teachers.

The Contract of Mutual Responsibilities serves as a written understanding between families and the school regarding the role each plays in the successful education of their children. By signing the Contract, parents agree to: take an active role in their child's education; maintain high academic expectations for their child; ensure their child arrives to school on time and ready to learn; communicate regularly with the school and teachers; and be held accountable as a parent and a partner in education.

Once the school year begins, South Boston Harbor Academy expects families to actively participate in the education of their children by: attending the three Family-Teacher conferences; signing all four progress reports and four report cards; calling or e-mailing teachers and administrators regularly to discuss their child's progress; and providing input to the school at the school-wide family meetings or through the annual family surveys.

## **Parent Board Representation**

Because the school values the unique perspective that parents have and the knowledge that they bring to the formation and development of our school, South Boston Harbor Academy has parent representatives serve on the school's Board of Trustees. Given a parent's experience with the daily operations of the school and with the family-school relationship, adding parents to the Board of Trustees has proved invaluable for the continued vision and success of the school. Currently, two parents serve as Trustees at SBHA. The Board plans to maintain parent representation as an essential part of the fulfillment of the school's mission.

## **Family Committees**

In the 2001-2002 school year, families played an integral role planning school activities and events and supporting the work done in the classroom and afterschool. This year, four parent committees met to plan events, raise funds to support school-sponsored activities, and welcome new families to the school.

Family committees, which met in the evening and were open to all families interested in participating, included:

- Family Fundraising Committee
- Event Committee
- 5<sup>th</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Committee
- Welcome Committee

## Family Events

South Boston Harbor Academy hosts several whole-school events throughout the year to bring families together, foster a sense of community, and celebrate student achievements. In the 2001-2002 school year, the event committee spearheaded efforts to organize, plan, and staff whole-school activities. These events allowed families to meet one another, join together with school staff, and see a window into the hard work their children are doing every day.

Over the course of the school year, families helped to plan and volunteered their time for events such as:

- |  |                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| ✓ Fall Open House                                      | ✓ College Day                     |
| ✓ 5 <sup>th</sup> Grade Gingerbread House Decorations  | ✓ Winter Holiday Celebration      |
| ✓ School Dances  | ✓ Winter and Spring Science Fairs |
| ✓ 8 <sup>th</sup> Grade Celebration/Graduation         | ✓ Book Fair                       |
| ✓ 8 <sup>th</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> Grade Semi-Formal | ✓ 2002 School Lottery             |
| ✓ Career Day   | ✓ New Family Orientation          |
| ✓ Mardi Gras Celebration                               | ✓ New Family Welcome Dinner       |

## Parent Involvement Activities

South Boston Harbor Academy encourages all parents to volunteer at the school and welcomes the diverse skills and experience that families bring to the school community. Families contributed their time during the school day by volunteering at breakfast, monitoring lunch, helping out in the office, substitute teaching, chaperoning field trips, running school fundraisers, managing the library, assisting with new student recruitment, welcoming new families, coaching, and organizing whole-school events. Those who could not contribute their time donated materials or made in-kind contributions to the school, and participated in weekend activities.

*“What impresses me most is not an event or activity (although there are plenty). I am most impressed when my child comes home and has to tell me what wonderful things he has learned, because he is excited and because he is exposed to more than in a traditional school. He tells me things that I did not learn until college. He talks about college because he can envision himself there thanks to the school’s staff.”*

*-SBHA Parent*

Because it is crucial for parents and families to be involved in their children's education, SBHA provides opportunities for families to shape their child's experiences and become involved in the daily operations of the school. During the 2001-02 school year, our 175 families were intimately involved in many important functions:

- 92 families attended the first parent-teacher conferences, 107 attended the second, and 80 attended the third;
- 10 parents volunteered weekly to help administer the school's lunch program;
- 1 parent administered our school breakfast program;
- 3 parents volunteered every week at breakfast;
- 3 parents helped to run and organize our library;
- 1 parent worked in our main office once a week;
- 3 parents served as substitute teachers and tutors;
- 18 parents served on our parent committees;
- 10 parents spoke at the school's Career Day;
- 2 parents volunteered at the New Family Orientation;
- 35 different parents chaperoned the school field trips our students enjoyed this year;
- All 234 students brought back with them each of the eight progress reports and report cards distributed during the year, signed by their parents indicating receipt and acknowledgment, totaling 1856 copies signed and returned;
- 2 parents volunteered their time to start and coach the SBHA Boys Baseball team;
- All families participated in the Yankee Candle and Calendar fundraisers to raise money for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade trip to Quebec and 10<sup>th</sup> grade trip to Washington D.C.; and
- Every one of our families was called within the first period of the 188 school days if their child was absent without a prior call or written note.



## Communication with Parents

Continual and ongoing dialogue between parents and school staff is an integral part of our mission to work in partnership with families in their children's education. Our technology program plays a crucial role in allowing us to fulfill this part of our mission. The school's Web site provides families with an up-to-date school calendar, listing upcoming events, allows parents to view photos of recent school activities, and links parents to educational web sites so that education can continue at home. The school's voice mail system allows parents and students to check daily assignments on the Homework Hotline, one of the most popular features of the school. In addition, each teacher and administrator has a phone line, voice mail, and e-mail so that they are readily accessible to parents and can communicate regularly regarding students' progress and well-being. By signing every progress report and report card, the school ensures that parents receive a written report of their child's academic and behavioral progress eight times each year. Finally, the school sends home a family newsletter each month as well as periodic Principal Updates, detailing upcoming events, addressing whole-school issues, showcasing student work, and providing a listing of cultural activities throughout Boston for families to attend.

99% of parents said they were very satisfied or satisfied with the school's educational program.

### English Success Story

One boy, a shy 10<sup>th</sup> grader with a penchant for watching wrestling, always struggled with vocabulary tests. He was a quiet student who barely ever spoke in class and never asked to stay for extra help. As soon as the bell rang at the end of the day, he was gone. This past winter, he did poorly on a vocabulary test and was sentenced to vocabulary "boot camp." The rule about boot camp was that you could not leave without learning the words, all 120 of them. He came, he studied, he was focused on those words for 2 hours. When everyone else had left, he asked if he could take his flashcards home and study some more before taking the exit exam. He came in the next day and got a 90% on the test—the highest grade he's even earned in English class. He was beaming with pride. I called his parents to let them know how proud I was of him and his mother was so touched that she came in the next day to shake my hand and thank me. She said that because her son is so quiet and never causes trouble, teachers never call home. She said the whole family rejoiced at the good news and her pride was clearly showing.

-Maisie Veeder, English Chair

## ***PART IV. CHARACTER AND RESPONSIBILITY***

### **A Sense of Community**

One of the benefits of being a small school is that students feel a significant sense of community and accountability to themselves and one another. SBHA has extremely high standards for discipline, behavior, and citizenship including a commitment to service both within the school community and within our larger community of Boston.

In order to instill in students a sense of responsibility and caring for the school, all 234 students spend the final 10 minutes of each school day cleaning their classrooms as well as the school's common areas. Tasks are divided by class, but shared by all, so that while some students are wiping down their desks, others are in the hallways or at the front door, ensuring the quality of our academics can also be reflected by the quality of our appearance.

To celebrate our school community and our inclusion in a larger charter school community, SBHA designated the week of April 29th – which was National Charter School Week – as SBHA Spirit Week. Each day of the week, whole-school activities were geared toward celebrating the hard work and fun that happens each day at SBHA. Student work and activities were highlighted while students enjoyed whole-school assemblies, a pep rally, a “Reverse Dress Day,” films, and pizza lunch throughout the week.

Building a cohesive, safe and supportive school community is essential to a successful education and to South Boston Harbor Academy's mission. Built into the school schedule, students find a sense of community with their class and advisory group, their afterschool club or sports team, and the school as a whole. Starting from the first day of school, when the entire student body gathers together for a Welcome Assembly, a sense of identity as an integral member of the South Boston Harbor Academy community is emphasized. Students are encouraged to take responsibility and pride in the school by helping prepare for school-wide events, attending extracurricular activities and sporting events, mentoring younger students and others new to the school, and serving as hosts to visitors to our school.

Each Friday morning, middle school students gather in our Assembly area—high school students gather on Monday and Friday—to discuss school policies, celebrate special events, and make personal and professional announcements. Students are afforded an opportunity to practice their public speaking skills, show pride in an accomplishment, or ask questions about upcoming events. Teachers have a chance to speak to the students as a whole, as well as congratulate students on worthy achievements. Most importantly, the entire school has a chance to bond together and create a sense of communal spirit.



## DISCIPLINE

In any school, it is clear that little academic progress can be made without a real commitment to a safe and orderly learning environment. We are happy to report that if nothing else, this commitment has continued to be held to the highest standard. Not one incident passed without consequence during the 2001-02 school year, fulfilling our school's motto that for every action, there is a consequence, positive or negative. Our Student Code of Conduct clearly spells out all school-related disciplinary offenses and their appropriate consequences. It is important that we set academic standards and assessments to measure our performance toward those standards. But the truth of the matter is that none of these changes will improve academic achievement unless schools are safe and orderly places in which teachers can teach and students can learn.

	<u>1998-99</u>	<u>1999-00</u>	<u>2000-01</u>	<u>2001-02</u>
<i>Enrollment</i>	120	160	200	234
Total suspensions	57	38	99	235
In-school	15	16	45	122
Out-of-school	42	22	54	113
Total number of incidents	45	26	73	197
Number of different students	29	31	49	89
Total days of suspensions	87	71	172	359
Total due to in-school	18	31	62	140
Total due to out-of-school	69	40	110	219
Expulsions	0	0	0	5

This past year, we have seen an increase in the total number of incidents resulting in an in- or out-of-school suspension. The primary reason for this jump from 99 incidents with 200 students to 235 incidents with 234 students was an increase in the number of suspensions that resulted from student disrespect of fellow students and staff (109 of the 235). While in the past students have received mostly automatic detentions as a result of such incidents and only occasionally suspensions, this year, we as a staff placed an unwavering emphasis on addressing such behavior with students most likely being in- or out-of-school suspended. Additionally, of the 235 incidents this past year, 187, or 80%, were from repeat offenders, students who had suspended on at least two different occasions.

In 2001-02, five students were expelled from SBHA for possession of a legal, controlled substance (prescription medication).

While the number of days lost to suspension continues to be higher than we would like, we see this as an indication of our commitment to a policy of zero tolerance. We will not let

unacceptable behavior interfere with learning. We will not allow students who are disruptive in class limit the education of others. We are especially fortunate to have a maximum of 22 students in each class, but we know that it only takes one student to derail the education of the other 21. Having set a strong precedent in our first four years, we look forward to a reduction in the number of incidents that warrant suspension in the years to come.

## ***PART V. LIFELONG INQUIRY AND LEARNING***

### **GUEST SPEAKERS**

To make explicit the connection between school and society, and to demonstrate to students the value and importance of education, the school invited speakers from a variety of professions to speak to and work with our students. Students benefited from the insight and knowledge of guests such as:

- The Yellow Dress—a play about dating violence
- Three Congressional Medal of Honor Recipients
- U.S. Congressman Barney Frank
- Ellen Craft—a historical speaker
- Marie Sullivan—Outreach Director of Friends of Boston’s Homeless
- “Massachusetts Water Watch Week” Kick Off including a lesson on watersheds and wastewater treatment
- Ten community members and parents spoke at Career Day to share with students their educational and professional experiences
- Science Fair Judges—Twenty outside judges evaluated and provided feedback on projects at the Fall and Spring Science Fairs. Judges came from a variety of professional and educational institutions, including Harvard University, Brown University, Tissue Engineering, National Consumer Law Center, Project RE-SEED at Northeastern University, Arthur D. Little Consulting, Citizen Schools, Ottoson Middle School, Milford Hospital, Massachusetts Charter School Resource Center, Perry-Dean and Associates Architects, and Polaris Venture Partners.



## COLLEGE EXPECTATIONS

Beginning in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade, SBHA emphasizes to students the importance of college and begins to instill in students the expectation to attend college. Throughout the year, the school provided students opportunities to visit and begin planning for college.

To see the connection between education and later careers, parents spoke to students in grades 5 through 10 on our second annual Career Day. Fifteen parents and volunteers spoke to small classes in the middle school and a larger panel in the high school about their college experiences and their subsequent professional lives, and students prepared questions about undergraduate and graduate education as well as different careers. This year, speakers included an architect, nurse, urban planner, labor organizer, community organizer, city councilman, lawyer and probation officer.

In order to begin their college portfolios, our 9<sup>th</sup> grade class spent one day in March focusing solely on post-high school graduation at our second annual High School College Day. Students took a survey of preferences for college, researched various institutions, began individual college folders that they will build upon throughout high school and took a tour of the University of Massachusetts - Boston. At the end of the day, high school advisory groups were renamed in honor of the advisors' alma maters: Bates, UNC, Fordham, UMass-Boston, Northeastern, and MIT.

During our yearlong focus on college attendance, 10<sup>th</sup> grade students took the PSAT's for the first time in October. Both 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students will take the PSAT's beginning in the fall of 2002 in order to better prepare them for the SAT's to be taken for the first time in the spring of 2003. High school students interested in a possible career in the arts had the opportunity to visit the Berklee College of Music, Boston. 10<sup>th</sup> grade students traveled to western Massachusetts and visited the University of Massachusetts – Amherst, Smith College and Mt. Holyoke College. Students toured each college, ate lunch in dining halls, and visited lecture halls and athletic fields. In the Spring, all high school students spent a morning at the World Trade Center in Boston attending the National College Fair sponsored by the National Association for College Admission Counseling.

Additionally, while on the first annual sophomore trip to Washington D.C., students toured Georgetown University. With students having finished their fourth year at SBHA, students will have now taken one-day visits to Georgetown in addition to Brown University, Boston College, Harvard University, Tufts University, and the University of Massachusetts-Boston.

Again this year SBHA continued its tradition of exposing students to college experiences by sponsoring three students at the Summer Institute for the Gifted at Amherst College, a three-week summer academic program for high-achieving students. Two students who participated in the program last year continued their pre-college adventure this summer by studying for three weeks at the Summer Institute for the Gifted at Vassar College. One 10<sup>th</sup> grade student through our sponsorship, earned admittance to Summer Search program and is studying on marine biology on Daulphin Island off the coast of Alabama, and two 10<sup>th</sup> graders are participating in the Summer of Opportunity Program, a mentoring and career development program in Boston.

Beginning in the 2002 – 2003 school year, a college counselor will be at SBHA to help acculturate students, families and faculty to the college application process. Future plans for the upcoming year include Saturday trips to colleges in surrounding states, an afterschool essay writing center, practice interview sessions, program for teacher training in the writing of recommendations and SAT prep classes.

## ***STUDENT CHARACTERISTICS***

### **STUDENT APPLICANTS**

On March 15, 2001, we held our fourth lottery to select students for this year's 5<sup>th</sup> grade class and for spots on the waiting list of the 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. We received a total of 258 applications: 172 for the 5<sup>th</sup> grade and 86 for spots on the waiting lists of the 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades.

#### **2001-02 Applicants**

Allston	2	Hyde Park	5
Boston	19	Jamaica Plain	6
Brighton	2	Mattapan	4
Charlestown	4	Roslindale	5
Dorchester	111	Roxbury	7
East Boston	3	South Boston	88
		West Roxbury	2

On March 14, 2002, we held our fifth lottery to select our fifth group of new students and families at SBHA. This time, we received a total of 298 applications for 66 open spots in our 5<sup>th</sup> grade and for spots on the waiting list of the 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

#### **2002-03 Applicants**

Boston	22	Mattapan	20
Brighton	2	Milton	1
Charlestown	8	Quincy	1
Dorchester	112	Roslindale	7
East Boston	7	Roxbury	13
Hyde Park	12	South Boston	78
Jamaica Plain	7	West Roxbury	8

In the 2002 Lottery, the applicant pool continued to shift to reflect a broader applicant base. This year, the largest percentage of applications came from Dorchester (38%), approximately

a quarter of applications came from South Boston (26%), and more than a third came from other neighborhoods (36%).

## STUDENT WAITING LIST

Reflecting our applicant pool, we have students on our waiting list from various neighborhoods around the city. However, the majority of our waiting list students reside in Dorchester (38%) and South Boston (36%). As of June 2002, we had a total of 537 students on our waiting list.

### Waiting List

Allston	2	Mattapan	21
Boston	35	Milton	1
Brighton	1	Quincy	1
Charlestown	12	Roslindale	8
Dorchester	203	Roxbury	13
East Boston	10	South Boston	195
Hyde Park	15	West Roxbury	9
Jamaica Plain	11		

## STUDENT TURNOVER

During the 2001-2002 school year, five students withdrew and are attending other schools in the city of Boston. In addition, three students moved out of Boston. For the start of the 2002-2003 school year, 10 students are leaving to attend Boston Latin School or Latin Academy, 2 students chose to return to parochial school, and 5 students have chosen to go to private high schools. 17 students were admitted off of our waiting list to fill these open spots.

## STUDENT BACKGROUND

In the 2001-2002 school year, the school enrolled 234 students in grades 5 through 10, with the following characteristics:

**Gender.** Of our 234 students, 121 (52%) are boys and 111 (48%) are girls.

**Residence.** All of our students live in the city of Boston. The majority reside in South Boston (58%) and Dorchester (30%) and an ever-expanding number (12%) come from neighborhoods throughout the city, including Charlestown, Hyde Park, Jamaica Plain, North End, and Roxbury.

**Racial Makeup.** 90.5% of our students are White Non-Hispanic, and 9.5% are Black Non-Hispanic, Hispanic, Asian and Interracial.

**Limited English Proficiency.** There are no students presently enrolled at SBHA who are limited English proficient, nor are there any students presently enrolled who are linguistic minorities. SBHA has developed preliminary educational plans should this situation change.

**Special Needs.** By special education prototype, there are 26 special needs students at SBHA, 11% of the total enrollment of 234.

**Free and Reduced Price Lunch.** 33% of our students qualify for free or reduced price lunch.

**Parental College Attendance.** 26% of our parents have attended or graduated from college, while 74% have not.

## **STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

The school's average daily attendance for 2001-02 was 221.13 students, while the school's average membership for the academic year 2001-02 was 233.75 students, providing an average daily attendance rate of 94.6%.

## ***SCHOOL PROGRAM***

### **GRADE LEVELS**

During the 2002-02 school year, SBHA served 234 students in grades 5 through 10. In the 2002-03 school year, the school will expand to grades 5 through 11 with 300 students. We will be expanding one grade each year – until we are a full middle and high school, with grades 5 through 12 in 2003.

## **OUTREACH, ELIGIBILITY & ENROLLMENT**

Our student body is chosen at random through a publicly held, independent lottery, with no regard to a student's background or family situation. Enrollment eligibility is met if:

- the student is a resident of Massachusetts;
- the student has successfully completed (or is expected to successfully complete) the grade preceding the grade to which he/she seeks admission; and
- both the student and his or her parent/guardian have signed the application stating that they understand the expectations of the school and agree to sign the contract to comply with the student code.

While we receive many calls throughout the year regarding admissions, and maintain an active database of interested families, we only accept applications during our enrollment period, which begins in January and runs through mid-March.

The enrollment process opens with extensive, city-wide outreach, multiple information sessions, and broad application distribution. In order to inform the general public about the school, fliers are posted throughout the city; advertisements are placed in both city papers as well as nearly every Boston community paper; and information sessions are held both at the school and in other communities. All applicants and their parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to attend a school information session.

This year, SBHA, along with two other charter schools, spearheaded the second-annual Boston Charter School Showcase of Schools, held in January, 2002 at Northeastern University. All Boston area charter schools were present with staff, teacher and student representatives. The Showcase provided over 330 families a single forum to learn about all of the Boston area charter schools, and charter schools in general.

The enrollment process concludes in mid-March with a publicly-held lottery to allocate available slots to applicants in the new 5<sup>th</sup> grade or on the waiting lists of the 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> grades. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of slots available in any given class, the remaining applicants are placed on a waiting list by their grade and lottery number. If and when a slot becomes available in grades 5 through 8 (we do not accept new students into grades 9 through 12), waiting list candidates are offered the position by telephone and in writing, and have up to a week to respond. Any student offered a position in the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades are required to take an assessment exam and based on that assessment may be required to attend summer school.

The charter school law, M.G.L. c.79, s. 81, provides a sibling preference provision that gives siblings of enrolled students preference over non-siblings in enrollment. Therefore, if the sibling of a current South Boston Harbor Academy student, or of a student accepted in the lottery for the new 5<sup>th</sup> grade class, applies to the school during the enrollment period, then that sibling has preference over existing waiting list candidates who are not siblings. If no space is available in the grade, the sibling will be placed at the top of the waiting list.

A full description of our enrollment policy is available at the school and is on file at the Charter School Office of the Massachusetts Department of Education.



## STUDENT-TEACHER RATIO

During the 2001-02 school year, there were 24 teachers, providing families with a 10:1 student-teacher ratio. With an average class size of 20, students benefit from as close and individualized instruction as possible.

## SCHOOL CALENDAR

In order to provide students with a comprehensive, college preparatory education, SBHA has a longer-than-usual school day and longer-than-usual school year. During the 2001-02 school year, we were open 188 days, longer than the traditional 180 days. This year, our regular school day began at 8:00 AM and ended at 3:00 PM. However, for many students the day extended to anywhere from 3:30 to 5:00 PM for homework help and tutoring. Between the longer year and longer day, students enjoyed an additional 40 days of instruction by June 27<sup>th</sup>, our final day of school.

### Science Success Story

Fifth graders often have a hard time at the beginning of the year participating actively in class. One fifth grader had been particularly quiet the first few months of school. She rarely contributed to class discussions, and when she did she seemed nervous and unsure of herself.

At the conclusion of the Introduction to Science Unit, fifth graders were challenged to design their own experiments. With guidance, students asked good scientific questions, identified their independent variable, dependent variable and constants, and wrote workable procedures. This student worked diligently to design her experiment, and often sought extra help and redirection along the way. Upon completion, students typed up their experiments and then copied them on to overheads. Students then presented their experiments to their peers and answered questions posed to them by their classmates.

When it was this fifth grader's turn to present, she stepped up to the white board with her goggles and white lab coat. Her experiment was projected onto the wall behind her, and she presented what she had done skillfully and with confidence. She called on her classmates, "Oh, yes... a question in the back from...Dr. Smith?" and answered their questions with ease. This experience served as a sort of springboard for this fifth grader's confidence in class and participation. From these beginnings, she has grown into a leader in her class and one of the most active and engaged students in the fifth grade.

-Julie Trott, Science Teacher

# FINANCE SUMMARY

## Operating Costs

As a public charter school, South Boston Harbor Academy provides a tuition-free education to its students. The school receives operating funds from a combination of state and city sources. For each full-time equivalent (FTE) student enrolled, the school received \$9540 in support, or the amount equal to the cost to educate one FTE student in the Boston Public School system.

In addition, to supplement operating resources, private contributions of \$152,000 were raised in 2001-02.

The South Boston Charter School Foundation raised \$141,160 in unrestricted private contributions and \$75,700 in restricted private contributions.

## Capital Costs

### *Related to Facility*

For capital purposes, the school received from the state a per-pupil allocation of approximately \$211 for facility-related expenses. Other than that allocation, charter schools have limited access to public funds for capital, particularly facility-related expenditures. Therefore, the Board of Trustees, in cooperation with the South Boston Charter School Foundation, an associated 501(c)(3) organization, has continued its fundraising campaign and pursuit of alternative financing options to complete renovations to the school facility and renovate the eventual permanent facility.

### *Related to Other Capital*

As the school continues to grow, new capital purchases will need to be made. While our start-up period provided computers and telephones, classroom furniture, and office equipment, the continued rapid growth requires new capital goods each year. In FY02, the school spent more than \$32,000 to continue to add books, desks, and technology for our increasing school population. These costs will recur each year until we reach our full capacity.

## State and Federal Grants

State and federal grant funds for the 2001-02 school year totaled \$190,068.

Title I Grant	\$37,750.00
Class Reduction Size	5,992.00
Breakfast Grant	4,741.00
SPED Grant	13,317.00
Charter School Dissemination Grant	75,000.00
State Facilities Grant	49,368.00
Academic Support Services Grant	3,900.00
Total	\$190,068.00

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

South Boston Harbor Academy Charter School  
 FY02 Actual Expenditures v. FY03 Approved Budget

	<b>Projected Final FY02</b>	<b>FY03 Budget <i>approved 6/11/02</i></b>	<b>FY03 Budget <i>amended 7/24/02</i></b>
Revenues	9306	9399	9958
Per Pupil Tuition Payments	\$2,272,422	\$2,782,104	<b>\$2,818,114</b>
Fundraising - Restricted	\$75,000	\$50,000	\$50,000
Fundraising - Unrestricted	\$76,500	\$50,000	\$50,000
Federal Funds - Restricted	\$0	\$0	\$0
State Facilities Grant - Restricted	\$49,368	\$40,000	\$40,000
Other Restricted State Grants	\$42,000	\$35,000	\$35,000
Student Fees	\$52,000	\$47,600	\$47,600
Interest	\$15,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Other	\$75,000	\$5,600	\$5,600
sub-total:	<b>\$2,657,290</b>	<b>\$3,020,304</b>	<b>\$3,056,314</b>
 Expenses			
Compensation & Benefits			
Administrators/Program & Develop. Directors	\$404,983	\$623,517	\$623,517
Teaching Faculty	\$896,416	\$927,677	\$927,677
Summer program	\$18,443	\$0	\$0
Support staff	\$81,169	\$65,500	\$65,500
Performance bonus	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000
Payroll taxes	\$48,000	\$59,334	\$59,334
Benefits	\$25,000	\$60,802	\$60,802
sub-total:	<b>\$1,479,011</b>	<b>\$1,741,830</b>	<b>\$1,741,830</b>
Program Equipment & Technology			
Office/classroom furniture	\$0	\$2,000	\$2,000
Office/classroom technology	\$0	\$4,500	\$4,500
Interest	\$0	\$0	\$0
sub-total:	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$6,500</b>	<b>\$6,500</b>
Facility			
Rent	\$329,000	\$341,000	\$341,000
Operating costs	\$90,000	\$113,120	\$113,120
Repair/renovation	\$46,000	\$19,000	\$19,000
sub-total:	<b>\$465,000</b>	<b>\$473,120</b>	<b>\$473,120</b>

Services and Contracts			
Contracted services	\$61,500	\$83,850	\$83,850
Insurance	\$25,000	\$53,300	\$53,300
Special needs program	\$6,000	\$500	\$500
Student transportation	\$22,000	\$52,000	\$52,000
Food service	\$25,000	\$30,000	\$30,000
Summer/Afterschool program services	\$6,500	\$11,500	\$11,500
sub-total:	<b>\$146,000</b>	<b>\$231,150</b>	<b>\$231,150</b>
Program Development and Support			
Program expense	\$30,000	\$14,250	\$14,250
Library	\$900	\$1,000	\$1,000
Assessment	\$5,000	\$6,000	\$6,000
Student/staff recruitment	\$14,000	\$23,000	\$23,000
Marketing/development	\$12,000	\$15,000	\$15,000
Miscellaneous administrative	\$52,000	\$39,740	\$39,740
Professional development	\$3,500	\$5,000	\$5,000
Student activities/uniforms	\$15,000	\$24,500	\$24,500
Supplies	\$22,000	\$31,000	\$31,000
sub-total:	<b>\$154,400</b>	<b>\$159,490</b>	<b>\$159,490</b>
Depreciation	<b>\$45,000</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>	<b>\$45,000</b>
Contingency	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>	<b>\$100,000</b>
Total Revenues	<b>\$2,657,290</b>	<b>\$3,020,304</b>	<b>\$3,056,314</b>
Total Expenses	<b>\$2,289,411</b>	<b>\$2,757,090</b>	<b>\$2,757,090</b>
Balance (Deficit)	<b>\$367,879</b>	<b>\$263,214</b>	<b>\$299,224</b>
Total Operating Expenses	\$2,289,411	\$2,757,090	\$2,757,090
Capital Expenses			
Textbooks/Instructional	\$12,000	\$17,000	\$17,000
Office/Classroom Furniture	\$6,000	\$5,500	\$5,500
Office/Classroom Technology	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Total:	<b>\$28,000</b>	<b>\$32,500</b>	<b>\$32,500</b>

# FISCAL YEAR 2002 BALANCE SHEET

Jun 30, 2002

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
00100 · Cash	1,146,176.51
Total Checking/Savings	<u>1,146,176.51</u>
Accounts Receivable	
10000 · Accounts Receivable	82,206.35
Total Accounts Receivable	<u>82,206.35</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>1,228,382.86</u>
Fixed Assets	
12000 · Prop, Equip & Tech	100,678.83
Total Fixed Assets	<u>100,678.83</u>
Other Assets	
12900 · Security Deposit	17,000.00
Total Other Assets	<u>17,000.00</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u><u>1,346,061.69</u></u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
23500 · A/P FY02	2,982.04
Total Accounts Payable	<u>2,982.04</u>
Other Current Liabilities	
23060 · Accrued Expenses for FY01 only	9,897.96
24000 · Deferred Revenue	328,614.89
25000 · Payroll Liabilities	84,974.12
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>423,486.97</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>426,469.01</u>
Total Liabilities	<u>426,469.01</u>
Equity	
30000 · Reserved Account	8,568.50
36000 · Opening Balance Equity	769,146.37
39000 · Retained Earnings	-455.19
Net Income	142,333.00
Total Equity	<u>919,592.68</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>1,346,061.69</u></u>

# **GOVERNANCE, FACULTY & STAFF**

## **Board of Trustees**

South Boston Harbor Academy Charter School is governed by a Board of Trustees which has responsibility for all fiduciary, legal, and regulatory compliance issues, and ensures that the school is operated in accordance with its charter. During the 2001-02 school year, the Board bylaws allowed for twelve Board members, but only eight seats were filled.

**Andrew Fairbanks**, Principal Consultant, PricewaterhouseCoopers

**Joseph Foley**, Parent, South Boston Harbor Academy

**Susan Fortin**, Founder, South Boston Harbor Academy

**Vivien Li**, Executive Director, The Boston Harbor Association (resigned 5/13/02)

**Stephen F. Lynch**, *Chairperson Emeritus*, U.S. Representative

**Brian Miller**, Vice President of Investments, Morgan Stanley, Dean Witter

**Jack Moriarty**, Director of Permitting and Government Affairs, Peabody Construction

**Pat Murphy**, Vice President of Human Resources, World Trade Center/Seaport Hotel

**Brett Peiser**, *ex officio*, Founder and Principal

**James Schultz**, Executive Director, Outdoor Explorations

## **Advisory Board**

An Advisory Board of individuals with parental, professional, and educational expertise serves on committees and advises the Trustees on relevant matters.

**Roger Berkowitz**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Legal Sea Foods, Inc.

**James Connolly**, General Counsel, The Gillette Company

**Raffaella Hanley**, Attorney, Raffaella Hanley At Law

**John J-H Kim**, Former President and Chief Executive Officer, Chancellor Beacon

**Tom Loveless**, Director, Brown Center on Education Policy; Brookings Institute

**Frank McCourt, Jr.**, President and Chief Executive Officer, The McCourt Company, Inc.

**Joseph E. Mullaney III**, Attorney, Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C.

### **Board of Trustees Committees**

#### **Development**

Jim Schultz  
Andrew Fairbanks

#### **Governance**

Susan Fortin  
Andrew Fairbanks

#### **Facilities**

Jack Moriarty  
Joseph Foley  
Brian Miller

#### **School Policies**

Pat Murphy  
Joseph Foley  
Brett Peiser

#### **Finance**

Susan Fortin  
Brian Miller

## **BOARD MEETINGS**

The Board of Trustees meeting schedule for the 2001-02 school year:

- Tuesday, September 18, 2001
- Tuesday, November 13, 2001
- Wednesday, December 12, 2001
- Tuesday, January 8, 2002
- Monday, January 28, 2002
- Tuesday, February 12, 2002
- Tuesday, March 5, 2002
- Tuesday April 23, 2002
- Tuesday, May 14, 2002
- Tuesday, June 11, 2002
- Wednesday, July 24, 2002

The Board of Trustees tentative meeting schedule for the 2002-03 school year:

- Tuesday, September 10, 2002
- Tuesday, October 8, 2002
- Tuesday, November 12, 2002
- Tuesday, January 14, 2003
- Tuesday, March 11, 2003
- Tuesday, May 13, 2003
- Tuesday, June 10, 2003

All meetings of the Trustees are conducted in accordance with the Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 30A. Notices of such meetings are filed with the Secretary of State, Secretary of Administration and Finance, and Boston City Clerk.

## **MAJOR BOARD DECISIONS**

The Board made a number of major policy decisions during our fourth year:

- Elected Andrew Fairbanks, Jack Moriarty, and James Schultz as voting Trustees for two-year terms
- Approved creation of Executive Director position reporting to the Board
- Approved change in mission statement to read, “To prepare every student for college.”
- Created new committee on School Policies to serve as sounding board for Principal
- Approved change in enrollment policy to expand enrollment to 300 in 2002-03 and to 400 in 2003-04
- Approved participation in Executive Service Corps board development project
- Upheld four student expulsions by Principal pursuant to M.G.L. c 71, s 37H

- Approved 2002-03 operating budget
- Approved audited Financial Statements for fiscal year 2000-01
- Approved health services delegation policy

## **MAKING BOARD POLICY**

The SBHA Board of Trustees meetings provide any or all members with the opportunity to present issues for consideration, including new or amended policies. Once the issue is raised, the membership may opt to refer the concept to the appropriate committee for further review. The school has five standing committees, including the Facility Committee, the Development Committee, the Finance Committee, the School Policies Committee, and the Governance Committee. In the event that the proposed issue cannot be referred to any of the standing committees, a special commission of 2-4 Board members is created to study the particular issue.

After reviewing the merits of the proposed policy or finishing work on a proposed document, the committee makes a presentation and/or recommendation to the full Board for their consideration. The new or amended policy is then approved, rejected, or tabled for further consideration and review.

## **HEARING COMPLAINTS**

Both the school and the Board work in conjunction with one another to hear and resolve any complaints. If a problem arises, both the school and the Board encourage the complainant to address the problem directly with the staff member(s). If the complainant is dissatisfied with the proposed resolution by the appropriate faculty or staff member, a meeting should be scheduled with the school Principal. If the situation has still not been resolved, the Board encourages attendance at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Trustees to try and resolve the situation.

If this meeting does not resolve the relevant complaint, the complainant should follow the guidelines set by M.G.L. c. 71, § 89(jj) and 603 CMR 1.10. If an individual believes that the school has violated any provision of the charter school law or regulations, he or she may file a formal complaint with the Board of Trustees. After receiving the complaint, the Board must send a written response to the individual within 30 days. 603 CMR 1.10(2). If the Board does not address the complaint to the individual's satisfaction, the individual may submit the complaint to the Commissioner of Education. 603 CMR 1.10(4). A parent/guardian may file a complaint with DOE at any time if he or she believes that the school has violated any federal or state law or regulation. 603 CMR 1.10(6).

The Board of Trustees received no formal complaints during 2001-02.

## 2001-02 FACULTY & STAFF

<p>Brett Peiser Founder/Principal</p> <p>B.A., Brown University M.A., Harvard University</p>	<p>Brett Peiser is a Founder and Principal of the South Boston Harbor Academy Charter School. Mr. Peiser spent several years teaching History in Brooklyn, New York, where he also founded an afterschool basketball program. Mr. Peiser co-authored <u>Competition in Education</u>, a study of the impact of interdistrict school choice in Massachusetts.</p>
<p>John Budron Director of Operations/Finance</p> <p>B.S., University of Massachusetts-Boston M.A., Bridgewater State College</p>	<p>John Budron is the school's Director of Operations and Finance. Most recently, Mr. Budron was Director of Business Operations at Bridgewater State College. Prior to this, Mr. Budron spent six years working in the President's Office at the University of Massachusetts.</p>
<p>Joshua Cabral French Teacher and College Advisor</p> <p>B.A., University of Massachusetts-Amherst</p>	<p>Joshua Cabral joins SBHA after spending the past four years teaching French, Italian, and Drama at Falmouth Academy. Mr. Cabral has also taught and studied in France and has a working knowledge of Spanish and Dutch.</p>
<p>Eileen Callahan High School Director/History Chair</p> <p>B.A., M.A., Fordham University M.A., Harvard University</p>	<p>Eileen Callahan is a Founding Teacher. Prior to coming to Boston, Ms. Callahan taught high school Social Studies in New York City for five years, where she also served as her department's chairperson.</p>
<p>Jon Clark Math Chair</p> <p>B.A., Oberlin College</p>	<p>Jon Clark is a Founding Math Teacher, Math Chair, and coach of the boys' basketball team. Mr. Clark also taught junior high school math for two years in Belle Chasse, Louisiana. Before coming to SBHA, Mr. Clark worked as a researcher for a professor of International Economics at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.</p>
<p>Sheila Connors History Teacher</p> <p>B.A., M.A., Villanova University</p>	<p>Sheila Connors teaches 8th and 10th grade history. She coaches soccer, cheerleading, and softball. Prior to joining SBHA two years ago, Ms. Connors taught 7<sup>th</sup> grade Social Studies in Charlotte, North Carolina. Ms. Connors has also taught Social Studies in Tulsa, Oklahoma.</p>

<p>Stephen Costello Math Teacher</p> <p>B.A. Georgetown University M.A., University of Massachusetts- Boston (current)</p>	<p>Stephen Costello joined SBHA in 2001 after spending the past 10 years working as a research analyst in molecular biology with Mass General Hospital, the Mass Department of Public Health, and U-Mass Medical School.</p>
<p>Emily Cox French Chair</p> <p>B.A., Dickinson College Accelerated Certificate of Teaching (ACT) College of Notre Dame of Maryland</p>	<p>Emily Cox, a founding French teacher, teaches French IV to eighth and tenth grade students. Ms. Cox joined SBHA in 1998 after teaching French and Spanish for three years in Baltimore, Maryland. In addition to her position as French teacher, Ms. Cox serves as her department's chairperson, coaches the girls' basketball team and serves as the high school yearbook advisor.</p>
<p>Nadia Cyprien English/Special Needs Teacher</p> <p>B.A., University of Massachusetts M.A., Cambridge College</p>	<p>Before joining SBHA in 1999, Nadia Cyprien most recently taught at the Manville School in Boston. Ms. Cyprien has also coordinated tutoring and mentoring afterschool programs, including the Boston Learning Center. She helps organize the Spirit Committee, Ski and Dance Clubs.</p>
<p>Michael Eder Art Teacher</p> <p>B.A., Rhode Island School of Design</p>	<p>Michael Eder is an artist who has been at SBHA for three years. Besides teaching drawing, painting and sculpture, he also runs the Friday Art Club. Mr. Eder has led mural projects with different schools, and previously taught Art to high school students in Louisiana.</p>
<p>Kim Everett History Teacher</p> <p>B.A., Haverford College M.A., College of New Jersey</p>	<p>Kim Everett previously taught English and Social Studies at the Tobin Community Middle School for five years. Previously, Ms. Everett worked as an ESL instructor both at Roxbury Community College and in Namibia, Africa.</p>
<p>Peter Ferrara English Teacher/Dean of Students</p> <p>B.A., University of Massachusetts M.A., Eastern Nazarene College</p>	<p>Peter Ferrara joined SBHA in 1999 after spending 11 years teaching at St. Peter's School in South Boston.</p>
<p>Tobey Jackson Science Chair</p> <p>B.A., Brown University M.A., Harvard University</p>	<p>Tobey Jackson is a Founding Teacher at SBHA. Mr. Jackson taught middle/high school Science for six years at schools in New Jersey and Maryland. He also worked for Joint Action for Community Service in Massachusetts which offers support services for at-risk youth. Mr. Jackson runs the middle school science project program and co-coaches the soccer team.</p>

<p>Christena Langan Administrative Assistant</p> <p>B.A., University of Massachusetts-Boston</p>	<p>Christena Langan is our Administrative Assistant. She provides continuous support to all administrative and teaching staff at SBHA. Ms. Langan is currently enrolled at the University of Massachusetts where she is pursuing a degree in Music.</p>
<p>Kristen Mohan, RN School Nurse</p> <p>B.S.N., Boston College</p>	<p>Kristen Mohan joined SBHA in 2001. In addition to caring for the children of SBHA, she taught grade 10 Health Education. She spent five years working as a nurse on the inpatient acute psychiatric unit at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center, and more recently for a pediatric practice.</p>
<p>Kate Murray Math/Science Teacher</p> <p>B.S., University of North Carolina M.A., Columbia University</p>	<p>Kate Murray joined SBHA in 2000 after teaching math and science at Landmark High School in New York City. Ms. Murray has also directed an afterschool program in North Carolina and led workshops at a science museum camp. She started and co-advises SBHA's Student Government Association.</p>
<p>Maureen O'Grady Operations Manager</p> <p>B.S., Bridgewater State College</p>	<p>Maureen O'Grady is our Operations Manager, helping manage the school's finances and providing continuous support to the administrative and teaching staff. Before coming to SBHA, Ms. O'Grady was the Student Account Manager at Katherine Gibbs Business School in Boston.</p>
<p>Dara Ratchford Math Teacher</p> <p>B.A., Wheaton College M.A., Simmons College</p>	<p>Dara Ratchford is a Founding Teacher at SBHA and currently teaches middle school math. Prior to coming to the school, Ms. Ratchford taught the fourth grade at the Warren-Prescott Elementary School in Charlestown.</p>
<p>Kathleen Sullivan English Teacher</p> <p>B.A., Williams College M.A., University of Mississippi</p>	<p>Kathleen Sullivan most recently spent a year studying Anthropology in New York City. Ms. Sullivan has taught 9<sup>th</sup> grade English in Mississippi and tutored and mentored students in a farmworker community in Florida. She began teaching at SBHA in the fall of 2000 and since then has enjoyed running with students after school and organizing a year-long afterschool tutoring program that pairs high school and middle school students.</p>
<p>Carrie Tatum Program Director</p> <p>B.A., Yale University</p>	<p>Carrie Tatum, our Program Director, directs all of SBHA's non-curricular programs. Most recently, Ms. Tatum has worked as a legal advocate for domestic violence victims in a non-profit organization in New Haven, Connecticut, and previously in Birmingham, Alabama.</p>

<p>Julie Trott Science Teacher B.A., Willamette University</p>	<p>In addition to teaching middle school science, Julie Trott leads the Journalism Club, which produces the school newspaper, The Academy Times, and also coordinates the Outdoors Club. She most recently worked as a teaching assistant at North Star Academy Charter School in New Jersey. She joined SBHA in 2000.</p>
<p>Brian Turner History/English Teacher B.A., Hamilton College</p>	<p>A member of SBHA's founding teaching team, Mr. Turner spent the last year and a half teaching English in China. This year, he returned to teach 7<sup>th</sup> grade English and History before leaving SBHA to start a new charter school.</p>
<p>Rob Vandenabeele Health/Phys. Education Teacher B.A., Framingham State College</p>	<p>Rob Vandenabeele (Mr. V), our Health and Physical Education teacher, was most recently the Head Physical Education teacher at St. Margaret's School in Dorchester. Mr. V has also worked for American Basketball Clinics and Thayer Summer Academy.</p>
<p>Maisie Veeder English Chair B.A., Bard College M.A., Simmons College</p>	<p>Maisie Veeder, one of our English teachers, and the chair of the department, joined us after teaching English in Dartmouth, Massachusetts for three years. Ms. Veeder also tutored in the afterschool homework club and served as coach of the school's Scrabble club.</p>
<p>Beverly Vieira Special Needs Teacher B.S., University of Massachusetts-Boston</p>	<p>Beverly Vieira is a Special Needs Teacher and Summer School Instructor. Prior to joining the school, Ms. Vieira worked for three years in Fall River Public Schools.</p>
<p>Sue Walsh Curriculum Coordinator B.A., M.A., University of Massachusetts-Boston</p>	<p>Before joining SBHA, Sue Walsh was Curriculum Coordinator and English teacher/counselor at Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School for six years. She has also been teaching composition and literature for the English Department at UMass-Boston since 1992. Ms. Walsh joined SBHA in July of 2001 as Curriculum Coordinator, also serving as an advisor and English teacher.</p>
<p>C.A. Webb Director of Development and Marketing B.A., Wellesley College</p>	<p>C.A. Webb most recently worked for Fast Company Magazine as a Brand Manager in their Event Marketing group. Prior to that, she was an Associate at the Office of Public Interest Advising at Harvard Law School.</p>
<p>Tracy Wedel French Teacher B.A., University of Winnipeg</p>	<p>Tracy Wedel, one of our French teachers, most recently taught French and Music Appreciation in Winnipeg, Canada. Ms. Wedel also directs the SBHA Choir.</p>

Jim White  
Science Teacher

B.S., University of Massachusetts

Jim White spent three prior years teaching middle school math and science at Boston Renaissance Charter School. Mr. White has completed graduate courses in Inorganic Materials Chemistry at MIT. He joined SBHA in 1999.

Elana Wolkoff, Ph.D.  
Director of Student Support

B.A., Hampshire College  
M.A., Harvard University  
Ph.D., Northeastern University

Elana Wolkoff directs all of SBHA's Student Support Services. Previously, Dr. Wolkoff taught English and History to high school students with learning difficulties for five years, and worked as a school psychologist and counselor in the Cambridge Public Schools for three years.





## **TEACHER APPLICATIONS AND POSITIONS**

Prior to the start of the 2002-03 school year, we received over 1000 applications for our 8 open positions – History, English, French, Science, and Math/Science – an average of 125 applications per open position.

For the 2001-02 school year, there were 24 full-time teachers:

- 4 Teachers of History
- 4 Teachers of Science
- 1 Teacher of Math and Science
- 3 Teachers of Math
- 5 Teachers of English
- 1 Teacher of English and History
- 2 Teachers of Special Needs
- 2 Teachers of French
- 1 Teacher of Art
- 1 Teacher of Health/Phys. Education

## **FACULTY BACKGROUND & EXPERIENCE**

- Our teaching corps brings a combination of classroom experience and graduate study to our students.
- Our full-time teachers average over 7 years of teaching experience
- 63% have earned their Master's or Doctorate degrees
- 77% hold Massachusetts state teacher certification
- 90% hold certification from Massachusetts or some other state

## **FACULTY TURNOVER**

For the upcoming 2002-03 school year, we will have 19 teachers returning, and will be adding 8 new, full-time teachers. Of our eight original Founding Teachers, five will be returning with us to start our fifth year of operations.

## FACULTY PROGRAMS & RESOURCES

It cannot be overstated that few successes in a school are possible without intelligent, quality, and hard-working teachers. However, it is not enough to select great teachers. Here at SBHA, we believe in giving teachers the schedules and processes necessary to take advantage of the latitude and flexibility granted to charter schools. On average, each of our teachers teaches four classes of 20 students each, for a total program of 80 students, half the size of a traditional public school program. Class periods run for 55 minutes, affording teachers longer-than-usual periods to cover the ever increasing academic expectations we hold for students. With only two subject preparations and their own classroom, teachers have a more sensible and logical schedule. And with individually reserved funds to spend within each department, teachers also have the financial control they need to best educate students.

89% of parents said that the quality of teachers at SBHA is better than at their child's previous school.

Furthermore, each teacher has the physical tools necessary to be an effective instructor. In our two teachers' offices, each part- and full-time teacher has his or her own Pentium III computer, T1 Internet access, e-mail, voice mail, and desk, to use during his or her two-hour, free-period block each day. The school's technology program allows faculty members to coordinate lessons, track student progress, and communicate with parents. Through e-mail and the school's internal network, SBHA teachers can facilitate coordination among colleagues and help them efficiently track and communicate to parents the academic and behavioral performance of their children. By efficiently sharing information about their students, teachers can better coordinate their instructional strategies and better involve parents in their children's education.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In accordance with our mission of promoting academic excellence among our students, and allowing our teaching staff to continuously develop as professional educators, South Boston Harbor Academy's teachers participated in several professional development activities throughout our fourth year. Prior to the start of the school year, 100% of our staff participated in workshops on learning and behavioral disabilities, and strategies to use in the classroom to address such difficulties. In addition, our teachers:

- Attended conversation events at the French Library, Boston, MA
- Attended the Summer Institute on College Admissions at the Harvard Graduate School of Education
- Attended 3 day French immersion workshop at Bay Path College
- Attended the ACTFL foreign language conference
- Completed "Eye as Eyewitness" January-March course at Cambridge Adult Education on writing creative non-fiction
- Participated in Literacy Seminars at MA Charter School Resource Center

- Visited Oak Hill Middle School, Newton, MA to view their reading program
- Attended 2002 Charter School National Conference “No Child Left Behind”

As led by our Founding History Teacher and High School Director Eileen Callahan, each teacher in the school was able to visit another teacher’s classroom at least once during the year. Through these inter-classroom visits, teachers were able to view learning from the students’ perspective, as well as meet with the cooperating teacher to discuss methodology and strategies.

The “lesson-study” model for professional development that the Math Department has developed borrows heavily (including the very name “lesson-study”) from the Japanese model, which is described in detail by James Stigler and James Hiebert in The Teaching Gap. The core unit of this program is a subject-specific team of 2-4 teachers. This year at SBHA, our math teachers have formed a lesson-study group, as have our science teachers. These teams have regularly scheduled meeting times over the course of the year (weekly or bi-weekly) during which they engage in the following steps.

1. Teachers schedule mutual classroom observation times after which they meet to discuss observations and similarities/differences in classroom structure and management. These are not formal observations or critiques, but rather are intended to gain an understanding of the different lesson formats and teaching styles employed by the cooperating teachers in their classrooms.
2. Teachers meet to identify topics of instructional difficulty for which they would like to improve their lessons.
3. Teachers choose one of these topics to address by designing a lesson cooperatively. They also choose a teacher, a class, and a specific date on which it will be taught.
4. Teachers continue to meet to discuss the lesson in painstaking detail. Included in this discussion is the pre-existing foundation of knowledge which their students will bring to the lesson, the objective of the lesson itself, the examples to be provided, the questions to be posed to students and their anticipated responses, the activity or activities in which students will be engaged, the materials to be distributed, the conclusion of the lesson, the homework to be provided, and the means by which it will be determined the extent to which the lesson was a success.
5. Teachers write up a formal lesson-plan.
6. Teachers perform a rehearsal or run-through in order to perfect time management of the lesson.
7. The actual lesson is taught in the classroom. During the lesson, the cooperating teachers are in attendance and the lesson is videotaped.
8. Teachers meet to discuss and refine the lesson.

9. Another teacher in another classroom teaches the refined lesson again. Once again, the lesson is attended by the cooperating teachers and videotaped.
10. When this process is finished, we have a well-considered written lesson addressing an area of difficulty and an accompanying video demonstration.

This year, the math department developed a 6<sup>th</sup> grade lesson on dividing fractions, a concept which is as difficult to teach as it is for 6<sup>th</sup> graders to understand. Having invested a great deal of time and thought to the matter, they developed a strong lesson on dividing fractions, and now have a written lesson and a video demonstration to show for it. Perhaps more importantly, their discussions regarding the foundation which 6<sup>th</sup> graders need to learn this concept well, helped to construct a 6<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum sequence for the first half of the year which is more logical and efficient than the one we had before.

In addition to classroom visits within SBHA, teachers and staff had the opportunity to visit several other charter schools to share ideas, observe classes, and discuss best practices. Throughout the year, all teachers visited at least two different schools including Academy of the Pacific Rim Charter School, Community Day Charter School, Neighborhood House Charter School, Roxbury Preparatory Charter School, KIPP Academy in New York, Amistad Academy in New Haven, North Star Academy in Newark, and the Epiphany School. Charter school visits lie at the heart of the school's professional development program, allowing teachers to leave the classroom (and the school) and see other practitioners at work.

## **STAFF COLLABORATIONS**

Given the ever-pressing need for more time during the school day, great attention is paid to developing a coherent and sensible school schedule. With this in mind, each SBHA teacher is given two hours off each day to plan lessons and meet with fellow instructors, especially those who teach related subjects or the same group of students. In addition, related subjects are scheduled consecutively to create a two-hour block available for teachers to plan extraordinary lessons. As a result, a number of excellent partnerships were forged between the various disciplines:

### 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Science, English & Art

In the Ocean Biology Unit, fifth graders researched specific marine organisms that live in the kelp forest. Students chose one organism and used Internet research skills learned in computer class to research their animal. Students then wrote up small summaries describing their animal's niche, adaptations, predators, prey and any other relevant information. Students then used the animal drawing skills they had developed in art class to recreate realistic and scientifically accurate drawings of their animals. This information was combined in a comprehensive "Kelp Forest Mural" in the hall.

Additionally, students wrote two poems and selected two poems by published poets and bound them in poetry books that they typed and illustrated in art class. Copies of the books were available for sale at the school book fair.

### 6<sup>th</sup> Grade Science, French & Art

In the Introduction to Biology Unit, students learned about and identified six major body systems. At the conclusion of the unit, sixth graders were asked to share their knowledge. The students chose one body system, and drew and labeled it on their own white t-shirt. Students were allowed to wear their creation and educate their peers on the location and function of various body systems.

During the Watershed Ecology Unit, sixth graders were learning about watersheds and simultaneously preparing for an overnight “outdoor” trip to New Hampshire. In French class, students were learning vocabulary associated with watersheds and the water cycle, as well as learning camping and outdoor equipment vocabulary. When they arrived in New Hampshire, students could explain what they saw in both French and English.

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade History, Science, and Art

7<sup>th</sup> graders made paper mache masks in conjunction with the Egypt Unit in their History class. They also learned basic Sumi-e techniques, and did a Unit on Chinese Painting and Multilevel Perspective, in conjunction with Chinese Unit in their History class. After students completed their geologic time projects for science class, they made dioramas for art class. Students took the facts they learned on their own and made a diorama depicting a scene representative of their period of the earth's history.

### 8<sup>th</sup> Grade History and Art

8<sup>th</sup> graders worked on The Mural Project, the American Quilt Design Project, and the Craft Unit in conjunction with their American History Class.

### 9<sup>th</sup> Grade History and Art

9<sup>th</sup> graders created Protest Posters after completing a unit on political protest and activism in History class. They also linked their architecture unit to their History class.

### 10<sup>th</sup> Grade: Math, History, Art & Science

On the heels of the anthrax letters of October 2001, the students had a unit on biological warfare and bioterrorism. Students learned about biological agents and about how bioweapons have been used throughout history. This was matched up with history units on current events of the Middle East and the recent breakup of the Soviet Union.

The Geometry Art Unit was done in conjunction with Math class and the Figure Unit, Medieval Painting Unit, and the Sculpture Unit were all done paralleling History class.

### Science Projects: Team Teaching

This year, the science project became part of the standard 6<sup>th</sup> grade science curriculum. Once a week throughout the year, students learned about completing science project. During those classes, Julie Trott and Tobey Jackson co-taught the lessons.

### 9<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Rocket Competition

The ninth grade and fifth grade found themselves in the unique position this year of studying similar topics: Newton's Laws of Motion. In the South Boston Harbor Academy spirit, the fifth grade challenged the ninth grade to a friendly competition of rocket building.

Both groups spent a few class periods towards the end of the year experimenting with variables that affect rocket flight. At the field day festivities, each class presented its top five contestants for a battle of the grades. Rockets were judged based on time in flight as well as creativity of design.

## **STAFF EVALUATION**

Every classroom at SBHA is conducted with an open door, welcoming both 5- and 55-minute visits alike. Without such an atmosphere, it would be difficult for our faculty to continue to develop, and impossible for our staff to exchange ideas and best practices in our constant pursuit to promote student achievement. While the basis of teacher evaluations are traditional formal visits throughout the year, informal observations by the Principal play an important role, since it makes little sense to judge 860 hours of annual teaching on two, 55-minute sessions.

### *Formal Observations*

Formal observations offer the Principal and/or Curriculum Coordinator a structured opportunity to assess both teacher strengths and weaknesses, and provide a useful tool to guide teachers' professional growth. Formal observations are both announced and unannounced, with meetings held to discuss objectives, context, and expectations, as well as to review the successes and challenges met by the lesson.

The basis of the observation is the teacher's use of a Do Now – a short activity that sets the tone of the lesson and motivates the students to work – an Aim or Focus – which provides students with the direction and topics of the day's lesson – and assigned Homework – a useful tool to assess student comprehension of past or upcoming material. Written or oral feedback is given to the teacher soon thereafter.

### *Informal Observations*

The Principal and/or Curriculum Coordinator also observe teachers in their classrooms without a formal schedule or announcement. These short and frequent visits provide both the Principal and Curriculum Coordinator an on-going measure of classroom effectiveness and professional development. These observations are also an opportunity for teachers to share and demonstrate their work with other school staff, Trustees and Advisors, school visitors, and the community at large.

### *Peer Observations*

Peer observations provide staff members opportunities to laud their peers' strengths and provide solutions to areas in most need of improvement. These visits – conducted by department – also provide professionals working together a scheduled forum to share information, observations, and suggestions on what works.

The Curriculum Coordinator establishes a schedule for teachers to observe one another's classrooms, and monitors teachers' participation in the peer evaluation program and completion of peer observation reports.

### *Year-End Summary*

Each teacher is expected to collect evidence for a professional portfolio that demonstrates effective work in and out of the classroom, and serves as the basis of the teacher's summary evaluation. Portfolios may include particularly effective examples of curriculum or assessments, student work, or participation in professional development activities, all of which serve as a demonstration of student progress over the year.

Supplemented by this portfolio, teacher evaluations are essentially based on four different categories:

- work done with students in class;
- work done with students outside of class;
- work done with fellow teachers; and
- work done to help the school as a whole.

By the end of the year, the Principal, Curriculum Coordinator, and individual teachers will have a collection of observation reports from formal observations; observation reports from informal observations; peer observations; evidence of student work and achievement; and/or evidence of teacher work and professional development.

# ***ENRICHMENT AND RESOURCES***

## **AFTERSCHOOL ACADEMICS**

Because our students come from widely disparate backgrounds, both academically and socially, we face the challenge of providing the necessary time, attention, and support to ensure that every student, regardless of ability, can succeed. It is the school's firm belief that these objectives cannot be met in the traditional school hours. It is only with the additional, specialized support of afterschool time – totaling up to an additional 300 hours of learning – that these ambitious goals can be realized.

### *Homework Club*

Because regular homework completion reinforces responsibility and newly acquired skills, allows students to apply classroom learning in an outside context, and comprises an essential part of South Boston Harbor Academy's educational program, the school initiated the afterschool Homework Club. Any student who did not complete even one assignment from the previous night was required to stay for at least one hour after school to complete the work. The Homework Club ran five days per week, from 3:00 PM until 5:00 PM, and was staffed by teachers on a rotating basis. After teachers collected students' assignments each morning at 8:00 AM, families of students required to stay afterschool were phoned at work or at home to notify them of missed homework and their obligation to stay afterschool. The Homework Club, which was met with strong support from families, ensured that all students completed all of their homework all of the time.

### *One-on-One Student Tutoring*

Recognizing that some students need intensive, one-on-one support to tackle difficult concepts or work through their homework, we launched the SBHA Student Tutoring Program in the 2001-2002 school year. High school students applied to work as tutors, and those selected were paid for their afterschool help. High school students were then matched up one-on-one with middle school students who needed individual help with a particular subject or with homework completion.

Not only did the one-on-one tutoring ensure that students understood material more thoroughly and completed all of their homework, but it also allowed for strong mentoring relationships to develop between high school and middle school students. These relationships fostered a greater sense of mission and community throughout the school.

### *Teacher Tutoring*

Teachers dedicated their time afterschool to ensure that students received needed subject-based skill development. With tutoring both voluntary and mandatory, teachers led the way in providing individualized afterschool support tailored to the needs of each student and the particular lessons at hand. Teachers ran small tutoring groups and one-on-one sessions to review for upcoming tests, practice math, writing, and reading skills, and complete difficult or lengthy projects.

### *Afterschool Computer Lab*

With T1 Internet access, new computers, and a fully networked Computer Lab, SBHA students have all the resources they need to integrate technology into their afterschool work. Students are able to stay as long as they need to in the school's Computer Lab to conduct research for individual Science Projects, type and edit English papers, and work on their basic reading, math, and French skills through appropriate educational software.

## **AFTERSCHOOL ENRICHMENT**

As a core component of its mission, South Boston Harbor Academy seeks to create a comprehensive school community that engages every student and family. SBHA's afterschool enrichment program, which ignited students' interests in drama, culture, the outdoors, public service, and the community around them, allowed students in all grades and of all academic abilities to participate in school-wide events and activities. Through enrichment activities, students are able to develop skills and strength of character outside of the classroom.

In the 2001-2002 school year, SBHA provided extensive offerings afterschool for students with a wide variety of interests. Students could choose from activities ranging from art club to the student newspaper to a movie-making club throughout the school year.

### *Art Club*

Every Friday, students work with Mr. Eder on creative projects that build on what they learned in class.

### *City Club*

To get a taste of the rich culture of Boston, Ms. Callahan led students on periodic trips throughout the city.

### *Choir*

To give students the opportunity to express themselves through music and perform at school events. Students sang under the direction of Ms. Wedel.

### *Dance*

To allow students to design their own dance routines and perform for school events. Students worked with Ms. Cyprien.

### *Girls Club*

This club provided a chance for middle and high school girls to discuss issues relevant to their lives and exercise together. Ms. Vieira facilitated this group.

<b>Core Academic Tutoring</b> 1-4 x / week depending on subject 2001-2002	
<b>Math</b>	<b>English</b>
➤ Geometry bi-weekly tutoring	➤ 6 <sup>th</sup> /8 <sup>th</sup> /9 <sup>th</sup> /10 <sup>th</sup> grade Vocabulary Boot Camp
➤ Algebra II bi-weekly tutoring	➤ 7 <sup>th</sup> grade MCAS writing workshops
➤ 5 <sup>th</sup> /6 <sup>th</sup> grade times tables work sessions	<b>History</b>
<b>Science</b>	➤ History Film viewing/discussions
➤ Physics bi-weekly tutoring	➤ 8 <sup>th</sup> /10 <sup>th</sup> test review sessions
➤ 6 <sup>th</sup> /7 <sup>th</sup> test review sessions	<b>French</b>
➤ Science Project weekly work sessions	➤ One-on-one skill sessions

### *Leader Within Saturday Girls Program*

Led by the Junior League, this program fosters leadership skills and provides community service opportunities to middle school girls.

### *Movie-Making Club*

To give students experience writing, performing, and filming short dramatic movies, students worked under the guidance and expertise of amateur filmmaker Michael Scagliotti.

### *Outdoors Club*

To explore the outdoors in and around Boston, students met regularly with Ms. Trott.

### *Scrabble/Chess Club*

To allow students in grades 5 through 10 to compete, students met Monday afternoons to learn and practice the intricacies of Scrabble and Chess with Ms. Veeder and Ms. Walsh.

### *Student Government*

High school students get a lesson in civic activism and the political process via SBHA's own student government. Ms. Murray and Mr. Costello led this group.

### *Student Newspaper*

To get the scoop on what's going on in the SBHA halls, students met with Ms. Trott once a week and learned the skills of journalism.

## **ATHLETICS**

To foster excellence and achievement outside of the classroom and provide opportunities for students to participate in athletic activities, South Boston Harbor Academy strengthened and expanded its athletic teams in the 2001-2002 season. The athletic program grew to include a co-ed Soccer Team, girls' and boys' Basketball Teams, a Spirit Squad, Softball Team, Running Club, Ski Club, and Baseball Team. The teams afforded students in all grades the chance to express their athletic abilities, foster school spirit, and improve their skills, while competing against other charter schools and private schools. The SBHA Hurricanes demonstrated a fierce love of competition and strong school spirit on the practice field and during games with staff, fellow students, and parents cheering them on.



### *Co-Ed Soccer*

In its third season, the Soccer Team built on the base established in the previous two seasons and expanded its game schedule. The team held practices twice a week at the local M Street Park under the coaching expertise of teachers Tobey Jackson and Sheila Connors. Open to girls and boys in grades 6 through 10, the team drew widespread interest, growing to a size of over thirty players by the end of the season.

### *Girls' and Boys' Basketball*

Beginning in November, the girls' and boys' Basketball Teams, under the guidance of Coaches Emily Cox (French Chair), Kim Everett (History Teacher), and Jon Clark (Math Chair), began their third seasons by again focusing on the fundamentals and honing essential skills. With two to three practices each week, the players showed dramatic improvement throughout the season, and showed off a cohesive understanding of teamwork and enthusiastic school spirit. Both teams competed against other charter schools, private schools, and local parochial schools. Both teams had excellent seasons as players learned to work together and combine their individual skills.

### *Running Club*

Throughout the fall and into the winter, students in the Running Club took long-distance jogs throughout South Boston every Monday. Rain or shine, under the direction of English teacher and former varsity runner, Kathleen Sullivan, the Running Club explored the city and worked on endurance and form techniques.

### *Spirit Squad*

Beginning in the winter season, the Spirit Squad, led by History Teacher, Sheila Connors, commenced its second season by cheering on the girls' and boys' basketball teams. In addition to cheering at home games and travelling to away games, the squad also led the school pep rally during spirit week and performed at Friday assemblies.

### *Snowboarding and Ski Club*

On Saturdays during the winter, students who joined the ski club had the opportunity to go to Noshoba Valley for a day of skiing or snow boarding.

### *Softball Team*

History teacher, Sheila Connors, and English teacher, Maisie Veeder, led the Softball Team in its second season.

### *Baseball Team*

In anticipation of a Baseball Team next year, students played intramural baseball games throughout the spring alongside Dean of Students, Peter Ferrara and Principal, Brett Peiser. The baseball games were played at nearby M Street Park, and portend an excellent future for an SBHA Baseball Team.



## **LIBRARY RESOURCES**

The library serves as an extension of the academic inquiry and love of learning encouraged in and out of the classroom, providing a space for all students to explore and stretch the limits of their imaginations. Built by the dedication, enthusiasm, and labor of SBHA parents, volunteers and staff, it has proved to be a valuable resource for the entire school community.

This fall, SBHA conducted a school-wide book drive for high school-aged books. Families donated books from the library wish list and brought the books to the fall Open House in September. Over 100 books were collected initially, with many more donated throughout the school year. This spring Curious George Goes to Wordsworth conducted a two-day school-wide book fair. The profits from the fair were used to expand our collection of young adult books.

The library contains hundreds of volumes of age-appropriate books, including fiction, biography, poetry, art, music, and non-fiction choices. In addition, students can use and check out CDs, videos, periodicals and other educational materials. Students are encouraged to make use of the library before school, during their free periods, at lunchtime, and after school and are welcomed to check materials out to continue their explorations at home.

In order to increase literacy skills and nurture a love of reading, students are required to have an independent reading book with them at all times. This year the library was indispensable in helping to promote and maintain this policy as well as provide students resources for fifteen minutes of daily silent sustained reading.

As our school continues to grow, so will our library collection. The school will continue its focus on acquiring high school age-appropriate books to meet the developing needs of our students.

## **TECHNOLOGY**

In order to ensure that students develop a basic literacy of computers and related hardware, expertise using software applications such as Microsoft Word, Excel, and Power Point, and increasingly important yet simple typing skills, SBHA builds hour-long, Computer classes into students' weekly schedules for grade 5. During these classes, students learn the computer's essential architecture; how to create, edit, and format documents, spreadsheets, and presentations; and how to navigate the Internet for classroom research.

To ensure that these classes do not stand alone, our Computer instructors check in weekly with classroom subject teachers – in addition to searching through our internal network of lesson plans – for illustrative topics that can be used to teach these essential skills. For example, students participated in Internet scavenger hunts in developing ideas for their end-of-year, History research papers; inputted data and created charts to complete a Math survey assignment; and finalized their Science Project reports to include comprehensive visual displays. Most importantly, students spent the first 15 minutes of each class improving their

basic keyboarding skills, an increasingly essential skill in today's collegiate and professional workplace.

## **PARTNERSHIPS AND COLLABORATIONS**

Given our mission to integrate the community and city into our educational program, SBHA has continued to establish partnerships during the 2001-02 school year, including:

### **The Boston Harbor Association (TBHA)**

In the fall, SBHA's 8<sup>th</sup> grade took part in the "Adopt-a-School" Program. This grant-funded, pilot program was an educational experience that promoted long-term stewardship of and knowledge about Boston Harbor's natural resources. Once a week for 12 weeks, TBHA came to class to co-teach lessons on natural history, causes of pollution in Boston Harbor, and environmental conservation and protection strategies. The program also included four field trips.

### **Bay State Cruise Company**

The Bay State Cruise Company generously provided boat transportation for the 8<sup>th</sup> grade's beach clean-up on Thompson Island. The Boston Harbor Association helped with identifying a clean-up site and managing logistics.

### **Junior League**

SBHA paired with the Junior League of Boston to provide a 10-month-long girls' leadership program for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade girls. The program, which was held at schools around Boston on Saturdays, was entirely staffed by Junior League volunteers. Girls developed stronger self-esteem and leadership skills and took part in a variety of community service projects.

## ***FACILITIES & OPERATIONS***

### **SCHOOL BUILDING**

South Boston Harbor Academy is located at 7 Elkins Street, off the corner of Summer Street, a short distance from South Station and downtown Boston. After extensive renovations during the summer of 1998, the space was transformed from a single, cavernous second floor without separate rooms, to a freshly-painted middle school with classrooms, offices, and an assembly room. In 1999-00, the school expanded to include a renovated first floor, containing additional office space, private tutoring rooms, a larger library, and an even larger common meeting space. In the academic year 2000-01 and 2001-02, the school continued to utilize its present space by adding six more classrooms, a third teachers' office, and creating dedicated space for Art, Health, and Physical Education. For academic year 2002-03, the school will add three additional classrooms and will have utilized every bit of available space in the current facility.



### **STUDENT TRANSPORTATION**

In order to ensure safe and reliable transportation for all students, the school uses a variety of methods to bring students to and from school. Students who live 1½ miles or more from school are eligible for Boston Public Schools bus transportation. For those students who are not eligible to use the Boston Public Schools buses, South Boston Harbor Academy provides student MBTA passes to those who request them. Of our total enrollment of 234 students in 2001-02, 65 used BPS buses.

### **FOOD SERVICE**

In keeping with the school's belief in the development of strong character and in order to provide a nutritional, competitively priced lunch program to students, South Boston Harbor Academy contracted the services of a caterer. Essence of Thyme, an independent food service provider, delivers hot meals daily.

South Boston Harbor Academy provided five hot lunches each week to students, which were served cafeteria-style to students. Students ate their meals in their classrooms, and time to visit other students and other classes was provided after the meal. SBHA also launched its breakfast program this year to provide all students with a nutritious breakfast five days a week. In addition, the South Boston Harbor Academy participated in the National School Lunch Program, to accommodate students qualifying for free and reduced price lunch.

## REPLICABILITY

South Boston Harbor Academy enjoys the opportunity to learn from and share best practices with other schools. The strongest partnership has been among Academy of the Pacific Rim, Roxbury Preparatory Charter School, and SBHA. School leaders call one another frequently to share ideas, as do other members of the administrative and teaching staffs. In fact, *The Boston Globe* wrote an article about this partnership because it is so much in keeping with the spirit of the charter school law – which calls for charter schools to serve as a laboratory of new ideas. As in the past, SBHA assisted several newly chartered schools as they lay the groundwork for their founding year. Uphams Corner Charter School, Smith Academy of Learning, and South End College Prep were among the schools SBHA assisted this year.

Additionally, South Boston Harbor Academy organized with two other charter schools a Boston Charter School Student Recruitment Fair. Held in early February on the campus of Northeastern University, all the Boston and Boston-area charter schools were represented. With the goal of spreading student enrollment information to as many families as possible, over 225 families attended this second annual event.



Perhaps the greatest accomplishment of the year has been the incubation of a brand new charter school, the Edward Brooke Charter School, which will be modeled after SBHA replicating SBHA's best practices. Edward Brooke Charter School will open in August 2002 to 88 students in the 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Each year, it will expand one grade until it is a 5-8 middle school with approximately 320 students by 2005. The school will be temporarily located in Brighton for the first year and will focus on preparing students for post-secondary education, ensuring that each and every student attends a college preparatory high school. Jon Clark, founding Math Teacher and Math Department Chair at SBHA, will serve as Edward Brooke Charter School's founding principal.



South Boston Harbor Academy Charter School would like to thank the parents, students, faculty, and staff, for their help in providing all of the information in this Annual Report. Special thanks goes to C.A. Webb, SBHA Director of Development and Marketing, for leading the development of this year's report. Copies of the Annual Report are available at:

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Brett Peiser, Founder and Principal  
Susan Fortin, Founder and Chairperson, Board of Trustees

# APPENDIX

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- Contract of Mutual Responsibilities
- SBHA in the News
  - *Charter Schools Share Ideas*, Boston Sunday Globe, June 16, 2002
  - *Nearly 13,000 kids on charter school waiting lists*, Boston Herald, April 3, 2002
  - *Innovations in Public Service—Brett Peiser: A Hundred Little One Percent Solutions Add Up to a Better Education for South Boston Youth*, Kennedy School of Government News, April 5, 2002
  - *Education Week Shines Spotlight on State's Waterway*, Massachusetts Service Alliance Newsletter, February-March 2002
- The Courage of Boston's Children—Max Warburg Courage Curriculum Award-Winning Essay by SBHA Student, Kaitlin Miller