


HILL VIEW MONTESSORI
CHARTER Public School

Annual Report
2009-2010 School Year



75 Foundation Avenue
Haverhill, Massachusetts 01835

Table of Contents

Page number

Letter from Board of Trustees Chairperson	2
School Address and Contact Information.....	2
Introductory Description	2
Mission Statement	2
 FAITHFULNESS TO THE CHARTER.....	 3
<i>Accountability Objectives and Measures</i>	3
<i>Common School Performance Criteria:</i>	8
Implementation of Mission, Vision and Educational Philosophy	
 ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUCCESS.....	 10
<i>Accountability Objectives and Measures</i>	10
<i>Common School Performance Criteria:</i>	13
Curriculum	
Instruction	
Program Evaluation	
School Culture	
Diverse Learners	
Supervision and Evaluation of Teachers	
Professional Development	
 ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY.....	 19
<i>Accountability Objectives and Measures</i>	19
<i>Common School Performance Criteria:</i>	21
Policy Decisions	
Amendments to the Charter	
Complaints	
Oversight	
Board Planning	
Family Satisfaction	
Financial Oversight	
 DISSEMINATION.....	 25
FINANCIAL REPORTS.....	26
FY10 Unaudited Income Statement and FY11 Budget	
FY10 Unaudited Balance Sheet	
FY11 Capital Plan	
 DATA SECTION.....	 29
ATTACHMENTS.....	32

July 19, 2010

Dear HVM Community:

When I think about this year's accomplishments at Hill View Montessori Charter Public School (HVM) the late and great John Wooden's words come to mind: "The difficult challenge provides the best opportunity."

The difficult and unique challenges of a Montessori school thriving in a public school environment in the State's rigorous standards-based environment is being realized after many years of hard work, including both successes and failures, by the entire HVM community. The vision of the founders continues to be strong and our students and staff continue to follow Montessori's clear and simple guiding principles: grace, courtesy, respect, and responsibility. And now the promise of high academic growth is also being met, according to the State's new growth metric!

The strength of the entire HVM community was never more evident than when it pulled together to successfully purchase, renovate and move into a new facility in the middle of the school year. The State, by law, cannot provide Charter Schools with building assistance – so the entire financial load was put squarely on the backs of the HVM community. Parents, citizens, local businesses, staff, administration, the HVM Foundation and the Board of Trustees all came through and raised the down payment and sustainment funding. It was a huge success!

We also successfully launched our middle school program with 30 seventh graders. We will be proudly adding eighth grade starting in the fall of 2010. It proved to be a prudent decision two years ago to hold off on adding the middle school until we hit a critical mass with the K-6 programs, despite the demand for it.

On a personal note, I will be stepping down as Chairperson of the board to give another leader a chance to take HVM to the next level. However, I will be remaining on the board as a trustee. To be a member of the HVM community is not always easy. Everyone takes their role very seriously and fights for that in which they believe. The level of commitment is extraordinary and exhausting at the same time. This is exactly the kind of community of which I am proud to be a part.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Michitson".

John Michitson
Chairperson, Board of Trustees

School Address and Contact Information

School Address:

Hill View Montessori Charter Public School
75 Foundation Avenue
Haverhill, MA 01835

Contact Information:

Janet Begin, Executive Director
978.521.2616 main telephone
978.521.2656 facsimile number
JBegin@hvmcps.org
www.hillviewmontessori.org

Introductory Description

Hill View Montessori Charter Public School (HVM) provides students residing in Haverhill a grade K-8 public education that promotes academic excellence using the Montessori philosophy. The school was chartered by the Massachusetts Board of Education in 2003 and opened the following year to serve 122 students in grades K-3. Each subsequent year an additional grade has been added such that full enrollment of 296 students with a K-8 grade span will be reached in September 2010.

At the close of school in June 2010, HVM had 267 K-7 students and a waitlist of 370 students spanning all grades. In February 2010, the school consolidated three sites into one and moved to a permanent facility in the Ward Hill Business Park in Haverhill. The new site will adequately house the 29 additional students being added at the start of school in September 2010.

The 2009-2010 school year was HVM's sixth year of operation and the first year of its second charter term. The current charter term is scheduled to end in 2014 and the school anticipates seeking an early renewal.

Mission Statement

The mission of Hill View Montessori Charter Public School is to provide a grade K-8 public education that promotes academic excellence using the Montessori philosophy. In partnership with teachers and parents, children attain high levels of academic, personal and social achievement and so prepared, become constructive contributors to our community.

PERFORMANCE AND PLANS

The following information and supporting data summarize HVM's achievements during the FY10 school year based on HVM's current accountability plan as well as the State's Common School Performance Criteria.

FAITHFULNESS TO THE CHARTER

Objective F1: HVM will be a preeminent public Montessori school.

Measurement F1.1: HVM will create and maintain alignment charts describing Montessori and supplemental curriculum that will address each of the Massachusetts Frameworks standards in Mathematics, English Language Arts and cultural subjects (Science and Social Studies/History).

Progress: HVM is making progress toward meeting this measure.

Alignment charts exist in mathematics and the cultural subject areas for grades K-7. Curriculum binders which contain supplemental curriculum to augment areas where the Montessori curriculum does not address Massachusetts standards are readily available to all teachers in grades K-7. They are updated and supplemented as needed and reviewed on a regular basis.

This year, the lower elementary teachers focused on creating additional supplemental materials for the 1st-3rd grade science curriculum. The upper elementary teachers reviewed the 4th-6th grade math alignment charts and made adjustments and/or added additional supplemental materials as needed. Finally, the middle school teachers created new curriculum alignment charts for 7th grade math, science and social studies.

A different approach has been taken in the ELA curricular area. The Montessori philosophy views reading and writing as an integral part of all subjects rather than as an independent subject area to be taught unto itself. Further, the Montessori Method relies on the integration of reading and writing as a means of teaching those skills. We have found that this approach is somewhat limiting. Therefore, alignment of the ELA curriculum has required additional attention.

Already existing in the Montessori curriculum are specific grammar and language materials and lessons for kindergarten through grade six. In lower elementary, our ELA alignment charts identify Montessori lessons that address specific areas of the Frameworks and are being augmented to reference supplemental materials to be used for direct reading and writing instruction. HVM has been piloting and evaluating programs and materials that could be used for this purpose. Part of the decision process includes determining which programs best complement our philosophy and what professional development and additional support teachers need to implement them. HVM has piloted a few programs and will ultimately choose one or two programs that will be used consistently across the school.

Measurement F1.2: HVM will hire an outside Montessori consultant to conduct an audit every two years to evaluate its program and any findings will be addressed within six months.

Progress: HVM is making progress toward meeting this measure.

This measurement calls for an outside audit every other year; FY10 would have been the first year of the audit. The audit was postponed until the spring of 2011 as a result of internal strategic planning work that began this past spring and focused on creating a shared definition of public Montessori and the initiatives HVM could undertake to continually strive toward the core tenants of the philosophy. This work stems from the fact that the Montessori Method is more than just a curriculum to be adopted. It is a philosophy that permeates everything that occurs in a school; it impacts what materials are used, the way classroom environments are organized, how lessons are delivered, as well as the curricular content presented and the role of the teacher in the classroom.

During the spring of 2010, the HVM Board of Trustees was engaged in a conversation regarding Montessori's rich cultural and practical life aspects and the need to merge and support that part of the curriculum with the school's commitment to academic standards and outcomes. In collaboration with the BOT, HVM administrators and instructional staff worked in partnership to investigate ways to further the school's commitment to the Montessori Method. This spawned the creation of a number of task forces including committees that are looking into curriculum, assessment and professional development, as well as "school culture" and "communications." The work of these committees is ongoing.

The re-visit of the HVM Montessori mission was much like an audit and has included more than six collaborative meetings wherein task force groups inventoried and assessed HVM's current programs and traditions and began drafting a vision for what the school could strive to become over the next few years. This process empowered staff and has resulted in greater buy-in than would have occurred were a consultant to come in and assess the school from an outside perspective. During the 2010-2011 school year we will implement some of the steps that have been proposed during this visioning work. An outside audit has been scheduled for April 2011 to provide time for this work to take effect. The auditor has both public school and Montessori experience and will spend 1½ days observing classrooms and provide a ½ day oral report-out as well as a written summary of findings. The audit will help HVM assess the work of the task forces.

Objective F2: HVM will focus on holistic student development.
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***Measurement F2.1:** At least 85% of HVM students will usually or consistently demonstrate personal, social and emotional attributes on the Personal and Social Growth and Work Habits section of the end-of-year progress report.*

Progress: HVM met this measure in twelve of the fourteen attributes.

The HVM grade 1-7 progress reports assess the consistency at which students demonstrate personal, social and emotional characteristics as well as work habits. During this school year lower and upper elementary teachers requested that the personal and social growth and work habit sections of the report card be tailored to better reflect the development of the student and the attributes which teachers are focused on in the classroom every day. As such, language in the personal and social growth and work habit sections was modified and increased to include 14 attributes. The kindergarten report card assesses ten attributes, albeit on a different scale.

In all but two of the fourteen areas, at least 85% of students usually or consistently realized personal and social growth and demonstrated appropriate work habits. In fact, at least 90% of students consistently or usually met the attribute on ten of the 14 attributes. The two attribute areas that students did not usually or consistently demonstrate achievement were "asks for help when necessary" and "manages time wisely" where they missed the measurement by two and one percentage point respectively.

Percent of Students Usually or Consistently Demonstrating Achievement of the Attribute

<i>Personal and Social Growth</i>	
Acts age-appropriately	96%
Accepts responsibility for own actions	92%
Displays a positive attitude	97%
Communicates appropriately with peers	96%
Helps others	88%
Has awareness of others' feelings	91%
<i>Work Habits</i>	
Responds appropriately to adults	95%
Follows directions	92%
Asks for help when necessary*	83%
Shows best effort in daily work	90%
Manages time wisely*	84%
Is attentive during work cycle	87%
Maintains order	91%
Returns homework on time	94%

**Below target*

Although this measure was met in most areas, HVM is reevaluating its reliability and validity. Identifying a better measure of so-called “soft skills” is a challenge with which many organizations struggle. Anecdotally we know that our students are learning social and personal skills and work habits that are often described as “21st Century Skills”. It is our goal to find a more valid way to assess and document them.

Measurement F2.2: *Annually, each K-6 classroom will participate in at least one community service project; each middle school student will complete 20 community service hours.*

Progress: **HVM met this measure in seven of eight classrooms.**

Every kindergarten, lower and upper elementary classroom was involved in a community service project during the year. The middle school came within 20% of meeting its goal of 600 community service hours with over 482 hours logged by the 29 middle school students. Following is a description of the community service projects for each of HVM’s ten classrooms.

FY10 Community Service Projects

<i>Kindergarten 1</i>	Collected coats for local charity coat drive
<i>Kindergarten 2</i>	Collected coats for local charity coat drive
<i>Lower Elementary 1</i>	Provided financial support for rainforest preservation via t-shirt sales
<i>Lower Elementary 2</i>	Provided financial support for rainforest preservation via t-shirt sales, Collected hats and mittens for local shelter
<i>Lower Elementary 3</i>	Collected goods for MA Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, Sang at nursing home
<i>Lower Elementary 4</i>	Cleaned Ward Hill Business Park
<i>Upper Elementary 1</i>	Collected and recycled Terracycle drink pouches
<i>Upper Elementary 2</i>	Collected and recycled cell phones
<i>Upper Elementary 3</i>	Cleaned Ward Hill Business Park
<i>Upper Elementary 4</i>	Collected bottles and paper for recycling for entire school all year long
<i>Middle School</i>	Collected food items as a group for food drive, Ran school-wide recycling committee,

	Miscellaneous individual projects including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reading to children at day care center ○ Working on new facility ○ Establishing and maintaining a school garden ○ Building equipment for school playground ○ Fundraising
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In September 2009, HVM launched its middle school program. With all of the curricular planning and requirements to start this program, as well as run it in a remote location, the middle school did not create a tracking system to collect community service information. Community service and service learning is, however, an integral part of the Montessori Method and we believe that more community service work occurred than was recorded. Next year the middle school will create a system to accurately record community service of the middle school students.

Objective F3: HVM will work collaboratively with its various constituents.

***Measurement F3.1:** 95% of students will be represented by parent(s) or guardian(s) at all parent-teacher or parent-student-teacher conferences or through some other form of communication with the teacher about their child's learning during the time period covered by each conference.*

Progress: HVM nearly met this measure.

Data to support the attainment of this measure was derived by collecting regularly scheduled parent-teacher conference attendance information and reports of parent-teacher meetings not arranged specifically during the week-long conference block for each of the two conference time periods.

During the fall conference period, 92% of families attended or learned of their child's progress via conferences or direct communication with the child's teachers. During the spring conference period, this rate rose to 94%. HVM will continue to improve upon the opportunities available for parents to be informed about their child's progress.

***Measurement F3.2** To provide an avenue for input, annual parent and staff surveys will be administered and summary results made available to the entire school community.*

Progress: HVM met this measure.

The school's annual family survey was administered via Survey Monkey, an online survey tool, beginning February 2010 and following the school's move to its new site. For families who preferred to take the survey offline in written form, a hard copy of the survey was provided and the data was entered online by an administrative assistant so that the survey tool could aggregate the data. More than 1/3 of families participated in the family survey.

Summary results from the parent survey were shared with the greater community via email, the school's newsletter and website. Additionally, parent survey data was considered by the Board in their evaluation of the Executive Director.

Staff surveys were also administered via survey Monkey, and were conducted in January just prior to the February 2010 school move. Approximately 70% of employees participated in the survey. Results were compiled and those pertaining to the Executive Director and the school at large were shared with the Board of Trustees. Findings related to the other three members of the administrative team were shared

with their supervisor, the Executive Director, for use in their ongoing supervision. The school shared summary results of the Staff Survey with the entire staff electronically.

Objective F4: HVM will campaign to enroll a student population that reflects the diverse economic and racial make-up of the district schools.

***Measurement F4.1:** HVM will adjust its advertising and recruitment campaign each year in an effort to attain racial diversity, in terms of its white vs. non-white student population, which is within 5 percentage points of the Haverhill District School's racial diversity as measured by comparing Student Information Management System (SIMS) data each year.*

Progress: HVM met this measure.

Knowing that HVM has historically had less racial diversity than the Haverhill Public School District, HVM wrote and adopted an enrollment advertising plan during this past school year. The plan outlines how HVM will work to ensure its enrollment advertising is more specifically targeted at diverse populations. The plan includes the use of "passive" advertising (flyers, news briefs, newspaper ads, etc.) as well as direct connection with local community service agencies that already have connections with more diverse populations. It also lays plans for more direct recruitment of the Hispanic/Latino community via advertising at Spanish bodegas, churches, with Spanish news sources and through direct networking with our current Latino population.

HVM's FY10 non-white student population of 24% compares to the Haverhill Public School District's non-white population of 29%; putting HVM within five percentage points as set in our Accountability Plan goal.

***Measurement F4.2:** HVM will adjust its advertising and recruitment campaign each year in an effort to attain economic diversity of its student population that is within 5 percentage points of the Haverhill District School's economic diversity as measured by comparing Student Information Management System (SIMS) data each year.*

Progress: HVM met this measure.

HVM adopted a new enrollment advertising plan during the past school year (as mentioned above). The plan identifies ways to better target low income populations by targeted advertising via Community Action, low income housing authorities, Boys and Girls clubs, etc. The plan was implemented but its success cannot be fully determined until school opens in September when new families apply for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch program (FRL), the indicator of low income.

At year-end FY10, 26% of HVM students qualified for the FRL lunch program. This is a 2% increase from the previous year when HVM began to more specifically target market. The rate of low income students in Haverhill district schools varies significantly from school to school. In comparison to four Haverhill schools, HVM has a similar percentage of students enrolled in the Free or Reduced Lunch Program. In the four other Haverhill district schools, however, HVM significantly lags in the number of students classified as low income. Overall, 42% of students in the Haverhill district schools were classified as low income.

Economic demographics of the Haverhill Public Schools as well as the local elementary schools individually are highlighted below. The district overall, as well as four of Haverhill Public School's eight elementary schools had economic diversity greater than that of HVM.

Percentage of Low Income Students FY10

<i>Hill View Montessori Charter Public School</i>	26%
<i>Haverhill Public School</i>	42%
Walnut Square Elementary School	15%
Greenleaf Elementary School	25%
Crowell Elementary School	23%
Bradford Elementary School	28%
<i>Silver Hill Horace Mann Charter Public School</i>	42%
Golden Hill Elementary School	50%
Pentucket Lake Elementary School	52%
Tilton Elementary School	60%

Implementation of Mission, Vision, and Educational Philosophy

The mission of Hill View Montessori Charter Public School is to provide a K-8 public education that promotes academic excellence using the Montessori philosophy. In partnership with teachers and parents, children attain high levels of academic, personal and social achievement and so prepared, become constructive contributors to our community.

Below are HVM's core values, which represent the heart of our mission and vision, along with evidence of how HVM remains faithful to them.

Core Value 1: Preeminent Public Montessori

Being a preeminent public Montessori school means that the Montessori philosophy and curriculum exists throughout the school and that it is aligned so that teachers can facilitate mastery of the standards laid out in the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks. Part of preeminence is having students attain high levels of academic, personal and social achievement. One metric of academic progress, the State's new growth metric, provides evidence that HVM is on a path toward continuous academic achievement. HVM students' academic achievement showed average to high growth in all grades and subjects. (See Attachment 1- District Achievement and Growth by Grade.)

In the area of personal and social achievement, HVM is also a model of preeminence. Student's personal and social achievement is validated by the Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy's choice of HVM as one of only three K-8 schools in Massachusetts chosen to participate in the second stage of a research study aimed at finding best practices related to 21st Century Skills. Many of the 21st century skills, including initiative, self direction, social skills, communication and collaboration, are competencies that the Montessori curriculum teaches well. (See Attachment 2 – Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy letter.)

Confirming HVM's ongoing commitment to being a preeminent public Montessori, staff had multiple meetings, including many held afterschool, to develop ways to better address our mission. These meetings were the result of staff desire to further its commitment to embracing the Montessori philosophy and curriculum as fully as possible in a public school environment. Initial strategies have been developed to strengthen efforts in this area and this work will continue throughout the 2010-11 school year.

Core Value 2: Holistic Student Development

HVM is committed to the development of the whole child and believes that it is necessary to provide a holistic approach to education for a child to learn and achieve. Without feeling safe, understood, valued and able to make and grow from mistakes, a child may learn skills but will not reach his or her full potential as a critical thinker and competent problem solver. As mentioned above, the Montessori

philosophy equips students with 21st century skills such as self-direction, teamwork, critical thinking and problem solving skills in addition to a love of learning that will empower them throughout their life. Students are demonstrating these skills as evidenced by the Rennie Center's choice of HVM to participate in their research study on 21st century skills.

HVM continues to find ways in which to support the development of the whole child. During this past school year, the school offered three 8-9 week Elective Blocks (free of charge) to students in grades 1-6. The weekly two-hour afternoon sessions were offered in collaboration with the local community and staffed by volunteer community members. The electives provided students an opportunity to pursue areas of interest such as swimming, woodworking, journalism, science extensions, robotics and martial arts.

Less typical than traditionally found in public schools where a guidance counselor is employed, HVM employs a .75 FTE licensed social worker who provides support to students and families to facilitate students' ability to perform and function effectively in the classroom. Services include various social skills/support groups, some limited individual counseling and coordination with relevant agencies within the local community.

This year HVM began offering breakfast to its students, both those qualifying for the Free and Reduced Lunch program and others.

Core Value 3: School-Strengthening Collaboration

Parental involvement continues to be a hallmark of HVM. This year family support was overwhelmingly evident as parents and grandparents spent over 1,000 hours to prepare our new building for a February move-in. For a period of three months, three to four nights per week, "crews" appeared at the new site to paint, relocate movable partitions, move furniture, wire for tel-data, clean and perform light construction duties, etc.

Outside community members also continue to collaborate with the school as demonstrated this year during the introduction of the "Elective Blocks" (referenced above). Virtually all of the 30 elective offerings were taught by volunteer community members who were excited to share their professional and personal expertise in areas such as journalism and robotics. For a great many of our students, the opportunity to develop additional capacities afforded by these varied activities would not be possible. Further, this community support enabled HVM teachers time for inter and intra level collaboration.

Core Value 4: High Quality Staff

HVM continues to be committed to employing teachers with Montessori training who also meet federal standards for high quality teachers. It is difficult to find teachers who have both skill sets but even in the face of limited funding, the school maintained a significant budgetary line item to pay stipends for both Montessori training and other professional development. The goal is to ensure all lead teachers are fully competent and trained in both Montessori philosophy and Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

In the general education classrooms, all teachers are highly qualified. Additionally, in the kindergarten and lower elementary programs, all lead teachers are Montessori certified. In upper elementary and middle school all except two of seven are either Montessori certified or trained.

ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUCCESS

The following information and supporting data summarizes HVM’s academic achievement as measured by both internal and external measures. During the FY10 school year, HVM set rigorous goals that included increasingly aggressive internal benchmarks and a data driven instruction initiative. While we have not fully met the aggressive benchmarks laid out in the Accountability Plan, curriculum and instructional improvements have allowed us to pinpoint where further improvements need to be made and have enabled us to meet the 2009 Adequate Yearly Progress requirements as put forth by No Child Left Behind legislation.

Objective A1: HVM students will demonstrate high levels of achievement in **reading and writing.**

Measurement A1.1: *At least 85% of students at each grade level will reach their grade level benchmark (i.e. be at least within the Independent range in Oral Reading Fluency and Comprehension on a grade-level appropriate text) on the end-of-year Developmental Reading Assessment. To realize this goal prior to the end of the next charter period, HVM has set 75% as SY09-10 end-of-year interim benchmark.*

Progress: HVM met this measure in three of seven grade levels.

The Accountability goal for reading is a “moving target” with the goal increasing every year. Last year HVM met the goal in two categories, and nearly met it in one other. This year, three grades met the elevated benchmark target and three others neared it.

We analyzed this data thoroughly to assess whether students were making progress toward meeting this goal, especially as the target was increasing. Using last year’s goal of 70%, six grades would have met the target, indicating growth over the previous year when only two grades met the 70% measure. Further, we did an analysis of cohort data to verify growth of groups of students over time. In every grade except for one, cohorts maintained or showed growth in the development of their reading skills.

Students Reaching FY10 Interim Reading Benchmark of 75%

	FY10	Percent Change of Cohort Group from Prior Year
<i>Kindergarten</i>	82%	NA
<i>Grade 1</i>	44%	NA
<i>Grade 2</i>	71%	+20%
<i>Grade 3</i>	70%	0%
<i>Grade 4</i>	71%	-8%
<i>Grade 5</i>	63%	+6%
<i>Grade 6</i>	76%	+7%
<i>Grade 7</i>	90%	+33%

HVM continues to focus on ways to improve reading achievement. At the beginning of the FY10 school year we hired a Title I ELA specialist for upper elementary. We also sent three teachers for Wilson Language training.

Planning for the upcoming year includes a literacy initiative. HVM has a grant request out to one of its funders to help support this initiative. The goal is to continue the data-driven instructional improvement initiative started last year (and described further in the Program Evaluation section) with a specific focus on improving student literacy skills. Specific plans include a literacy audit and action planning institute with an outside consulting group.

HVM has also planned the purchase of student literature that will allow greater exposure and opportunity for reading instruction. Research shows that extensive reading of developmentally appropriate material of many kinds results in substantial growth in vocabulary and comprehension abilities and in the information base of students. We are purchasing custom book collections for grades K-5 that are correlated to the MA Science and Social Studies Curriculum Frameworks so that students have an opportunity to read across the curriculum. Grades 6-8 will initially purchase a literature collection that is correlated to the ELA Curriculum Frameworks and will expand this in upcoming years to include literature to be used across the curriculum as well.

Measurement A1.2: *At least 85% of students at the end of each level (Lower and Upper Elementary) will achieve a total score of 27 or higher based on adding the averaged score of two independent readers for each trait in the 6+1 Trait writing rubric (target is to have at least 3.5, 4 and 4.5 out of 5 at each successive grade within a level on each trait for a total of 21, 24 and 27 for students at the first, second and third years of a level respectively) on an end-of-year writing assignment using a prompt and associated genre that reflect state standards for the applicable grade level. To realize this goal prior to the end of the next charter period, HVM has set an interim benchmark of 16, 19, and 22 or higher (for each successive grade in a level).*

Progress: HVM has not met this measure.

Like the reading goal, HVM’s writing goal is also a “moving target” that is increasing every year. This year, with the higher goal, HVM did not meet the goal in any grades.

Percent of Students Reaching FY10 Interim Writing Benchmark (16, 19, 22)

<i>Grade 1</i>	74%
<i>Grade 2</i>	77%
<i>Grade 3</i>	70%
<i>Grade 4</i>	54%
<i>Grade 5</i>	40%
<i>Grade 6</i>	46%
<i>Grade 7</i>	72%

That being said, although HVM did not meet the rising goal, writing results showed continuous improvement over the entire year in all but one grade level, third grade. Evidence to indicate growth in writing can be ascertained by looking at the student performance using last year’s benchmark goal. In last year’s annual reporting, HVM met the target in only one out of six grade levels. Looking at this year’s results, coupled with last year’s benchmark target, students met the goal in three grades: first, second and seventh.

Plans to address the inadequate achievement in writing have already begun and are mentioned above. They include a literacy initiative around reading and writing that will begin with a literacy audit and action planning institute. Additionally, and in the area of writing specifically, we plan to send all teaching staff to a 2-day workshop on Six Traits Writing in order to expand the success we have had with this program. We initially introduced the traits as a way for students and staff to assess writing and develop common language around what constitutes good writing. As we have used the Six Traits Writing rubric, teachers have struggled with how to translate the outcomes to writing instruction. The workshop will strengthen teachers’ understanding of the traits, demonstrate what each one “looks like” in literature and show how to create lessons to teach the traits.

Going beyond the immediate initiatives cited above, we want to take more strategic steps to ensure a strong school-wide literacy program. Partially conditional on the receipt of grant funding, we plan to work with an outside consulting group to determine what programs are not working and how they can be changed. The consultants will assist in making decisions about materials, data and the use of data to define best instructional practices. The consultant will also assist designing and planning focused professional development to improve teacher knowledge and consistent use of research-based literacy approaches.

Measurement A1.3: *HVM will meet annual academic growth targets in ELA as established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, or achieve Adequate Yearly Progress in the aggregate and for all statistically significant subgroups.*

Progress: HVM met this measure.

2009 AYP data indicates that HVM has met this measure in the aggregate and for all subgroups. Further, preliminary, yet-to-be-released, FY10 MCAS data suggests that there will be improvement in ELA results for grades 4-7 cohorts.

Objective A2: HVM students will demonstrate high levels of achievement in mathematics.

Measurement A2.1: *At least 85% of HVM students at each grade level will demonstrate proficiency on at least 70% of the standards on HVM’s Math Tracking Tool. HVM has set 70% of students as an interim benchmark for SY09-10.*

Progress: HVM met this measure at two of seven grade levels.

The math accountability goal, like the reading and writing goals laid out in the HVM Accountability Plan, are aggressive and include a “moving target” wherein the “bar is raised” each year. Under this year’s goal, only two grades met the goal. If using last year’s goal, five grades would have met the goal, indicating that while HVM students did not yet meet the FY10 goal, they are at least showing one year’s growth and in many instances, showing more improvement over the previous year.

Students Demonstrating 70% Proficiency on FY10 Math Interim Benchmark

<i>Grade 1</i>	71%
<i>Grade 2</i>	59%
<i>Grade 3</i>	67%
<i>Grade 4</i>	37%
<i>Grade 5</i>	46%
<i>Grade 6</i>	64%
<i>Grade 7</i>	70%

Plans for addressing mathematical shortfalls include continuation of initiatives already begun: continued support by a full-time Title I math specialist as well as the addition of a middle school Title 1 teacher. Further, HVM was able to bolster its technology-enhanced mathematics curriculum through the use of IDEA grant funds that allowed us to launch a Technology Enhanced Math Instruction Project (TEMIP).

With up-to-date computers, more of them and networking hardware, HVM more fully implemented the web-based, artificial intelligence system, ALEKS (Assessment and LEarning in Knowledge Spaces, to support math instruction and provide ongoing formative assessments three times a year. ALEKS is also

being used in HVM's Systemic Data-Use Project, a recent initiative to support improved student achievement through the consistent use of data to inform instructional practices.

In the coming year, HVM hopes to contract with an outside consultant to customize ALEKs assessment output, to create systems for uploading the data into the data warehouse and to design reports for extracting it for analysis. The reports will be used by collaborative teams to adjust teaching and to make informed decisions about the remediation, intervention and enrichment aspects of our tiered math instruction. This work will be facilitated by Public Consulting Group who provided professional development and coaching during the FY10 school year.

Measurement A2.2: *HVM will meet annual academic growth targets in mathematics as established by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, or achieve Adequate Yearly Progress in the aggregate and for all statistically significant subgroups.*

Progress: HVM met this measure.

2009 AYP data indicates that HVM has met this measure in the aggregate as well as in all of the subgroups. Based on preliminary MCAS results, HVM anticipates improvements in mathematics for FY10.

Objective A3: HVM students will demonstrate high levels of achievement in science and engineering/technology, and history and social studies.

Measurement A3.1: *At least 70% of HVM students will demonstrate proficient or advanced levels of achievement on MCAS for science and engineering/technology, and history and social studies in grades 5 and 7. HVM has set 50% as an interim benchmark for SY09-10.*

Progress: HVM met this measure.

In FY09 60% of HVM's students who took the Science and Technology MCAS scored in the Advanced or Proficient categories. Additions to the curriculum and continual internal attention to the areas of Science and Technology are credited for the improvement.

Curriculum

HVM's curriculum has been developed by aligning the Montessori Scope and Sequence with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and identifying supplemental resources and materials where needed to ensure that all standards are addressed. The combined curriculum is delivered through a Montessori approach which embraces the use of concrete, hands-on learning using Montessori manipulatives as well as supplemental, non-Montessori materials. In FY10 we added a 7th grade to our existing program.

In addition to the core academic areas of Mathematics, English Language Arts, and the Cultural Curriculum (Science and Social Studies/History), students at HVM also receive instruction in Health and Fitness and the Arts. Each of these curriculum areas is described below.

Mathematics: Students in grades K-6 use Montessori mathematics manipulatives and supplemental materials to explore concepts in concrete form before abstracting. The curriculum is based on lessons as outlined in alignment charts developed by HVM. Concepts taught include number sense and operations; patterns, relations and algebra, measurement; geometry; data analysis; probability and statistics; problem solving; fractions and money. In grade 7, the curriculum is taught through a Montessori approach but not

through the use of Montessori manipulatives. Integral to the Montessori philosophy is the application of mathematics to real-life scenarios. At this level, students work in small groups on somewhat more traditional looking curriculum but it is delivered consistent with the Montessori philosophy and students are repeatedly given opportunity to apply their knowledge in mathematics to real-life scenarios.

In the upper elementary and 7th grade, HVM continued to use an online AI-based mathematics software application aligned with the Massachusetts Frameworks. Using artificial intelligence, this program is individualized to each student and can be used for supplemental in-class work, assessment and the generation of individualized homework.

English Language Arts: Students in grades K-6 use Montessori and non-Montessori materials to learn how to read, read for meaning, engage in literature circles/discussions and express themselves through written expression. Phonemic awareness, phonics, whole word reading techniques, grammar, and vocabulary development are a large part of the Montessori ELA curriculum. In addition to the Montessori materials, teachers at the lower grades have used the Rigby Reader Series to assist with teaching reading comprehension skills and strategies. Scholastic Leveled Readers were implemented for grades K-7 for this same purpose. One class piloted Daily Café, a reading program that focuses on C-A-F-E skills (comprehension, accuracy, fluency, and expanding vocabulary). Non-fiction leveled readers in the areas of science and social studies will be ordered for grades K-5.

A number of classes in grades 1-6 implemented the Four Square Writing model to assist students in writing multi-paragraph essays. This model helps students eliminate common errors. It also helps students become better writers by providing them with a way to organize their thoughts in the pre-writing stage of the writing process. Students first use a variety of activities and approaches to spark their creative writing interest. Brainstorming on a topic using a graphic organizer or sensory map is one example and is completed before organizing with the Four Square model.

The 6 Traits writing rubric, a framework designed to help all teachers and students use a common language to refer to characteristics of writing as well as create a common vision of what good writing looks like, was referenced by all teachers (grades 1-7) to score internal writing assessments. Students in grades 4-7 were provided the 6 Traits student rubric as a tool to enhance their writing abilities.

Cultural Curriculum - Science and Social Studies/History: Students at HVM are introduced to Montessori's five *Great Lessons* which are a series of stories designed to provide an understanding of the history of the universe with a focus on humankind's place in that continuing story. These lessons are revisited and built upon throughout the grades, and provide overarching, "big picture" stories that inspire more specific study of subjects such as physics, botany, world cultures and ancient history.

In lower elementary, teachers are able to weave concepts required by the Massachusetts Frameworks into the Montessori lessons as well as deliver a sensorial perspective to the more advanced concepts that are not introduced by lower grade Massachusetts Frameworks. In upper elementary, the same sensorial lessons are revisited to teach concepts as well as to extend the lower elementary Montessori curriculum. Upper elementary teachers use the Massachusetts Frameworks as their guide to create supplemental lessons for Science and Social Studies.

Different from last year, upper elementary teachers taught all content areas (i.e., science and social studies in addition to ELA and mathematics). In doing so, they determined a set amount of time to teach a particular topic and created culminating projects. For example, the unit on immigration resulted in the Upper Elementary traveling to New York City to explore Ellis Island. Lessons on the scientific method culminated in a year-end science fair for all upper elementary students.

The following subjects, which are typically part of an integrated Montessori classroom, were taught to HVM students through non-integrated instruction:

Visual and Performing Arts: Students in grades K-7 receive instruction in art and music each week. These classes are taught by teachers with Massachusetts certification in these areas and they reference the Massachusetts Frameworks on a regular basis to develop their lessons. Over the long term, HVM hopes to provide specialist teachers with formal instruction in Montessori's philosophy with the intent that they will strive to implement lessons in a more Montessori fashion. HVM began this process last year by providing specialists with an overview of the Montessori theory and planes of development.

During FY10, the art teacher worked in collaboration with the teachers to create lessons which aligned with the cultural work being taught in the classrooms. In doing so, the art curriculum aligned with MA art frameworks as well as social studies and science frameworks for grades K-7.

At the end of the 2009-1020 school year, the music teacher signed up to attend a week-long Montessori music seminar that will support her teaching next year. The goal is to assist this specialist with creating lessons in a more Montessori fashion as well as aiding teachers in incorporating the Montessori music program into the classroom.

Health and Fitness: Students in grades K-6 participate in fitness classes twice each week; 7th grade one time per week. These classes are taught by a certified physical education teacher and lessons are developed based on the Massachusetts Frameworks. HVM students also received periodic health lessons from the school nurse. Younger students receive instruction related to human health and nutrition and older students learn about human growth and development, reproduction and sexuality. These lessons are also based on the Massachusetts Frameworks.

Instruction

The HVM learning environment is based on Montessori's philosophy; one that fosters the intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of each student. Teachers refer to the school's curriculum alignment charts as well as their Montessori curriculum albums to identify the skills and knowledge to be taught and a logical, developmental sequence in which they should be taught. Students receive skill lessons primarily in small groups at the lower grades (K-6) with bigger group lessons for middle school students (grades 7-8). Content curriculum is delivered primarily in whole group lessons. In all curriculum areas, teachers use a variety of manipulatives, novels, journals, texts and internet sources as resources to aid with instruction. Teachers do not rely on textbooks to directly instruct students.

In keeping with Montessori education, HVM offers students differentiated curriculum and instruction in multi-age classrooms. Learning is maximized by teaching to student's individual academic level and by leveraging each child's unique learning style. Montessori teachers are trained to closely observe students at work so they can prepare the environment and provide support as needed by each child. Teachers reference their observational notes to determine when children are ready to learn new skills or concepts. In addition to academic skills, students are taught how to plan and manage their own work. Students, with the support of their teachers as needed, set daily goals and help assess their own progress, also known as meta-cognition or learning about learning. Class time is structured so that students reach these goals through small and large group lessons, one-on-one student/teacher interactions and self-directed learning. The result is confident children who are motivated life-long learners.

To facilitate this individualized instructional approach, there are long work blocks each day when students receive individual or small group lessons and/or work on their goals individually or with a partner. The flexibility allowed by this long work cycle facilitates instruction from special education/Title 1 teachers

for those students that need extra support. Most of this extra support can be provided in the classroom and when there is a need for pull-out services, this can be easily accommodated within this structure.

Program Evaluation

Qualitative and quantitative evidence is used by teachers and school leaders to inform and guide instructional planning and practice in a variety of ways. Qualitative evidence is used every day by Montessori teachers who are trained to be careful observers of children and their work. Teachers keep both objective and anecdotal records and use those in planning lessons for students.

More formal evidence, in the form of internal formative assessments for reading, writing and mathematics, are administered three times throughout the school year. Systems to collect, track and aggregate and disaggregate the data for the purpose of informing instruction, as well as providing overall program improvements, are being developed, piloted, and improved upon on an ongoing basis. Aggregated information is shared with the Board of Trustees at least three times per year in the form of a “dashboard”. The Dashboard provides information related to many of the Accountability Plan goals. Academic assessment data is further disaggregated in the dashboard to provide the board with grade level data for each of the three assessment periods. Where indicated, the board requests corrective action plans. *(See Attachment 3 for Sample Dashboard.)*

A commitment to data-driven instruction was the focus of FY10 as we identified a need to support educators to more effectively analyze and use student data. Public Consulting Group (PCG) was hired to provide a professional development and coaching series targeted at building a culture of data use at HVM. The series aligned with the administration of HVM’s formative assessments and availability of the results of those assessments. PCG worked with instructional staff and administrators to examine the assessment data, create data overviews, learn techniques for question formulation, identify learner centered problems, identify problems of practice, and create action plans. Coaching sessions focused on the implementation of action plans including additional support for skills learned during professional development sessions.

The greatest challenge as it relates to program evaluation continues to be the time commitment and labor intensity of administering assessments, collecting and manipulating the data, and then translating it into a user-friendly format for teachers, administration and the board. HVM has developed its capacity in this area and continues to investigate mechanisms that will make this process more effective and efficient including use of the State’s data warehouse.

School Culture

The HVM learning environment is based on Maria Montessori’s philosophy and fosters the intellectual, social, emotional and physical development of each student. Children are placed in multi-age classrooms and engage in lessons that are developmentally appropriate. Montessori education is based on observation. The teacher’s role is to carefully observe each child in the classroom, prepare the environment to engage the child, and guide him/her through the work available within that environment. Student behavior is addressed most typically on an individual basis with the goal of developing self control within the child.

At the beginning of the school year, students meet on a classroom by classroom basis to create a set of guidelines for classroom behavior as well as the consequences for not staying within the guidelines. Depending on the classroom and the skill level of the students, the teacher either guides, coaches, or if necessary, directs the students in the creation of customs for the classroom. Over time, the expectation is for students to monitor and support peer behavior, increasingly without teacher intervention.

For students with more specific and individual behavioral needs, HVM employs a licensed social worker. She works with students individually and in small groups. Where indicated, she also coordinates with outside agencies to provide additional student support including individual and family counseling.

The school culture is HVM's most notable strength. The courteous and respectful tone and tenor of classrooms and associated expectations for student responsibility and accountability for their own actions minimizes the number of severe behaviors. Further, classroom teachers are well trained to deal with most infractions. For consistently recurring and/or serious incidents, HVM has a Code of Conduct that details the steps to be taken and the grounds for suspension and expulsion. During the 2009-10 school year, there were seven incidences of in-school suspensions and 16 total days of out-of-school suspension for offenses such as bullying, fighting, inappropriate language and/or insubordination, and possession of inappropriate items (tobacco, pocket knife).

Diverse Learners

The Montessori philosophy recognizes the strengths and challenges of each individual and focuses on individualized, differentiated instruction. If a student appears to need additional support, he/she is referred to the Teacher Assistance Team (TAT) to provide evidence-based interventions for the student. The TAT team meets weekly to adjust the intensity and nature of those interventions depending on the student's responsiveness. Classroom teachers are required to make modifications to the classroom environment and/or their teaching style to accommodate the needs of the student, and data is collected. If, after these interventions, the child is still not making progress, he/she may be referred for Special Education testing in the area(s) of suspected disability. If the child qualifies for services, an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is designed and implemented by the Special Education team.

All students access the general education curriculum through guided instruction and independent work in the general education classroom. If the nature or severity of a disability is such that education in regular classes cannot be achieved satisfactorily, even with the use of supplementary aids and services, then the school offers specialized instruction in a pull-out resource room setting. The child's placement and the services he/she receives are dependent on the child's individual needs as mandated by the Individual with Disabilities Education Act. Instruction in other settings is used to modify, supplement and support the standard HVM educational program.

In FY10 HVM's Special Education department restructured in order to better meet the needs of students with disabilities. The Special Education model transitioned to a case manager model, better enabling special education staff and general education staff to work in unison. One teacher/manger was assigned to approximately 15 students and was responsible for service delivery, annual goals and the IEP process. In most instances, the case managers were assigned to students in only one or two classrooms resulting in stronger connections with those general education teachers and facilitating a more inclusive approach.

Beginning in the 2007-08 school year, HVM also initiated services for English Language Learners. A number of students have been tested and to date, three students have been identified as Limited English Proficient (LEP) and qualify for direct English instruction. During this school year, the three identified students worked with a teacher in a small group and one-on-one to receive direct English instruction. These students were also pre-taught vocabulary and concepts as well as provided with tools/techniques to assist with their language development. As described above, the long classroom work blocks facilitates the delivery of specialized services for students such as English language learners.

Supervision and Evaluation of Teachers

As documented in the *Hill View Montessori Charter Public School Staff Supervision and Evaluation Plan*, a process is in place for developing and retaining high quality staff. Supervision and evaluation

of teachers is designed to be done on an annual and differentiated basis. The original plan was adjusted prior to the start of the FY10 school year to better serve teachers with greater longevity. The current plan states that teachers who have been teaching 2 years or less at HVM will undergo annual observations and evaluations according to a specific and descriptive set of essential teaching standards while experienced teachers (3+ years) will be evaluated based on observations as well as collaborative work using data and information to analyze the impact of teaching strategies on student learning. At the beginning of each year, the evaluation process will be determined for each staff person through a discussion between the staff member and the immediate supervisor.

The supervision plan includes forms that guide the reflection, observation and evaluation process. These forms are based on the work of Charlotte Danielson as described in her book, *A Framework for Teaching*. In particular, there is a focus on the following areas (defined as Domains in Danielson's work): planning and preparation (Domain 1), classroom environment (Domain 2), instruction (Domain 3) and professional responsibilities (Domain 4).

During FY10, all teachers met with their supervisor to establish goals for the year related to the various Domains. The goals aligned with the school's overall goals, the school's accountability plan as well as the school-wide professional development plan. All teachers were observed as outlined in the supervision plan. Teachers completed a self-reflection at the end of the year and a summative evaluation was prepared by their supervisor. These evaluations will be used as input for future goal setting and will be the basis for what supports and professional development programs are offered. Newer teachers as well as teachers identified as needing guidance from the Educational Program Director received, and will continue to receive, more supervision and feedback on a consistent basis.

Professional Development

One of HVM's strengths is that it has a small, collaborative professional community where staff feel committed to working together. To support this collaboration, lead classroom teachers are given approximately two hours a week, to meet with colleagues from their level (sometimes including special education and Title 1 teachers) to discuss curriculum, assessment objectives, student learning and/or concerns, teaching strategies, and classroom management techniques. These meetings provide a forum for school-based professional development. In addition to this meeting, many other professional development opportunities were provided.

School-wide professional development goals are set each year based on student achievement and input from administrative and teaching staff. Academic performance in ELA and math has not met our expectations so raising student achievement in this area with a special effort on better serving our struggling special education students has been an ongoing focus. Part of this work requires increasing staff's capacity as Montessori teachers since that is the basis for HVM's curriculum.

Below are all of HVM's professional development goals for 2009-10 along with the activities undertaken in each area:

<i>Increase teachers' capacity in literacy and math instruction</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continued work with 6+1 Traits writing rubrics throughout year (all teachers)• Reading Coach, Lesley Collaborative, LE and UE teachers- April 2010 (all teachers)• Wilson Language Training for three Special Education teachers- summer 2009• Montessori math training for UE teachers provided by HVM middle school teacher during '09-'10 collaborative time• Half day training with ALEKs representative (all grade 3-7 teachers)

<i>Increase teachers' capacity to use data to inform instruction</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data driven instruction workshop series throughout 2009-10 school year (all teachers) • Data driven instruction coaching throughout 2009-10 school year (all teachers)
<i>Strengthen Montessori training for both Montessori and non-Montessori trained teachers</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Montessori math workshop for assistants and teachers who have not had this type of training - fall 2009 • Montessori training for three lead teachers – summer 2009 • Montessori music workshop – summer 2010 (music teacher) • AMS Montessori conference - March 2010
<i>Provide teachers tools to better support students with Special Needs</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Half-day workshop about special education laws and classroom teachers' responsibility – fall 2009 • Special education consultant- restructuring TAT process with teachers, inclusion support during collaborative • Executive Functioning: Aiding Students in the Classroom- April 2010

Training is evaluated in multiple ways. First, during teacher observation and evaluations, the Educational Program Director looks for evidence of application of the skills taught whether it is reflected in Montessori lessons, writing instruction, or addressing the needs of special education students. Second, the impact on student performance compared to prior years is used to gauge training effectiveness. In particular, the administration looks closely at formative math and writing assessments as well as MCAS to determine training impact. The team also looks at the progress of specific subgroups including special education students. Finally, surveys were administered to determine the impact of the data-driven instruction professional development.

ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY

Objective O1: HVM will be fiscally sound.

Measurement O1.1: An annual independent external audit will be conducted and quarterly (unaudited) financial reports presented to show that HVM is maintaining and operating within an accurate, balanced budget.

Progress: HVM met this measure.

An independent external review for the 2008-2009 school year was conducted by Rucci, Bardaro & Barrett, P.C., Malden, MA . HVM received an unqualified audit opinion. In addition, during FY10, quarterly financial reports showing that HVM is maintaining and operating within an accurate, balanced budget were presented to, and approved by, the HVM Board of Trustees.

Objective O2: HVM will be fully enrolled and have an ample pool of student applicants.

Measurement O2.1: The number of applicants for admission to Kindergarten each year will be at least 65. There will be a combined wait list of at least 100 students for grades 1-8.

Progress: HVM met the measure for the number of applicants as well as for the waitlist.

There were 71 applicants to kindergarten during the March 2010 lottery and 16 to all other grades. An additional lottery will be held in August 2010. The waitlist is currently 370 grade K-8 students.

Objective O3: HVM will have highly qualified professional staff.

Measurement O3.1: Annually, HVM will retain 90% of the lead teaching staff who have received positive evaluations and whose life circumstances allow them to continue teaching at Hill View Montessori Charter Public School.

Progress: HVM met this measure.

Ninety five percent of lead teaching staff who had positive evaluations and whose life circumstances did not preclude them, are returning to HVM for the FY11 school year. HVM had 15 lead general education teaching staff, four special education and three Title I teachers this past year. Of these 22 fulltime teaching staff, one teacher's life circumstances have interfered with her ability to continue working at HVM as she is moving out of state. One other teacher has accepted a position in a district school and will deliberately not be returning to HVM for the 10-11 school year

Measurement O3.2: 100% of HVM teaching staff will have a written evaluation every year and two documented observations will be done for all teachers in their first and second years and every third year thereafter.

Progress: HVM met this measure.

All full-time members of the teaching staff had beginning-year goal setting meetings and a written annual evaluation. Teachers in their first, second and fifth years received two observations which were individually documented except for four teachers whose observations were included as part of their final evaluations. Those who did not receive documented observations met with the Educational Program Director during the middle of the year to review progress toward meeting their goals. Also, additional observations and/or other supports were provided as needed or requested

Objective O4: The HVM Board of Trustees (BOT) will demonstrate effective governance of the school.

Measurement O4.1: The BOT will provide effective oversight of the school's progress toward the Accountability Plan by reviewing applicable measurable data at least three times per year.

Progress: HVM met this measure.

A "dashboard" was developed in 2008 to provide a concise update of HVM's results compared to benchmarks for achieving accountability goals. This tool continued to be used for the 2009-10 school year. The board reviewed the dashboard data for each of the three formative assessment periods (fall, winter and spring).

Measurement O4.2: The BOT will ensure that the annual operations and facilities fundraising goals, as documented in the HVM Development Plan, are met.

Progress: HVM met this measure.

The board set very aggressive development goals last year anticipating a need for additional funding to purchase a building. The goal for this past year was to raise \$205,000: \$80,000 from Foundations and \$125,000 from individuals and corporations. HVM surpassed this goal in both categories and raised approximately \$237,000 in total during FY10. One hundred thousand of the funds raised came from two foundation grants (surpassing the goal by \$20,000). The remainder was raised through fundraising

targeted at individuals and corporations (surpassing the goal by approximately \$12,000). Overwhelmingly, the majority of funds received were from individuals.

***Measurement O4.3:** The BOT will generate an outside evaluation of BOT operations every two years and self-evaluations in-between and will respond to all findings within six months.*

Progress: HVM met this measure.

The Board of Trustees hired K. Weill Consulting to perform an outside evaluation of the operations of its board as a means to identify areas where the BOT could implement strategies designed to improve its performance. This assessment was conducted over the course of approximately 6 weeks during February and March 2010. As part of this work, there was a thorough review of documents (including surveys, meeting minutes, board retreat documents) and interviews of all Trustees including the Executive Director. The interview data was aggregated and analyzed, and a PowerPoint presentation of findings and recommendations was developed.

The consultant also conducted a 2-hour board retreat where the findings and recommendations were shared. Then he facilitated a discussion to generate strategies for improvement. These strategies were later adjusted and transferred to an action plan. Some of these actions have already been completed and others are still in process under the direction of the Trustees committee.

Policy Decisions

The HVM Board of Trustees has a number of subcommittees that meet regularly to perform the work of the board. These committees research items under the board's consideration, share information with the board and make recommendations for future board member votes. Some decisions are also brought directly to the BOT from the Executive Director along with information needed to ensure an informed decision/vote. During the 2009-10 school year, the BOT made decisions in the following areas:

School Facilities

- Voted to allow the Executive Director to sign a lease for space for HVM's Middle School program at a Little Sprouts facility starting in August 2009.
- Voted to guarantee tax-exempt financing in an amount not to exceed \$3.4 million so a loan could be made to the HVM Foundation to purchase the building at 75 Foundation Avenue Haverhill.
- Voted to approve a long-term lease with the HVM Foundation for 49,000 square feet in the building at 75 Foundation Avenue Haverhill including a payment of \$195,000 towards leasehold improvements to prepare the building to specifications.

Finance

- Voted to change the signature authorities on the savings and checking accounts to members of the current board and administration and removed former board and staff members from this role.
- Approved updates to the school's Finance Policies related to petty cash.
- Voted to permit the school to get a debit/credit card for use as specified in the Finance Policies.
- Approved amendments to the FY10 budget.

Development

The board voted to approve the FY10 and FY11 Development Plans.

Accountability

The board voted to submit the Annual Report to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. They also approved changes to the school's Accountability Plan.

School Operations

- The personnel policies of the school were reviewed and updated.
- The board voted to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) committing the school to implement the initiatives in the State's Race to the Top grant proposal.
- The board also approved the FY11 school calendar.

Amendments to the Charter

There was one amendment request filed by the Board of Trustees during the 2009-10 school year. The BOT requested approval to change the bylaws to remove a section that prevents the school from being a guarantor. This was done so the school could guarantee a loan for the HVM Foundation to purchase a building where the school would lease space. There was also a request to make a minor change to the required number of board members.

Complaints

In FY10, one official complaint was received in writing by the Board of Trustees from a former school employee. It followed a complaint that was first sent to the BOT in FY09. In keeping with the school's grievance policy, the BOT referred the initiator of the complaint to the Executive Director first. When the initiator of the complaint did not find the Executive Director's response to the grievance satisfactory, it was sent to the BOT for follow-up.

As per the HVM Grievance Policy, a subcommittee was created and all parties to the complaint were invited to the meeting. The committee then made a decision on how to address the complaint, ensured that this decision was carried out and responded in writing to the initiator regarding the decision.

Oversight

The Board of Trustees assessed the performance of the Executive Director's (ED) and the school throughout the year with both informal and formal measures. To assess the performance of the school, the BOT relies on a number of measures. Three times per year the BOT receives a "Dashboard" (as described previously). The Dashboard provides a snapshot view of the school's progress on the majority of its accountability goals. It also provides a detailed snapshot of particular parts of the school's academic program broken down by curricular area and grade. Last, a "step-down" level of the academic snapshot is also provided in order to provide the BOT with insight about academic growth.

In terms of informal feedback, HVM is a collaborative environment where many of the board members have regular contact with the school and participate in school activities. In this context, board members received feedback from parents in an informal manner throughout the school year.

The Board of Trustees provides a formal annual review for the Executive Director. Various sources of information are used as input to this evaluation. In particular, performance is based on detailed and separate surveys of the parents, staff and board members. In addition, the annual audit and periodic Dashboard reports are used as indicators of the performance of the school and its leader. Based on this information, the BOT provides feedback to the ED.

Board Planning

During FY10, the board's major focus was to support the Foundation board's effort toward securing and renovating a permanent site in which the school could lease space, and then supporting the school's

efforts to move into this site. In support of this work, the Board of Trustees again collaborated with the HVM Foundation by approving a joint FY10 Development Plan as well as approving site work to move forward.

To support joint work on the goals in the Development Plan, the Development Committee was co-chaired by one member from each of the two boards: governing and foundation. Similarly, a representative from the Foundation took an active role on the Site Task Force. The development and site goals were overseen by the committees and monitored by the board through monthly reports given by the chair of each of these committees. The major development efforts included a series of “Roadshows” arranged by the development committee during the summer of 2009 to share news about the impending building purchase and request donations to support this work. Major site efforts included support for obtaining financing and overseeing building renovations.

After the building was purchased and the school moved, the board conducted an outside audit of its operations as called for as part of the school’s Accountability Plan. This audit was followed by a retreat where objectives were created in the following priority areas:

Development and Financial Stability

- Develop clear consistent messaging and tailor it to specific audiences,
- Clarify the relationship between the board and foundation with respect to fundraising,
- Recruit and add board members with fundraising expertise and/or sufficient means to support the school financially,
- Strengthen and clarify BOT expectations and accountability for fundraising,
- Ensure financial stability by better understanding and planning for the school’s future needs.

Mission

- Reaffirm HVM’s commitment to Montessori education.

Governance

- Ensure that board meetings are run at the governance level and do not stray to managerial or administrative discussions.

For each of these objectives, action steps have been created and the board and its subcommittees will be focusing on these in the upcoming months.

Family Satisfaction

Each year since the school has opened, HVM has conducted family and staff surveys. Both surveys were administered in the winter of 2010 via Survey Monkey, an online survey tool. Participants were given at least two weeks to respond and received multiple reminders of the survey and its link. They were also given the opportunity to complete the survey electronically or in hard copy.

Results from the family survey were positive and included that 98% percent of families who answered the survey would recommend HVM to other parents in the community. Staff survey results were also positive overall. A sample of some of the results from both surveys follow:

Selected FY10 Family Survey Results

Survey Questions*	Satisfied or Very Satisfied
Overall experience at HVM	97%
Overall academic program	96%
Overall standards and expectations for students	93%
Quality of Executive Director	94%
Quality of Educational Program Director	96%
Quality of Classroom Teachers	92%
School Facility	98%
Lunch program	66%
<i>*tabulations exclude survey respondents who indicated N/A</i>	

More than 1/3 of HVM families participated in this year’s survey than in past years, a significant increase over last year. In response to the mediocre level of satisfaction with the lunch program, HVM decided to revisit its selection of a lunch vendor. An RFP was initiated and a task force was formed that included staff, parents and students. The task force received proposals from and evaluated four lunch vendors and a decision was made to contract with a new vendor beginning September 2010.

Selected FY10 Staff Survey Results

Survey Questions	Agree or Strongly Agree
The HVM mission and core values are clear to me	88%
I feel personally committed to my work at HVM and want to return next year	91%
Overall I am satisfied with my job at HVM	78%
The Executive Director conveys high academic, social and personal expectations for ALL students	77%
I feel that the school community (staff, parents, board, etc.) is working together toward common goals	81%
I understand the role of the HVM Board of Trustees	80%
I am satisfied with my pay and benefits at HVM	74%

The staff survey was completed by 62% of the HVM staff and included open comment sections as well as multiple choice answers. Based on the results of both the staff and parent surveys, plans have been made to address the areas that were a concern for the largest percentage of people.

Financial Oversight

HVM’s Executive Director, with input from the rest of the school’s administrative team, prepared an annual operating budget of revenues and expenses, and a capital budget reflecting the needs of both the academic and administrative areas of the school. Priorities were set based on the school’s core values. In particular, close consideration was given to retaining and hiring highly qualified teachers and staff members with the goal of supporting high levels of student achievement. During FY10, HVM implemented a salary scale for teachers.

In keeping with these priorities but knowing that funding was being cut for FY11, the administrative team worked diligently to raise revenues and decrease expenses in areas that would minimize impact on the education of students. In particular, a commitment was made to increase efforts to ensure greater grant revenue. An arrangement was also made to sublease space to raise additional income. In addition, a less expensive health insurance plan was negotiated. One cut was made to the core educational services by eliminating the middle school Spanish program. The administrative team determined that time and funding

were best spent on the general education curriculum during these tight economic times. One paid elective will also be cut and replaced with a choice that will be provided by a volunteer.

Special attention was given to ensure that the FY11 budget incorporates the rent and maintenance costs for our new facility while also including some raises for teachers. The raises were less than desired (around 1%) but given our financial constraints, it was a significant effort to give any increase. The draft budget was reviewed and approved by the Finance Committee, then sent to the Board of Trustees where it was reviewed and modified as necessary, before final approval was given.

Dissemination

During the 2009-10 school year, HVM disseminated its work in the following ways:

- Participated in the Rennie Center Education Research and Policy project commissioned by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to find examples of best practices for teaching 21st Century Skills.
- Hosted students from Northern Essex Community College in kindergarten classrooms.
- Shared information about HVM's program with group of individuals evaluating the opportunity of applying for a new public Montessori charter school.
- Shared experiences nationally via the Educational Program Director's work conducting Montessori observations.
- Presented on public Montessori literacy program at annual national Montessori conference.
- Shared work in data-driven instruction another Montessori public school and offered to do the same with the local district.
- Hosted visitors from other schools who were interested in learning more about Montessori education.
- Held bi-monthly community tours that allowed visitors to hear about charter schools, the Montessori Method, and HVM specifically.
- Presented on Facilities Acquisition at Massachusetts Center for Charter Public School Excellence Leadership Summit.
- Shared information about the purchase and renovation of the new facility with members of our district, and hosted an open house for the greater Ward Hill Business Park community.
- Hosted a visit from the Commissioner of Education, Paul Reville.
- Published a school paper entirely written by students within the local Haverhill newspaper.
- Received press via numerous articles in the local papers.

Financial Reports

FY10 Unaudited Statement of Operating Revenues & Expenses and FY11 Budget

Ordinary Income/Expense	FY10	FY11 Budget
Income		
4000 · State Sources		
Total 4000 · State Sources	2,539,238	2,575,536
Total 4200 · Federal Sources	204,260	200,500
Total 4300 · Private Grants	10,018	85,000
Total 4400 HVM Foundation	0	15,000
Total 4700 · Student Services Income	77,183	92,800
Total 4800 · Other Sources	28,885	32,000
Total Income	\$2,859,585	\$3,182,836
Expense		
5000 · Salaries and Wages	1,911,275	2,211,678
5050 · Payroll Taxes	95,228	117,996
5100 · Employee Benefits	99,799	114,393
5150 · Advertising	866	2,000
5200 BOT (Governance)	3,000	2,000
5250 · Consultants	146,412	157,500
5300 · Equipment & Furniture	16,562	11,000
5350 · Facilities	274,596	305,500
5400 · Fees, Licenses and Memberships	9,570	10,000
5450 · Insurance	33,637	31,700
5500 · Marketing/Public Relations	761	2,500
5550 · Materials & Supplies	36,534	42,000
5600 · Office Expenses	4,268	5,000
5650 · Professional Development	34,777	30,050
5700 · Outside Business Services	37,054	30,064
5750 · Student Services Expenses	58,565	67,500
5800 · Technology & Telecommunications	33,023	41,450
5850 · Misc Travel	1,547	0
5910 · Loss From Insurance Claim	1,000	0
Total Expense	\$2,798,476	\$3,182,330
Net Ordinary Income	\$61,109	\$506

FY10 Unaudited Balance Sheet As of June 30, 2010

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings	
Total Checking/Savings	732,369
Accounts Receivable	
Total Accounts Receivable	30,478
Total Other Current Assets	35,633

Total Current Assets	798,480
Total Fixed Assets	3,888,222

TOTAL ASSETS	\$4,686,703
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LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Liabilities

Current Liabilities

Accounts Payable	
Accounts Payable	5,837
Other Current Liabilities	
Capital Lease Payable	3,631,427
Other Current Liabilities	355,725

Total Liabilities	\$3,992,988
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Equity

3300 - Retained Earnings	707,966
Net Income	-14,252
Total Equity	693,714

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	\$4,686,703
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FY11 Capital Plan

The HVM Foundation purchased a building at 75 Foundation Avenue Haverhill, MA in November 2009 and then signed a long-term lease with HVM for use of 49,000 square feet for school operations. After the fall purchase, the Foundation completed renovations to bring the building up to code for a school (mostly upgrades to the fire alarm system and the HVAC system). These renovations were completed in February 2010 at which time HVM moved in and started to lease.

The building site committee has started exploring projects necessary to maintain and improve upon the building. However, there has not been enough time and research to finalize a long-term capital plan. Instead, the following list of possible projects has been compiled including two that are being completed this summer:

- MS and Lower Elementary Reconfiguration – The building at 75 Foundation Ave. has been configured using moveable partition walls. This summer some of those walls are being adjusted to create a more appropriate space for HVM’s growing middle school and to enlarge two lower elementary classrooms. This project is in progress and should be completed by mid-August. The project will cost approximately \$20,000 and is being funded by the Foundation from its fundraising revenue.
- Classroom Sink Installation – Sinks are being added to four of the lower elementary classroom. This project is in process and will be completed by mid-August. The project will cost approximately \$20,000 and is being funded by the Foundation with a grant from a private foundation received specifically for installing classroom sinks. A future project will add sinks to the kindergarten and middle school classrooms and will cost about \$10,000 since rough plumbing is already installed.
- Outdoor Play Area – HVM currently uses part of a parking lot as a student play area. Initial planning has begun for a play area but no details have been confirmed.
- HVAC Replacement – The Foundation is aware that the HVAC units that service the building will eventually need to be replaced so a plan is being put together for this work.

Data Section

Instructional Time:	
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<i>Total number of instructional days for the 2009-10 school year</i>	180
<i>First and last day of the 2009-10 school year</i>	8/31/09 6/23/10
<i>Length of school day/Exceptions:</i> 10 early release days of 3.5 hours for all grades Middle school and kindergarten day was 6.5 hours until February move to new facilities First 8 days of kindergarten were early release days for a total of 18 early release days;	7 hours

Student Enrollment Information:	
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Number of students who completed the 2008-09 school year but did not reenroll for the 2009-10 school year)	15
Total number of students enrolled as of October 1, 2009	271
Total number of students who enrolled during the 2009-10 school year after October 1, 2009	2
Total number of students who left during the 2009-10 school year after October 1, 2009	11
Total number of students enrolled as of the June 30, 2010 SIMS submission	267
Number of students who graduated at the end of the 2009-10 school year	NA
Number of students on the waitlist as of June 30, 2010	370

<i>Reason Cited for Departure</i>	<i>Number of Students</i>
Moved out of state	3
Chose to home school	1
Looking for increased structure	1
Convenience for family	1
Parents did not recognize academic improvement	1
No reason provided	4

Student Demographic & Subgroup Information (as of the 06/10 SIMS submission)		
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<i>Race/Ethnicity</i>	<i># of students</i>	<i>% of entire student body</i>
African-American	13	5%
Asian	5	2%
Hispanic	40	14%
Native American	0	0%
White	203	76%
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0	0%
Multi-race, non-Hispanic	6	3%
<i>Special education</i>	48	21%
<i>Limited English proficient</i>	3	1%
<i>Low income</i>	69	26%

Administrative Roster for the 2009-2010 School Year			
<i>Title</i>	<i>Brief Job Description</i>	<i>Start date</i>	<i>End date</i>
Janet Begin	Executive Director	May '07	NA
Kate Coltin	Educational Program Director	Sept '07	NA
Jonnie Lyn Evans	Data and Development Director	Jan '07	NA
Andrea Kwiatkowski	Personnel and Operations Director	May '08	NA

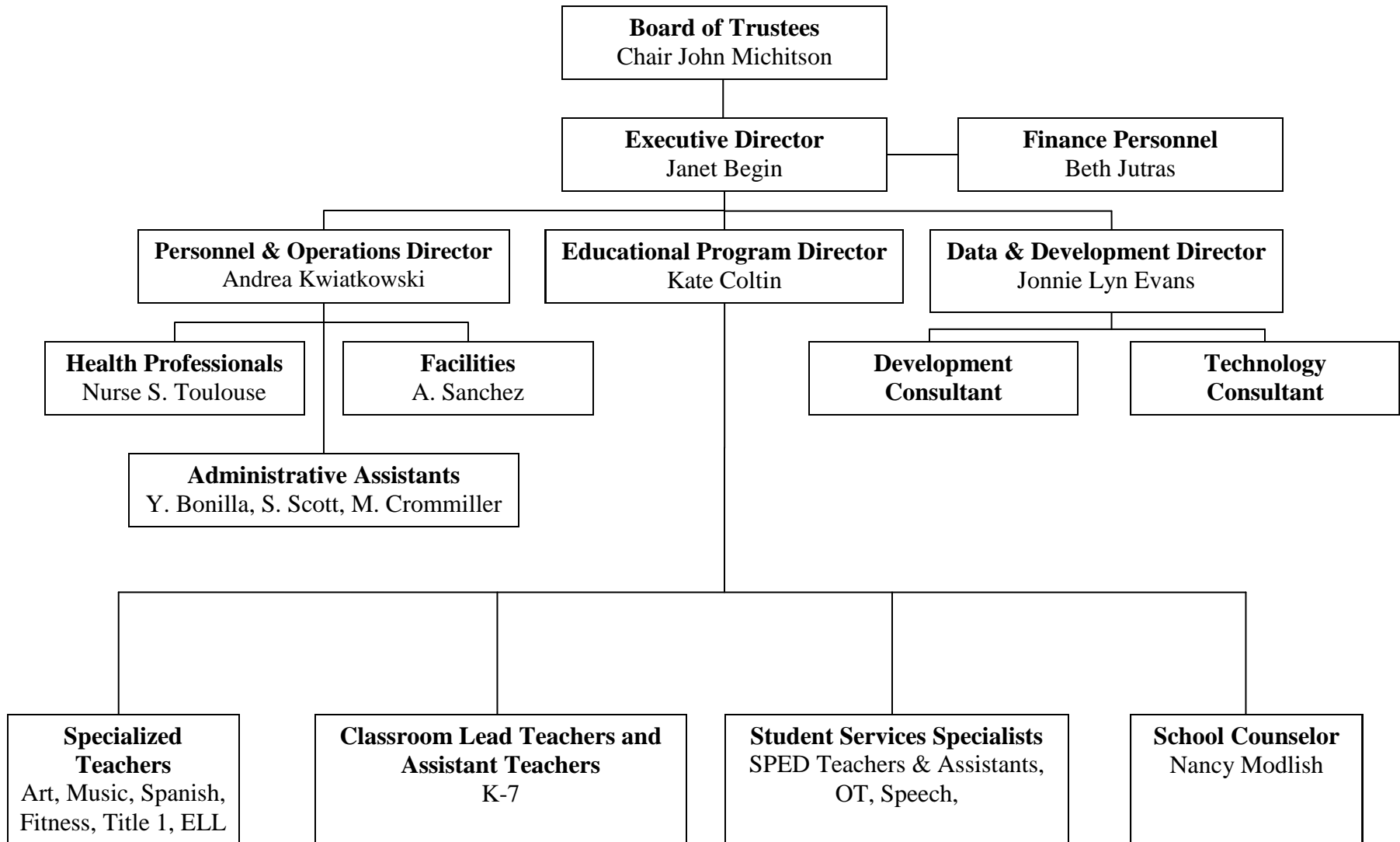
*Organization Chart follows data tables

Teachers and Staff Attrition for the 2009-2010 School Year			
	<i>Number as of the last day of the 2009-2010 school year</i>	<i>Departures during the 2009-2010 school year</i>	<i>Departures at the end of the school year</i>
Teachers	24	2	2
Other Staff	21	0	1

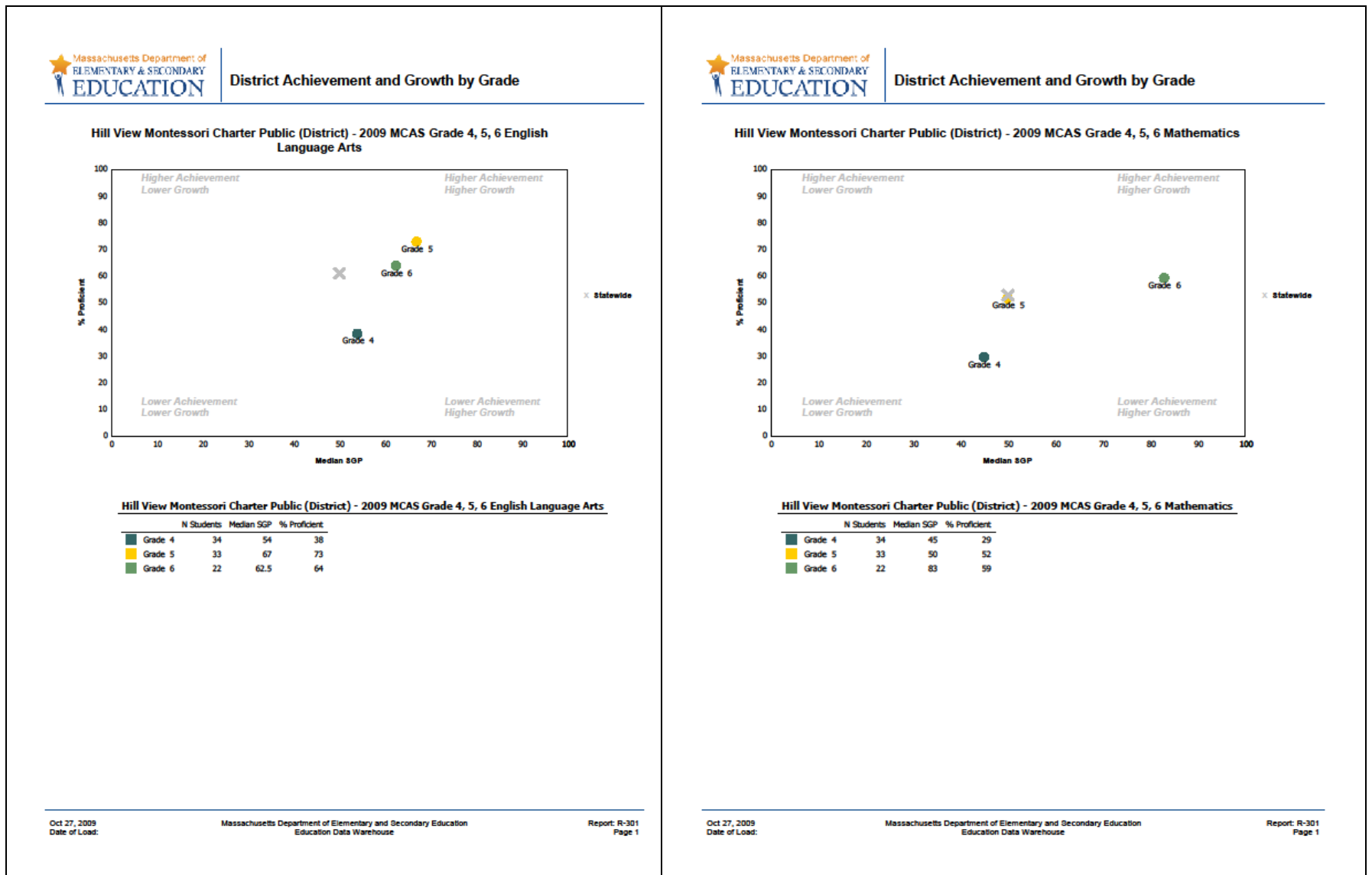
*Reasons for attrition: One teacher moved out of state; one chose to work at a district school; one took position in different field, one left for health reasons.

Board Members for the 2009-2010 School Year				
<i>Name</i>	<i>Position on the Board</i>	<i>Committee affiliation(s)</i>	<i>Area of expertise</i>	<i>- Number of terms served; - Length, date of election and expiration</i>
Michael Hoffman	Trustee	Site Task Force	Corporate management Parent of public Montessori K-8 students	Serving first 3-yr term, 7/07-6/10
Risobel Laracuente	Treasurer	Finance	Parent Finance	Serving first 3-yr term, 8/8-6/11
John Michitson	Chairperson	ED Evaluation Task Force	Engineering Local government	Serving second 3-yr term, 1/07-6/12
Nandesh Palinsamy	Clerk	Technology Task Force	Engineering Parent	Serving second 3-yr term, 1/05-6/10
Lisa Bergen	Trustee	Accountability	Montessori education	Serving first 3-yr term, 1/10-1/13
Shaw Rosen	Trustee	Trustees	Real estate Public school board	Serving second 3-yr term, 11/04-6/11
James Vanderpol	Trustee	Finance	Finance Non-profit management	Serving first 1.5-yr term, 2/09-6/10
Erik Ingersoll	Vice Chairperson	Development	Risk Management	Serving first 3-yr term, 7/09-6/12
Carol Landry	Trustee	Accountability	Educational Administration	Serving first 3-yr term, 1/10-1/13
Janet Begin	Ex-officio	All	Executive Director	Serving since 05/07

Hill View Montessori Charter Public School Organizational Chart (10.5.09)



Attachment 1: District Achievement and Growth by Grade (ELA and Mathematics)



Attachment 2: Rennie Center for Education Research and Policy Letter



April 10, 2010

Dear Ms. Begin:

Thank you for participating in our online survey entitled *Goals for Improving Student Learning*. I am writing to you today because we would like to learn more about what you and your staff are doing to support the teaching and learning of 21st century skills at Hill View Montessori Charter School.

Your school is one of three K-8 schools in Massachusetts selected to participate in the second phase of our study. The purpose of this research is two-fold: 1) to identify school-wide policies and practices for creating a culture that encourages and enables the integration of 21st century skills, and 2) to identify exemplary practices of individual educators. This project is being conducted by the Rennie Center for Education Research & Policy with funding from the Nellie Mae Education Foundation.

For this phase of the study, we would like to develop a brief case study about your school for the purpose of drawing out best practices that might be helpful for other schools. Research for the case study will include a 40-minute interview with you and one-on-one interviews with a few teachers who you think do an outstanding job of incorporating 21st century skills into core subject matter classes. Guidance on selecting teachers is attached.

The research for the case study should not take more than three hours of your and your staffs' time. We would like to conduct the interviews during a single visit to your school, at a time that is most convenient for you and your staff. If possible, we would like to visit your school between Monday, April 26 and Wednesday, May 19. I know this is a busy time of year and would most appreciate your willingness to participate in this important research.

A Rennie Center staff member will contact you by telephone in the next week or so to schedule the visit and answer any questions that you may have about the study. Or if you prefer, you may contact Ivy Washington at 617-354-0002.

We look forward to speaking with you.

Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lisa Famularo".

Lisa Famularo, Ph.D.
Research Director

Attachment 3: Dashboard

Hill View Montessori Charter Public School Dashboard				
FY 10 End of Year				
Critical Performance Area	Measurement	Target	7/1/2010	
Academic Success	A1.1	Reading - 75% at grade level benchmark	75	66
	A1.2	Writing - 85% scoring (f 14,17,20), (w 15,18,21), (s 16,19,22)	85	62
	A2.1	Math Tracking 1-3 - 70% mastering 20(f), 45(w),70(s)	70	66
	A2.1	Math Tracking 4-7 - 70% mastering 20(f), 45(w), 70(s)	70	54
Faithfulness to the Charter	F2.1	Development of Whole Child Report - consistent (%)	85	91
	F2.2	Classroom Community Service - participation rate (%)	100	100
	F2.2	MS Community Service 20 hrs/student (30 students)	600	482
	F3.1	Conference/Communication Rate - (%)	95	NA
Organizational Viability	O2.1	K Applicants (#) >2*slots	68	71
	O2.1	Waitlist for Grades 1-8 (#) >100	100	300
	O2.1	Highly Qualified Teachers (%)	100	96

(Continued, Academic dashboard)

Hill View Montessori Charter Public School Trimester Academic Dashboard

Updated for July 2010 Board Meeting

Goal	Measurement	Target:	FY10 Yr End	one level down (last yrs target)
			75%	70%
HVM students demonstrate high levels of reading achievement <i>DRA - 75% at grade level benchmark</i>	Grade 1	75	44	44
	Grade 2	75	71	71
	Grade 3	75	70	70
	Grade 4	75	71	71
	Grade 5	75	63	63
	Grade 6	75	76	76
	Grade 7	75	90	90
<p><i>NOTE: This measures the percentage of students who are reading at their respective grade level at the trimester assessment.</i></p> <p>Green ≥ 75 Yellow = 74-65 Red < 65</p>				
			≥16,19,22	≥15,18,21
HVM students demonstrate high levels of writing achievement <i>Writing Assess - 85% scoring 16,19,22 (s)</i>	Grade 1	85	74	85
	Grade 2	85	77	88
	Grade 3	85	70	76
	Grade 4	85	54	69
	Grade 5	85	40	49
	Grade 6	85	46	52
	Grade 7	85	72	86
<p><i>NOTE: This measures the percentage of students who received a designated cumulative score of the 6 traits at the trimester assessment.</i></p> <p>Green ≥85 Yellow = 84-75 Red <75</p>				
			70%	65%
HVM students demonstrate high levels of math achievement <i>1-3 Math Track Tool - 70% mastering 70 of standards</i> <i>4-7 ALEKS Track Tool - 70% mastering 70 of standards</i>	Grade 1	70	71	71
	Grade 2	70	59	71
	Grade 3	70	67	76
	Grade 4	70	37	57
	Grade 5	70	46	57
	Grade 6	70	64	73
	Grade 7	70	70	74
<p><i>NOTE: This measures the percentage of students who mastered x percent of grade level math topics at the trimester assessment.</i></p> <p>Green ≥ 70 Yellow = 69-60 Red <60</p>				