



**PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOLS IN THE
COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA**

PRESENTED TO

**GOVERNOR TIMOTHY M. Kaine
AND THE
VIRGINIA GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

July 25, 2007



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

P.O. Box 2120

Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120

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Superintendent of Public Instruction

August 7, 2007

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The Honorable Timothy M. Kaine
Governor of Virginia
Patrick Henry Building, 3rd Floor
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Members of the General Assembly of Virginia
Patrick Henry Building
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Governor Kaine and Members of the General Assembly:

I am pleased to submit the Board of Education's report on Public Charter Schools pursuant to Section 22.1-212.15 of the *Code of Virginia*. The Code requires the Board of Education to report annually its findings and evaluations of public charter schools to the Governor and the General Assembly, including the number of public charter school applications approved and denied.

If you have questions or require additional information relative to this transmittal request, please do not hesitate to contact me at 225-2023.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Billy K. Cannaday, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

Billy K. Cannaday, Jr.

BKCr/dj
Attachment

c: The Honorable Thomas Morris, Secretary of Education
Dr. Mark Emblidge, President, Board of Education

PREFACE

Section 22.1-212.11 of the *Code of Virginia*, as amended, requires local school boards to report annually to the Virginia Board of Education the status of public charter schools. Based on these compliance and performance criteria and other evaluation considerations, the objectives of the evaluation are as follows:

- Evaluate charter schools' progress in achieving the goals.
- Evaluate the performance of charter school students compared to the performance of other public school populations.
- Evaluate the impact of charter schools' activities in terms of contributions to the community and education system, in general.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

SUMMARY REPORT	Page
Executive Summary	iii
Chapter One	1
Purpose	1
Objectives and Scope of Evaluation	1
Summary Report	1
School-Specific Attachments	1
Sources	2
Structure of the Remaining Chapters of the Summary Report	2
Chapter Two	3
Background and Summary Information	3
A. <i>Code of Virginia</i> as Applied to Charter Schools	3
B. Waivers	3
C. Schools and Student Populations	3
D. Student Populations	4
Chapter Three	5
Evaluation of Charter School Student Performance	5
A. Student Selection Criteria	5
B. Comparing Charter School and Traditional School Student Performance	5
C. Student Achievement 2006-2007	6
1. Standards of Learning and Other Quantitative Testing	6
2. Qualitative Measure of Achievement	6
3. Other Measures of Achievement	6
D. Average Daily Attendance (ADA) Rate	6
E. Dropout Rate	7
Chapter Four	9
Overall Assessment	9
A. Effectiveness in Meeting the Needs of the Populations Served	9
B. Progress in Achieving Goals	9
C. Benefits Provided to Students	9
D. Factors Influencing the Status of Charter Schools in Virginia	10
E. Testimonials	10
ATTACHMENTS	12
Charter Schools Evaluation – 2006 - 2007	12
Attachment A1: Albemarle County Public Schools, Murray High School	13
Attachment A2: Hampton City Public Schools, Hampton Harbour Academy	16
Attachment A3: York County Public Schools, York River Academy	19

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The evaluation of the public charter schools of Virginia examines the three public charter schools in operation in the state during the 2006-2007 school year. All three schools are designed to provide alternative and experiential learning opportunities for students who are at-risk. However, differences among these schools include: the histories of the schools, characteristics of the communities served, characteristics of the students enrolled, size of the student bodies, grade levels served, resources available, and educational approaches and priorities.

Key Observations and Findings

National

- Laws. Forty states and the District of Columbia have charter school laws in place.
- Schools. In 2006-2007, of the more than 94,000 public schools nationally, 3,940 were charter schools. This represents an increase of 11 percent from 2005-2006.
- Grades. Fifty-two (52) percent of the charters are at the elementary level, 21 percent are at the middle and high school level, and 27 percent are a combination.
- Students. A total of 1.16 million students are enrolled in charter schools. This represents an increase of 7.4 percent from 2005-2006.
 - The charter schools serve a student body that is on average 53 percent minority and 54 percent low-income.
 - In 2006, more than four in ten charter schools served a student body comprised of 60 percent or more “at risk” and minority students.
 - The average enrollment per school is 295 students.¹

Virginia

- Schools. Three charters operated in Virginia in 2006-2007. The total enrollment for the three charter schools was 237 students as of June 2007. Two proposed charter schools were denied by their respective school boards in Richmond City and Loudoun County during the 2006-2007 school year. The charter for Murray High School in the Albemarle County Public Schools expired at the end of June and will not be renewed. The school will continue to operate as a nontraditional magnet and specialty high school but not as a public charter school. For 2007-2008, two charter schools will operate in Virginia, in York County and Hampton City.

¹ “Charter Schools Fast Facts.” 10 May 2007. Center for Education Reform. Washington, D.C. 17 May 2007.

<http://www.edreform.com/csoy/>

<http://www.edreform.com/index.cfm?fuseAction=section&pSectionID=59>. Path: Site Index.

- Staff. The three schools reported a total of approximately 36.5 staff members including principals, teachers, paraprofessionals, and guidance counselors. The average student-to-teacher ratio was 9 students per teacher.
- Progress in Achieving Goals. Progress as reported in terms of improved academic achievement, average daily attendance, and decreased dropout rates varies from year to year and among the schools. Two schools, Murray High School and York River Academy achieved Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) performance targets under the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* for the 2006-2007 school year based on data from spring 2006. For 2004-2005, 2005-2006, and 2006-2007, Murray High School and York River Academy were also fully accredited. Although Hampton Harbour Academy did not make the AYP or Accreditation performance targets for the 2006-2007 school year, the Virginia Board of Education granted Hampton Harbour Academy a status of “Accreditation Withheld/Improving School Nearing Accreditation” for 2006-2007 because of its significant academic progress. The final accreditation and AYP results for 2007-2008, based on 2006-2007 assessments, will be available after the Standards of Learning (SOL) data have been released.
- Average Daily Attendance and Dropout Rates. The overall average daily attendance rate in the charter schools has improved slightly during the last several years and is presently at 91.3 percent. The state rate is 95.2 percent. While dropout rates in the public charter schools have historically been higher than comparable rates for the divisions in which they are chartered, dropout rates over the last several years for these schools have improved. Official dropout rates for 2006-2007 will be available from the Virginia Department of Education after October 1, 2007.
- Comparison of Student Performance. The performance of pupils in charter schools as compared to students in other schools is reported in Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and Standards of Learning (SOL) assessment results. Assessment results indicate that in some cases, student performance in the charter schools exceeds that of the more traditional school; in other cases it does not. This is to be expected in schools that address the needs of at-risk students whose poor academic achievement may have contributed to their attendance at the charter school. Some schools also self-reported that survey responses by students and parents suggest that these students are generally performing better than if they had remained in a traditional school.
- Impact on the Community. All of the schools report programs to achieve parental and community involvement. The perceptions of the schools, community awards, other forms of recognition, and parental surveys suggest success in these efforts. Survey results suggest that the small size, individualized instruction, and innovative approaches to education found in these schools have had a positive impact on the communities they serve.

The *Code of Virginia* and Charter Schools

The 2006-2007 Virginia General Assembly passed House Bill 2311, Public Charter School Fund, during the 2006-2007 session. This act amended the *Code of Virginia* by adding a section numbered 22.1-212.5:1, relating to the establishment of a public charter school fund.

The purpose of this fund is to establish a mechanism whereby gifts, grants, bequests, or donations from public or private sources can be paid into the state treasury and credited to the fund for establishing or supporting public charter schools in the Commonwealth that stimulate the development of alternative public education programs. Criteria for making distributions from the fund are being established by the Virginia Board of Education.

Growth of Charter Schools in Virginia

In July 2005, the United States Education Department (USED) awarded three federal charter school grants for proposed public charter schools in Albemarle, Richmond, and Norfolk. The charter school applications in Norfolk and Albemarle are under review by the respective local school boards. The Richmond City charter school application was denied by the Richmond City School Board in April 2007. The Richmond Public School Charter School Application Review Team recommended denial to the local board citing “the proposal lacks specificity regarding how it is qualitatively different than instruction efforts currently being provided to Richmond Public School students.” The Loudoun County School Board also denied a charter school application for a science academy in August 2006. The Loudoun County charter school applicant did not receive a federal charter school grant. Among the reasons cited for denial included lack of evidence that the charter school would offer an enhanced course of study; curriculum was not well-aligned with the Standards of Learning; program was not superior to the programs offered by the Loudoun County Public Schools in any of the content areas; and financial projections were understated.

In Superintendent’s Memorandum, Number 16, Administrative, dated April 27, 2007, “Charter School Report for 2006-2007,” superintendents were asked to respond to the following charter school question: “Please list barriers you perceive in establishing charter schools in Virginia.” Forty six (46) percent of the respondents listed no barriers, 16 percent cited lack of funding resources, and 15 percent responded there was no interest in forming charter schools. Other barriers cited included: satisfaction with the public school system, lack of local facilities, and lack of political will for establishing charter schools. Six (6) percent submitted no response or responded they had not studied the issue sufficiently to identify barriers.

CHAPTER ONE

Purpose

This report provides the results of an evaluation of the public charter schools in Virginia. The evaluation examines the three public charter schools in operation during the 2006-2007 school year. All of these schools serve at-risk students.

Objectives and Scope of Evaluation

The goals of the three charter schools included in this evaluation are similar in that they are all designed to provide alternative and experiential learning opportunities for students who are at-risk. While the general goal is similar, there are also differences among these schools such as:

- histories of the schools;
- characteristics of the communities served;
- characteristics of the students enrolled;
- size of the student bodies;
- grade levels served;
- resources available; and
- educational approaches and priorities.

Summary Report

The summary report focuses on evaluation considerations applicable for all charter schools in the Commonwealth. Section 22.1-212.11 of the *Code of Virginia*, as amended, requires local school boards to report annually to the Virginia Board of Education the status of public charter schools. Various sections of this Code delineate compliance and performance criteria. In that context, the objectives of this evaluation are as follows:

1. Evaluate charter schools' progress in achieving their goals.
2. Evaluate the performance of charter school students compared to the performance of other public school populations.
3. Evaluate the impact of charter schools' activities in terms of their contributions to the community and education system, in general.

School-Specific Attachments

Differences in the characteristics of the three schools and in the data provided by each restrict the ability to provide comparable reporting of charter school performance at the summary report level. These differences also make it difficult to capture many of the unique characteristics and accomplishments of the individual schools. An attachment is provided for each charter school that includes selected school-specific information for many of the same evaluation areas considered in the summary report.

Sources

The information, observations, and findings in both the summary report and the attachments are primarily based on the following sources:

- Information collected by the Virginia Department of Education (VDOE) through an annual report. These reports were submitted to the VDOE in June 2007 for the 2006-2007 school year by the school divisions that had public charter schools operating during that period.
- Additional data available to the VDOE that were used to augment the school division reports.
- Information collected by the VDOE on the number of charter school applications approved and denied by local school boards through Superintendent's Memorandum, Number 16, Administrative, dated April 27, 2007.
- Relevant information previously published by the VDOE.

Structure of the Remaining Chapters of the Summary Report

The summary report provides a collective evaluation of the three public charter schools in Virginia. The following sections of this summary report address:

- Chapter Two -- background information related to the *Code of Virginia* as it applies to charter schools as well as summary data related to the charter schools and student populations, waivers, staff, and initiatives to foster parental and community involvement;
- Chapter Three – evaluation of charter school student performance; and
- Chapter Four – the overall impact of charter schools in terms of:
 - effectiveness in meeting the needs of the students served;
 - progress in achieving the schools' goals;
 - benefits to the charter school students;
 - factors influencing the status of the schools; and
 - testimonials.

CHAPTER TWO

Background and Summary Information

This section provides general information addressed in the *Code of Virginia* as it applies to charter schools as well as general information profiling Virginia's charter schools.

A. The *Code of Virginia* as Applied to Charter Schools

As delineated in the *Code of Virginia* (§ 22.1-212.5), public charter schools in Virginia are nonsectarian, nonreligious, or non-home-based alternative schools located within a public school division intended to:

- stimulate the development of innovative educational programs;
- provide opportunities for innovative instruction and assessment;
- provide parents and students with more options within their school divisions;
- provide teachers with a vehicle for establishing schools with alternative innovative instruction and school scheduling, management, and structure;
- encourage the use of performance-based educational programs;
- establish and maintain high standards for both teachers and administrators; and
- develop models for replication in other public schools.

The 2006-2007 Virginia General Assembly passed House Bill 2311, Public Charter School Fund, during the 2006-2007 session. This act amended the *Code of Virginia* by adding a section numbered 22.1-212.5:1, relating to the establishment of a public charter school fund. The purpose of this fund is to establish a mechanism whereby gifts, grants, bequests, or donations from public or private sources can be paid into the state treasury and credited to the fund for establishing or supporting public charter schools in the Commonwealth that stimulate the development of alternative public education programs. Criteria for making distributions from the fund are being established by the Virginia Board of Education.

B. Waivers

Based on information collected in the annual evaluation in June 2007, one school, Hampton Harbour Academy, requested and received approval by the Board of Education for certain waivers for the 2006-2007 school year. The waivers were in the areas of: 1) course offerings and electives; 2) foreign language offerings; and 3) number of clock hours offered per year of instruction in science and history and social sciences.

C. Schools and Student Populations

Since the initial state legislation for charter schools was passed in 1998, eight charter schools in eight school divisions have been approved by local school boards. Three of these schools continued to operate through the 2006-2007 school year. A Virginia public charter may be approved or renewed for a period not to exceed five school years, but the school can be granted multiple renewals that permit operation for more than a total of five years. Table 1 provides summary information about these schools.

In July 2005, the United States Education Department (USED) awarded three federal charter school grants for proposed public charter schools in Albemarle, Richmond, and

Norfolk. The charter school applications in Norfolk and Albemarle are under review. The charter school application in Richmond was denied by the Richmond City School Board in April 2007. The Richmond Public School Charter School Application Review Team recommended denial to the local board citing “the proposal lacks specificity regarding how it is qualitatively different than instruction efforts currently being provided to Richmond Public School students.” The Loudoun County School Board also denied a charter school application for a science academy in August 2006. The Loudoun County charter school applicant did not receive a federal charter school grant. Among the reasons cited for denial included lack of evidence that the charter school would offer an enhanced course of study; curriculum was not well-aligned with the Standards of Learning; program was not superior to the programs offered by the Loudoun County Public Schools in any of the content areas; and financial projections were understated.

Table 1.
Virginia Public Charter Schools -- 2006-2007

Division	School	Year Opened	Grades Served	Enrollment (reported by the school in June 2007)
Albemarle County Public Schools	Murray High School	2001	9-12	109
Hampton City Public Schools	Hampton Harbour Academy	2001	6-8	88
York County Public Schools	York River Academy	2002	9-10	40

D. Student Populations

Virginia’s public charter schools serve a variety of grade levels and are relatively small. The schools report a total of 237 students enrolled as of June 2007. Virginia’s public charter school student population grew steadily from the opening of the first school in 1999 through the 2003-2004 school year. The student population declined in 2004-2005 and further declined during 2005-2006 with the decrease in the number of schools. The 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 charter school populations remained constant as did the number of schools. Table 2 profiles the statewide public charter school population over the last eight years.

Table 2.
Trend in Student Populations in Virginia Public Charter Schools

School Year	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Number of Public Charter Schools	1	1	6	8	7	5	3	3
Total Student Population [1]	41	40	440	685	745	555	231	237

Note [1]: Student population is based on charter school self-reported data.

CHAPTER THREE

Evaluation of Charter School Student Performance

Virginia's public charter schools focus on increasing educational opportunities and providing alternative educational programs for students who are potentially at some risk of academic failure. However, their population is not a representative subset of the traditional school student population. Assessing student performance using the Standards of Learning (SOL) test scores is valid and provides some insight toward performance gains, but for the charter school population, other metrics require consideration.

Many of the students, particularly older students enrolled in the two high school programs, were in danger of dropping out of school prior to attending the charter schools. Poor attendance, past academic failure, and other risk factors create challenges for the schools in raising the academic achievement level of these students, graduating them, and preparing them to be productive members of society. Despite the challenges, progress has been demonstrated and reported in improved academic achievement, improved average daily attendance, and a decrease in dropout rates. However, the quantitative results in the form of SOL achievement data vary from year to year and among schools.

A. Student Selection Criteria

Because the three schools evaluated have different educational models and objectives, they have different student populations. However, many of the criteria used to select students are similar. These criteria include selecting students who:

- have been unsuccessful in a traditional school setting and would benefit academically from a smaller, nontraditional school environment;
- are at risk for leaving school or graduating below potential;
- are over age for the grade level for a variety of reasons (e.g., dropped out, failed grade(s), medical reasons); and/or
- have chronic problems of attendance and/or discipline.

These criteria are unique to these schools and warrant consideration when evaluating the student performance. Other selection criteria such as student career interests and student willingness to commit to school policies and objectives vary. The local selection process also differs among schools.

B. Comparing Charter School and Traditional School Student Performance

Since the objective of Virginia's charter schools is to provide an alternative educational approach and environment to improve educational results for students who experienced failure or poor performance in the traditional schools, the issue of comparative performance is one of determining whether each individual student would perform, or has performed, better in a traditional or charter school. The performance of pupils in charter schools as compared to students in other schools is reported in Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) and Standards of Learning (SOL) assessment results.

C. Student Achievement 2006-2007

Measuring student achievement for the charter school student population also presents challenges. The charter school student population is small and lacks continuity from year-to-year. Given the at-risk profile of these students, modest testing results may reflect significant improvement and may represent only a small portion of the actual educational benefit realized.

- 1. Standards of Learning and Other Quantitative Testing.** Standards of Learning (SOL) assessment results will not be available for the 2006-2007 school year until fall 2007. A history of SOL test scores is provided in the attachment for each school. In general, SOL test results reflect variability by year, grade level, and test. Additionally, they have varied from school to school, ranging from comparable or better than the scores in the school division in which the school is chartered to lower than overall school division scores. For 2004-2005, 2005-2006, and 2006-2007 Murray High School and York River Academy were fully accredited. Murray High School and York River Academy met their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) objectives for the 2006-2007 school year based on assessment data from 2005-2006. Hampton Harbour Academy did not make its AYP objectives for the 2006-2007 school year based on assessment data from 2005-2006. Historically, Murray High School and York River Academy have produced SOL test scores that were comparable or better than the average overall scores from their divisions. Hampton Harbour Academy made significant academic progress between 2005-2006 and 2006-2007, and the Virginia Board of Education granted the school a status of “Accreditation Withheld/Improving School Nearing Accreditation” for 2006-2007. In summary, available SOL test data suggest improved student academic performance at the schools.
- 2. Qualitative Measures of Achievement.** Several schools conduct surveys that address student attitudes about the school experience, the desire to attend school, and the learning climate. These surveys also try to measure increases in the students’ personal ethics, collaboration, and cooperation. Some schools survey parents regarding the perceptions of their children’s attitudes and observable changes. Schools report that this qualitative and other anecdotal feedback suggest additional evidence of student improvement in the charter school setting.
- 3. Other Measures of Achievement.** Many of the at-risk students attending charter schools have a history of difficulties in discipline, attitude, and peer relationships; poor study habits; and communications issues. These characteristics lead to, or are correlated with, low attendance levels and higher dropout rates.

D. Average Daily Attendance (ADA) Rate

Chronic attendance problems are one of the selection criteria for entry into charter schools. Consequently, public charter schools in Virginia generally have student populations that have lower ADA rates than the traditional public student population.

Charter school and comparable division ADA rate data since 2001 are presented in Table 3. Average daily attendance rates for the 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 school years were reported for only one charter school and are not included. Complete ADA histories for the three evaluated schools and their divisions are provided in the school’s attachment.

The overall average daily attendance rate in the charter schools has improved modestly since 2001-2002. The division rates have remained constant at near the average state rate of 95.2 percent.

Table 3.
Average Daily Attendance – Charter Schools and Their Divisions

Average Daily Attendance [1]	2001-2002 [2]	2002-2003 [3]	2003-2004 [3]	2004-2005 [2]	2005-2006 [4]	2006-2007 [4]
Charter Schools	86.87%	86.15%	88.71%	87.78%	90.6%	91.3%
Divisions	95.10%	95.18%	95.19%	95.36%	95.7%	95.5%

Note [1]: Based on data provided by the VDOE.

Note [2]: Includes five charter schools and the divisions in which they were chartered.

Note [3]: Includes seven charter schools and the divisions in which they were chartered.

Note [4]: Includes three charter schools and the divisions in which they were chartered.

E. Dropout Rate

Another criterion used to select students for charter school placement is “their risk of leaving school.” Charter schools in Virginia generally have student populations that would predictably have higher dropout rates than the overall student population. Overall charter school and comparable division dropout rate data for the previous four years are presented in Table 4. Official dropout rates for 2006-2007 will not be available until after October 1, 2007. Dropout rates for 1999-2000 and 2000-2001 were reported for only one charter school and were not included. Complete dropout histories for the three evaluated schools and their divisions are provided in the school’s attachment.

Dropout rate data vary from school-to-school and over time for each charter school. As indicated by the data in Table 4, dropout rates in Virginia public charter schools have historically been higher than comparable rates for the divisions in which they are chartered. For 2005-2006, the charter schools dropout rates were above the state dropout rate of 1.88 percent.

Table 4.
Dropout Rates – Charter Schools and Their School Divisions

Dropout Rates [1]	2001-2002 [2]	2002-2003 [3]	2003-2004 [3]	2004-2005 [4]	2005-2006 [4]	2006-2007 [5]
Charter Schools [1]	18.0%	12.9%	6.7%	1.6%	3.6%	TBD
School Divisions [1]	2.6%	1.7%	1.5%	0.8%	1.7%	TBD

Note [1]: Based on data provided by the VDOE.

Note [2]: Includes five charter schools and the school divisions in which they were chartered.

Note [3]: Includes seven charter schools and the school divisions in which they were chartered.

Note [4]: Includes three charter schools and the school divisions in which they were chartered.

Note [5]: Official dropout rates for 2006-2007 for the three charter schools will not be available until fall 2007.

CHAPTER FOUR

Overall Assessment

The charter schools state they have all made progress towards the goals and objectives as stated in their charters. They believe that they have contributed positively toward the educational experience and lives of their students and the communities they serve. For most of these schools, available quantitative data support these perceptions, and qualitative data reinforce them.

A. Effectiveness in Meeting the Needs of the Populations Served

The schools identify their effectiveness as a school by the degree the school meets the “special needs” of its students. In general, they believe that the student populations served require an individualized, nurturing, and safe educational environment to be successful in school and increase their opportunity for success beyond school. Success cited by the schools includes return rates, graduation rates, parental support and feedback, community support, and school division support. The three schools also demonstrated academic improvement and improved performance on SOL tests as a measure of success.

B. Progress in Achieving Goals

The three public charter schools evaluated in this report expressed their progress differently, but stated their goals as:

- achieving state accreditation and meeting AYP targets;
- assuring graduation, completion, promotion, and other certifications;
- facilitating student access to postsecondary education and training opportunities;
- helping students transition into postsecondary educational, workforce, or military opportunities; and
- increasing parental and community involvement.

All of these schools report progress toward meeting some of these goals. However, goals varied from school-to-school and progress was mixed. Two schools achieved their AYP goals and were fully accredited for the 2006-2007 school year. One school that had not been accredited previously received a status of “Accreditation Withheld/Improving School Nearing Accreditation” for 2006-2007 because of its significant academic progress.

C. Benefits Provided to Students

All three schools report that a primary benefit they provide their students is an educational environment: (1) in which the students can be comfortable and competitive; (2) more suited to providing post-graduation opportunities for these specific students; and (3) more supportive of the special individual needs of these students.

D. Factors Influencing the Status of Charter Schools in Virginia

Schools provided a variety of responses regarding the factors that have contributed to their present status. Reported perceptions included support (i.e., school system, community, and parental support), funding, facilities, student selection, emphasis on technology, small, structured environments, and excellent staff.

E. Testimonials

Schools have provided statements from parents and students during the course of the year on the success of their charter school. Comments are provided below:

Parent/Guardian Statements

“I want to convey my appreciation for everything that you and the rest of the staff have done for [my child] this year. You have no idea just how different it is for us to be ending the school year not having to wonder if [my child] will fail. This has been such a positive experience for all of us.”

“I don’t know what to do in the mornings now. I don’t have to fight with my son to go to school; he loves school for the first time since the first grade.”

“Let us know what we can do to help make sure [the school] expands; it is the best hope for our son to finish high school.”

“When [name] entered [school], his grades changed dramatically. The teachers and principal have worked with my grandson and I to help him understand the value of an education. They understand that the children with learning disabilities, and living in a troubled environment need special help. I would like to thank [school] for helping my grandson and me for the 2006-2007 school year.”

“I called you earlier in the school year because I wanted to thank you and your staff for what you did for my son. [Name] is a very bright individual and your staff knew exactly how to show him what he was capable of and in doing so, prepared him for high school....He is doing very well and I feel that I have you, and your patient and understanding staff to thank for that. You have a good thing going at [school]. Don't ever stop!”

Student Statements

“More individual attention, better grades, good relationships with other students, and computer technology is top of the line. I want to stay here.”

“The first quarter here I had the best report card since the third grade.”

“[The school] has been a very big help to me. [The school] taught me how to study. The program at the school skipped me up to get ready for high school. Finally, the teachers are marvelous.”

“I feel that you have been there for us. I appreciate all the things that you do. If it weren’t for you, I would not be here. I thank you for hiring these wonderful teachers. With these teachers and their help, we will pass the SOL. Other people, me included, truly love the way you motivate us to do good things. Now I see why you stay on us. I see now why you always motivate us to do our work and get in uniform.”

“I really appreciate the hard work and dedication that you and your people are doing to help us to make it to high school. I feel like I can achieve any goal that I set my mind to since I came to [the school]. This school has shown me discipline, and most importantly respect towards others.”

“I would not be the person I am today if I had not gone to [school]. I have not only learned to love each and every living thing but I have learned to love myself.”

“The experience at [school] let me start believing in myself once again. I was so scared that it might not last, like the past two years of going to other schools. If it weren’t for the non-credit process, the teachers, and the administration [school], I wouldn’t have made it because any normal system would have advised me to get my GED due to the lack of attendance and assignments I would produce....Due to patience and perseverance, some of my burdens disappeared and hope in the world has been restored.”

“I have learned a lot in classes, but that isn’t the most significant thing. When I first arrived at [school] I really hated school and didn’t enjoy anything having to do with it. Now I enjoy school for the most part, and I want to learn more. I used to really hate writing, but now it is no longer so bad. I also now read much more because I want to continue learning after I graduate and for the rest of my life. I have also become a much happier and confident person.”

ATTACHMENTS

Charter Schools Evaluation – 2006-2007

The three charter schools in Virginia included in this evaluation are different. These differences make generalizations about charter school performance and impact difficult.

The following sections provide an attachment for each individual school that is included in the summary report. Each attachment includes the following school-specific information:

- General school information;
- Student performance Standards of Learning (SOL) test results;
- Attendance data;
- Dropout data;
- Professional development information; and
- Staffing data and information.

The data shown in these attachments are a combination of school self-reported information and information derived from Virginia Department of Education data sources.

Attachment A1

Albemarle County Schools, Murray High School

Year opened as a charter school:	2001
Grades served in 2006-2007:	9-12
Enrollment 2006-2007:	109
School designed to serve students considered to be at-risk:	Yes
Intends to operate as a charter school during the 2007-2008 school year:	No*

Student Achievement. Murray High School SOL test results have generally improved over its years as a charter school as shown in the table A1.1. The 2006-2007 SOL test results will not be available until fall 2007.

Table A1.1.
SOL Pass Rates for Murray High School

SOL End-of-Course Test Results [1]	School Percent Passing	School Percent Passing	School Percent Passing	School Percent Passing	<i>Division Percent Passing</i>	<i>School Percent Passing</i>	School Percent Passing
	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2005-2006	2006-2007
English Reading	71	100	96	82	89	92	[2]
English Writing	67	93	92	94	91	95	[2]
Algebra I	100	75	75	100	94	93	[2]
Algebra II	71	N/A	73	50	84	88	[2]
Geometry	90	83	90	88	89	94	[2]
World Geography	63	60	100	100	82	82	[2]
World History I	N/A	100	N/A	N/A	91	82	[2]
World History II	75	89	100	81	92	94	[2]
U. S. History	57	68	93	86	94	100	[2]
Earth Science	70	N/A	93	100	88	83	[2]
Biology	100	75	100	50	89	92	[2]

Note [1]: SOL test results for 2001-2006 were provided by VDOE in terms of percent passing.

Note [2]: SOL test results for 2006-2007 will not be available until fall 2007.

*The school will continue to operate as a nontraditional magnet and specialty high school but not as a public charter school in 2007-2008.

Average Daily Attendance (ADA). Table A1.2. provides a summary of average daily attendance rates for Murray High School and the school division in which it is chartered. Average daily attendance has improved slightly since becoming a charter school in 2001 and approaches overall attendance rates for the division.

Table A1.2.
Average Daily Attendance for Murray High School

Average Daily Attendance	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Murray High School	90.5%	93.3%	94.4%	91.6%	93.4%	94.5%
Albemarle County Public Schools	95.9%	95.8%	96.0%	96.1%	96.0%	96.1%

Dropout Rates. The following table summarizes dropout rates for Murray High School and the school division in which it is chartered. Dropout rates have been low and have historically been comparable to the division results. The 2006-2007 rate results will not be officially available until fall 2007, although Murray High School reported no dropouts during the 2006-2007 school year.

Table A1.3.
Dropout Rates for Murray High School

Dropout Rates [1]	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Murray High School	0%	1.9%	2.3%	2.2%	1.9%	[2]
Albemarle County Public Schools	0.8%	0.6%	1.4%	1.4%	1.6%	[2]

Note [1]: Dropout results for 2001-2006 were provided by VDOE.

Note [2]: Dropout results for the 2006-2007 school year will not be available until after October 1, 2007.

Professional Development. In response to survey questions concerning professional development offered at school, the school's response was:

Professional development customized for charter school personnel only:	No
Professional development hours provided:	Over 100
Number of professional development activities provided:	11 or more
Amount of communication with other charter schools within Virginia:	Very little
Amount of communication with other charter schools outside Virginia:	Very little
Opportunity to attend national meeting(s) regarding charter schools:	No

Staff. The 2006-2007 staffing data indicate one Murray High School teacher per 10 students enrolled. The school reported that all teachers were licensed and endorsed. Staffing data for Murray High School are summarized in Table A1.4.

Table A1.4.
Staffing for Murray High School for 2006-2007

Category	Total Number of Staff (FTE)	Positions Filled by Licensed and Endorsed Individuals (FTE)	Percent Filled by Licensed and Endorsed Individuals
Principal/Director	1.0	1.0	100
Teachers	10.83	9.83	90
Paraprofessionals	0.66	N/A	N/A
Guidance Counselors	1.0	1.0	100

Attachment A2

Hampton City Schools, Hampton Harbour Academy

Year opened as a charter school:	2001
Grades served in 2006-2007:	6-8
Enrollment 2006-2007:	88
School designed to serve students considered to be at-risk:	Yes
Intends to operate as a charter school during the 2007-2008 school year:	Yes

Student Achievement. Hampton Harbour Academy student Standards of Learning (SOL) test scores reflect substantial variability by year, grade level, and test. The school's results improved markedly in English and mathematics in 2005-2006. The 2006-2007 SOL results will not be available until fall 2007.

Table A2.1.
SOL Pass Rates for Hampton Harbour Academy

SOL End-of-Course Test Results [1]	School Percent Passing	School Percent Passing	School Percent Passing	School Percent Passing	<i>Division Percent Passing</i>	<i>School Percent Passing</i>	School Percent Passing
	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	<i>2005-2006</i>	<i>2005-2006</i>	2006-2007
Grade 8							
English: Writing	23	23	48	27	91	90	[2]
English: Reading	28	26	32	49	76	73	[2]
Mathematics	8	16	45	35	74	75	[2]
History/Social Science	22	38	76	N/A	67	N/A	[3]
Civics	N/A	N/A	N/A	68	86	N/A	[2]
U.S. History 1	N/A	N/A	N/A	51	49	N/A	[2]
Science	41	44	77	59	82	46	[2]

Note [1]: SOL test results for 2001-2006 were provided by VDOE in terms of percent passing.

Note [2]: SOL test results for 2006-2007 will not be available until fall 2007.

Note [3]: SOL test results for History/Social Science were broken into two end-of-course tests in 2004-2005: Civics and U.S. History.

Average Daily Attendance (ADA). Table A2.2. provides a summary of average daily attendance rates for Hampton Harbour Academy and the division in which it is chartered. The school's ADA has remained constant for the past few years. The ADA remains below overall attendance rates for the school division.

Table A2.2.
Average Daily Attendance for Hampton Harbour Academy

Average Daily	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Hampton Harbour Academy	85.2%	83.1%	85.0%	82.1%	84.1%	85.2%
Hampton City Public Schools	94.8%	94.5%	94.8%	95.2%	95.0%	94.9%

Dropout Rates. The following table summarizes dropout rates for Hampton Harbour Academy and the school division in which it is chartered. When the school served secondary students from 2001-2004, the dropout rate was higher than the division dropout rate. Beginning in 2004, the school served middle schools students. No dropouts were reported for the 2004-2005 school year. For the 2005-2006 school year, the dropout rate exceeded that of the division. The 2006-2007 dropout rate results will not be officially available until fall 2007.

Table A2.3.
Dropout Rates for Hampton Harbour Academy

Dropout Rates [1]	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Hampton Harbour Academy	34.3%	9.2%	9.7%	0.00%	10.0%	[2]
Hampton City Public Schools	2.7%	2.1%	2.2%	0.5%	2.5%	[2]

Note [1]: Dropout results for 2001-2006 were provided by VDOE.

Note [2]: Dropout results for the 2006-2007 school year will not be available until fall 2007.

Professional Development. In response to survey questions concerning professional development offered at school, the school's response was:

Professional development customized for charter school personnel only:	Yes
Professional development hours provided:	33
Number of professional development activities provided:	11 or more
Amount of communication with other charter schools within Virginia:	Very little
Amount of communication with other charter schools outside Virginia:	Very little
Opportunity to attend national meeting(s) regarding charter schools:	No

Staff. For the 2005-2006 school year, Hampton Harbour Academy reports one teacher per eight students enrolled. Staffing data for Hampton Harbour Academy are summarized in Table A2.4.

Table A2.4.

Staffing for Hampton Harbour Academy for 2006-2007

Category	Total Number of Staff (FTE)	Positions Filled by Licensed and Endorsed Individuals (FTE)	Percent Filled by Licensed and Endorsed Individuals
Principal/Director	1.0	1.0	100
Teachers	11.0	10.0	91
Paraprofessionals	3.0	3.0	100
Guidance Counselors	1.0	1.0	100

Attachment A3

York County Schools, York River Academy

Year opened as a charter school: 2002
 Grades served in 2006-2007: 9-10*
 Enrollment 2006-2007: 40
 School designed to serve students considered to be at-risk: Yes
 Intends to operate as a charter school during the 2007-2008 school year: Yes

Student Achievement. As depicted in Table A3.1., the York River Academy Standards of Learning (SOL) test results reflect variability by year and by End-of-Course subjects. The 2006-2007 SOL results will not be available until fall 2007.

Table A3.1.
SOL Pass Rates for York River Academy

SOL End-of-Course Test Results [1]	School Percent Passing	School Percent Passing	School Percent Passing	<i>Division Percent Passing</i>	<i>School Percent Passing</i>	School Percent Passing
	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2005-2006	2006-2007
English Reading	100	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	[2]
English Writing	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	[2]
Algebra I	40	89	81	92	81	[2]
Algebra II	N/A	N/A	N/A	89	50	[2]
Geometry	N/A	N/A	33	95	100	[2]
World Geography	90	85	64	80	71	[2]
World History I	N/A	100	81	89	86	[2]
World History II	N/A	N/A	100	93	N/A	[2]
U. S. History	N/A	N/A	40	94	N/A	[2]
Earth Science	100	71	64	87	90	[2]
Biology	N/A	N/A	N/A	93	N/A	[2]
Chemistry	N/A	N/A	N/A	93	N/A	[2]

Note [1]: SOL test results for 2002-2006 were provided by VDOE in terms of percent passing.

Note [2]: SOL test results for 2006-2007 will not be available until fall 2007.

*The York County School Board voted unanimously to amend the charter to allow for an 11th grade in 2007-2008.

Average Daily Attendance (ADA). Table A3.2. provides a summary of average daily attendance rates for York River Academy and the school division in which it is chartered. Average daily attendance rates for the school have been comparable to the school division ADA rates.

Table A3.2.
Average Daily Attendance for York River Academy

Average Daily Attendance	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
York River Academy	98.8%	95.1%	95.2%	96.7%	95.6%
York County Public Schools	96.7%	96.3%	96.3%	96.6%	96.0%

Dropout Rates. The following table summarizes dropout rates for York River Academy and the school division in which it is chartered. Historically, from 2002-2005, dropout rates for the school have been higher than division rates but comparable to state results. For 2005-2006, there were no dropouts at the school. The 2006-2007 dropout rate results will not be officially available until fall 2007.

Table A3.3.
Dropout Rates for York River Academy

Dropout Rates [1]	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
York River Academy	0%	2.1%	2.6%	0%	[2]
York County Public Schools	0.9%	0.2%	0.5%	.4%	[2]

Note [1]: Dropout results for 2002-2006 were provided by VDOE.

Note [2]: Dropout results for the 2006-2007 school year will not be available until fall 2007.

Professional Development. In response to survey questions concerning professional development offered at school, the school's response was:

Professional development customized for charter school personnel only:	Yes
Professional development hours provided:	Over 60
Types of professional development activities provided:	11 or more
Amount of communication with other charter schools within Virginia:	Very little
Amount of communication with other charter schools outside Virginia:	Very little
Opportunity to attend national meeting(s) regarding charter schools:	No

Staff. For the 2006-2007 school year, York River Academy reports more than one teacher per eight students enrolled. The school reported that all teachers were licensed and endorsed. Staffing data for the school are summarized in Table A3.4.

Table A3.4.
Staffing for York River Academy for 2006-2007

Category	Total Number of Staff (FTE)	Positions Filled by Licensed and Endorsed Individuals (FTE)	Percent filled by Licensed and Endorsed Individuals
Principal/Director	1.0	1.0	100
Teachers	5.0	5.0	100
Paraprofessionals	0.0	N/A	N/A
Guidance Counselors	1.0	1.0	100