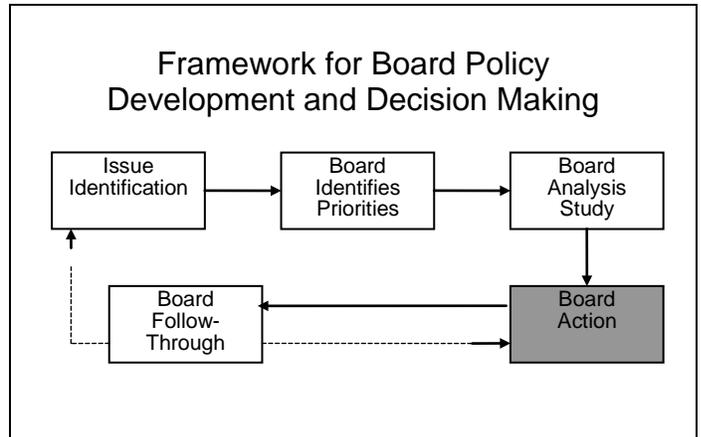


# Iowa State Board of Education

## Executive Summary

March 6, 2014



**Agenda Item:** Storm Lake/Iowa Central/Buena Vista Early College High School Charter Renewal

**Iowa Goal:** All PK-12 students will achieve at a high level.

**State Board Role/ Authority:** Iowa Code chapter 256F gives the State Board the authority to grant or deny charter school applications.

**Presenter:** Janet Boyd, Consultant  
Bureau of School Improvement

**Attachments:** 1

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the Storm Lake/Iowa Central/Buena Vista Early College High School Charter be granted a renewal of their charter through the end of the 2017-2018 school year.

**Background:** The Storm Lake Community School District received approval in 2005 for Storm Lake/Iowa Central/Buena Vista Early College High School. The charter was renewed in 2010 and the goals were revised in 2010 from the original charter.

# **STORM LAKE/IOWA CENTRAL/BUENA VISTA EARLY COLLEGE HIGH SCHOOL CHARTER**

**Renewal – March 2014**

## **SCHOOL/DISTRICT INFORMATION**

Storm Lake/Iowa Central/Buena Vista Early College Charter High School  
419 Lake Avenue  
Storm Lake, IA 50588  
Administrator: Beau Ruleaux, High School Principal

Storm Lake Community School District  
419 Lake Avenue  
Storm Lake, IA 50588  
Administrator: Dr. Carl Turner, Superintendent

## **MISSION OF THE CHARTER**

The mission of the Storm Lake/Iowa Central/Buena Vista Early College Charter High School program would be to make higher education more accessible, affordable, and attractive to all students and especially those who did not see a college degree in their future due to language and/or economic barriers, and, thereby help to increase Storm Lake's high school graduation and successful college completion rates for all of its graduates and especially a portion of its most disadvantaged youth.

## **DESCRIPTION OF CHARTER**

Storm Lake/Iowa Central/Buena Vista Early College Charter High School is a school within the Storm Lake Community School District. It is available to all junior and senior level students and incorporates a partnership with Iowa Central Community College, Buena Vista University, and Storm Lake High School to provide students unlimited opportunities to enhance and perpetuate a student's course of study. Students are given an opportunity to take college courses to begin their college educational track.

## **Storm Lake/Iowa Central/Buena Vista Early College High School Charter School Renewal Application Narrative**

### **STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT & GOALS**

**Review the innovative approaches that were described in the original charter application. Explain how those approaches have been incorporated into the charter school.**

The Storm Lake/Iowa Central /Buena Vista Early College High School's original charter was approved by the State Board of Education in July 2005 and implemented with students in August 2005. The charter has been renewed once in March 2010. The mission of the original Charter School was to make higher education more accessible, affordable and attractive to all students, especially for those students who do not see a college degree in their future due to language and/or economic barriers, thereby helping increase Storm Lake High School's overall graduation and college completion rates for all its students, particularly for a portion of its most disadvantaged youth.

The original charter was written to provide funding for students to continue working on college courses following their senior year in high school with the hope that students will receive a post secondary degree. Considering the Storm Lake Community School District's diversity (80% Non-Caucasian) and poverty (75% Free and Reduced Lunch), the additional year of funding provided many students, who might not have otherwise had this opportunity, with post-secondary education. Under the original charter, some students took advantage of the additional funding to take more than one year of college courses, which, in March 2010, was limited by the State Board of Education to only one year with the renewal of the charter. Since its inception in August 2005, 106 students have graduated with an Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, or Associate of Applied Science degree. In addition, many students who did not finish their program of study in the charter program transferred to 4-year universities, many of whom completed other degrees. Since the start of the Charter Program, 10,452 hours of college credit have been earned with many former charter students employed by area businesses in fields such as nursing, computer networking, industrial mechanics, automotive technology, and carpentry. The local economy has been positively impacted by the addition of these highly skilled workers who are filling high demand jobs with salaries averaging between \$22,000 and \$65,000 annually.

Beginning in middle school, each student completes academic plans for high school and post-high school years. These plans allow guidance counselors and the Charter Director to identify students who would benefit from the charter program. These individualized plans increase the number of students enrolled in concurrent academic and career technical courses resulting in a more rigorous high school experience.

In addition to individualized plans for students, implementing the Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) research based strategies beginning in middle school has further enhanced the Charter School students' educational experience. The primary focus of AVID is to encourage students who have never had anyone in their family attend college to consider post-secondary education. The Advancement Via Individual Determination strategies and philosophy focus on providing students with college readiness skills in writing, inquiry, collaboration, reading and organization which has given students the skills, information, and confidence to pursue education past high school.

The Storm Lake/Iowa Central/Buena Vista Early College Charter High School has provided opportunities to our students to participate in postsecondary education that would not be possible without the financial assistance provided by the school funding formula.

**Share academic and non-academic goals the charter established at its inception and detail progress made toward these goals.**

To accomplish the mission of the original charter to make higher education more accessible, affordable and attractive to all students, the Storm Lake/Iowa Central/Buena Vista Early College Charter High School established the following goals:

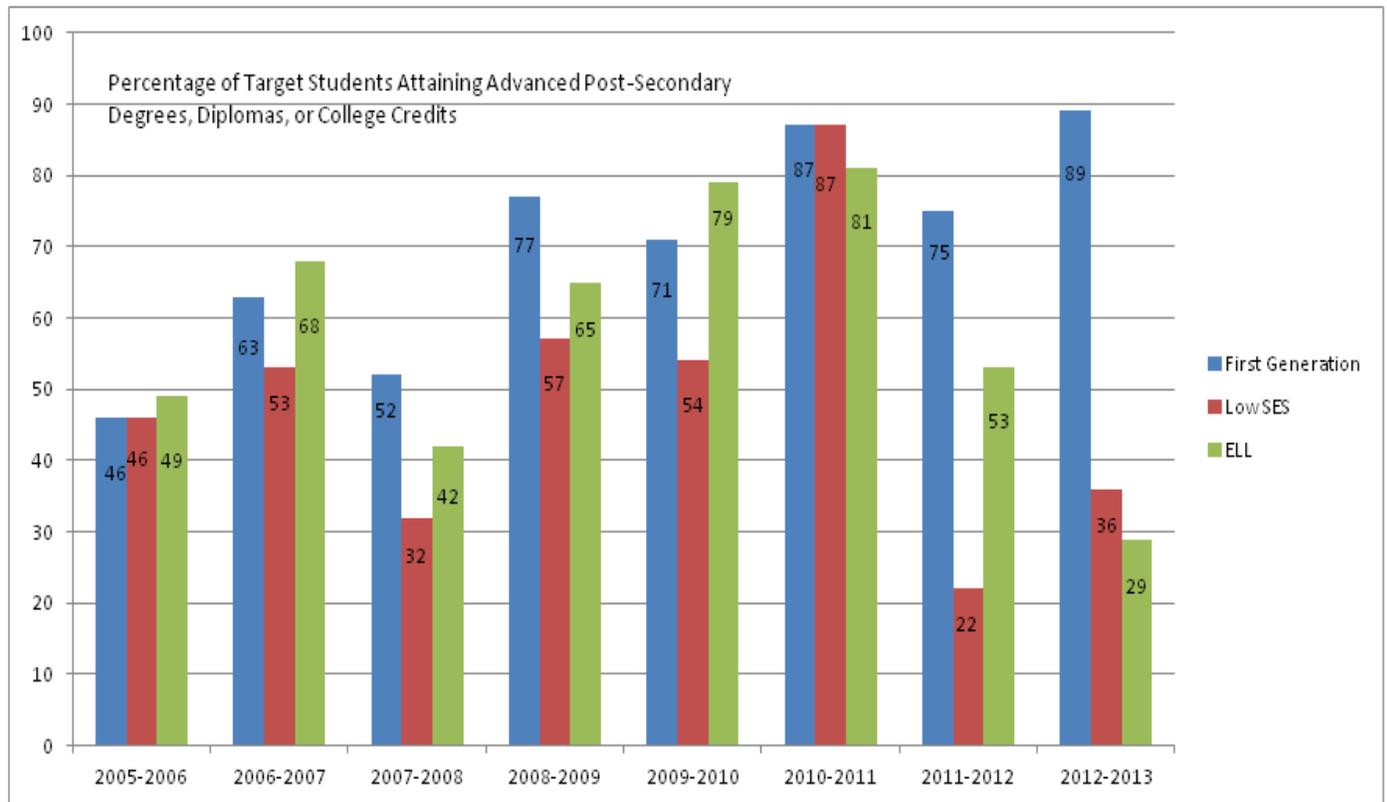
**1. Increase the number of first generation, low income, English Language Learner and students of color attaining advanced postsecondary degrees and diplomas or two years of college credit.** During the fall of 2013, a study was conducted with Iowa Central Community College on past Charter participants to discover the number of students that earned postsecondary degrees, diplomas, or two years of college credit. The study showed 106 students have graduated with a diploma, Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, or Associate of Applied Science degree. In addition, students who didn't finish their program of study in the charter program transferred to 4-year universities, many of which completed other degrees.

**Storm Lake/Iowa Central/Buena Vista Early College Charter High School Enrollment Totals**

	05-06	06-07	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13
First Generation	46	63	52	77	60	61	37	49
Low SES	36	53	32	57	45	61	11	20
ELL/ESL	49	68	42	55	66	57	26	16
Special Education	?	?	4	6	5	5	7	2
Asian	4	7	4	5	10	16	4	3
African-American	1	3	0	3	3	0	1	3
Hispanic	46	57	38	56	60	43	29	35
Total Non- Caucasian	51	67	42	64	73	59	34	41
Males	27	41	25	40	44	29	31	29
Females	32	48	34	49	40	41	18	28
Total Enrolled	59	89	59	89	84	70	49	55

The graph below shows that the percentage of first generation students to attend college has exceeded 50% of the total Charter School enrollment in all but one school year. The percentage of English Language Learners has exceeded 50% of the total charter enrollment in

five of the eight years. In four of the eight charter years, over 50% of the Charter School enrollment was made up of low socioeconomic students. This data supports the Charter School's mission of making higher education more accessible, affordable and attractive to all students, especially those first-generation students who do not see a college degree in their future due to language and/or economic barriers.



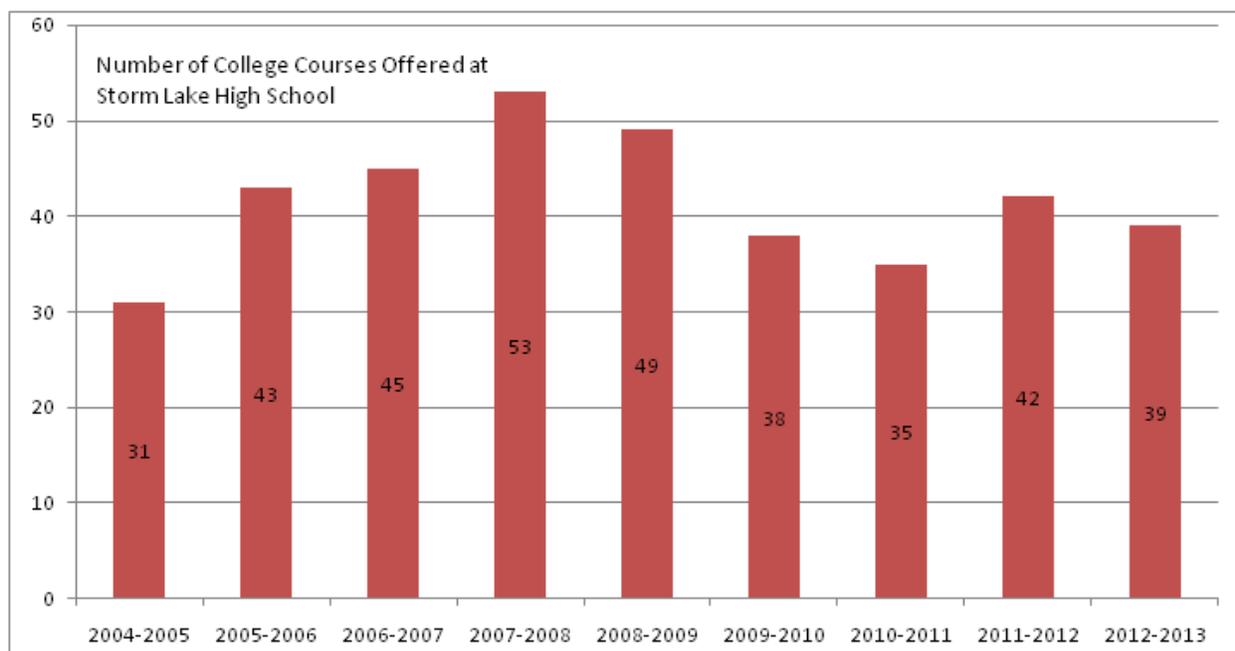
**2. Provide a more rigorous and relevant college/career preparation curriculum.** The focus of identifying students for the charter and the increased implementation of Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) research based strategies has resulted in a more rigorous and relevant college/career preparation curriculum during students' high school years. Since the inception of the Charter School, 10,452 hours of college credit have also been completed by students. Many students that may have not considered postsecondary education before are now being given the opportunity to learn the skills and develop the confidence to consider their opportunities after high school.

**3. Raise individual ITED scores in the areas of reading, mathematics and science that will impact overall class performance.** The overall class performance on the Iowa Tests of Educational Development and Iowa Assessments has been a continual area of focus by the Storm Lake Community School District. The data indicates that continued efforts need to be made to close the gap between Caucasian and Non-Caucasian students which is evidenced in the charts that are presented below. Improving student test scores need to be a continued focus, but it is the district's belief that the gap would be much larger if students did not have the

opportunity to participate in the more rigorous concurrent courses as a result of being enrolled in the Charter School.

With 62% of the high school population being identified as English Language Learners, the school district is excited about students' performance on the 2013 Iowa English Language Development Assessment; 19% (28 out of 147) of our English Language Learners exited the English Language Learner program after demonstrating proficiency in English.

**4. Increased the number of dual credit offerings and PSEO opportunities for all students, specifically, monitoring increased participation and performance of subgroups.** A constant effort is made to offer as many concurrent credit opportunities for high school students as possible. Students are also encouraged to participate in PSEO opportunities when they have completed all the possible courses in the area of interest at the high school. The number of concurrent credit courses offered at the high school reached a high during the 2007-2008 school year with 53 courses offered. Staff retirements limited the high school's concurrent credit offerings to 39 in 2012-2013. The district will encourage staff to pursue advanced degrees so more concurrent credit courses can be offered. The reduction of concurrent credit course offerings further reinforces the need for the Charter Program to provide additional postsecondary opportunities for our students.



**5. All students will have an individual learning plan that is overseen by the Charter Director and the Storm Lake High School Administration.** The individual learning plan begins for all students during middle school and is modified throughout students' high school experience. The Charter Director and High School Guidance Counselors attempt to identify students during their sophomore year who may benefit from concurrent credit course offerings that can be further extended during the additional year provided by the Charter School.

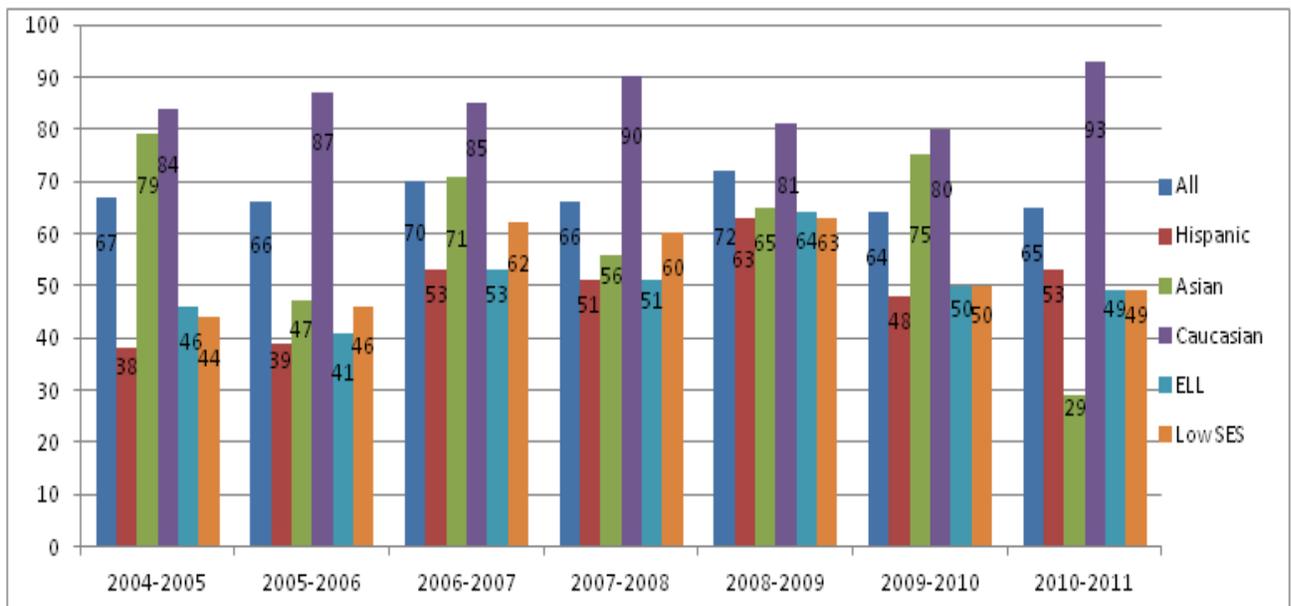
Currently, students are allowed to enter the Charter School pathway following their sophomore year, but increased efforts have been made by the Charter Director to identify students by their sophomore year so that the full benefits of the Charter can be realized.

**Make a trend-line comparison of student achievement data, using the baseline data collected during the first year of the charter. Explain improvement in achievement as shown in the data.**

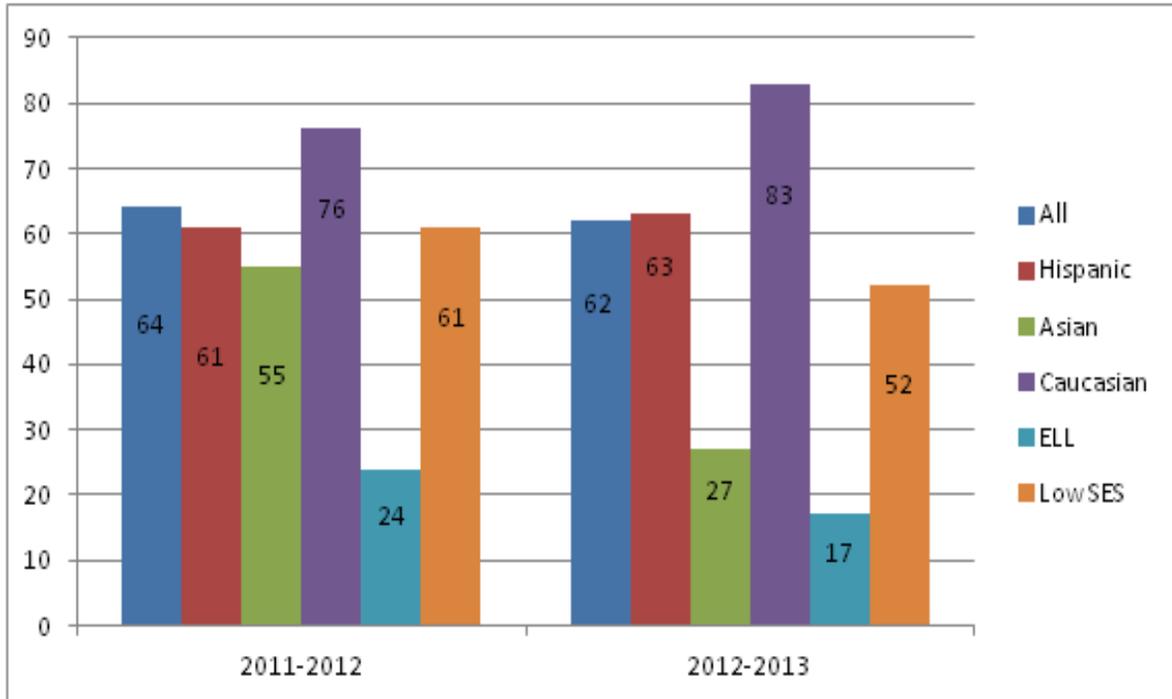
**Storm Lake Community High School Standardized Test Results 2004-2013**

Storm Lake High School grade 11 standardized testing results are presented in the charts below. The data indicates that continued efforts need to be made to close the gap between Caucasian and Non-Caucasian students. It is evident that improving students scores need to be a continued focus, but it is the district's belief that the gap would be much larger if students did not have the opportunity to participate in the more rigorous concurrent courses as a result of being enrolled in the charter.

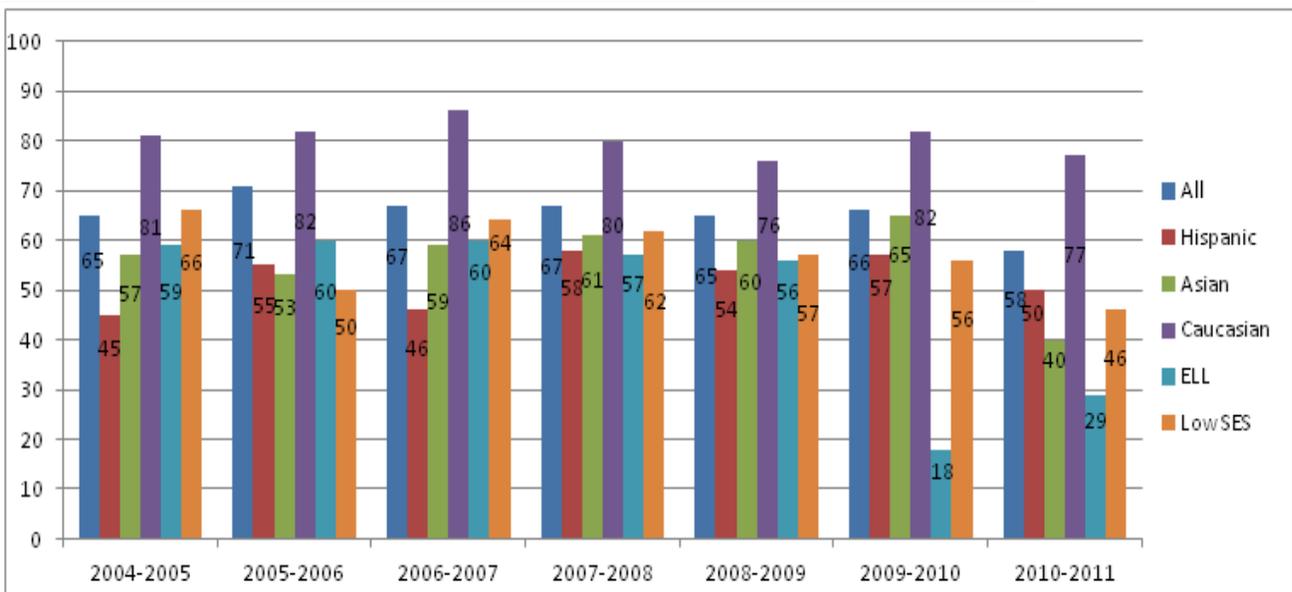
**Reading - Grade 11 - Iowa Test of Educational Development 2004-2011**



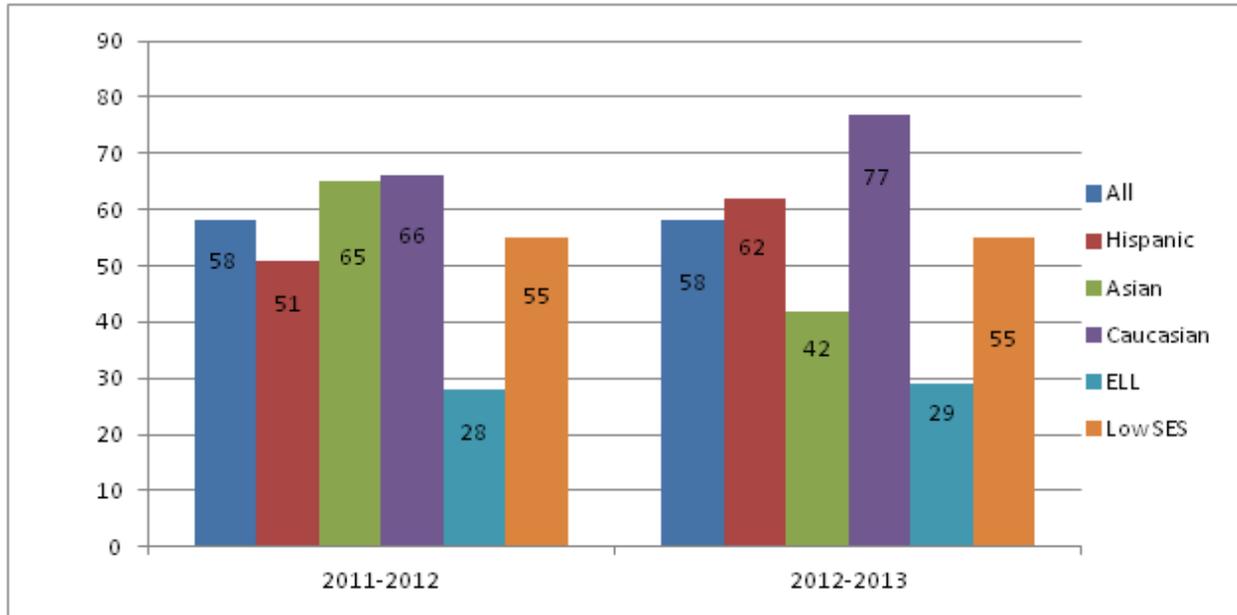
**Reading - Grade 11 - Iowa Assessments 2011-2013**



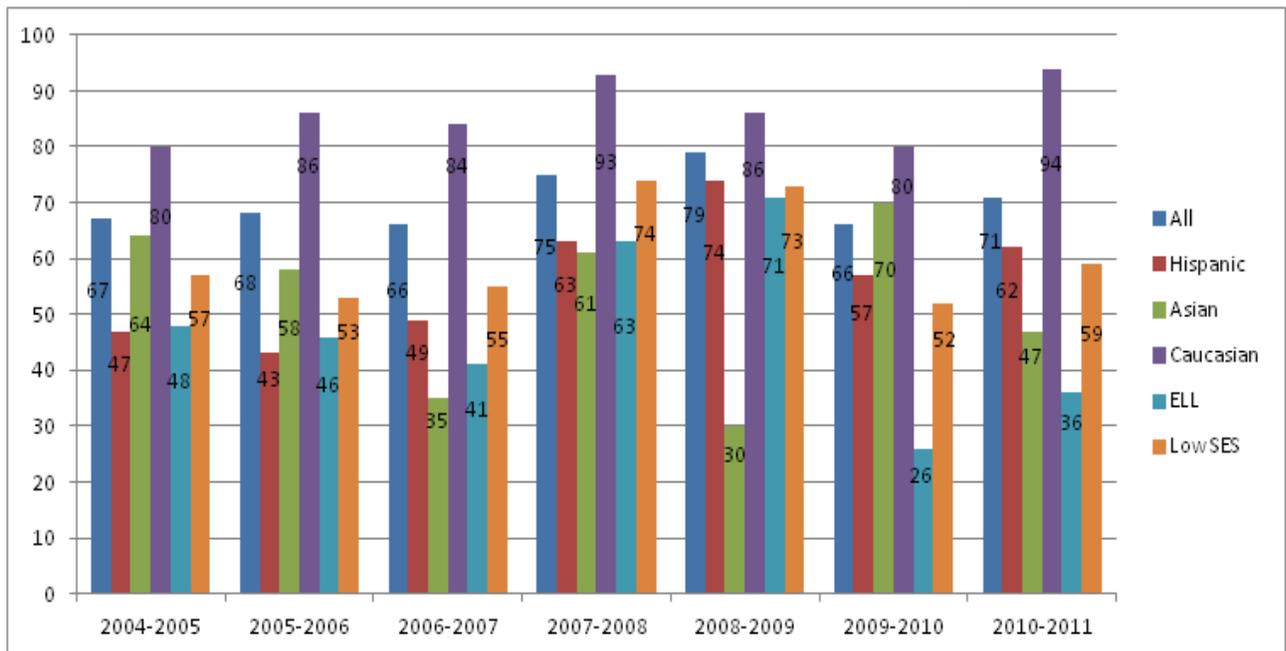
**Mathematics - Grade 11 - Iowa Test of Educational Development 2004-2011**



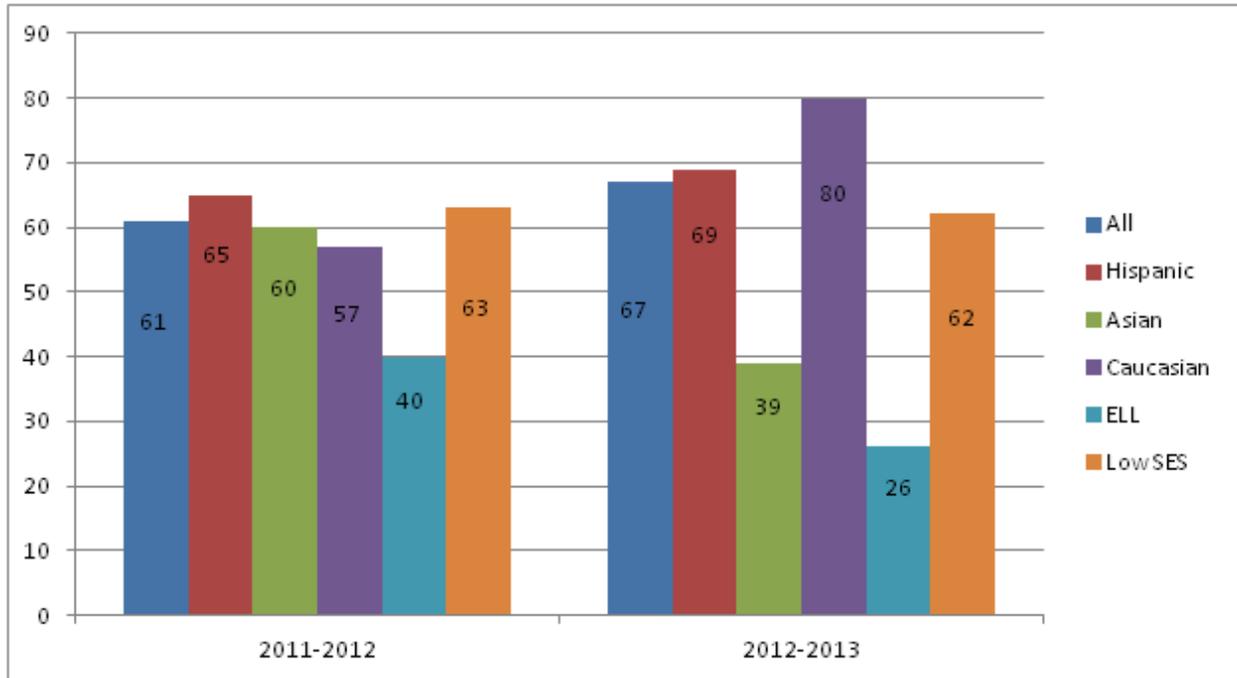
**Mathematics - Grade 11 - Iowa Assessments 2011-2013**



**Science - Grade 11 - Iowa Test of Educational Development 2004-2011**



### **Science - Grade 11 - Iowa Assessments 2011-2013**



### **ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES**

#### **Is the school an effective, viable organization with effective leadership?**

The Storm Lake/Iowa Central /Buena Vista Early College High School has been an effective and viable organization because of the solid leadership that has been provided by our Charter Directors and High School Administration. Since 2006, a full-time Director has been employed by the school district to monitor and assist the students who are involved in the Charter School. In addition to working with students, the Charter Director communicates with parents, instructors at Iowa Central Community College and Buena Vista University, and the administration at all organizations. The Charter Director receives additional support for students from the guidance departments at the high school, Iowa Central Community College and Buena Vista University.

#### **What role has the Advisory Council played in the school?**

The Advisory Council receives progress reports annually on the Charter School's goals and offers input on ways to improve the programs that are offered to students. The Advisory Council is also instrumental in developing the components of the renewal applications.

In addition to the Advisory Council, the Storm Lake Community School District Board of Education takes an active role in monitoring the progress of the charter students. Data is presented annually to school board members.

**Are parents, students, teachers, and other stakeholders satisfied? How is information and input gathered from parents, students, teachers, and other stakeholders (e.g., local businesses).**

The Charter Director gathers input from parents, students, teachers, and other stakeholders through both group and individual meetings and surveys. The Director makes frequent trips to Fort Dodge and Buena Vista University to check with advisors, instructors and students. Charter participants, both past and present, appreciate the opportunity to continue their education after high school. Parents are thankful for the tuition and textbook savings. Local business leaders appreciate the training and skills that charter students bring to their organizations.

Many of our past Charter School students live in the community, and the additional educational opportunities they have received has allowed them to be employed in highly skilled and high demand jobs including jobs in nursing, industrial maintenance, and building and trades.

**Is the school fiscally sound?**

The Storm Lake/Iowa Central /Buena Vista Early College High School is fiscally sound due to the financial assistance that is provided by the State of Iowa. Dollars generated by the charter student count are spent on charter school expenses including tuition, equipment, and transportation. A charter school line item budget has been established and is monitored closely by the Superintendent, Business Manager, High School Principal and the Charter Director.

**FUTURE PLANS / GOALS**

**Describe the successes and challenges the charter school has experienced since its inception. What impact have these had on the charter school and its future**

With 75% of Storm Lake students qualifying for free and reduced lunch and 80% of students being Non-Caucasian, The Storm Lake/Iowa Central /Buena Vista Early College High School success has been the number of students who have had the opportunity to continue their education past high school. These post-secondary opportunities have resulted in many students securing skilled jobs in nursing, mechanical support, and building and trades, which in turn has motivated more high school students to participate in the charter school program.

The number one challenge the charter school has experienced since its inception is the same challenge that many colleges face which is keeping students focused and enrolled until they complete a program or degree. The school district is looking for additional ways to support students to successfully finish the programs that they have started. Despite challenges that are beyond the educational system's control, The Storm Lake/Iowa Central /Buena Vista Early College High School has resulted in more students earning college credit and participating in a more rigorous curriculum than would have happened if the charter was not in place.

To alleviate another unavoidable challenge, the district has effective transition structures in place if administration or the charter director changes address these changes and the new

employees have been able to adapt to these positions. The district has noted the valuable input from each leader to make improvements to the program.

Despite all these challenges, the Storm Lake/Iowa Central /Buena Vista Early College High School is an important part of the educational opportunities that are offered to the students of the Storm Lake Community School District. Each Charter Director has learned from the previous Directors and as a result the policies and practices of the charter program have continually been refined and improved to provide charter students with additional support to increase success.

**What plans are in place for the financial stability of the charter?**

The Storm Lake/Iowa Central /Buena Vista Early College High School's financial stability is entirely based upon the financial assistance that is provided by the State of Iowa. If the state aid continues, a budget will be established based upon the amount of aid received and the expenditures will be monitored closely to insure financial stability.

**Summary**

The Storm Lake/Iowa Central /Buena Vista Early College High School is an important part of the Storm Lake Community School District's educational program. The additional post-secondary opportunities that have been made possible by the Charter School have benefited students, parents, and the community. The Storm Lake/Iowa Central /Buena Vista Early College High School has accomplished its original mission of making higher education more accessible, affordable and attractive to all students, especially those students who did not see a college degree in their future due to language and/or economic barriers.

The testimonials from past and current charter school participants reinforce the importance of the charter school program. This application includes some students' testimonials for your consideration.

	Department of Education	Department of Education
<b>GOAL 1:</b> Increase the number of first generation, low income, English Language Learner and students of color attaining advanced postsecondary degrees and diplomas or two years of college credit.	These numbers have generally increased since the inception of the charter, especially for first generation students.	Generally Met
<b>GOAL 2:</b> Provide a more rigorous and relevant college/career preparation curriculum.	The charter has provided opportunities with both Iowa Central Community College and Buena Vista University.	Met
<b>GOAL 3:</b> Raise individual ITED scores in the areas of reading, mathematics, and science that will impact overall class performance.	Reading and Mathematic scores are roughly the same since inception of the charter. Science scores have increased. The use of ITED (Iowa Assessments may not be the best indicator of achievement or increased learning)	Results inconclusive.
<b>GOAL 4:</b> Increase the number of dual credit offerings and PSEO opportunities for all students, specifically monitor increased participation and performance of subgroups.	The number of dual credit (concurrent credit) courses have fluctuated and is slightly increased over inception. This number is dependent on staff qualifications. PSEO (Post Secondary Enrollment Options) continue to be offered through Iowa Central Community College and Buena Vista University.	Met
<b>GOAL 5:</b> All students will have an individual learning plan that is overseen by Storm Lake High School and the Charter Administration.	These plans are in place for the charter students.	Met
Improve student learning. §256F.1(3)"a"	Achievement as measured by Iowa Assessments is steady. The district may want to consider other measures to assure improved student learning.	Generally Met

	<b>Department of Education</b>	<b>Department of Education</b>
Increase learning opportunities for students. §256F.1(3)"b"	Met through college level courses.	Met
Encourage the use of different and innovative methods of teaching. §256F.1(3)"c"	Met through college level courses.	Met
Require the measurement of learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes. §256F.1(3)"d"	The district may want to consider different forms of measuring outcomes.	Inconclusive
Establish new forms of accountability for schools. §256F.1(3)"e"	The district may want to consider different forms of measuring outcomes.	Inconclusive
Create new professional opportunities for teachers and other educators, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site. §256F.1(3)"f"	Unclear what professional development is in place for Storm Lake staff and postsecondary staff.	Inconclusive
Create different organizational structures for continuous learner progress. §256F.1(3)"g"	The use of college courses meets this requirement.	Met
Allow greater flexibility to meet the education needs of a diverse and constantly changing student population. §256F.1(3)"h"	The school is meeting the needs of a increasingly diverse population. Working to improve the career opportunities for their students.	Met

	Department of Education	Department of Education
Allow for the allocation of resources in innovative ways through implementation of specialized school budgets for the benefit of the schools served. §256F.1(3)“i”	The District and Community support the charter. A public hearing and board approval of the charter renewal occurred on December 19, 2013 and the Advisory Council approved the charter renewal on November 4, 2013. The local paper published an article in support of the charter.	Met

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Storm Lake/Iowa Central/Buena Vista Early College Charter High School be approved through the end of the 2017-2018 school year. The charter school shall engage in continuous improvement with the Department to monitor goals and to align itself to newly emerging data systems at the Department.

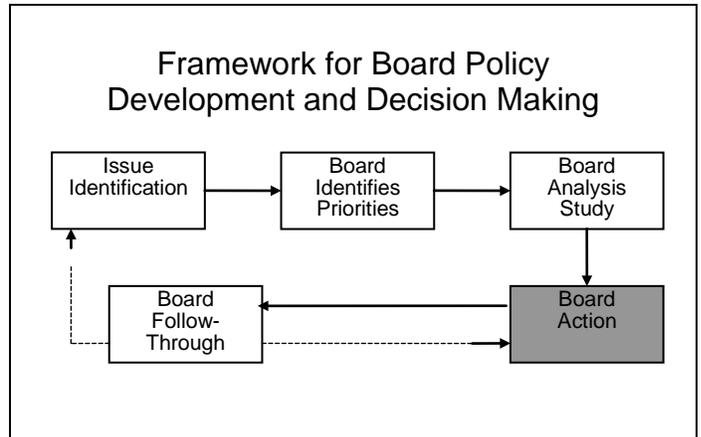
The charter shall continue to evaluate how they will meet the nine purposes of a charter school which are spelled out in Iowa Code 256F.1:

- Authorization and purpose.*
- 3. The purpose of a charter school or an innovation zone school established pursuant to this chapter shall be to accomplish the following:*
- a. Improve student learning.*
  - b. Increase learning opportunities for students.*
  - c. Encourage the use of different and innovative methods of teaching.*
  - d. Require the measurement of learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes.*
  - e. Establish new forms of accountability for schools.*
  - f. Create new professional opportunities for teachers and other educators, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.*
  - g. Create different organizational structures for continuous learner progress.*
  - h. Allow greater flexibility to meet the education needs of a diverse and constantly changing student population.*
  - i. Allow for the allocation of resources in innovative ways through implementation of specialized school budgets for the benefit of the schools served.*

# Iowa State Board of Education

## Executive Summary

March 6, 2014



**Agenda Item:** Prescott Elementary School Charter Renewal

**Iowa Goal:** All PK-12 students will achieve at a high level.

**State Board Role/ Authority:** Iowa Code chapter 256F gives the State Board the authority to grant or deny charter school applications.

**Presenter:** Janet Boyd, Consultant  
Bureau of School Improvement

**Attachments:** 1

**Recommendation:** It is recommended that the Prescott Elementary School Charter be granted a renewal of their charter through the end of the 2017-2018 school year.

**Background:** The Dubuque Community School District received approval in 2006 for Prescott Elementary School. The charter was renewed in 2010.

# PRESCOTT ELEMENTARY CHARTER SCHOOL

Renewal – March 2014

## SCHOOL/DISTRICT INFORMATION

Prescott Elementary Charter School  
1151 White Street  
Dubuque, IA 52001  
Administrator: Chris McCarron, Principal

Dubuque Community School District  
2300 Chaney Road  
Dubuque, IA 52001  
Superintendent: Stan Rheingans

## MISSION OF CHARTER

The mission of Prescott Elementary Charter School, an Expeditionary Learning Charter School for the Arts, is to empower each child to achieve his/her potential and to become a strong contributing member of the community.

## DESCRIPTION OF CHARTER

Prescott is an Expeditionary Learning School with Arts infusion. Expeditionary Learning is a comprehensive design that teaches the curriculum through multi-disciplinary learning expeditions, includes a focus on character development, active student engagement, and service. Prescott has placed a strong emphasis on the infusion of the arts into the academic program and expanded opportunities for students to participate in art activities beyond the school day.

The school is the charter (school-wide charter).

## CHARTER HISTORY

Received a charter planning grant in 2005-2006 - \$50,000  
Received charter status in 2006-2007 and a charter status grant - \$350,000  
Renewal of the charter in 2010

**Financial Stability:** This district does not have a negative unspent authorized budget.

**Number of Teachers:** 33 (FTE)

**Qualifications:** All teachers hold Iowa licenses.

**Number of Administrators:** 1 (FTE)

**Qualifications:** Administrator holds an Iowa license.

# Prescott Elementary, *An Expeditionary Learning Charter School for the Arts*

## Charter School Renewal Application Narrative

January, 2014

### STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

#### **Innovative Approaches:**

**Expeditionary Learning:** Since opening as a charter school in 2006, Prescott School has implemented Expeditionary Learning. The Expeditionary Learning framework is a comprehensive design that transforms curriculum, instruction, assessment, school culture and school organization to enable all students to achieve at a high level.

- **Curriculum:** Prescott teaches the curriculum identified in the Iowa Core and in Dubuque Community School District's standards and benchmarks through three major learning expeditions at each grade level. Each learning expedition is a multi-disciplinary, thematic, in-depth study of learning. One learning expedition is the primary focus of the trimester's learning at each grade level. The learning expeditions are built *primarily* around themes from the science and social studies standards of the Dubuque Community School District, although there are some themes from other disciplines. Within each learning expedition, a strong emphasis is placed on the integration of not only science and social studies, but also reading, writing, speaking, the arts, character development and service. If there are specific standards and benchmarks that do not naturally fit into the expeditions, these subjects are taught in a more contained learning experience and are not forced to fit into the expedition.
- **Instruction:** The learning expeditions require the students to take an active role in discovering the answers to the guiding questions of each expedition. Protocols and instructional strategies that foster student engagement are central to the delivery of content.
- **Assessment:** Assessment takes many of the traditional forms, but Expeditionary Learning also places a great emphasis on performance assessments. Students are active participants in the assessment process. Students are required to share their learning with a public audience at the end of each trimester at a Celebration of Learning. The Celebrations of Learning vary in the way that students demonstrate their learning. Demonstrations vary from a musical production, to portfolio sharing, to the creation of a museum, to teaching their parents and guests at stations. Learning targets are posted for all lessons, and students and teachers continually measure their progress of learning against the targets.

- School Culture: The school day is structured so that all classes begin their day with a Morning Meeting. During the Morning Meeting ALL support staffs are assigned to classes on rotating monthly basis. During Morning Meeting, social skills and the 10 Design Principles of Expeditionary Learning are explicitly taught and practiced. Each Morning Meeting involves students being greeted, an activity, and the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance and the Prescott Promise. The Prescott Promise is a shared vision of expectations for the character traits we all promise to develop. Twice each month, the school community comes together for what is called our Dolphin Gathering. The Dolphin Gathering provides a public forum for students to share their learning through performance for an authentic audience and celebration of student achievements Opportunities for students to be engaged in service are integrated into the learning expeditions. Students are encouraged to demonstrate their understanding of the Steps to Success and the Design Principles through their service to others. Community mentors and community experts help students to see the connection between school and the real world.
- School Organization: Teachers and students stay together for two years: kindergarten and first, second and third, and fourth and fifth. This “looping” helps to develop stronger connections among the teacher, the students, and the families. We also have teamed special education teachers to co-teach with general education teachers as much as possible. In our second and third grades, co-teaching takes place on a full-time basis. Because of this co-teaching, the individual needs of all students are differentiated right within the classroom. The expertise of both instructors is utilized to meet student needs. We also have structured our schedule so that the arts instructors collaborate and co-teach with the general education teacher and utilize their areas of expertise to support the classroom curriculum.

### **Arts Infusion and Extensive Arts Programming Beyond the School Day:**

Prescott has infused the arts (visual arts, music, drama, and dance) into the learning expeditions and has dramatically increased the number of opportunities students have to participate in enrichment classes for the arts. Each learning celebration highlights one aspect of the arts and an arts specialist is assigned to support the grade level as it incorporates the arts into the expedition. Just as concepts from the various arts are used to help to teach the content areas, the art concepts are taught within the content from other curricular areas. Arts specialists co-teach with general education teachers. Not only did we increase the inclusion of the arts into the curriculum, we also dramatically increased arts programming opportunities for students beyond the school day.

### **GOALS:**

*The following goals were identified in the original Prescott School Charter School Application and Design. For each goal, there is an updated summary. Charts and graphs that further provide evidence of our progress are included in the attachment.*

**GOAL: Increase student achievement in READING**

***PROGRESS: ON BOTH the MAP and ITBS, in reading, we have increased our scores since the baseline data taken in 2006.***

- **On the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)**, in the area of **READING**, the average scores for each grade on the MAP have increased since 2006. (SEE GRAPH IN THE ATTACHMENT.)
- **On the ITBS Reading Comprehension Test**, when the data from full academic year students (FAY) in grades 3, 4 and 5 are collapsed, there was an increase in the percentage of students proficient in reading. In 2006, 50.7% of the students were proficient. In 2012, 54.9% of the students were proficient. (SEE GRAPH IN THE ATTACHMENT.)

***GOAL: Increase student achievement in MATH***

***PROGRESS: ON BOTH the MAP and ITBS, in math, we have increased our scores since the baseline data taken in 2006.***

- **On the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP)**, in the area of **MATH**, the average scores for each grade on the MAP have increased since 2006. (SEE GRAPH IN THE ATTACHMENT.)
- **On the ITBS Math Total**, when the data from full academic year students (FAY) in grades 3, 4 and 5 are collapsed, there was an increase in the percentage of students proficient in math. In 2006, 43.6% of the students were proficient. In 2012, 62.9% of the students were proficient. (SEE GRAPH IN THE ATTACHMENT.)

***GOAL: Increase student achievement in SCIENCE***

***PROGRESS: ON the ITBS, in SCIENCE, we have increased our scores since the baseline data taken in 2006.***

- **On the ITBS SCIENCE TOTAL**, when the data from full academic year students (FAY) in grades 3, 4 and 5 are collapsed, although there was a drop this school year, the scores are still above the baseline year of 2006. We began with 43.7 % of our students proficient in 2006 and in 2012, 69.2% of the students were proficient.(SEE GRAPH IN THE ATTACHMENT.)

**GOAL: Increase student achievement in SOCIAL STUDIES**

**PROGRESS: ON the ITBS, in SOCIAL STUDIES, we have increased our scores since the baseline data taken in 2006.**

- **On the ITBS SOCIAL STUDIES TOTAL**, when the data from full academic year students (FAY) in grades 3, 4 and 5 are collapsed, we have shown continual growth. We began with 40.8 % of our students proficient in 2006, in 2012, 53.7% of our students were proficient. (SEE GRAPH IN THE ATTACHMENT.)

**GOAL: Increase PARENT INVOLVEMENT**

**PROGRESS: Parent/family/friend involvement at Prescott has increased.**

- We have measured parent/family/friend involvement by tracking the percentage of students who had a parent or other representative at each learning celebration. In 2005, the year prior to opening our Charter School, we only had less then 50% of our students who had a parent attend school events. We often arranged for community members to come to school events with students when parents and families were not attending.
- When we implemented learning celebrations, we made a commitment to encouraging involvement from families. We worked hard to make the first level of involvement a celebration of their child’s learning. This yielded very positive results. Last year, we had 90% participation rate in learning celebrations. If parents are unable to attend, many find other friends or relatives to attend with their child.
- We have also measured attendance at parent/teacher conferences. The year before the charter school opened, our attendance rate at conferences averaged 62%. This past year, attendance at conferences was 95%.
- Finally, as we seek renewal, our plan is to continue to work on our goal of increased parental participation, but we are next efforts will be on increasing parental volunteerism in our school.

**GOAL: Increase ECONOMIC DIVERSITY**

**PROGRESS: We increased the economic diversity slightly by decreasing the percentage of**

*students who qualify for free and reduced lunches.*

- One goal of the charter school was to draw students of different economic backgrounds to the school. The number of students receiving free and reduced lunches decreased from 90.3% in 2006-2007 to 79.7% in 2007-2008 a decrease of 10.6%. However, we saw an increase of 2.6% in 2008-2009 to 82.2% of our students receiving free and reduced lunches.

**GOAL: Increase STUDENT ATTENDANCE**

**PROGRESS: Our attendance rate in 2005-2006, the year that we completed planning grant was 93%. Last year our attendance rate was 94%. Attendance has remained relatively stable.**

**GOAL: Increase student PARTICIPATION IN THE VISUAL AND PERFORMING ARTS**

**PROGRESS: We have increased the number of students participating in the arts.**

- Prior to the opening of the charter school, there were no arts programming outside the school day; and students only had exposure to the arts through participation in art and music classes in two forty-five minute periods per week. In our first year as a charter school in 2006 we had 242 students participate in arts programming
- Each trimester a different area of the arts is emphasized in each expedition.
- A 5<sup>th</sup> grade musical is performed each year.
- We have formed a new band, a steel drum band, a choir, and new string group.
- We sponsor an annual paper dress show that began with our school participating the first year and now has been expanded to include participants from across our district.
- We have the only steel drum band in the Dubuque Community School District. Our steel drum band has performed at many events within our community, across the state, and has been selected to teach a master class at the 2010 National Expeditionary Learning Conference in Kansas City in March 2009. Students who have graduated from Prescott and who participated in the steel drum band continued to express an interest in this activity, so we now sponsor a steel drum group for middle school students, also.
- Students have won national art ceramic competitions, and the ceramic class series was broadcast on the local cable channel.
- We obtained two grants from the Prudential Foundation to support arts programming.
- Our school was recently awarded a “Community Award of Excellence” for our arts program by the Dubuque Main Street Corporation.

**GOAL: Increase the IMPLEMENTATION of the EXPEDITIONARY LEARNING**

**PROGRESS:** We have *increased* our implementation Expeditionary Learning.

- Each year, our staff has worked with the staff from Expeditionary Learning to review the degree to which we implement Expeditionary Learning. A variety of assessment rubrics have been used to measure implementation. Each year, we demonstrated a deepening of our practices.
- A curricular map has been created and revised for three learning expeditions for each grade level that aligns all learning expeditions with the Iowa Core.
- The curriculum map of the expeditions has been reviewed for both horizontal and vertical articulation.
- Community members visit classrooms as authentic experts with whom our students can make connections with their learning to real-world applications.
- Prescott staff have participated in a variety of Expeditionary Learning professional development opportunities with other implementers from across the country.

**GOAL: Increase COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT**

**PROGRESS:** Community support for Prescott has increased.

- We had a dramatic increase in the number of mentors in our school working with students!
  - 2006-2007 31 community mentors
  - 2012-2013 101 community mentors
- We have established the following partnerships with community agencies: St. Luke's Church, The Dubuque Arts Museum, The Colts Drum and Bugle Corp and Skate Country.
- The Colt's Drum and Bugle Corp has helped to support our music program through sponsorship of piano keyboard lab, our steel drum band and our choir.
- Half of the students attending Prescott live beyond what was our geographical boundaries.

## ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

**School Effectiveness and Leadership:** Chris McCarron has served as the principal of Prescott School since the very beginning stages of planning for the charter school. She continues to be dedicated to the vision, mission and instructional design of the charter school. In addition to Chris' leadership, there is strong teacher leadership. An infrastructure has been created at Prescott School to provide many different levels of leadership opportunities for the staff. The Prescott School Leadership Team is comprised of teacher representatives who lead both the professional development within the school and create structures for the analysis of data. The Advisory Council determines the goals and monitors the work of the goals while the Leadership Team determines how best to reach the goals. Smaller work teams, grade level teams or professional learning communities implement the improvement efforts and assess progress.

Dr. Linda Munger, the consultant who served as Prescott's external evaluator for the first three years of charter implementation, studied the leadership structures of Prescott as part of her evaluation process. In her year-end report in the spring of 2009, at the conclusion of the third year of the Charter School implementation, Dr. Linda Munger stated,

*"Through multiple sources of data, it is evident that Prescott has a strong instructional leader who consistently sets high expectations for students and staff and monitors and provides constructive feedback to teachers relative to their instructional practices and student achievement (e.g., lesson plans, student achievement data, classroom observations). Teachers have multiple opportunities to engage in ongoing, job-embedded professional learning (e.g., planning learning expeditions, examining student work, learning and practicing instructional strategies, observing colleagues, co-teaching) linked to improving teacher effectiveness and student achievement. Involvement with families and community is evident through celebrations held at the end of the grade level learning expeditions and ongoing communication with parents (e.g., verbal communication between school and parents, newsletters, attendance coaches)."*

The structures to which she referred are the same structures that remain in place at Prescott.

**Role of the Advisory Council:** The Prescott Charter School Advisory Council has served as the policy maker for our school. The Advisory Council has maintained the membership composition that was outlined in the original grant: the principal, two teachers, two parents, one community member, the fine arts coordinator for DCSD, the Director of School Improvement for DCSD, and a DCSD School Board member. The Charter School Advisory Council determines goals and monitors student performance. The Advisory Council meets on a monthly basis throughout the school year.

**Stakeholder Satisfaction:** When Prescott opened as a charter school in 2006, we simultaneously opened as a School In Need of Assistance. Each year as part of our SINA citation, we must notify parents of the citation and inform parents of their right to transfer their children from our school to other schools within our district. In each of the eight years, this letter has been sent home, and only 1 parent has selected to have their children removed their school from Prescott. Another indication of stakeholder satisfaction with our school is the fact that there has been a waiting list for our school each of the past past years. During our first year of opening as a Charter School, we only a waiting list for kindergarten. This year, we had a waiting list at kindergarten, first and second at the beginning of the year.

An indicator of community support was the editorial by the local newspaper in November of 2009. *The Telegraph Herald* editorial was written indicating their support for Prescott to proceed to seek renewal of Charter School Status. The Telegraph Herald also ran another feature article about Prescott prior to this reauthorization. Another indicator of support was the “Ruth and Russell Nash Community Award for Excellence” that was presented to Prescott School by the Dubuque Main Street Association. This award was given to our school in recognition of our arts programming.

A parental survey was given to parents in 2012 asking why parents had selected Prescott as their school of choice. Parents that chose this school because of its geographical location, now state that the instructional design was the reason they chose to stay.

**Fiscal Responsibility:** The Dubuque Community School District has maintained supervision of the Prescott School finances. All finances have been tracked through the DCSD financial accounting office. The original grant funding that was received from the Charter School Grant was used primarily for staff development, but was also used to purchase materials that would support Expeditionary Learning and to increase the infusion of the arts. We have continued to support our contract with Expeditionary Learning and our professional development plan with our SINA budget. Our SINA reform efforts have aligned with our Charter School instructional design. Knowing that grant funds would diminish, we have created a leadership team that is highly committed to the charter school and who will be able to provide ongoing support to teachers after outside professional development providers can no longer be funded.

We believe that Prescott has established internal structures to promote collaboration among teachers. Teachers open their classrooms to each other, and they are comfortable observing each other and providing feedback to each other to improve professional practice. The strength of this staff as a professional learning community will enable it to support each other and the instructional design of the Charter School through the upcoming period of budget reductions.

## ***FUTURE PLANS/GOALS***

**Successes and Challenges of the Charter School:** When we first considered applying for Charter School Status, there were many parents who were open enrolling their children away from Prescott. In 2005, the year we applied for our planning grant, there were over 100 students open enrollments away from Prescott School. As we were planning for the opening of the new Prescott School, there was fear that we would not have enough students to fill the school as a two-section school. There was even consideration given to opening the school as a one-section. However, each year since we opened the school, we have had additional grade levels filled and more students on the waiting list. Our enrollment continues to climb. Approximately half of all of the students who attend Prescott live beyond what would be identified as the Prescott School Boundaries. There is an increasingly more positive perception about our school in the community. Our local newspaper, the Telegraph Herald, just recently spotlighted our school in a major feature article.

Prior to opening as a charter school, the student achievement data at Prescott was on a steady decline and was one of the primary motivators to seek Charter School status. Since opening as a Charter School, the decline has stopped and, in fact, there has been an increase in student achievement. Although we are not yet satisfied with the level of student achievement, we are proud of the work and commitment of our staff to change their practices to impact student achievement. Increasing student achievement remains a significant concern and focus of the Prescott staff, but we are creating structures and practices that are beginning to have a positive impact. We believe with continued focus on the instructional design we will continue to see an increase in student achievement.

Another area of success for our school is the number of students that we have been able support to participate in arts activities that they might not have had the opportunity to participate in without our Charter School program. One graphic example of how our program has the door to more opportunities in the arts is illustrated with the annual school musical that we have. Students in kindergarten through 5<sup>th</sup> grade are able to participate in the all-school musical. This past year, over half of the student body joined the musical. 130 students were on stage performing for parents and students.

Finally, the strong collaborative spirit of the staff at our school is one our greatest strengths! The staff observes each other teach on a regular basis, plans lessons together, and review instructional practices as a regular component of their professional life. Staff works collaboratively to implement the Iowa Core. Our classrooms are open instructional models for each other every day. We also invite external

visitors to our classrooms to observe our practices and to give feedback to help us to improve our instructional practices.

We have faced challenges during our time as a Charter School. One challenge has been the retention of staff. There are a variety of reasons for Prescott's struggle with retention of teachers as we began the charter school journey. One reason is that another elementary school opened in Dubuque and teachers had an opportunity to transfer to this new school and other resulting openings that occurred within the district because of the new building. Another reason is that because Prescott has the newest teachers to the district, each time staff reductions need to be made within the district, our staff was impacted. In addition, the complexity of working in a high-poverty school has been challenging for some teachers, and teachers have transferred when there were other options available. Teachers also cited the additional work of planning learning expeditions as well as high principal expectations as other reasons for leaving. Since the last renewal, the staff at Prescott has stabilized. The staff working at Prescott are making a choice to both work with the instructional design of the charter school as well as working with the population of students that we serve. As staff were changing, we struggled with the staff development needs. It was difficult to sustain instructional improvement efforts when the staff was not consistent. As our staff has stabilized, we have been able to go more deeply with their implementation of the instructional design.

The high poverty level and mobility of our student population continues to be a challenge for our schools. With 88% of our students qualifying for free and reduced lunches (the majority of those at the most extreme poverty levels), our students and their families have many significant needs that impact the students' readiness for school. Teachers and support staff at our school are consumed by helping families meet basic needs as well as providing for the academic needs of the child.

Another challenge has been that at the same time we began as a Charter School, we also were cited as a School in Need of Assistance. Although both the Charter design and the SINA plan focused on improving student achievement, navigating the process of SINA and its regulations while being true to the Charter School plan has been a challenge. The challenge did not arise because of the difference of the work, but rather in the distinctively different documentation processes. The Prescott staff has focused all of its work, whether to meet the growth expected for SINA or for the goals of the Charter School on improving student achievement. Improved student achievement is and always will be the core focus of all of our improvement efforts! As we analyze the multiple measures of student achievement growth, there is steady, although slow increase in all measures of student achievement. Since the charter opened, we have both stopped the downward decline and also changed the trajectory to a positive one.

**Financial Stability:** We will continue to utilize our regular school budget to support our instructional design. Because of decreasing financial resources, we have had to decrease our contract with Expeditionary Learning from the original one. As we have decreased our dependency on this outside resource for professional development, we have increased our internal leadership teams. Our partnerships with the community will need to continue to bring in additional financial resources to provide arts programming beyond the school day. The financial stability of our all education is certainly a challenge.

The staff at Prescott is committed to continuing to utilize all resources that are available to continue to implement the instructional design of the Charter School. Fortunately, Expeditionary Learning is not dependent upon materials, but rather is reliant upon instructional strategies and structures that support active student engagement. The leadership team at Prescott is prepared to help new teachers to learn these strategies as well to continue to strengthen the skills of the new teachers even if we must continue to decrease our support from outside resources.

ATTACHMENT  
OF GRAPHS AND CHARTS ILLUSTRATING  
STUDENT ACHEIVEMENT and OTHER  
IMPROVEMENT EFFORTS

Prescott Elementary School

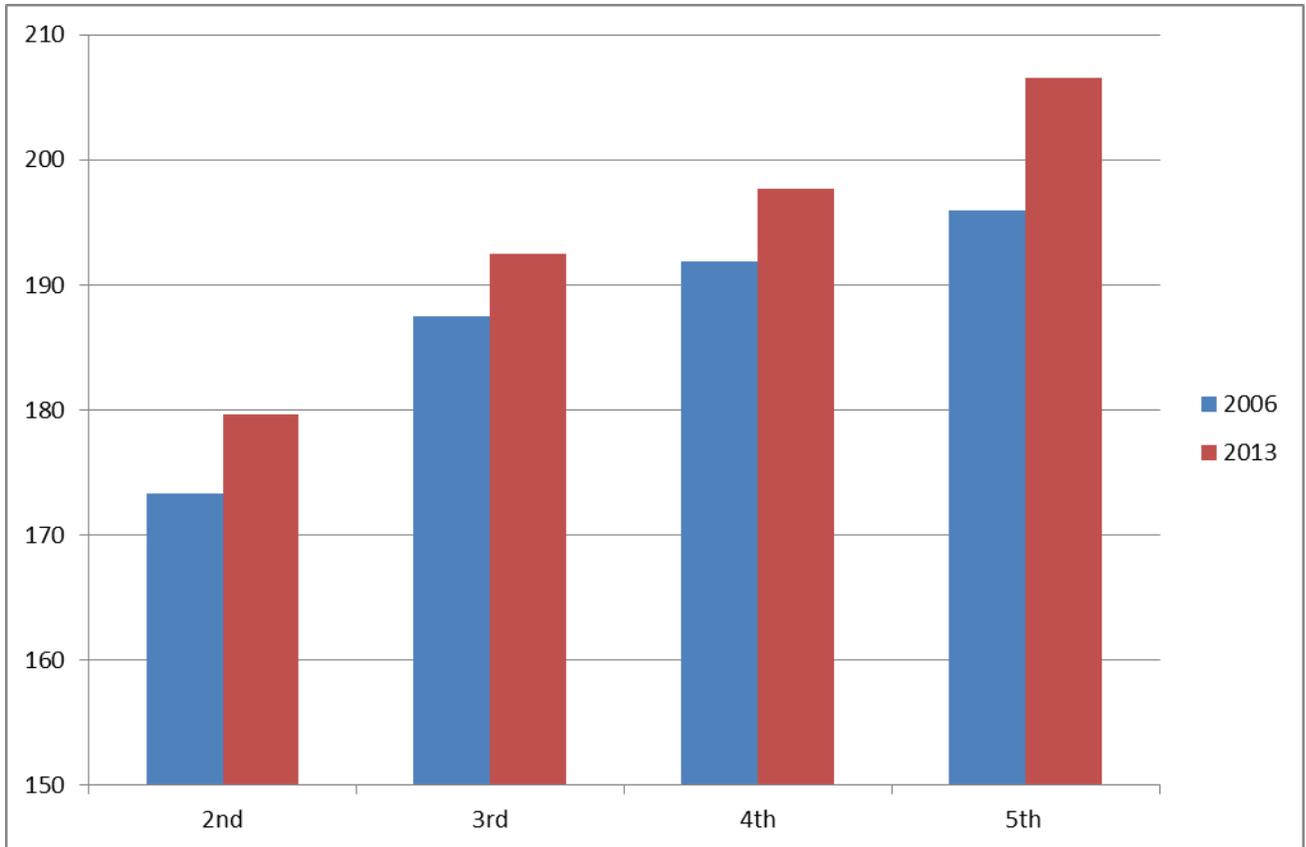
*An Expeditionary Learning Charter School for the Arts*

# READING Measures of Academic Progress Assessment

Comparison 2006-2013

(Average RIT Score at each Grade Level)

## GROWTH AT EACH GRADE LEVEL from 2006-2013



## Percentage of Students Reaching their Individual Target Scores on MAP in READING

2006-2013

- Between 2—6 and 2012 we had a 12.1% increase in the percentage of students reaching their individual growth target.
- This was the 2nd highest growth of all of the elementary schools in the district

**1<sup>st</sup> Grade Title 1 READING Data**

*(A comparison to other DCSD Title 1 Schools)*

**We had the lowest scores of all the Title 1 buildings when the charter opened.**

**We now have the highest scores.**

**We had the highest increase in the percentage of students reaching grade level expectations. We had a growth of 28.2%.**

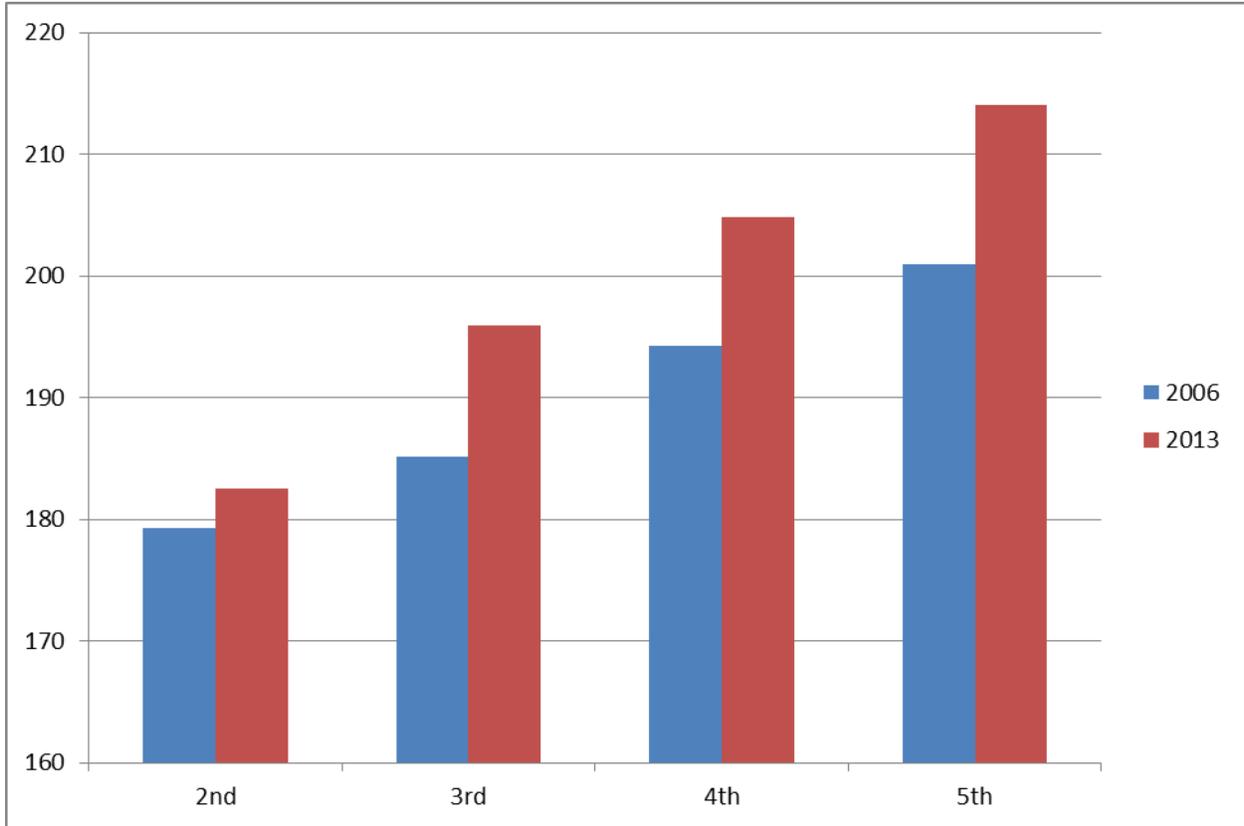
<b>Longitudinal Progress of Title Building Spring Scores</b>					
	School A	School B	School C	School D	Prescott
06-07	69.4	47.6	46.3	75.6	46.2
07-08	74.5	84.4	70.5	74.4	63.4
08-09	63.0	63.3	63.3	85.7	62.9
09-10	58.3	73.7	59.7	84.4	70.3
10-11	54.8	59.6	71.1	79.5	66.7
11-12	55.6	75.6	71.4	85.0	55.1
12-13	67.7	61.9	62.0	74.0	74.4
Difference	-1.7	+14.3	+15.7	-1.6	+28.2

**MATH Measures of Academic Proficiency Assessment**

Comparison 2006-2013

(Average RIT Score at Each Grade Level)

GROWTH AT EACH GRADE LEVEL from 2006-2013



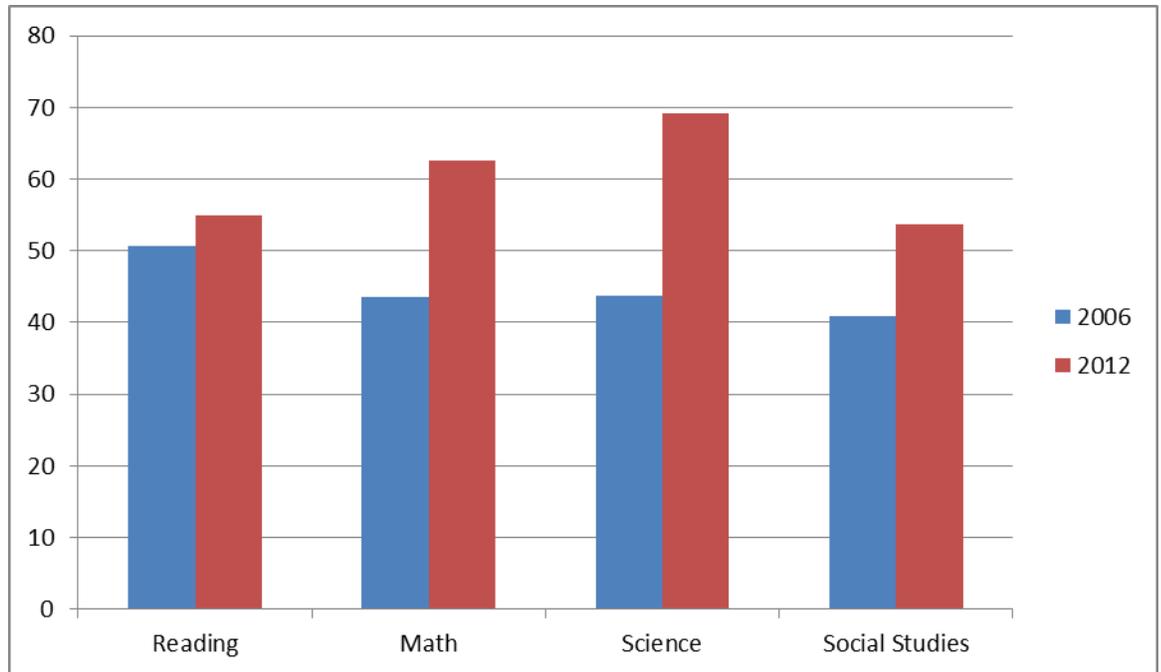
**Percentage of Students Reaching their Individual Target Scores on MAP in MATH**

**2006-2013**

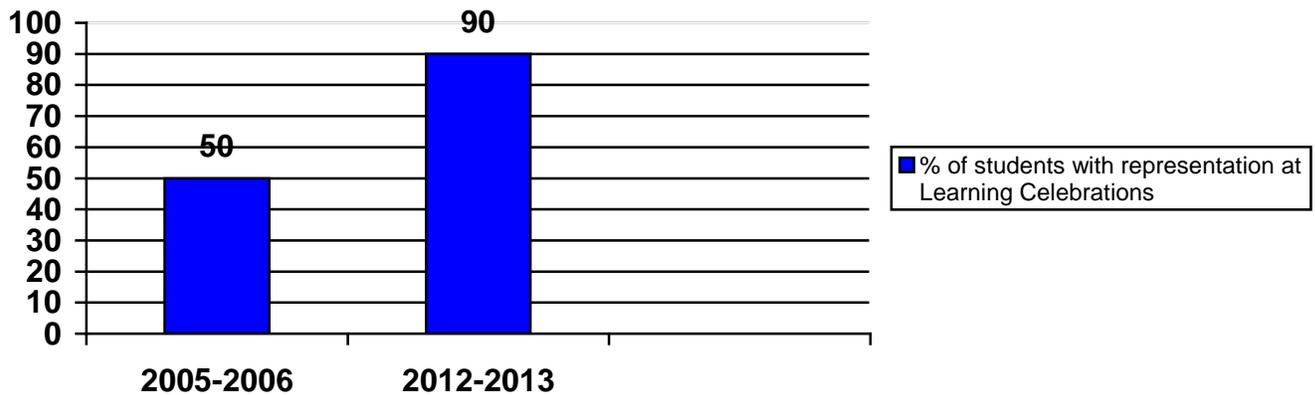
- Between 2006 and 2012, we had a 22.1% increase in the percentage of students reaching their individual growth target.
- This was the highest growth of all of the elementary schools in the district

**ITBS**

**GROWTH IN EACH SUBJECT AREA FROM 2006- 2013**



**Parental/Family/Friend Participation in Learning Celebrations**



## PRESCOTT SCHOOL – A SCHOOL OF CHOICE

As a charter school, our school is not a neighborhood school, but by law, is open for any family as a school of choice. We have students attending our school who represent the geographic boundaries of every elementary school in the Dubuque Community School District other than Sageville.

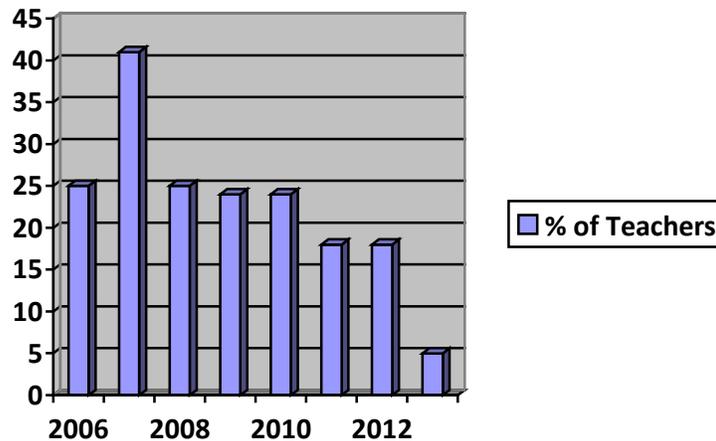
Of the 280 student attending Prescott 160 come from schools beyond Prescott boundaries.

- Audubon-34
- Bryant 3
- Carver-11
- Eisenhower-4
- Fulton-38
- Hoover-4
- Irving-5
- Kennedy-2
- Lincoln-4
- Marshall-7
- Prescott-120
- Sageville-0
- Table Mound-4

## TEACHER RETENTION DATA

2006-2013

TEACHER RETENTION IS BECOMING MORE STABLE



	Department of Education	Department of Education
<b>GOAL 1:</b> Increase student achievement in reading on an annual basis to make continual progress towards meeting the annual	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) for Reading indicate increases in achievement. Title I data also show improvement.	Met

	Department of Education	Department of Education
yearly targets determined by the Iowa Department of Education.		
<b>GOAL 2:</b> Increase student achievement in math on an annual basis to make continual progress towards meeting the annual yearly targets determined by the Iowa Department of Education.	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) for Mathematics indicate increases in achievement.	Met
<b>GOAL 3:</b> Increase student achievement in science on an annual basis to make continual progress towards meeting the annual yearly targets determined by the Iowa Department of Education.	Student growth shown.	Met
<b>GOAL 4:</b> Increase student achievement in social studies on an annual basis.	Student growth shown.	Met
<b>GOAL 5:</b> Increase student involvement with and staff implementation of the Expeditionary Learning Core Practices and Design Principles.	Implementation of Expeditionary Learning has increased since the inception of the school.	Met
<b>GOAL 6:</b> Increase student participation and positive perceptions regarding the visual and performing arts.	Participation in the arts has increased since the inception of the school.	Met
Improve student learning §256F.1(3)"a"	MAP testing indicates an increase in learning.	Met
Increase learning opportunities for	The Expeditionary Learning provides increased and differing learning opportunities.	Met

	Department of Education	Department of Education
students §256F.1(3)"b"		
Encourage the use of different and innovative methods of teaching §256F.1(3)"c"	The Expeditionary Learning provides different and innovative methods and in addition the school employs project based instruction.	Met
Require the measurement of learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes §256F.1(3)"d"	Performance based assessments with the arts.	Met
Establish new forms of accountability for schools §256F.1(3)"e"	The district is using MAP and Iowa Assessments. As the DE makes progress-monitoring tools such as FAST available the school may want to consider ways to implement those tools.	Met
Create new professional opportunities for teachers and other educators, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site. §256F.1(3)"f"	Expeditionary Learning professional development.	Met
Create different organizational structures for continuous learner progress. §256F.1(3)"g"	The school utilizes Learning Coaches. Structures such as "Morning Meeting" provide time for student to student collaboration.	Met
Allow greater flexibility to meet the education needs of a diverse and constantly changing student population. §256F.1(3)"h"	The school is utilizing Expeditionary Learning and arts to provide diversity in curriculum.	Met
Allow for the allocation of resources in innovative ways through implementation of specialized school budgets for the benefit	The Charter is board approved and supported. The community also supports the school. The Dubuque CSD Board of Education voted December 9, 2013 to support renewal of the charter and the Advisory Council voted October 29, 2013. The local paper published an article in support of the charter.	Met

	<b>Department of Education</b>	<b>Department of Education</b>
of the schools served. §256F.1(3)“i”		

**Recommendation:**

It is recommended that the Prescott Elementary Charter School be approved through the end of the 2017-2018 school year. The charter school shall engage in continuous improvement with the Department to refine measurable goals and to align itself to newly emerging data systems at the Department.

The charter shall continue to evaluate how they will meet the nine purposes of a charter school which are spelled out in Iowa Code 256F.1:

- Authorization and purpose.*
- 3. The purpose of a charter school or an innovation zone school established pursuant to this chapter shall be to accomplish the following:*
  - a. Improve student learning.*
  - b. Increase learning opportunities for students.*
  - c. Encourage the use of different and innovative methods of teaching.*
  - d. Require the measurement of learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes.*
  - e. Establish new forms of accountability for schools.*
  - f. Create new professional opportunities for teachers and other educators, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site.*
  - g. Create different organizational structures for continuous learner progress.*
  - h. Allow greater flexibility to meet the education needs of a diverse and constantly changing student population.*
  - i. Allow for the allocation of resources in innovative ways through implementation of specialized school budgets for the benefit of the schools served.*