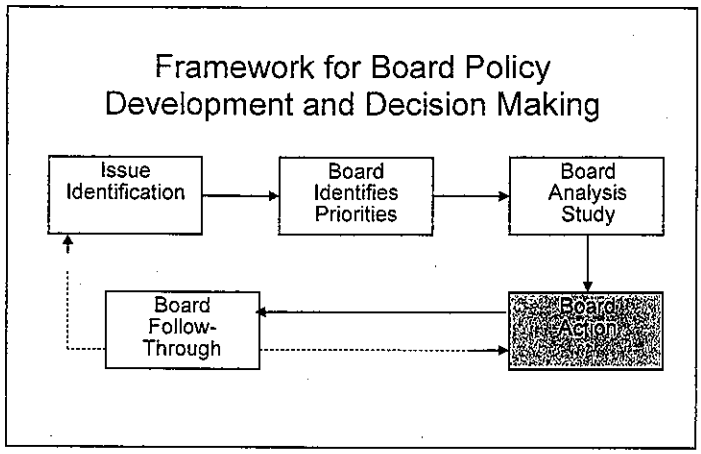
Iowa State Board of Education

Executive Summary

April 30, 2009



Agenda Item: Iowa Public Charter Schools: Renewal of Charter Status
West Central Community School District – Maynard, Iowa

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

Equity Impact Statement: Iowa public charter schools are required to be open to all students in accordance with Iowa's nondiscrimination policies.

Presenter: Del Hoover, Deputy Administrator
Bureau of Accreditation & Improvement Services

John Johnson, Superintendent
West Central Community School District

Attachments: 1

Recommendation: It is recommended that the State Board approve the charter school renewal for West Central Community School District. The charter school is called Northeast Iowa Charter High School.

Background: The 2002 legislature enacted a limited public charter schools law. The Iowa Department of Education was also awarded public charter school funding from the United States Department of Education. Schools submitting a successful application could receive up to $400,000 for a 36-month period. The West Central Community School District was among the second round of districts in Iowa to receive federal funding and be granted charter status.

Charter status is granted for a period of four years. After the initial four-year contract for a charter school and at the end of each renewal period thereafter, the school board that established the charter school, in the absence of revoking the charter, shall take affirmative action to renew a charter school contract. The West Central Community School District is seeking renewal of its charter status for the 2009-10 school year. No funding is currently attached with this status.

West Central Community School District

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John Johnson, 9-12 Principal
Cathy Timmerman, K-8 Principal
Kim Arndt, Business Manager/
Board Secretary

January 12th, 2009

Mr. Del Hoover, Deputy Division Administrator
Iowa Department of Education
Grimes State Office Building
400 E. 14th St.
Des Moines, IA 50319-0146

Dear Mr. Hoover,

It was a pleasure to get an opportunity to meet with you at the Iowa Association of School Board's Annual Convention in Des Moines, this past November. I appreciated the time you took to address my questions regarding the charter renewal application process for the Northeast Iowa Charter High School.

Enclosed, you will find the "Iowa Public Charter School Program Application for Renewal of Charter Status," and all the supporting information that you have requested.

I am sure that you will see by reading this application that the West Central Community School Board, administration, staff, students, parents, community, and other stakeholder have a vest ed interest and have made a solid commitment in the renewal of the charter status for the NEICHS. Besides the strong commitment for the charter among all of the stakeholders, you will also see that the charter has outstanding achievement data to support the continuation of the Northeast Iowa Charter High School

If you require any further information or documentation in this matter, please contact me at 1-(563)-637-2283. Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter, and I look forward to your reply.

Sincerely,

John C. Johnson, Superintendent
West Central Community Schools

Attachments: Charter School Renewal Application

IOWA PUBLIC CHARTER SCHOOL PROGRAM
Renewal Application Cover Sheet

Name of Charter School	Northeast Iowa Charter High School
Public School District	West Central Community School District
Name and Contact Information of Superintendent	Mr. John C. Johnson, Superintendent West Central Community School District 305 Pember Street, Post Office Box 54 Maynard, Iowa 50655-0054 **Phone**: 1-563-637-2283 e-**mail** jjonson@w-central.k12.ia.us
Name and Contact Information for Charter School Manager	Mr. John C. Johnson, Principal West Central High School and Northeast Iowa H.S. Charter 305 Pember Street, Post Office Box 54 Maynard, Iowa 50655-0054 **Phone**: 1-563-637-2283 e-**mail** jjonson@w-central.k12.ia.us

The Northeast Iowa Charter High School seeks to **RENEW** it pubic charter school status. The Charter School Advisory Council and the West Central Community School Board of Education have approved the Renewal process and application on the meeting dates listed below:

Advisory Council: December 8th, 2008

Board of Education: January 12th, 2009

Charter School description: The programming described in this program is unique from the perspective of the partnership between the Northeast Iowa Charter High School, the local district of West Central, the community, and a post-secondary institution, Northeast Iowa Community College. A combination of local offerings, college campus offerings, and expanded use of distance learning opportunities will be made available to all students who participate. Individualized plans for each student will be determined based on student needs rather than by availability and time schedule of courses. Additionally, some of the goals of the charter include:

- Increase the percent of graduates who complete post-secondary training from West Central Community School District
- Continue to raise ITED scores for 11th grade students in reading, mathematics, and science.
- Provide special needs and at-risk students with the opportunity to develop individualized courses of study working toward a high school diploma and developing employability skills
- Increase the percentage of students that graduate with a dual concentration of vocational and academic credits

- Increase the percentage of students that graduate with a dual concentration of vocational and academic credits

If the renewal of charter school status is approved, the district agrees to the following assurances:

XX End of the Year Charter School report will be submitted

Signatures needed for **RENEWAL** of Charter School Status:

Superintendent of Schools: John C Gibson

Charter School Manager: John C Gibson

Board of Education President: Signature included on original application dh

INTRODUCTION

The Northeast Iowa Charter High School, located in Maynard, Iowa, and run through the West Central Community School District, is seeking a renewal of our charter status for the NEICHS. Through the narration and supportive data, it is our belief that it is very evident that the NEICHS demonstrate improvement in student achievement and is able to produce data that supports achievement gains and successes in learning. Additionally, we will offer evidence of new opportunities teachers, administrators, and students have been able to participate in due to the inception of the charter school and some of the new innovations that have taken place in both instruction and the learning process. We have developed and utilized different and innovative forms of measuring student outcomes by the use of multiple measure and multiple formats in our assessments. With the charter we have establish new forms of accountability for the district from all stakeholder, including the student, parents, community, the board, the advisory board, the Iowa Department of Education, and the legislature. Additionally, we have created new professional opportunities for our teachers, including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program in the district and charter.

This application document is supported by the Northeast Iowa Charter High School Advisory Council as well as the West Central Community School and will become a part of the district's documents to which we are held accountable. Though this application of renewal of charter status for the NEICHS, we will present progress in meeting charter school goals as well as answer each question in the application set forth by the Iowa Department of Education. Our responses are based on clear, credible evidence to the areas of inquiry that guide charter school accountability.

Innovation:

The programming described in the charter is unique and innovative from the perspective of the partnership between the Northeast Iowa Charter High School, the local district of West Central, the community, and a post-secondary institution, Northeast Iowa Community College. A combination of local offerings, college campus offerings, and expanded use of distance learning opportunities will be made available to all students who participate. Individualized plans for each student will be determined based on student needs rather than by availability and time schedule of courses. The rural setting of the school district and the small population of students, make this type of individualized learning difficult outside of the Charter School. It is impossible for our size of district to offer such a program if it were not for this Charter plan. We cannot compete with our neighboring districts, which are much larger and can offer more opportunities to their student population. The educational plans are focused with high levels of instruction and high expectations of all students.

The primary design and focus of the charter is the development of career academics and pathways with a post-secondary institution beginning in middle school with the utilization of the Iowa Choices program. The charter provides students with a fast track to completion of post-secondary training in either an associates degree or four-year course of study. Students have access to expanded programming specific to career oriented areas. Moreover, the charter is individualized for the students and all students to give them access to college credit, including

Low SES students and those with IEPs. Northeast Iowa Community College will provide programs and courses not available in the resident district, West Central. This innovation will help increase the percent of graduates who complete post-secondary training from West Central Community School District, as well as percentage of students that graduate with a dual concentration of academic credits. Instruction will include the integration of upper level math, science, and technical reading skills into vocational coursework. Students will have access to current and up to date technology and equipment. The results have been improved student achievement in math, reading, and science, and on the ACT's.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT & GOALS

The primary goal of Northeast Iowa High School Charter is to increase the achievement of career-bound students by blending the content of traditional college prep students with quality fine art, vocational, and technical studies. The goals feature upgraded academic core courses, peer-collaboration and planning time for teachers to integrate instruction, and higher standards, and expectations for all students and staff. The primary partner is Northeast Iowa Community College, however, students will be able to link schools, and four-year colleges and universities. Some of the innovative approaches in delivering course that have been incorporated into the charter school include offerings on NICC's main campus in Calmar, at NICC's satellite campuses, via the ICN and internet, through the Regional Academy of Math and Science Center (RAMS) located in Oelwein, Iowa, and at West Central.

Main Goals: The four main charter goals that have been established and used for evaluation of the program are as follows:

1. Increase the percent of graduates who complete post-secondary training from West Central Community School District

2. Continue to raise ITED scores for 11th grade students in reading, mathematics, and science.
3. Provide special needs and at-risk students with the opportunity to develop individualized courses of study working toward a high school diploma and developing employability skills

4. Increase the percentage of students that graduate with a dual concentration of vocational and academic credits

Besides the four main charter goals, we have established additional academic and non-academic goals for the charter. Progress towards all four goals will be outlined in the narrative and data points contained in this document.

11th grade students will continue to raise reading, math, and science ITED scores. West Central Community School District will focus on high school redesign model to increase our gains in reading, math, and science. In addition, Northeast Iowa High School Charter and West Central High School will continue to work towards the No Child Left Behind objective of 100% proficient. Students will demonstrate improved ACT composite scores for the district. The West

Central district has consistently scored at or just above the state of Iowa average. With the higher expectation of upper level math, science, and technical reading skills, we expect to see Northeast Iowa High School Charter exceed state of Iowa average composite ACT score. Students will be able to focus on the academic core of courses required at most colleges and universities. Students will have expanded opportunities to take upper level courses traditionally not offered in a small rural school district.

Charter students who are academically motivated but are limited in the upper level course offerings in a small and rural school district will have the opportunity to complete their freshman year of college, while still in high school. In addition, if a student plans their high school credits accordingly, will be able to complete their associates degree. Moreover, students of low social economic status will especially benefit from this opportunity; it will create a pathway to unlimited courses not available in high school. Parental involvement is critical in this charter school. Parents are expected to help their children select a schedule, which reflects future goals and objectives. The career planning process begins with our middle school with Iowa Choices, specifically Choices Explores, and the development of an electronic portfolio, career paths, and courses needed that lead to the career of choice. Prior to a student's freshman year, they will have completed the regular choices program for an electronic portfolio as well as a hard copy portfolio for parent to sign.

Additional academic goals for West Central High School and the Northeast Iowa High School Charter include maintaining a less than 2% dropout rate. Each high school will continue the requirement of 4 units of English, 3.5 units of Social Studies, and 3 units of Math and Science. A unit of family life and two units of physical education will be required, too. A minimum number of 48 credits (24 units) for graduation will be required for a diploma. West Central the Charter will also be developing plan and curriculum to meet the requirements Iowa Core Curriculum.

Some of the non-academic goals for the charter include:

- Social development and transition to college
- Decrease the financial burden of post-secondary education on students and parents
- Full-time college and maintain extra-curricular participation at the high school
- Employability Skill improvement: Improved attendance and reduced office referrals
- Increased student engagement, improve environment, and increase the value

As part of the renewal application process we will take a closer look at the four primary goals and data that demonstrates the progress towards and attainment of these goals. As each goal is addressed, you will see annual and trend-line comparison of student achievement and perception data and the improvements made in each area.

Goal One: Increase the percent of graduates who complete post-secondary training from West Central Community School District.

Data indicates that the charter school is providing increased opportunities for students who are low income and who have IEPs, as well as students in the general population. The total numbers of IEP and Low SES students in the general population as well as those participating in the

charter are small, however the percent of participation of both subgroups in the charter continues to be high from year to year. This goal is one that makes the Northeast Iowa Charter School unique. **Table 1** show the actual credits obtained upon graduation pre and post charter. Also refer **to graph K, table 13**, average number of college credits earned per student upon graduation (Five year trend: two-years pre-charter and three years of charter). The Senior Class of 2007 had one-third of the students graduated with one year of college or more. The Senior Class of 2008 had two students graduate with two-year associate degrees along with their high school diploma. The actual data for the Senior Class of 2009 will be updated upon completion the 2008-2009 school year. Students who graduate high school with some dual credits are more likely to continue on in some type of post-secondary training.

Northeast Iowa High School Charter: Senior Credits

Senior Class 2004: 28 graduates • **17 took college courses** • **5 earned 15 hours credit or more** • **0 earned 30 hours credit or more** • **0 earned 40 hours credit or more**	**Senior Class 2005: 18 graduates** • **9 took college courses** • **3 earned 15 hours credit or more** • **0 earned 30 hours credit or more** • **0 earned 40 hours credit or more**
Senior Class 2006: 23 graduates **22 took college courses** **16 earned 15 hours credit or more** **3 earned 30 hours credit or more** **0 earned 40 hours credit or more**	**Senior Class 2007: 33 graduates** **30 took college courses** **22 earned 15 hours credit or more** **12 earned 30 hours credit or more** **3 earned 40 hours credit or more**
Senior Class 2008: 31 graduates **30 took college courses** **22 earned 15 hours credit or more** **12 earned 30 hours credit or more** **3 earned 40 hours credit or more**	**Senior Class 2009: 20 graduates** **__ took college courses** **__ earned 15 hours credit or more** **__ earned 30 hours credit or more** **__ earned 40 hours credit or more**

Table 1: Post-Secondary credits completed by senior. Two-years pre-charter/Three years Charter.

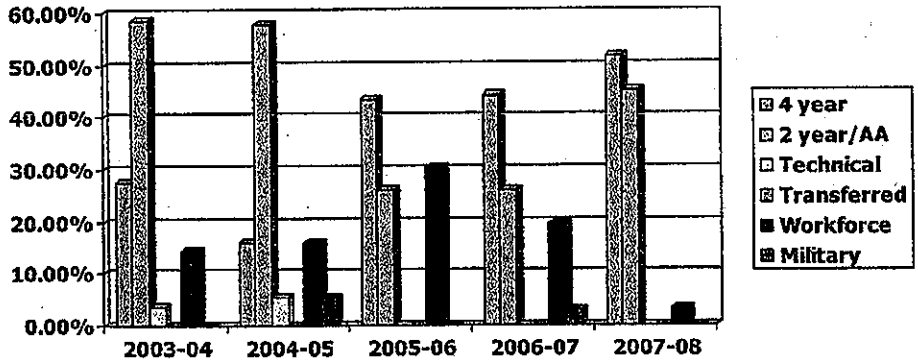
We had 29 of 31, or 93.5% of the graduating class 2008 take PSEO, contracted, or charter classes, while 18 of 20 Juniors have taken post-secondary classes, for a 90% participation rate. Sophomores qualify for post-secondary classes based on their Accuplacer score, ITED's, and TAG results. We had 9 of 21 sophomores take post-secondary classes in 2007-2008, for a 43% participation rate. With the Junior and Senior classes combined, we had 47 of 51 students take post-secondary classes, for a 92.2% participation rate for a voluntary program!! In our school, we had 57 students take college classes in 2007-08, including a CPI student. Two of thirty-one seniors graduated with a two-year associates degree!! Refer to **table 3/graph A**, post-secondary intentions.

Students that are participating in post-secondary training at West Central have demonstrated that they are more willing and comfortable pursuing a college degree after graduation. Based on post-secondary intention data, we can show that in the two years prior to the charter an average of 21.69% of graduates in 2004 and 2005 chose to go to a four-year

institution. The average percent of students going to a four-year institution during the charter years, 2006 though 2008, averaged 46.43%, an average increase of 24.74%. During the same time periods, we saw the total number of graduates in Of particular note is the fact that from 2004 to 2008, we saw the percentage of students who indicated that they were going to attend a four-year institution after graduation went from 27.6% to 51.6%, a 24% increase. This increase of students going to four-year and two-year institutions correlates to the increase in the number of students taking the ACT's and the increase in the number of college credits that students at West Central are graduating with. The increased participation in ACT and the improved scores has had an impact on students' decisions to pursue post-secondary offering after high school. All by one student, or 96.8% of the class of 2008 indicated that they intended to pursue post-secondary training.

Table 3/Graph A: Post-secondary Intentions

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
4 year	27.60%	15.78%	43.40%	44.30%	51.60%
2 year/AA	58.60%	57.78%	26.10%	26.10%	45.20%
Technical	3.45%	5.26%	0%	0%	0%
Transferred	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Workforce	14.28%	15.78%	30.40%	19.40%	3.20%
Military	0%	5.26%	0%	2.90%	0%



ACT: Narrative and Trend-line Data

Another indicator of post-secondary success is ACT scores. Also we feel that the participation increase in students taking the ACT is an indicator that more students are planning to continue their education in some type of post-secondary education program.

Table 2 shows that from 2005 to 2007, the average class ACT has risen 1.35 points, and the participation level has risen 11.11%. In the past four years the participation level in the ACT went from 33.3% in 2005, to 61.29% participation in 2008, a 27.99% increase in participation! During the same four year time period, the average cut score has risen by ½ point from 22.83 in 2005, to 23.32 in 2008, with the highest cut score average being 24.18 in 2007. The increase in student ACT scores is impressive and encouraging. Although we do not have any hard data to support the increase, we would like to attribute the increased ACT scores with the increased number of post-secondary courses that West Central students are taking though PSEO,

contracted, and Charter classes. The post-secondary level courses definitely increase the reading level and rigor for students, which is also what we are trying to accomplish in all of our courses at West Central and in the Northeast Iowa Charter.

Class of:	2005 (Baseline)	2006	2007	2008
ACT Participation	6 of 18 33.3%	10 of 23 43.47%	16 of 36 44.44%	19 of 31 61.29%
Average ACT Score	22.83	22.20	24.18	23.32

Table 2: ACT Participation/ACT Cut-scores

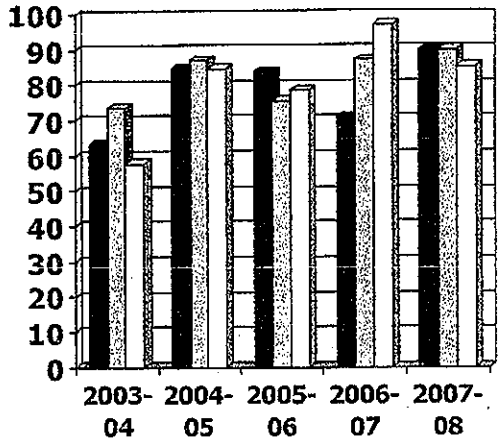
Senior Class of 2008: Four Seniors from the class of 2008 took the ACT as a sophomore, with 28 being the high score and 21 the low; they had a 24.25 average for the class. Four 2008 seniors took the ACT as a junior, with 25 being the high score and 22 the low; they had a 23.25 average for the class. A total of nineteen seniors, class of 2008, have taken the ACT with 31 being the high and 18 the lowest score, for a class total average of 23.32. The cut–score that is an indicator of success in college is 20, and 100% of the current senior class of 2008 taking the ACT scored at or above the cut-score. Of the nineteen current seniors who have taken the ACT, six have retaken the ACT and raised their scores by an average of 2.2 points with 31 being the highest score. 17 of 19 2008 seniors, or 89.5%, scored at or above the cut-score of 20, which is the score used to indicate success in college. The class of 2008 has now raised their class average score to 23.32!!! This is 3.32 points above the cut-score of 20, which is outstanding!!

Goal two: Continue to raise ITED proficiencies for 11th grade students in reading, mathematics, and science.

Continued evaluation of student performance in the charter, specifically in relationship to ITED, is a good indicator of "value added" to a students secondary education. If students in the charter continue to have a high percentage of low SES and IEP students, and the academic performance of all charter students will continues to rise, and there is a clear indication that, #1) when students are challenged to higher levels of rigor and, #2) when the instruction has meaning (relevance) for them, academic performance increases in all students. **Table 4/Graph B** shows that goal two has been attained as there was a rise in ITED proficiencies for 11th grade students in reading, mathematics, and science over a five-year trend. ITED data on proficiency increases for Low SES and IEP students is addressed in goal three data.

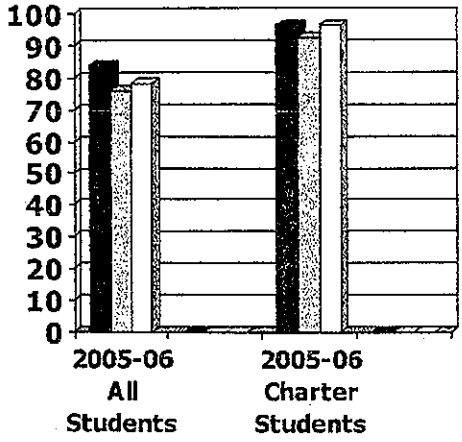
Data in tables seven through thirteen shows that proficiencies have increase in all of our subgroups as well as the over-all population of students.

Table 4/Graph B: Goal #2 Increase 11th Grade ITED Scores: 5 year trend-line data



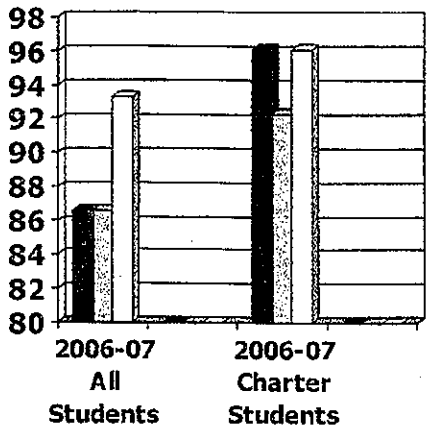
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Reading	63.2	84.6	83.7	71	90
Math	73.7	86.9	75.6	87.1	90
Science	57.9	84.6	78.3	96.8	85

Table 5/Graph C: Increase 11th Grade ITED Proficiencies by year: 2005-06



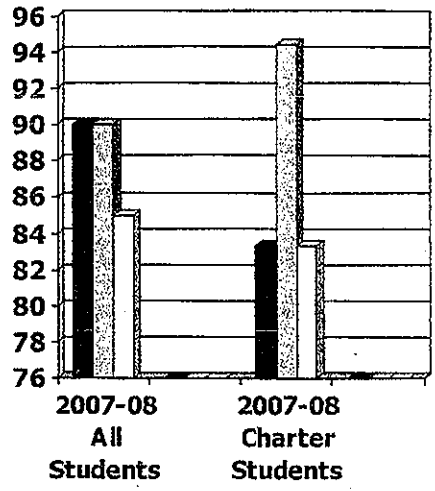
	2005-06 All Students	2005-06 Charter Students
Reading	83.7	96.1
Math	75.6	92.3
Science	78.3	96.1

Table 6/Graph D: Increase 11th Grade ITED Proficiencies by year: 2006-07



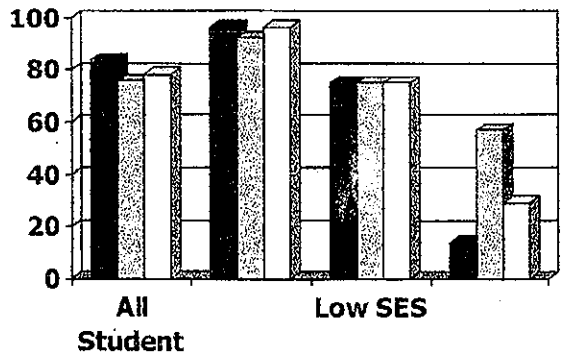
	2006-07 All Students	2006-07 Charter Students
Reading	86.6	96.1
Math	86.6	92.3
Science	93.3	96.1

Table 7/Graph E: Increase 11th Grade ITED Proficiencies by year: 2007-08



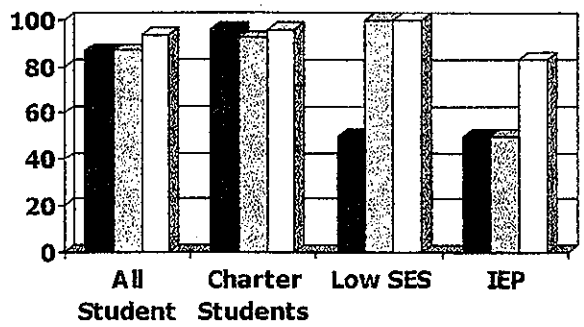
	2007-08 All Students	2007-08 Charter Students
Reading	90	83.3
Math	90	94.4
Science	85	83.3

Table 8/Graph F: ITED by Subgroup- 2005-06 11th Grade Students - % Proficient



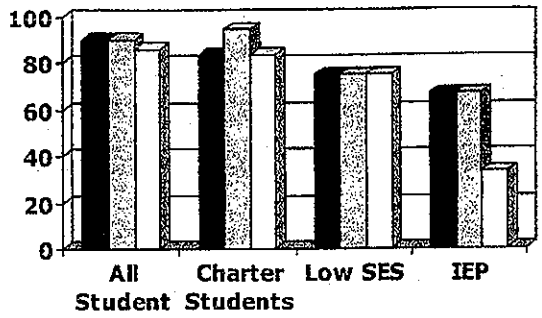
	All Student	Charter Students	Low SES	IEP
Reading	83.7	96.1	75	14
Math	75.6	92.3	75	57
Science	78.3	96.1	75	29

Table 9/Graph G: ITED by Subgroup- 2006-07 11th Grade Students - % Proficient



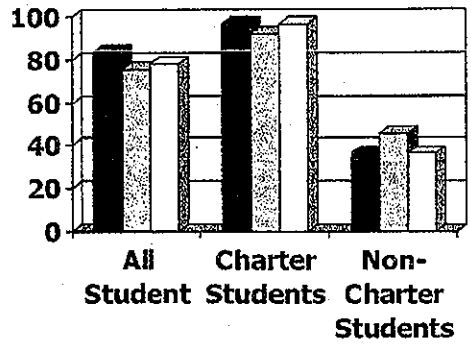
	All Student	Charter Students	Low SES	IEP
Reading	86.6	96.1	50	50
Math	86.6	92.3	100	50
Science	93.3	96.1	100	83.3

Table 10/Graph H: ITED by Subgroup- 2007-08 11th Grade Students - % Proficient



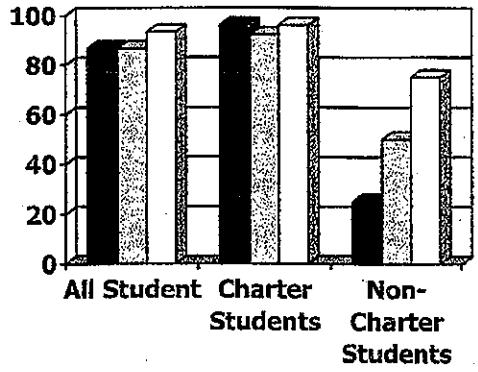
	All Student	Charter Students	Low SES	IEP
Reading	90	83.3	75	66.7
Math	90	94.4	75	66.7
Science	86	83.3	75	33.3

Table 11/Graph I: ITED by Subgroup- 2005-06 11th Grade Students - % Proficient



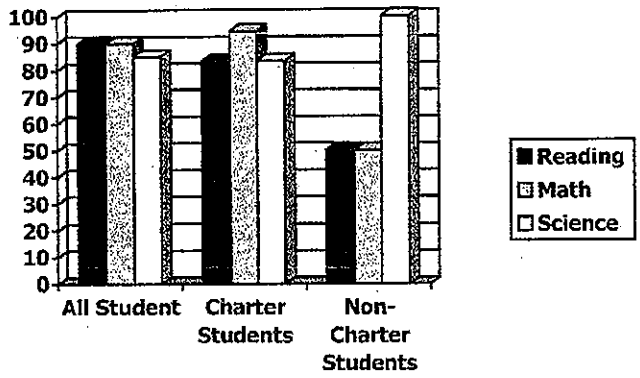
	All Student	Charter Students	Non-Charter Students
Reading	83.7	96.1	36.4
Math	75.6	92.3	45.4
Science	78.3	96.1	36.4

Table 12/Graph J: ITED by Subgroup- 2006-07 11th Grade Students - % Proficient



	All Student	Charter Students	Non-Charter Students
Reading	86.6	96.1	25
Math	86.6	92.3	50
Science	93.3	96.1	75

Table 13/Graph K: ITED by Subgroup- 2007-08 11th Grade Students - % Proficient



	All Student	Charter Students	Non-Charter Students
Reading	90	83.3	50
Math	90	94.4	50
Science	85	83.3	100

Goal 3: Provide special needs and at-risk students with the opportunity to develop individualized courses of study working toward a high school diploma and developing employability skills

The charter has provided special needs and low SES students with the opportunity to develop individualized courses of study working toward a high school diploma while developing employability skills as our third goal. The number of college level credits for students participating in the charter continues to increase annually including IEP and low SES students. Students interviewed indicated that the charter is challenging, but better prepares them for their life after high school. Formal and informal graduate follow up studies have shown that the charter has improved the readiness and opportunity to partake in post-secondary classes with success. The administration and guidance does an excellent job of discussing all possible options with all students, including the charter school. Students that would have not considered post-secondary education, specifically low SES and IEP students, now are taking college level courses, graduating with college credits and continuing their education beyond high school. The guidance, referral and support provided by the high school and through the charter is well established and achieving the goal.

Provide special needs and at-risk students with the opportunity to develop individualized courses of study (both academic and vocational skills training) working toward a high school diploma. Additionally, students will gain entry-level skills for employment, which enhances their employability.

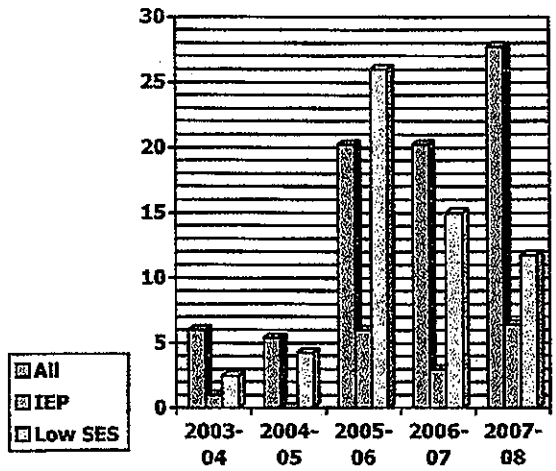
The average number of credits earned per student upon graduation increased for all students, as well as low SES and IEP students when comparing the pre-charter to charter years. During the pre-charter years of 2003-04 and 2004-05 the average number of credits earned for all students over the two years was 5.7 credits, and the average for the first three charter years was 22.7 credits per student. The class of 2008 graduated with an average of 27.7 credits, up 22.3 credits from the pre-charter year of 2004-05. During the pre-charter years of 2003-04 and 2004-05 the average number of credits earned for each IEP students over the two years was 0.5 credits,

and the average for the first three charter years was 5.13 credits per IEP student. IEP students in the class of 2008 graduated with an average of 6.4 credits, up 6.4 credits from the pre-charter year of 2004-05. **See table 14, graph L.** During the pre-charter years of 2003-04 and 2004-05 the average number of credits earned for low SES students over the two years was 3.375 credits, and the average for the first three charter years was 17.58 credits, up 13.33 credits from the pre-charter year of 2004-05. Low SES students in the class of 2008 graduated with an average of 11.75 credits, up 7.5 credits from the pre-charter year of 2004-05.

Table 15/graph M, show that during the pre-charter years of 2003-04 and 2004-05 the average number of total credits earned for low SES students over the two years was 18.5 credits, and the average for the first three charter years was 34.33 credits, up 15.83 credits from the pre-charter years of 2003-04 and 2004-05. Low SES students in the class of 2008 graduated with a total of 47 credits, up 30 credits from the pre-charter year of 2004-05. Low SES students in the class of 2008 graduated with an average of 11.75 credits, up from an average of 4.25 credit per student graduating in 2004, see **Table 16/graph N**. The percent of low SES students graduating with college credits during the pre-charter years of 2003-04 and 2004-05 average 25%, and the average percent of student earning credits for the first three charter of the charter was 91.66%. **Table17/graph O** shows that the class of 2008 saw 75% of the IEP students graduate with college credit, up 50% from the pre-charter year of 2004-05

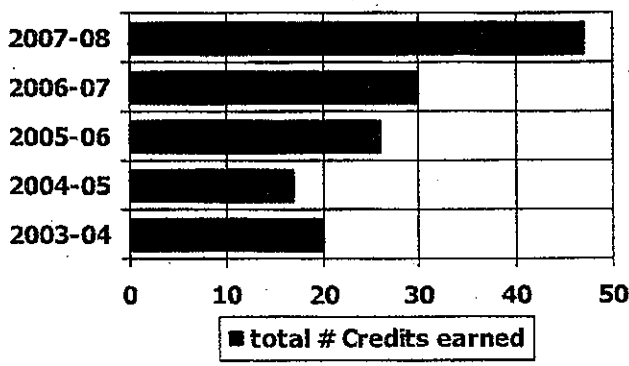
Table 18 A/graph P, show that during the pre-charter years of 2003-04 and 2004-05 the average number of total credits earned for IEP students over the two years was 3 credits, and the average for the first three charter years was 19.33 credits, up 16.33 credits from the pre-charter years of 2003-04 and 2004-05. IEP students in the class of 2008 graduated with a total of 32 credits, up 32 credits from the pre-charter year of 2004-05. IEP students in the class of 2008 graduated with an average of 6.4 credits, up from an average of 1 credit per student graduating in 2004, see **Table 18 B/graph Q**. The percent of IEP students graduating with college credits during the pre-charter years of 2003-04 and 2004-05 average 12.25%, and the average percent of student earning credits for the first three charter of the charter was 56.6%. **Table19/graph R** shows that the class of 2008 saw 60% of the IEP students graduate with college credit, up 60% from the pre-charter year of 2004-05

Table 14/Graph L: Average number of college credits earned per student upon graduation. Five year trend: two-years pre-charter and three years of charter.



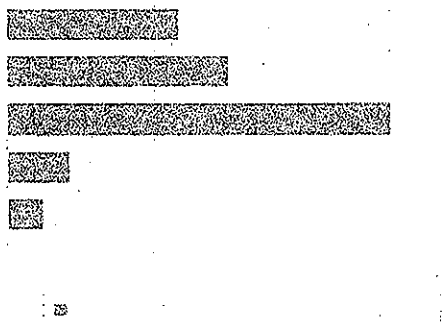
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
All	6	5.4	20.2	20.2	27.7
IEP	1	0	6	3	6.4
Low SES	2.5	4.25	26	15	11.75

Table 15/Graph M: Goal #3 Total number of credits earned by graduating Low SES Students



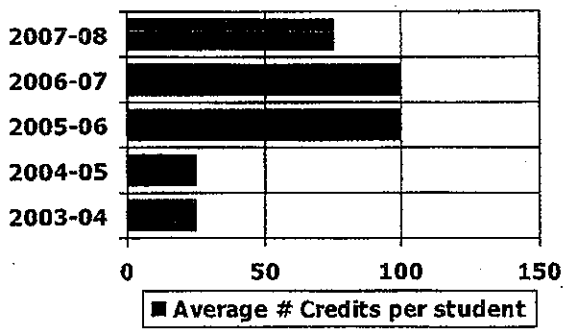
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
total # Credits earned	20	17	26	30	47

Table 16/Graph N: Goal #3 Average number of Low SES Students Graduating with College Credits



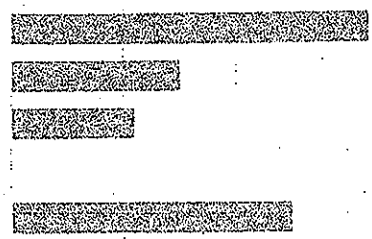
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Average # Credits per student	2.5	4.25	26	15	11.75

Table 17/Graph O: Goal #3 Percent of Low SES Students Graduating with College Credits



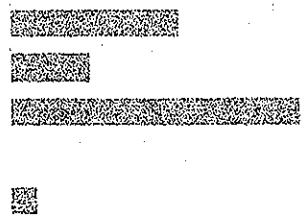
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Average # Credits per student	25	25	100	100	75

Table 18/Graph P: Goal #3: IEP Students Graduating with College Credits



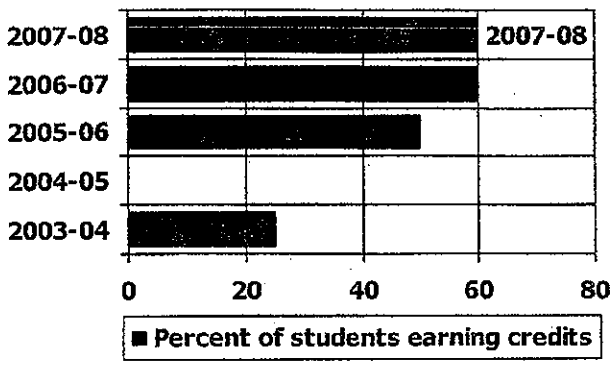
	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Total credits earned	6	0	11	15	32

Table 18/Graph Q: Goal #3: IEP Students Graduating with College Credits



	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Average # Credits earned	1	0	11	3	6.4

Table 19/Graph R: Goal #3: IEP Students Graduating with College Credits



	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Percent of students earning credits	25	0	50	60	60

Goal four: Increase the percentage of students that graduate with a dual concentration of vocational and academic credits.

Data in Tables 20, 21, and 22 definitely shows that the charter has increased the number of student at West Central who graduate with dual credits. The data shows the average number of credits taken by all students who graduated in the two pre-charter classes of 2004 and 2005 was 5.75 credits per student. The average number of credits taken by all students who graduated in the first three charter classes of 2006, 2007, and 2008 was 22.7 credits per student, 16.95 credits per student more than the two pre-charter years. The graduating class of 2008 had an average of 27.7 credits earned per student, up from an average of 5.4 credits during the pre-charter class of 2004, an increase of 22.3 credits per graduate. The average post-secondary participation rate in the pre-charter classes of 2004 and 2005 was 53.15%. The average post-secondary participation rate in the three charter classes of 2006, 2007, and 2008 was 94.33%. The graduating class of 2008 saw 29 of 31 students take post-secondary classes, for a 96% participation rate and a total of 861 credits taken for a class average of 27.7 credits earned which is the equivalent of one year of college, which meets our goal!!!

Tracking charter students through college completion of a post-secondary degree would provide quality data that could be used for participation in Governor Culver's newly proposed Senior Plus Program. Additionally, the data could be used by the school board to garner continued support and resources for the charter continuation, specifically if the data supported a reduction of time in college and cost of education due to student engagement in the charter. The data is clear that students are taking advantage of the charter, which is a key component in our renewal process and goal accomplishment.

Other ways we help increase the percentage of students that graduate with a dual concentration of credits Guidance meets with each students meets with students from 8th grade on (as early as 8th grade orientation). All 8th and 9th grade students going to college campus (NICC) to help relieve their fears of college. This level of 1 on 1 guidance helps assure they are considering moving into college level work, more fully engaging each student. The district has been proactive with offering remedial supports for students even prior to the charter. This helps the charter in that students are gearing up to assure core is completed, allowing them to advance into that charter. The career planning process begins with our middle school with Iowa Choices, and the development of an electronic portfolio, career paths, and courses needed that lead to the career of choice. Prior to a student's freshman year, they will have completed the regular choices program for an electronic portfolio as well as a hard copy portfolio for parent to sign.

Table 20: Goal #4: Dual Concentration 2 years pre / 3 years post charter

	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
All Seniors	16 of 27 59.3%	8 of 17 47%	22 of 23 96%	30 of 33 91%	29 of 31 96%
Low SES	2 of 8 25%	1 of 4 25%	1 of 1 100%	3 of 3 100%	3 of 4 75%
IEP	2 of 6 33.3%	0 of 5 0%	1 of 2 50%	3 of 5 60%	3 of 5 60%

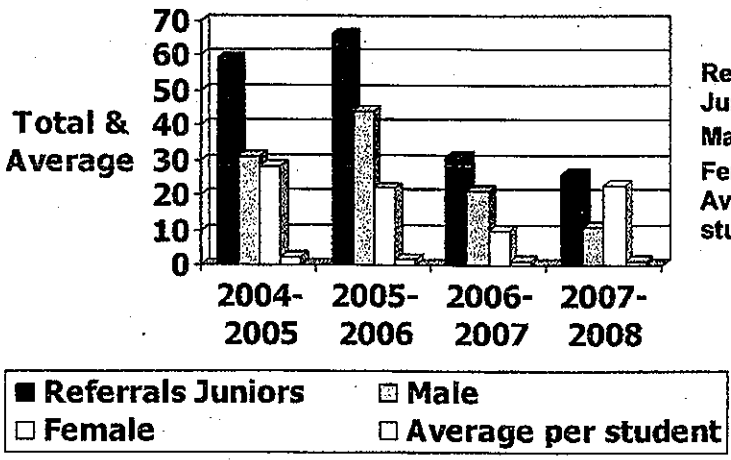
Table 21: Goal #4: Dual Concentration Charter Years: Trend-line: 3 year data

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
All Seniors	22 of 23 96%	30 of 33 91%	29 of 31 96%
Low SES	1 of 1 100%	3 of 3 100%	3 of 4 75%
IEP	1 of 2 50%	3 of 5 60%	3 of 5 60%

Table 22: Goal #4: Total Charter Credits Pre/Post Charter and average # of credits

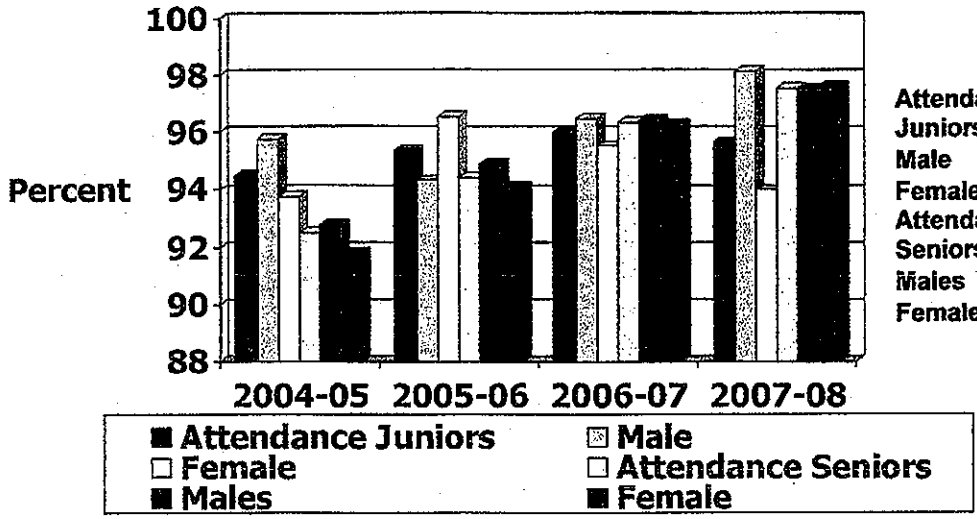
	2003-04 Cr./Students Aver. # Cr	2004-05 Cr./Students Aver. # Cr	2005-06 Cr./Students Aver. # Cr	2006-07 Cr./Students Aver. # Cr	2007-08 Cr./Students Aver. # Cr
All Seniors	164/27 6.1%	97/17 5.4%	465/23 20.2%	666/33 20.2	861/31 27.7%
Low SES	2 of 8 25%	1 of 4 25%	1 of 1 100%	2 of 2 100%	3 of 4 75%
IEP	2 of 6 33.3%	0 of 5 0%	1 of 2 50%	3 of 5 60%	3 of 5 60%

Table 23/Graph S: Goal #4 Reducing Office Referrals Employability Measure



	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
Referrals Juniors	59	66	31	26
Male	31	44	21	11
Female	28	22	10	23
Average per student	2.18	1.78	1	1.3

Table 24/Graph T: Goal #4 Improving Attendance (Employability measure) Juniors and Seniors

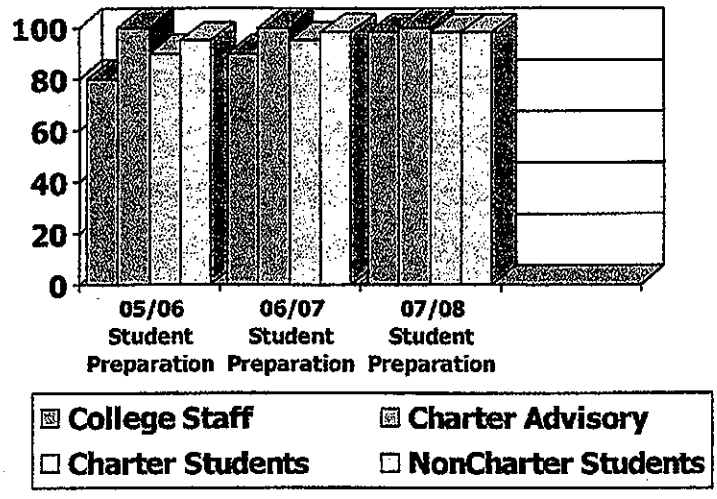


	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Attendance Juniors	94.5	95.34	96.04	95.65
Male	95.78	94.33	96.49	98.12
Female	93.75	96.54	95.52	94
Attendance Seniors	92.52	94.45	96.36	97.54
Males	92.77	94.91	96.39	97.48
Female	91.82	94.13	96.3	97.63

Quantitative Data: As a result of the post-secondary offerings, WC students are transferring to higher education with more college credits than ever before. Students are taking a more rigorous course load earlier in their high school career. Students with IEP's (Individualized Education Plans) and who are Low SES (Socio-Economic Status) have had an increased opportunity for participation in college courses. IEP and Low SES students are finding success at the college level as a result of post-secondary participation. The academic performance of juniors and seniors has increased during the past four years according to scores on the ITED and ACT. Additionally, student attendance rates have increased and the discipline referrals have decreased during the same time period.

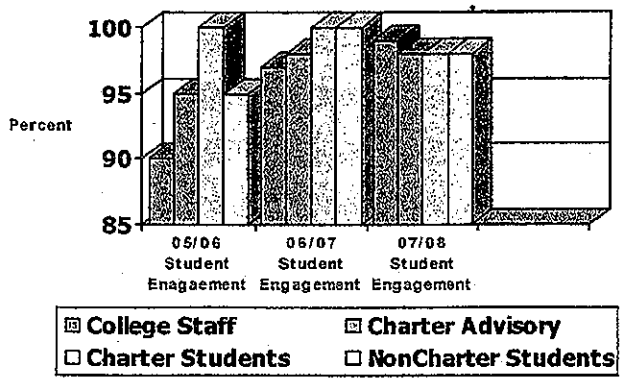
Qualitative Data Collection 2005/06, 2006/07, 2007/08 Students: Interviews, Teachers: Interviews, Board Members: Interviews

Table 25/Graph U: Qualitative: Percent of staff and students indicating students are prepared for participation in college credit courses



	05/06 Student Preparation	06/07 Student Preparation	07/08 Student Preparation
College Staff	80	90	98
Charter Advisory	100	100	100
Charter Students	90	95	98
Non-Charter Students	95	98	98

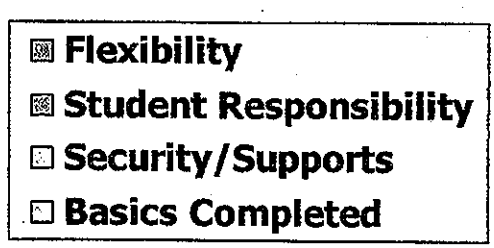
Table 26/Graph V: Qualitative: Learners Engaged - Percent of staff and students college credit courses are engaging to students

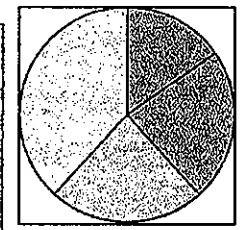


	05/06 Student Engagement	06/07 Student Engagement	07/08 Student Engagement
College Staff	90	97	99
Charter Advisory	95	98	98
Charter Students	100	100	98
Non-Charter Students	95	100	98

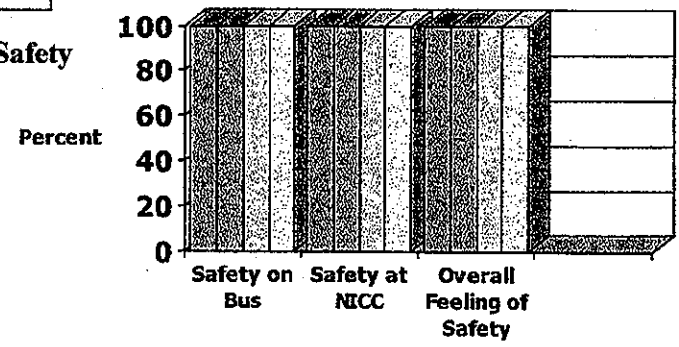
Table 27/Graph W: Qualitative: 2007/08 Benefits of the Charter school High School Staff College Faculty, Students (charter and non-charter) Charter

	Flexibility	Student Responsibility	Security/Supports	Basics Completed
College Staff	20	30	30	50
Charter Advisory	15	35	50	40
Charter Students	45	50	25	75
Non-Charter Students	40	45	25	60





Graph X: 2007/08 Charter School Safety



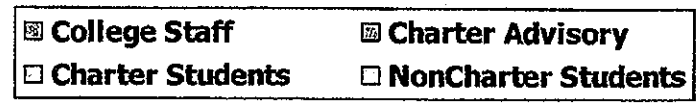
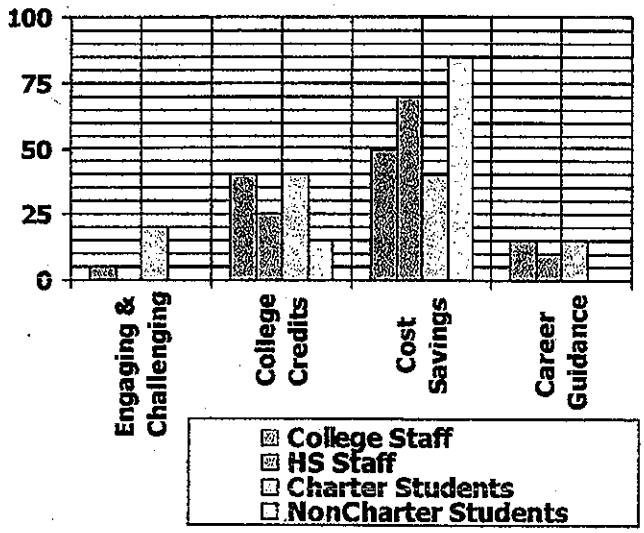
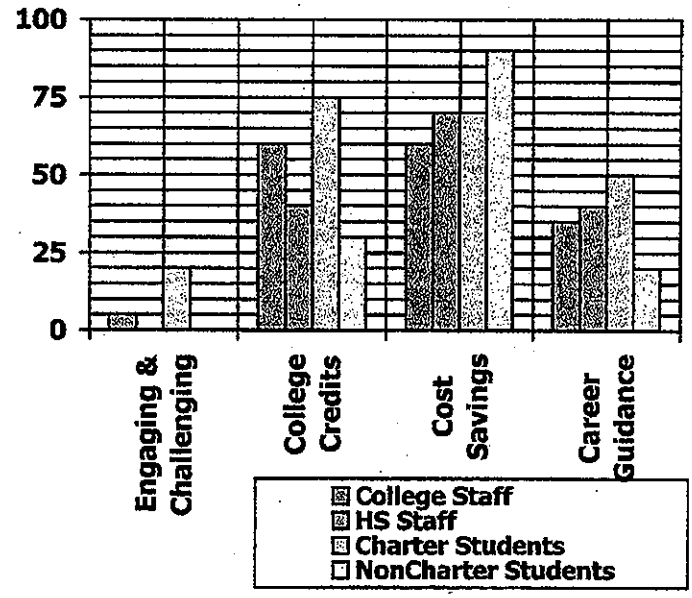


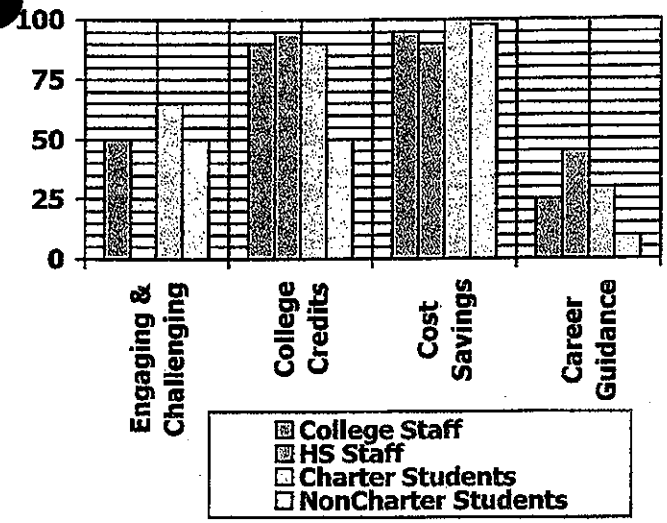
Table 28/Graph Y: Perception Data: Students reasons for participation in the charter verses Staff perception of why students are in the charter. Trend-line data from the first three years of the charter from 2005-06 to 2007-08.



2005-06	Engaging & Challenging	College Credits	Cost Savings	Career Guidance
College Staff	5	40	50	15
HS Staff		25	70	10
Charter Students	20	40	40	15
Non-Charter Students	0	15	85	

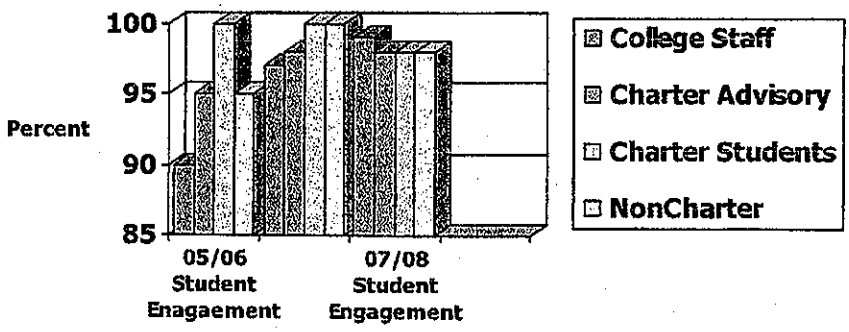
2006-07	Engaging & Challenging	College Credits	Cost Savings	Career Guidance
College Staff	5	60	60	35
HS Staff		40	70	40
Charter Students	20	75	70	50
Non-Charter Students	0	30	90	20





	Engaging & Challenging	College Credits	Cost Savings	Career Guidance
College Staff	50	90	95	25
HS Staff		95	90	45
Charter Students	65	90	100	30
Non-Charter Students	50	50	98	10

Perception Data: Students reasons for participation in the charter verses Staff perception of why students are in the charter. Trend-line data from the first three years of the charter from 2005-06 to 2007-08.



	05/06 Student Engagement	06/07 Student Engagement	07/08 Student Engagement
College Staff	90	97	99
Charter Advisory	95	98	98
Charter Students	100	100	98
NonCharter Students	95	100	98

ORGANIZATIONAL ISSUES

Leadership and Governance

The Northeast Iowa Charter High School is an effective and viable organization with competent leadership. The leadership of the West Central Board, the Charter Advisory Committee, and administrators are actively involved and committed to the charter. The Charter Advisory Committee have a good understanding of the requirements of the Charter, the responsibilities of the Advisory Committee to the Charter, and a high degree of confidence in the leadership and administration at both NICC and West Central. The group operates independently from the school Board of Directors; the Superintendent is responsible for communicating between the advisory committee and Board of Directors. The Charter Manager and advisory board play a vital role in reviewing the goals and data, evaluation of program and offerings, and makes recommendations to the board concerning the charter.

The Northeast Iowa High School Charter advisory committee has served as the advisor for the charter and the makeup of the committee. They have worked closely with the West Central Community School District Board of Education. The advisory committee makes recommendations to the board on areas of budgeting, curriculum, and operating procedures. The advisory council also assumes the responsibility to ensure agreements are fulfilled under the charter contract. The council meets with the charter school manager when needed, but no less than bi-annually. The advisory council has partnered with the school improvement team to review and approve all annual reports with the district in June, and jointly signs for approval prior to submitting reports to the board.

The charter school principal has also been tasked as the charter school manager to coordinate scheduling, staffing, planning, transportation, and oversee the finances for the charter school. The manager is responsible for all required reporting to the community and to the state of Iowa. As the manager for the Northeast Iowa High School Charter, Mr. Johnson is also responsible for the day-to-day operations, reporting directly to the Northeast Iowa High School Charter advisory council. The manager supervises the business manager and the faculty responsible for instruction.

The West Central Community School District School Board will be responsible for the overall guidance and progress of the Northeast Iowa High School Charter. The manager will report directly to the board on the progress of the charter school related to student achievement and the impact on district achievement goals in relationship to the charter. The charter school has been a regular agenda item on the West Central Board of Education monthly meetings.

Based on information gathered on the NEICHS, parents, students, teachers, and other stakeholders are very satisfied with the charter, its offerings, results, and management. The charter continually receives unsolicited input from parents, students, teachers, and other stakeholders on how satisfied they are with the charter and the leadership. The NEICHS also gains input from the stakeholders through formal and informal conversations and meetings, surveys, and though the yearly evaluation process by the district advisory board, NICC, a third party evaluator, and via the Iowa Department of Education Charter Site Visit. All interviewees,

including Charter and Non-Charter students, high school and college faculty, and advisory members feel the Charter is good for students, families, and the West Central School District. Several individuals referenced the support of the administration and school board on their commitment to maintaining the charter.

Northeast Iowa High School Charter has worked with the West Central Community School District to provide students opportunities to participate in the school hot lunch program, extra-curricular programming, band, vocal, special needs services, guidance services, and other electives not available through the Northeast Iowa High School Charter offerings. Students will continue to have the opportunity to be high school students while experiencing expanded opportunities for post-secondary training, which is a vital and valued part of the culture in the communities that make up West Central.

Finances/Funding

The West Central Community School district, which includes the NEICHS, is financially sound. Initially, West Central received a planning grant for the high school charter in the spring of 2005. The NEICHS status as a charter was approved in the summer of 2005, and the 2005-2006 school year was the first of two funding years. The third year of the charter, 2007-2008, was the first year of sustainability and was a challenge for the district financially. The NIECHS, NICC, and WC CSD have entered into a three-year 28E agreement for charter services that expired in August of 2008. The new agreement between West Central and NICC to facilitate the continuation and commitment of the charter is affective until August of 2011. The stakeholders of the West Central district were and continue to be committed to the Northeast Charter High School. However, the board, administration, and advisory board knew that the district could not continue the charter agreement as originally designed between NICC, West Central, and the charter and still stay fiscally sound. The board, administration, and advisory committee along with assistance with the district's legal council were able to come to a 28E agreement between all the entities involved with the NEICHS that would allow for its continuation while still being a financially viable program.

At West Central we have an unspent balance in excess of $900.000.00, our solvency rations is over 24%, and we have no debt service. We do have an aging middle/high school building and declining enrollment that are issues we will need to contend with and make plans for in the future for the financial stability of the district and the NEICHS. The current economic health of the state and nation are also a concern with sustainability, as well as the 1.5% across the board cut in the state. However, based on the current financial health of the district and a strong commitment to the charter from the board, administration, advisory committee, and the community, we feel that the charter is and will continue to be a viable option for students at West Central. The

The NEICHS would like to see additional funding in terms of increased weighting for post-secondary enrollments and grants from the state and federal government, especially for charters that achieve their goals and increase student achievement. Additionally, we would hope that the 4% allowable growth for education is sustained, if not increased, in the future.

IMPACT/CHALLENGES/FUTURE PLANS AND GOALS

There have been many successes and challenges that the Northeast Iowa Charter High School has experienced since its inception. Without a doubt, the greatest impact and success of the charter has been the increase of rigor, relevance, reliability, and expectations, which has lead to more accountability for everyone in the district. The benefit has been the students and their increased achievement, the heightened awareness of the need for increased rigor and relevance, and higher learning. The students and parents have also benefited from the cost saving associated with dual enrollments and this has enable some of our low SES students take that next step to college. The same is true for many of our IEP students, who have taken the first steps toward vocational and liberal arts paths.

Some of the challenges that we faced in the first three of the charter were expected, while other situations were learning experiences that gave us an opportunity to problem solve and helped improve the charter. Initially, just educating the various stakeholders on what a public charter was, how it worked, and the benefits was our first challenge leading up to the approval process. Some other concerns centered on the students being out of the building and with college age students. These concerns were quickly resolved with meeting, campus visits, orientations, and feedback from students who went to the main campus of NICC. Of course scheduling and transportation have always been a challenge, but one that has been handled well with the counselor and charter manager. The new concept of the charter and how the increased rigor of course and the affect on student's grades, assessments results, and the NCLB requirements was an initial concern. But again, the staff and students met the challenge and were successful, as the data has shown. We have consistently met our Comprehensive School Improvement Plan or CSIP goals as well as out AYP and APR goals. Again, the charter has helped our district increase our expectation for staff and students in terms of instruction and student achievement and they have responded positively. Our open enrollment approached did not work well with surrounding districts, and the buy-in option or concept is one that will be marketed and pursued in the future to help foster partnerships between districts and the NEICHS. Districts are now starting to utilize some of our course and teachers to meet some of their academic needs, and this has been a win-win for all stakeholders and districts.

Changes in the original program of the charter school that are needed and the school would like to make:

The focus of the original charter has not changed, but some of our approaches in terms of how we offer courses, transportation, needed some adaptations to keep the NEICHS and the West Central CSD viable and fiscally sound. One area that we would like to make a change is to the initial requirements for admission to charter school. The Northeast Iowa High School Charter admission requirements for attendance/admission currently include the need to be a Junior or Senior level status in high school, along with TAG students. Students must provide documentation of transcripts for a minimum of 24 hours of semester credits or 12 Carnegie Units to be eligible to participate. Admission would be allowed either semester of a school year. Students must be under the age of 21.

During meetings with advisory committee, they interrupted the TAG portion to include sophomores who meet the Accuplacer requirements and the endorsement of the high school counselor and principal. The only language change that we would like to formally make when renewing the application for charter status would be the inclusion of the underscored language. We would like to have our admissions language read as follows: Northeast Iowa High School Charter admission requirements for attendance would include the need to be a Junior or Senior level status in high school, along with approved sophomore TAG students. Students must provide documentation of transcripts for a minimum of 24 hours of semester credits or 12 Carnegie Units to be eligible to participate, or classified as a sophomores TAG student with documentation of transcripts for a minimum of 12 hours of semester credits or 6 Carnegie Units, who meet the Accuplacer requirements and have the endorsement of the high school counselor and principal. By making this language provision, we further support the premise of fast-track options for students and the concept of rigor, relevance, and reliability in the curriculum.

FUTURE GOAL:

Besides maintaining the current goals and objective of the charter, we feel we need to reinforce that fact that the Northeast Iowa High School Charter is part of the Northeast Iowa Learning Success Center and should be utilized more by the students. Currently, we use the Regional Education Center in Oelwein as our alternative school provider. Students seeking an alternative education program will are allowed to participate at the Success Center. They may earn an alternative diploma while having access to Northeast Iowa vocational courses. We will place an added emphasis to any students who needs an alternative setting and diploma to look at the advantages of NICC program. Having multiple alternative options will continue the trend of a dropout percentage below the state of Iowa average. This will encourage alternative education students to continue their education beyond high school as well.

The leadership of the NEICHS continues to evaluate and make future plans for the educational program offered though the charter including renewed emphasis and planning with Iowa Online offering, ICN and other distant learning opportunities, development of educational consortiums, utilization of adjunct faculty, and increase participation and partnering with Regional Academy of Math and Science or RAMS Center. A goal of the charter advisory committee, the board of directors, administration, and other stakeholders is to continue to keep benefits and successes of the NEICHS in the forefront. Additionally, continue to have high expectations for everyone involved with the charter, higher quality teachers and administrators, as well as developing ways to retain these quality administrators and individuals.

West Central and the NEICHS have made plans and taken action for the financial stability of the charter. The new billing process and 28E agreement demonstrates the board's commitment to the charter and fiscal responsibility. E board has also look at the budgeting process and what sources and funding streams that are available to sustain the charter. The influx of additional revenue from the state penny will also help to offset some of the charter expenses as these funds can be use for tax relief and infrastructure needs, freeing up other funds to sustain the charter.

Some final goals that will be continued and emphasize include:

- Improve student learning.
- Increase learning opportunities for students.
- Require the measurement of learning outcomes and create different and innovative forms of measuring outcomes. Continued analization of data from ITED's, ACCUPLACER, Mid-Iowa School Improvement Consortium and Measures in Academic Performance assessments or MAPS Assessments, ASVAB, NAEP Testing as a means of improving student instruction and learning at West Central and in the Charter.
- Peer-collaboration teams that look at student data and ways to improve instruction through differentiated instruction, which has encouraged the use of different and innovative methods of teaching.
- Establish new forms of accountability for schools: Staff, students, administration, and the board centered on improved instruction, rigor and relevance, and student global learning.
- Create new professional opportunities for teachers and other educators,
- Including the opportunity to be responsible for the learning program at the school site. The leadership team in the district has worked hard on planning professional development that is centered on our CSIP, the professional development model, Iowa Core curriculum, and the various other initiatives
- Continued rigor and relevance in the classroom training, the mandated mode core in-service for the staff, and members of our leadership team are attending training on all of the areas mentioned above and are working on developing a model core curriculum plan K-12.
- Continue Innovative Partnerships between charter school, local district, and a post-secondary institution
- Combination of local offerings, college campus offerings, and expanded use of distance learning opportunities.
- Individualized plans for each student – based on student needs rather by availability.
- Learning will be consistent with business and industry needs.
- Integration of upper level math, science, and technical reading skills.

Closing

In closing, we feel that the data and summaries provided prove that the Northeast Charter High School met their goals and the criteria established by the State of Iowa. The impact and the benefits of the NEICHS for students of West Central and all the stakeholder has been huge and can not be quantified entirely in graphs, data, and language. We would respectfully request that the Iowa State Board of Education approve the renewal application of the Northeast Iowa Charter High School based on the measurable and immeasurable benefits. Additionally, in the best interest of the students, family, district, and the community as a whole, we would again request the approval of this renewal application.

Thank you for your time and consideration regarding the Northeast Iowa Charter High School renewal application. If you require any additional information or have any question, please contact us and wee will supply the requested information.