Rekindle Your Potential
Ignite Your Future

Annual Report
2008-2009
Phoenix Charter Academy

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Table Of Contents

I. Letter from Chair of the Board of Trustees and Executive Director 3
II. Mission Statement 5
III. Introduction 5
   History and Mission 5
   PCA’s Student Population 5
   Best Practices in Action 6
   Unique Features 7
IV. Common School Performance Criteria 8
   Faithfulness to Charter 8
   Academic Program Success 9
   Organizational Viability 14
V. Accountability Plan 17
   Academic Measures 17
   Organizational Viability 19
   Faithfulness to Charter 25
   Phoenix Urban Fellowship Program 27
VI. Dissemination 28
VII. Data Section 29
VIII. Attachments 32

Financial Statements 32
   Fiscal Year 2009 Statement of Revenue, Expenses and Changes in Net Assets 32
   Fiscal Year 2009 Statement of Net Assets 33
   Fiscal Year 2010 Approved School Budget 34

PCA Organizational Chart 2008-2009 35

"Students at Chelsea school to receive hard-won diplomas"
By Nandini Jayakrishna/ The Boston Globe
Thursday, June 18, 2009 36
I. Letter from the Chair of the Board of Trustees and Executive Director

July 31, 2009

Dear Friends of Phoenix Charter Academy;

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, Phoenix Charter Academy (PCA) presents you with its third Annual Report. PCA is a public charter high school located in Chelsea, MA which opened in 2006 and next year will serve 180 students.

This past year the school began to move away from a founding phase into a capacity-building phase. We have studied our successes and challenges to date, defined who we are as a school and begun strategizing how to reach our instructional and organizational goals. The year has shown great growth in the following key areas:

Recruitment and Retention of Disconnected Students: Phoenix Charter Academy continues to fulfill its mission by reaching some of our cities’ most disconnected youth. Governor Deval Patrick recently charged charter and pilot schools to seek to enroll at least 25% of its students from groups that have dropped out from high school. Phoenix’s population of former drop outs not only well exceeds that goal but 26% of our graduates alone dropped out of prior high schools. Now they are enrolling in college.

Strengthening staff: 100% of the staff that PCA invited to continue have accepted which will significantly impact our ability to institutionalize our instructional program. The teaching staff in 2008-9 was our strongest yet producing unprecedented results on the 2009 spring MCAS exam. Additionally, the school formed its first seven person leadership team working weekly with the Executive Director, Principal and our Board to take the school in data-driven strategic directions in school culture building and tutoring this year and in 2009-10.

Increasing skills: In 2007-8, PCA students did reach the goals set in the PCA Accountability Plan, with many hurdling a 220 on the MCAS for the first time. However, less than 20% were able to reach the proficiency or advanced bars on the MCAS exam and we knew we must do better. In the winter of 2009, we launched a 1:1 MCAS tutoring program using college students as tutors for students taking the MCAS retest or spring exams. In our retest group, every single student improved by 3 or more points on the exam. While the results are not public until this fall, we are very excited about the unprecedented gains we are seeing in the proficiency and advanced categories in both the math and ELA exams.

The resiliency, effort and success of our students are the most exciting parts of life at PCA. Here are just a few updates on the remarkable students we highlighted in last year’s report:

- Douglas continues to be a top performer at PCA. He achieved honor roll this year at PCA. Most notably, through the work of our new English Language Learner Coordinator and ELL support staff, Douglas (and two other ELL students) passed the ELA MCAS on his first attempt this year.
- Claudia and her sister Lincy are both still enrolled at PCA. Claudia has passed one of her three required MCAS exams and will be working with a Phoenix Fellow tutor in the fall.
- Elvira has stayed enrolled at PCA for two full academic years, unprecedented in her own history. When she lost housing in Chelsea, she moved to Rhode Island, continuing to attend PCA every day. She has two children in the PCA Child Development Center and is hoping to graduate this year.
Like many of their peers, these students above found a school that helped them recast themselves as scholars and re-imagine their futures. However, not every student who enrolls at PCA has yet gained the same level of success. Nearly all of our students transfer into PCA with records of academic failure, truancy, and behavior struggles, as well as very complex personal lives. Some students have used our support systems to their advantage and have met the high bar we set, while others have faltered. We must improve our ability to reach students who are ready to re-enter high school and get the necessary data to teachers that they will use to continue improving student achievement every day.

We are extremely grateful to the Board of Trustees, parents, adult supporters, community partners in the social service and juvenile justice worlds and especially our staff and students for stewarding the school towards the best practices which will prove to help ALL disconnected students in our communities.

Sincerely,

Edward F. McDonough III
Chair, Board of Trustees

Beth Anderson
Executive Director
II. Mission Statement

Phoenix Charter Academy's mission is to close the achievement gap that exists between academically underperforming adolescents who are in Chelsea and surrounding cities’ district schools and their academically successful peers. Partnering rigorous academic work with relentless support for 14-22 year-old students, the Phoenix Charter Academy provides students with the tools necessary to achieve high school graduation and college success.

III. Introduction

HISTORY AND MISSION

“Phoenix Charter Academy is not like any other school. They really care about us and make sure our lives are on track. The classes are challenging but the teachers are always willing to give you extra help. Everyone here will try to help you. I’m now the first person in my family to ever go to college. Phoenix may be pushing you and aggravating you, but it’s worth it in the end.” Aldo Esparza-Cruz, 19 years old, Class of 2008, Everett

Phoenix Charter Academy was conceived by a group of teachers, business professionals and activists in Chelsea and Lynn five years ago. Appalled by the number of talented but much challenged young people that had dropped out of high school, they saw a fit between the freedom that a charter model offers and the need for a school to serve older disconnected youth. Without a high school diploma, many of these groups of students – out-of-school youth, teen parents, and newcomer students specifically - would be deprived of the life opportunities everybody deserves. Chelsea, Lynn and Revere district schools struggle to serve a significant percentage of their young adult population. These cities have respective four year high school graduation rates of 49.9%, 70.5%, and 67.5% compared to a statewide graduation rate 84.7%. In addition, the majority of students from Chelsea, Revere, Lynn, Everett and Boston neighborhoods have academic performances far below the standard that Massachusetts has deemed acceptable. These cities need more high school and college graduates. The founders believed that all students, despite their ethnicity or socio-economic background, should be able to earn a high school diploma and enter post-secondary college or professional training. They wanted to create a high expectations high school – not an alternative high school, not a program, not an equivalency pathway – specifically for out-of-school and under enrolled young people who largely had not had high expectations set for them.

Phoenix Charter Academy opened in the fall of 2006 to 75 students. During our third year, 2008-2009 school year, we serve 150 non-traditional students ages 14-22 residing in Chelsea, Lynn, Revere, Everett, East Boston and surrounding cities. In 2009-2010 we will increase our student body to 180 students.

PCA’S STUDENT POPULATION

“I love this school. I love saying I’m from phoenix. They helped me focus on staying on task and the teachers were always encouraging me. This is a community environment and I grew up here. It’s just my high school.”

Vidal Valentin, 18 years old, Class of 2009, Chelsea

Unique amongst charter schools, PCA primarily serves youth who are academically at-risk, have dropped out of school for a significant period of time, and/or have been unsuccessful in their traditional district high school. Our 2008-2009 student body was 63% Hispanic, 20% African America, 15% Caucasian and 1% Asian, and were born in 12 different countries.
Demographics of our particular mission-driven target populations tell an interesting story:

- 82% come from single parent homes and are eligible for free or reduced price lunch.
- 55% are currently or have been involved in Department of Children and Families, Department of Youth Services, and/or are involved in the Juvenile Court System.
- Out of all the students that have enrolled at PCA this year, 32% have dropped out of school before.
- 9% of all students that have enrolled at PCA this year are Pregnant or Parenting Teens.
- Average GPA at Prior High School (HS Transfers) = 0.9.
- Average GPA at Prior Middle School = 1.1.
- 56% Report having significant attendance problems before starting at PCA.
- 28% Report being suspended 5+ times before coming to PCA.
- 22% Report being expelled or forced to withdraw from at least one school before coming to PCA.

Best Practices in Action

“I was failing biology at first, but then we started learning about genetics and DNA. Everything that we were learning made sense. I became really interested in it. My teacher helped me to understand the lessons everyday and if I didn’t understand, she would explain it in a different way. That class made me realize I want to go to college and study science.”

Cathy Martinez, 17 years old, Everett

Phoenix Charter Academy offers a rigorous academic program that is designed to meet the needs of students who have not found success in traditional school environments. Through the use of best practices and some support features unique to our school, PCA is producing high school graduates from those who might have been neglected by district schools in neighborhoods of high poverty and social challenge. PCA’s school design and instructional methods include a number of proven, research-based best practices for small, urban, high poverty schools.

Emphasis on Literacy and Numeracy Skills: Many of our students failed at other schools and came to PCA because they didn’t have the basic academic skills to succeed in other settings. Most students need to raise their literacy and mathematics skills considerably in order to meet the school and Massachusetts state exit requirements within 3-5 years. At PCA, teachers and administrators are unified by their commitment to help these students catch up with the peers and get ready for college.

More Time in School: PCA Students attend school from 9 AM to 5 PM (Monday through Thursday) and 9 AM to 1 PM on Fridays for 190 days a year. Students at PCA are in school for 225 more hours than students at typical public high schools. In addition, having longer days allows for more time in math and
English language arts classes—an area of critical need for the 50% of our students who have dropped out of high school prior to enrolling in PCA.

**STRONG RELATIONSHIPS WITH ADULTS:** With a 6:1 student-to-staff ratio, there are no strangers at PCA. Every staff member knows every student. Moreover, each student at PCA has an advisor who calls his/her house with weekly updates and supports the students with issues as they arise.

**PHOENIX THROUGH COLLEGE (PTC) PROGRAM:** This program is specifically designed to make sure all PCA students have the skills needed to be successful in a postsecondary educational setting. The PTC Director works with students to prepare them for college requirements, guide each one through the application process, and support them through their first year of college.

**UNIQUE FEATURES**

“For any teen mom, having a baby is really hard. When I got pregnant, I thought that everything was gone for me. But then I heard Phoenix had a daycare in their school and the teachers really got to your level. Even though the school hours were long, it was worth it. The PCA Child Development Center helped me through school. By taking care of my child and letting me have the opportunity to study, I was able to graduate.” Yanira Pizarro, 18 years old, Class of 2008

PCA also has a number of features specifically designed to support its population of older students, former dropouts, teen parents and otherwise at-risk youth.

**ON-SITE CHILD DEVELOPMENT CENTER:** PCA has a unique capacity to meet the needs of parenting teens. Teen mothers arrive at school, drop their students off at the on-site daycare and attend class while their children begin their own education under the care of three experienced infant and toddler teachers. These parenting students also take parenting classes, taught by the PCA Child Development Center Director.

**360° SUPPORT:** Many of our students dropped out of school because of a lack of family and in-school support, family disruption, motivation or other outside struggles. PCA has a number of features that help push these students when they are tired, confront and interrupt the obstacles that prevent them from coming to school and support their families in a variety of ways when necessary. Partnering with teachers and the Principal, the Student Support Center, Dean of Students and Families, Recruitment and Retention Coordinator and the on-site social worker work together to create networks of support for PCA students.

**INDIVIDUALIZED GRADUATION PLANS INSTEAD OF GRADE LEVELS:** PCA serves a range of students including 14 year olds in search of an alternative to their local high school, 18 year old former drop out students who are now coming back for a second or third chance at a diploma, and older immigrant students who need to learn English as well as gain the skills necessary to compete for college admission. About 30% will stay at PCA for four years and matriculate to a four year college.

However, this route doesn’t often meet the needs of entering eighteen year old students who may have families to support. Instead, older students typically end up graduating in less than four years, then move into associate’s degree programs at community colleges. As a result, we established flexible graduation requirements which permit students to set their own graduation goal (2- or 4-year college matriculation) and earn all the required course credits for each of those pathways. Depending on each student’s situation, we help them develop an individualized "graduation plan" that maps a route through PCA and beyond. Whatever a student’s graduation plan is, ALL PCA students have the same high expectations. All students are required to meet or exceed the state’s MCAS graduation requirement before graduating from PCA and all students must have a college acceptance letter to graduate. In addition, it is the mission of every teacher to create a curriculum and classroom setting that will push each individual student towards higher academic standards.
II. Common School Performance Criteria

A. FAITHFULNESS TO CHARTER

Implementation of Mission, Vision, and Educational Philosophy

"We have all made mistakes," PCA Senior Jessica T. Gedeus, 18, said at a class dinner Tuesday, amid smiles, cheers and unstoppable tears of gratitude. "But...look at us now: Class of '09." - The Boston Globe, June 17, 2009

Each graduating class at Phoenix Charter Academy reflects our mission. Over the past three years, we have created pathways for teen moms, truant and drop out adolescents, court-involved students and English language learners to graduate from high school AND continue their education in college. Our mission is not just evident in our graduating class, but everywhere in our school from the front wall as students enter the building to the student work in the classrooms. It’s in our teachers’ ability to send students out of class because they were not following the strict classroom rules and then “round back” to have a constructive conversation about what is going on in that students life.

Phoenix Charter Academy is unique in that it has partnered the two components of its mission – rigorous academics and relentless individualized support – for a population for students who have failed in high school before and may be entering as older students. PCA’s educational philosophy is the belief that when high expectations for academic success are partnered with a strong and structured support system, students who were previously not achieving can pass the MCAS, graduate from high school and continue on to college.

Our experience, results, and current students suggest that we are making this statement a reality. Consider the following:

Rigorous Academics:

- “C-“ or above to receive course credit
- Teacher and advisor conversations with under-succeeding students, even if they are technically passing
- Development of a 2- and 4- year system to prepare for graduation so that older students may get the core skills they need for community college and younger students are held to a higher and more time intensive standard for graduation. In effect – no shortcuts.
- ALL students regardless of age, credit amount, MCAS status or outside situation must have a college acceptance in order to graduate.

Relentless Support:

- Ask any student what they like best about Phoenix Charter Academy. Almost all immediately state that the teachers and staff at PCA “actually care about you and never give up on you.” Over the past three years PCA has realized the importance of relentless support and increased our ability to provide it. This year, with the addition of a full time Social Worker and a Dean of Student and Family Support, we are able to offer students what we call “360 Support”.

The laser-focus on our mission is the cornerstone of the daily education program at Phoenix Charter Academy. Over the past two years, we have departed from a system of levels for separating students as we found that it did not fit older students who were returning to school at various ability levels. The school ascribes to a pedagogical philosophy of heterogeneous classes, whereby students are enriched by and stimulated by their peers and develop their leadership capacity by offering support to each other in different classes. Therefore, students are not separated by levels. In English, writing and history, students are heterogeneously mixed and cover a continuum of ability. Students take science classes and math classes depending upon which skills they still need to master for graduation and college success. The Principal hires
teachers who have an interest in and ability to differentiate their curricula and instruction so that students can be reached and challenged at different ability levels and progress together in the class.

The success of both our mission and our faithfulness to that mission is evidenced best by our two graduating classes. In the group of 19 students who have graduated from PCA in the last three years:

- 100% applied to and were accepted to postsecondary education. 16% were accepted to a four year university (St. John’s University and Wheelock)
- 73.7% had significant attendance and truancy issues prior to PCA
- 47% were 19 or older at time of graduation
- **26% of PCA graduates are former high school dropouts**
- 21% were first in their family to graduate with a high school diploma
- 47% are or will be the first in family to attend college
- 31% were either pregnant or parenting at the time of graduation
- 21% struggled with substance abuse

As *The Boston Globe* and video stated in an article in June 2009, “From asking students to sit up straight or tuck in their shirts, to making them rewrite literary analysis essays about 12 times, teachers don't hesitate to crack the whip at Phoenix Academy. The discipline and support have inspired the soon-to-be graduates to dream big”. While the school will not truly actualize its mission until it can recover all of the drop out students and others who walk through the doors, we are well on our way taking students from the streets, into scholarship and eventually college success.

**B. ACADEMIC PROGRAM SUCCESS**

**Curriculum**

“My goal is to be a scholar. Readers’ Workshop helped me expand my vocabulary so I can speak intelligently and understand educated conversations. I got 100% on all my vocabulary quizzes!” Maira Bonilla, 19 years old, Class of 2009, Chelsea

True to our charter, Phoenix Charter Academy provides a rigorous, college preparatory curriculum. It is our mission to educate our students so they are prepared to be successful in college. Curriculum at PCA is created by teachers and aligns with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks (MCF). All courses include basic literacy and numeracy skills, study skills and critical thinking skills. This year the teachers became much more intentional about delivering instruction around required MCAS competencies and college-preparatory skills creating a more enriched curriculum school wide. Teachers utilized performance-based assessment in their classes and focused on student presentations, exhibitions and projects giving students multiple ways to express what they have learned. Increased public displays of academic work now fill the classrooms and hallways throughout our building.

Phoenix Charter Academy’s courses are quarter-based, and each quarter is approximately nine weeks long. We have a mixed-grade model and heterogeneous class groupings. With the help of his/her advisor, each student completes an individualized graduation plan and charts his/her own course to graduation. Students choose their courses each quarter based on the credits and skills they need to move them toward graduation and college acceptance. From 9 – 3:15, students take four 70-minute core academic classes: two Humanities classes, a math class, and a science class. Our Humanities courses are interdisciplinary, integrating history, social sciences, and ELA. Our 2008-2009 math classes increased this year and included Number Sense in Algebra, Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II. Physics, Biology, Everyday Science, Health, and new this year Chemistry were our core science offerings.

From 3:15 – 5 PM, students take two 50-minute enrichment courses. The purpose of these “short-block” courses is to enrich the students’ core academic experience. We offered courses in the arts, such as
Mixed-media Painting, Drawing, Acting, and Dance. Several of our short-block courses, such as Parenting, Financial Education, Career Exploration, and Sexual Violence Prevention, coached students on making good life decisions. Other courses, including Sociology, Psychology, Web Design, and Environmental Science, introduced students to topics they may choose to explore in college. Examples of other courses offered in 2008-2009 were Public Speaking, SAT Prep, MCAS Prep, and Fitness.

PCA expanded its Advisory program in 2008-2009. The purpose of Advisory is for each PCA student to have a specific staff member who is looking out for him/her, literally and figuratively, every day. Each Advisory has 7 – 8 students and meets Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday morning from 9 – 9:15 AM and on Fridays from 12:20 – 1 PM. On Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday, the advisor helps his/her advisees get ready for a good day of school and acts as the student’s social-emotional and academic advisor, guiding him/her through graduation planning and good decision-making. In each advisory, students learn a word of the day complete a journal question. Friday’s Advisory includes an academic or social-emotional advising activity.

Instruction

“Even though I don’t like the long hours, I know I’ll be thankful for them when I’ve graduated and made something of myself. I know the long school day is best for my well being and my future. If you think about it, yes 9-5 is long, but it’s also really helpful. The more education you get the more opportunities you will have.” Helen Ramos, 16 years old, Revere

Phoenix Charter Academy uses several key instructional practices (listed below) that are hallmarks of our teaching. With a month-long Summer Institute at the beginning of the year and increased professional development throughout the year, PCA solidified consistent instructional practices school wide during the 2008-2009 school year.

- We utilize the workshop model and promote student-centered learning. The majority of every class period is devoted to time for students to work independently and/or collaboratively.
- Every teacher utilizes a standard blackboard configuration. On each teacher’s whiteboard, students expect to find the following: Do-Now, Objectives, Mini-lesson Focus, Activities, Ticket-to Leave, and Homework.
- All of our classes are mixed-grade and heterogeneous. All PCA classes include English Language Learners, students with IEPs, and students of a wide range of background academic content knowledge and skills. Therefore, all teachers are expected to differentiate their curriculum, instruction, and assessment to meet the varying needs their students.

Program Evaluation

“I took the math and English MCAS tests three times and only passed my English MCAS before I came to PCA. This is a hard test. I remember when I found out this year I passed the math MCAS. I couldn’t believe it!”
Julio Hernandez, 21 years old, Class of 2009, Chelsea

PCA uses two types of external assessments: the Stanford 10 and the MCAS. First, PCA uses the Stanford 10 as a summative assessment tool at the beginning and the end of the school year. Scores were used to identify strengths and gaps in learning of each student, aiding classroom teachers and advisors in course selection. Second, PCA tracks historical MCAS data and examines growth between 8th and 10th grade MCAS scores. Because so many students come to PCA several grade levels behind, we track growth using many assessment tools, including raw and scaled MCAS scores over time for students retaking the exam.

This year, with an increased focus on using real-time data to inform instructional planning, PCA launched a school-wide internal, formative assessment to measure student progress and drive instruction within classrooms. These quarterly assessments were MCAS-based and administered in October, January, and March, and the results were tracked using the Power School data management system. These results showed
gains for some students, particularly English Language Learners, and were a useful source of data to gauge the effects of instruction. However, we believe that they can be better correlated with the curriculum, and we will be negotiating a more seamless relationship between instruction and assessment during the 2009-10 academic year.

As part of the focus on strengthening PCA’s program and data-driven results, we hired our first Director of Assessment and Accountability, part-time, in January. In addition to overseeing the internal and external assessments, this position ensures that courses are vertically aligned to systematically cover state standard, create a culture of urgency around assessment, and help teachers create better formative assessments within their own classrooms. Her position was continued for the 2009-2010 year, full-time.

**School Culture**

“Phoenix Charter Academy is very diverse. There are all kinds of people here. We are from everywhere and we are a community. We are always there for one another in the hardest situations.” Paola Morales, 16 years old, Revere

Relentless support is the second pillar of our mission. During the 2008-2009 school year, we expanded our capacity to fulfill this part of our mission. We added a full time Social Worker and Dean of Student and Family Support for the first time, which strengthen our 360° support model. With the implementation of the Student Leadership Council and the expansion of the Phoenix Through College program, our staff and students grew into a tight knit community.

- **360° Support:** We know that high expectations and innovative programming aren’t the complete recipe for success. Without receiving the emotional and social attention they need in order to overcome their complicated life histories and difficult family situations, our students wouldn’t have a realistic chance at college success. PCA’s 360 support is created by the following areas that work to create networks of support.
  - **Student Support Center:** Many students enroll at PCA with a history of behavioral and academic challenges. The Student Support Center (SSC) is a resource for these students. Many PCA students bring challenging behavioral and academic history at prior high schools. These students are encouraged to use the staff of the SSC when they experience struggles in classes. In addition, if a student is misbehaving in class, a teacher may send the student to the SSC for a brief time where he or she will process their behavior. This year, the SSC codified a procedure for repairing relationships with students after they had become disrupted during school, “Circle Back Protocol”. It is the teacher’s responsibility to model how to best handle difficult situations. This is part of the goal of 360 support in terms of overall behavioral growth of students and social-emotional learning that comes with college preparatory education.
  - **Social Worker and Dean of student and Family Support:** With the implementation of these two positions, PCA has been able to codify and expand its ability to serve our student population. We now have institutionalized the way we support and track students through behavioral growth, crisis intervention, case management and outside referral, and advocacy. The Social worker has been able to counsel many of our students during the school year, and when that was not possible, refer them to appropriate counseling services. In addition, we serve a multi-crisis population and when a crisis arises the social worker is responsible for supporting the student and providing on-going case-management support.
  - **Recruitment and Retention Coordinator:** This year, the Recruitment and Retention Coordinator was able to focus more on recruiting underserved students in Boston. He showcased PCA at three high school conferences in Boston and led two middle school tours of PCA to students living in the Boston area. In addition, he worked closely with the Dean of Student and Family Support throughout the year to help track students who were on the verge of dropping out. By helping to
provide a network of support and accountability for PCA students, the Recruitment and Retention Coordinator played a vital role is getting our students to come to school every day and stay in school.

- **Student Leadership Council:** During the 2008-2009 school year, with funding from the Hyams Foundation, PCA established its first ever Student Leadership Council. This group is comprised of 10 committed students whose mission is to highlight student voice in the school’s decision-making process, arbitrate peer disputes and build capacity among scholars to solve their own problems, serve as liaisons between staff and students, and represent PCA at national conferences to showcase their work as Peer Mediators. These students have worked to preserve PCA’s mission to engage students in competent decision making and engender their independence of mind. They have met with community groups, established a school spirit week, coordinated Hot Topics and went to Washington D.C. to present their work nationally.

- **Phoenix Through College Program:** The Phoenix Through College (PTC) Program prepares PCA students, not just to get accepted, but to succeed in college. The majority of incoming PCA students view college as a distant dream. In fact, nearly sixty percent of PCA students will be the first person in their family to attend college. In addition, a full third will be the first in their family to graduate from high school. 23% of PCA students who graduated in June of 2009 were the first in their family to receive a high school diploma, and 46% will be the first in their families to go to college. This year, the Phoenix Through College has been able to develop a culture where attending college is expected from the moment each student walks through the front door of the school. Since September, the PTC Program has taken 30 PCA students to local colleges; Salem State, Framingham State, Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology, and Northeastern University. In addition to the influential college campus visits, the PTC office is packed with information and resources about college. Thanks to the PTC Office and work of the director, a much greater sense of urgency around attending college is now growing at PCA.

- **Demerit/Merit System:** PCA uses a Demerit/Merit system to monitor and track student behavior.
  - Students receive feathers (from the Phoenix bird, central to the school’s mission) that are “deposited” and “banked”. This system allows teachers to publically and timely reward positive behavior. When students wish, they are allowed and encouraged to exchange their feathers for PCA mission gear, school supplies and other rewards. On Fridays, at our week-ending community meetings, staff and students alike use a system of “beading” to publically recognize any member of the PCA community who has embodied one of the 7 aspects of a SCHOLAR: scholarship, community, hope, opportunity, leadership, achievement or respect. While PCA has had minimal reward systems previously, this year the systems became more public and more consistently carried out.
  - Students also receive demerits at PCA for behaving in ways that disrupt the learning environment. These behaviors can range from minor infractions to major, and all demerit infractions lead to detention. Again, PCA has had a similar system for 2 years, but this year it has become more consistently used.
  - While PCA does use a system of suspensions and expulsions for extreme, violent or repetitive behaviors, we attempt to seek alternatives to these punishments. Sometimes, however, these are appropriate measures. All expulsions are approved by the Board of Trustees (PCA expelled one student during 2008-2009 school year). All suspensions are decided by the Dean of Student and Family Support in conversation with the Executive Director and Principal.
During the 2008-2009 school year, Phoenix Charter Academy improved and strengthened its ability to serve diverse learners. A longer teacher institute in August, intense professional development throughout the year, a full time English Language Learner Coordinator, a full time Special Education teacher, and increased hours from our Director of Academic Support Services allowed PCA to focus on and support students with individual needs. The ELL Coordinator and the Director of Academic Support Services lead workshops throughout the year around effective strategies for differentiating curriculum and instruction for students with specific and general learning challenges. During professional development every Friday afternoon, teachers participated in “Kid Talk” case studies which involved taking a closer look at particular students and their learning needs. In addition, the Director of Academic Support Services and Special Education teacher facilitated the Instructional Support Team (IST) process at PCA, through which teachers were able to identify struggling students, analyze data related to their academic performance, and develop and implement interventions to support these students in the classrooms. The combination of these on-going trainings, case studies, classroom observation, and feedback created a comprehensive system around PCA’s diverse learners.

Our first English Language Learner Coordinator this year was responsible for teaching two sections of ESL and tracking the records and data for our ELL students. The two ELL classes were 70 minute classes that focused on humanities curriculum and included English language grammar. In addition, the ELL Coordinator closely follows and monitors students who had passed through the ELL program. PCA also hosted for the first time two parent nights just for parents of ELL students. All of these improvements have led to noticeable change and advancement in our ELL student’s. The attendance rate of the ELL students at PCA (who have attended PCA for two consecutive quarters will ) was 84%, reaching our Accountability Plan goal! One student, Rebecca, started at PCA after immigrating from Haiti and after just two quarters she was speaking flawless English, making public speeches and is now elected to be part of our Student Leadership Council next year.

Supervision and Evaluation of Teachers

“I love my teachers at Phoenix. They are interested in what they are teaching about and have real passion for the subject. I like their energy and they make you feel comfortable. I feel like I can talk to them about anything.”

Stephane LaFond, 19 years old, Class of 2009, Dorchester

Until this year, the positions of Executive Director and Principal were merged. This year, PCA separated these positions which allowed the Principal to focus more closely on overseeing teachers. Because of this, teachers received much more feedback and support from the Principal through informal feedback, formal classroom evaluations and quarterly reviews.

Informal Feedback includes:

- Teachers submit a weekly overview of their planned instruction to the principal by Sunday or Monday of each week. The principal reads the plans and provides written or verbal feedback.
- We utilize an informal classroom observation protocol adapted from Boston Collegiate Charter School’s “10-minute Observation Form.” We adapted BCCS’s form, shared it with PCA teachers during our August Teacher Institute, and revised it based on teacher feedback. The principal uses this tool for informal classroom observations.
- Additionally, as part of our Professional Development, teachers conducted two rounds of inter-visitations, visiting each other’s classrooms and providing feedback to one another, according to the 10-minute Observation Form.
Formal Classroom Evaluations include:
- Teachers received one formal classroom observation, and the principal conducted these formal classroom observations. The formal classroom observation evaluation document was shared with the teaching staff during August Teacher Institute and was revised based on teacher feedback. After each formal classroom observation, the principal met with the teacher to debrief the lesson and share her observations and feedback. Teachers then received a copy of the written evaluation, and a copy is kept on file at the school.

Quarterly Reviews include:
- At the end of Quarter 1, teachers completed a self-evaluation based on the expectations of teacher performance in their PCA teacher’s contract. For each indicator, teachers rated themselves as not yet meeting or meeting/exceeding. They also provided comments and evidence for each indicator. The principal and each teacher then met for a Quarter 1 review meeting.
- At the end of Quarter 2, the Principal met with each teacher to discuss whether that teacher was on track for 2009-2010 contract renewal. Teachers who were not on track for contract renewal were provided with specific improvement targets.
- At the end of Quarter 3, each teacher who was offered contract renewal sat with the principal and executive director for a contract renewal meeting, during which time they discussed the teacher’s strengths demonstrated during the year and areas where the teacher could grow in the coming year.

Professional Development

“The first I didn’t like my classes at PCA, especially Mr. Marston's class. I used to skip it all the time. He then gave me a lot of one-on-one attention. It made me realize he cared.” Josue Ithier, 18 years old, Class of 2009, Chelsea

The quality and quantity of professional development this year increased dramatically. Instead of dealing with new school operations like it often had in the past, professional development focused exclusively on instruction, student support, creating curriculum and classroom management throughout the year. The 2008-2009 school year began with an intense two-week Summer Teacher Institute in August. Teacher Institute included time for staff team-building, pedagogy workshops, curriculum writing, instructional workshops and trainings and preparing the classrooms and the building for the students’ arrival. Throughout the school year, teachers had professional development from 1:30 – 4:00pm every Friday. The focus of much of our P.D. work in 2008-2009 included differentiation, incorporating literacy strategies into content-area classes, creating opportunities for student-centered learning, building relationships with students, classroom management/promoting a scholarly culture, supporting the learning of English Language Learners, and supporting the learning of students who have IEPs. Workshops were led by the principal, the Dean of Students, the Director of Academic Support Services, the Academic Support Services Teacher, the ESL Coordinator, and several of the teachers who possess expertise in various pedagogical areas.

C. ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY

Policy Decisions
The Phoenix Charter Academy Board of Trustees voted to accept the following policies in the 2008-2009 school year:
- Student and Family School Policies
  - The Board voted to strengthen the attendance policy to include only 8 days allowed for absences per quarter for any reason.
The Board voted to modify the enrollment policy such that student who give up their space at PCA twice in a single academic year may not re-apply to the school in that same academic year. Additionally students who lose their space at PCA twice in a single academic year due to suspensions must meet with the enrollment committee of staff and student representatives before re-applying to the school.

Amendments to the Charter
The PCA Board of Trustees requested and obtained one amendment to the charter in 2008-2009. The Board of Trustees asked the Massachusetts Board of Education to add the city of Everett to its charter. The Massachusetts Board of Education granted permission in September of 2008.

Complaints
There were no official complaints received by the Board of Trustees during the 2008-2009 school year.

Oversight
During the 2008-2009 school year, the Executive Director met monthly or more often with the Chair of the Board of Trustees to prepare for Board meetings and update him on all aspects of the school as listed in and measured by the PCA Accountability Plan. The Board has not had a formal process for evaluating the Executive Director in the past, using frequent informal check-ins, Board meetings and subcommittee meetings to monitor and make decisions about the direction of the school.

The Board decided to create a more formal process of evaluation for Executive Director and met about the process in the spring of 2009. They created a "school leader evaluation subcommittee" of four trustees (the Chair, the Treasurer, and two other members who have worked closely with the school leader on development and real estate projects) which will meet in the summer of 2009 and provide a formal evaluation of the school leader by mid September 2009. Once the formal evaluation is complete, the subcommittee will formally meet with the school leader quarterly throughout the year.

Board Planning
The Board has planned and executed two major efforts this year:
1. The Board changed the school location, moving from 47 Clark Ave in Chelsea to 190 Nichols Street in Everett, MA (mailing address is 59 Nichols Street in Chelsea; the building is located on the Chelsea/ Everett line). PCA negotiated a 3-year lease with 5-year renewal option for a 30,000 sq foot building, enough for our growth needs for the foreseeable future. The Board and school leader negotiated to exit the prior lease for 47 Clark Ave and reached a reasonable settlement with the owners of the prior school site. The new building has been a great home to PCA this year with enough space to grow and large, safe rooms and hallways for our target populations, a huge improvement over our prior home.
2. The Board voted in March to launch a full time tutoring program, Phoenix Urban Fellowship Program, specifically designed to meet the challenge of the first two goals of PCA’s Accountability Plan. The Board examined the budget and has agreed to use earnings from past years to support the program for two years while it privately fundraises the support needed for the possible future of the program. If the PUFP shows direct gains on the MCAS exam and can raise the dollars to support it, then it will continue the program.

Family Satisfaction
Besides informal and anecdotal conversations, Phoenix Charter Academy measures whether families are satisfied with the school’s program through the Annual Site Visit Report, End of the Year Parent/Adult
Supporter Survey and the number of meetings between parents/adult supporters and PCA staff. PCA prides itself in our ability to have continuous communication with families about student’s progress. In fact, nearly 100% of students parents or adult supporters have had at least one meeting with PCA staff members, and 86.6% have had at least three school-based, home-based, or phone meetings.

Findings from the Year Three Site Visit include:

- Stakeholders report high levels of satisfaction with the school. Current parents, other adult supporters, and students are very happy with the unprecedented successes that students have experienced at PCA.
- Parents and other adult supporters interviewed by the site visit team were enthusiastic about the school, comparing it favorably with other schools and programs that their students had attended.
- Parents and other adult supporters of students all stated that communication from the school is very good, and that they feel well-informed about how their students are doing.

The 2008-2009 end of the year parent/adult supporter survey strongly supported the site visit report’s findings. 91% of parents and adult supporters reported being either satisfied or highly satisfied with PCA, whereas only 38% were satisfied with their child’s former school. The majority of parents/adult supporters were highly satisfied with the teachings and academics at PCA and 80% felt that PCA addresses their child’s individual needs. In addition, parents and adult supporters felt PCA makes a strong effort to involve them in school (75%), and feel comfortable raising questions or concerns (85%).

**Financial Oversight**

The Board of Trustees meets monthly to review minutes from the prior meeting, the Executive Director report from the month, and reports, updates and actions from the Development and Finance Subcommittees. The Finance Subcommittee meets quarterly or more at PCA and includes the Executive Director and the Board Treasurer, joined when needed by the PCA accountant and business manager. The Finance Subcommittee reviews the monthly or quarterly balance sheet, profit and loss statement, and statement of accounts. The Executive Director explains any overages or deficits and makes any corrections or changes based on the recommendation of the subcommittee. The Executive Director and Business Manager meet regularly to review the budget and review all accounts. They meet monthly with the accountant who is responsible for bank reconciliations and reviewing the chart of accounts. The Executive Director reviews payroll and bank statements for each period, ensuring accuracy with approved school expenses.
IV. Accountability Plan

A. ACADEMIC MEASURES — IS THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM A SUCCESS?

GOAL 1: Students at Phoenix Charter Academy will become proficient readers and writers of academic texts. For students who have attended PCA and have reached a 10th grade equivalent, and have had an 80% attendance rate for at least one quarter ...

Criterion Referenced Measures:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aggregate MCAS ELA</td>
<td>75% will receive a Needs Improvement or higher score</td>
<td>80% will receive a Needs Improvement or higher score</td>
<td>50% will receive a Proficient or higher score</td>
<td>55% will receive a Proficient or higher score</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **2006-2007 Results**: 100% of students passed the ELA MCAS.
- **2007-2008 Results**: 83% of all students passed the ELA MCAS with Needs Improvement (69%) or higher (14%). 91% of students who had 80% attendance rate or above passed the exam.
- **2008-2009 Results**: To be added when results are public.

In addition, PCA expects that the majority of students will take the MCAS 2-4 times. Many have taken the MCAS exams at prior high schools before enrolling at PCA. PCA students will show the following improvements each time they take the MCAS exam:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MCAS ELA retest score improvement</td>
<td>50% will improve their raw test score by 6 points each time they (re)take the MCAS.</td>
<td>60% will improve ... by 6 points.</td>
<td>70% will improve ... by 8 points.</td>
<td>75% will improve ... by 8 points.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **2007-2008 Results**: 100% improved their raw score by six points each time they retook the MCAS. All of the three students in this cohort who took the ELA MCAS Retest passed the first time. Only one student had an available comparison score and that student’s score improved from 218 to 224.

- **2008-2009 Results**: Of the nine students who took the ELA MCAS retest in November 2008 and March 2009, none raised their raw test score by six points. In January 2009, Phoenix piloted a Friday MCAS tutoring program. Two students taking the ELA retest exam opted to participate. These two students showed an average of a four point improvement in raw scores over students who opted out of the tutoring program.

**Action Plan**: In 2009-2010, the Phoenix Urban Fellowship Program will be implemented. See page 27. This program is specifically targeted at all students taking the MCAS exam. It will start in the fall and provide one full academic year of intensive, individualized support. We believe this support for students retaking the exam will boost scores and ensure that Year 4 goals are achieved.
Value-Added Measures:
80% will improve their reading skills by an average of 2 NCEs as indicated by the Stanford 10 as measured from spring to spring.

- **2007-2008 Results:** Based on two administrations of the Stanford 10 in October and May, the top 80% of students in this cohort had an annualized median improvement of 2.6 NCEs.

- **2008-2009 Results:** The annualized median change of the top 80% was 2.5 NCES.

Starting in the Academy’s second year, 75% will receive a letter grade of “C” or higher in their humanities classes by their third quarter of enrollment.

- **2007-2008 Results:** 43% of students in their third quarter of enrollment or later received a letter grade of “C” or higher.

- **2008-2009 Results:** 70% of students in their third quarter of enrollment or later received a letter grade of “C” or higher in their humanities classes. This year we had an improvement of 27% from the 2007-2008 school year.

**GOAL 2: Students at PCA will demonstrate proficiency in the understanding and application of mathematical computation and problem solving.**

For students who have reached a 10th grade equivalent, and have had an 80% attendance rate ...

**Criterion Referenced Measures:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MCAS Math</td>
<td>75% will receive a NI score or higher</td>
<td>80% will receive a NI score or higher</td>
<td>45% will receive a Proficient or higher score</td>
<td>50% will receive a Proficient or higher score</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **2006-2007 Results:** 75% of students passed the Math MCAS.

- **2007-2008 Results:** 62% of students passed the Math MCAS with Needs Improvement (47%) or higher (15%). 71% of students with 80% attendance rate or above passed the exam.

- **2008-2009 Results:** To be added when results are public.

In addition, PCA expects that the majority of students will take the MCAS 2-4 times. Many have taken the MCAS exams at prior high schools before enrolling at PCA. PCA students will show the following improvements each time they take the MCAS exam:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MCAS Math retake</td>
<td>50% will improve their raw test score by 6 points each time they (re)take the MCAS.</td>
<td>60% will improve ... by 6 points.</td>
<td>70% will improve ... by 8 points.</td>
<td>75% will improve ... by 8 points.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• **2007-2008 Results:** Of the thirteen Math MCAS retests taken by students in this cohort, eighteen percent of the tests demonstrated a six point improvement or more in comparison to the prior score. However, the good news is that seven of the ten students in this cohort moving ‘failing’ to ‘passing’ status. They made enough improvements to pass but not six points worth of improvements.

• **2008-2009 Results:** 50% of students in the accountability plan subgroup improved their scores by six points or more.

  **Action Plan.** In 2009-2010, the Phoenix Urban Fellowship Program will be implemented. See page 27. This program is specifically targeted at all students taking the MCAS exam. It will start in the fall and provide one full academic year of intensive, individualized support. We believe this support for students retaking the exam will boost scores and ensure that Year 4 goals are achieved.

**Value-Added Measures:**

80% will improve their math skills by an average of 2 NCEs as indicated by the Stanford 10 as measured from spring to spring.

• **2007-2008 Results:** Based on two administrations of the Stanford 10 in October and May, the top 80% of students in this cohort had an annualized median improvement of 3.1 NCEs.

• **2008-2009 Results:** The annualized median change of the top 80% was 2.3 NCES.

Starting in the Academy’s second year, 75% will receive a letter grade of “C” or higher in their math classes by their third quarter of enrollment.

• **2007-2008 Results:** 55% of students in their third quarter of enrollment or later received a letter grade of “C” or higher.

• **2008-2009 Results:** 70% of students in their third quarter of enrollment or later received letter grades of “C” or better in their math classes. We had an improvement of over 15% from the 2007-2008 school year.

**B. ORGANIZATIONAL VIABILITY — IS THE SCHOOL A VIABLE PROGRAM?**

**GOAL 3: PCA will practice sound decision-making and fiscal management sufficient to ensure strong student achievement and the responsible stewardship of public monies.**

**Budget Measures:**

Yearly balance sheets will show that the school is fiscally sound by maintaining an average cash reserve of 60 days and no less than 45 days in the Academy’s checking account.

• **2007-2008 Results:** The school met both of these measures during FY08.

• **2008-2009 Results:** The school met both of these measures during FY09.

The annual financial audit will show an unqualified opinion and no material weaknesses.
• **2006-2007 Results:** We received an unqualified opinion with two material weaknesses on the FY07 audit. The first material weakness addressed our systems for tracking restricted funds. The second material weakness addressed our accounts receivable tracking systems. We have since rectified both issues and expect to receive no material weaknesses on our upcoming audit of FY08.

• **2007-2008 Results:** We received an unqualified opinion and no material weaknesses on the FY08 audit.

**Board Measures:**
The Board will privately fundraise at least 10% of the school’s budget annually.

• **2007-2008 Results:** Through individual, corporate and private grants, the school privately raised 7% of its operating income.

• **2008-2009 Results:** Through individuals, corporate donations and private grants, the school privately raised 6.5% of its operating income. In response to the national economic crisis, foundations drastically lowered their grant-giving capacity. However, 100% of the foundations that funded Phoenix Charter Academy in previous years continued to do so this year.

The Board will increase its membership by 2-3 members each year until it reaches 13 members.

• **2007-2008 Results:** The Board added four new members this year representing the fields of foundation development, legal, education and finance. The Board has 7 total members.

• **2008-2009 Results:** The Board added three new members this year representing the fields of business and health care. The Board has 11 total members.

The Board will maintain 80% attendance at meetings and will have a quorum at each meeting.

• **2007-2008 Results:** Board meeting participation ranged from 57% to 88% during the year with the later meetings having the highest attendance rate. Board membership increased during the year and the Board Chair and membership committee continue to focus on increased membership as well as increased attendance for 2008-2009.

• **2008-2009 Results:** Board meeting participation ranged from 60% to 100% during the year with the later meetings having the highest attendance rate and the average attendance rate of 86%. Board membership and participation increased during the year and the Board Chair is focused on increased membership as well as increased attendance for the 2009-2010 school year.

**GOAL 4: PCA will build and ensure strong and consistent daily attendance by all students.**

**Attendance Measures:**
Attendance for students in the sub-groups below who have attended PCA for two consecutive quarters will meet the following average daily attendance rates for the year:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 2 Goal</th>
<th>Year 2 Actual</th>
<th>Year 3 Goal</th>
<th>Year 3 Actual</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
<th>Year 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aggregate:</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>81%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>90%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Teen Parents | 80% | 77% | 84% | 75%* | 87% | 90%
IEP/504 students | 80% | 70% | 84% | 75% | 87% | 90%
ELL Students | 80% | 82% | 84% | 84% | 87% | 90%
Court-Involved Youth | 80% | 68% | 84% | 76% | 87% | 90%
Previously truant and re-entering students *(These students tend to be 17+ years old, have histories of truancy and fewer than 100 credits accumulated over 2+ years of high school)* | 80% | 65% | 84% | 73% | 87% | 90%

*The attendance rate for teen parents includes maternity leave. Maternity leave ranged from 1 to 3 months.

- **2007-2008 Results:** Since the above chart shows that we did not meet our attendance measures, we include a discussion, an analysis and action plan.

- **2008-2009 Results:** Since the above chart shows that we did not meet our attendance measures for Year 3, we include a discussion, an analysis and action plan below.

**Discussion**
One of the biggest challenges our school continues to face is daily attendance and attrition. 77% of our student body has transferred from other high schools. 56% report having significant attendance problems before starting at PCA and 32% have dropped out of school before attending PCA. While these statistics are daunting, these are exactly the students we seek to serve. Despite their histories, we believe all students can rise to expectations and be successful. Some students rise to the demands of the long hours, strict rules, heavy workload, and daily attendance, while others do not. We believe we can both improve attendance rates and reduce attrition. It is our ongoing goal to continue to find new ways that improve daily attendance and attrition rates. In the following discussion and analysis, we will analyze the numbers, discuss the outcomes of last year’s action plan, and present our action plan for next year.

**Looking at the Numbers**
Phoenix Charter Academy students improved overall by 6% and are closer to our goal this year than we were last year.
**Aggregate:** For the 2008-2009 school year, PCA had an overall daily attendance rate for students who attended PCA for two consecutive quarters of 81%, increasing our rate by 5% from 2007-2008 and nearly meeting the goal of 84% for year 3. We spent a lot of time this year trying new ways to increase daily attendance.

- **Phone Banking:** During the middle of the year, PCA staff members did two two week periods of phone banking. Phone banking is the daily calling of parents or adult supporters to give attendance updates when students had attendance rates of 85% or below. While most parents and adult supporters appreciated this increased communication, we found the daily calls only increased attendance rates for 6 students. From this, we learned that for the students with the lowest daily attendance rates, involving parents or adult supporters is not the best way to increase their attendance.

- **Attendance Alerts:** Throughout the year, PCA used a new way of alerting students and families of their attendance. For each quarter, after 5 absences a letter is sent home. For each additional absence, the Dean of Students or Recruitment and Retention Coordinator made a call home on top of the absent calls our front office receptionist does. This was done throughout the entire year. Again, while parents and adult supporters appreciated the communication, this only increased attendance for a handful of students.

- **Awards:** Phoenix Charter Academy spent a great deal of time discussing school wide attendance. During Community Meetings, students received awards for their attendance rates. Weekly, monthly and quarterly awards were given out. Once again, this recognition increased daily attendance for a handful of students.

- **Motivation:** This year we learned that students will come to school if they have a reason to come. One student stopped skipping school on certain days just so he would be able to attend his Student Leadership Council class. Many of the male students that were a part of the trial basketball team this year came to school just so they would be able to practice and play in upcoming games.

(For more information about how we plan to use these lessons in the future, please read the Action Plan.)

**Teen Parents:** The 75% attendance rate for teen parents does take into consideration the time students took for maternity leave. While the attendance measure for this subgroup decreased this year by 2%, PCA did a lot of work on finding ways to better serve our teen parents during the 2008-2009 school year. We believe with these foundations in place, next year our teen parents will be better supported throughout the year increasing their daily attendance.

- This year the Principal, Child Development Center Director and Dean of Students were able to create maternity plans for students that became pregnant during the year. Each student’s maternity plan was different depending on that students’ needs academically and outside of the classroom support.
- Towards the end of this year, PCA hired a new nurse that became heavily involved with the health and care of our pregnant and parenting students. The nurse and the Child Development Center Director have started to work together to better help parenting students navigate the systems outside of school like prenatal care, WIC, and family planning clinics – which all contribute to absences.
- For the first time PCA received a grant from the Department of Education for Teen Pregnancy/STD/HIV-AIDS Prevention and Planning. As part of this grant, we have been able examine the way we currently serve parenting students and develop a more detailed and comprehensive plan for the meetings their needs.

**IEP/504 Students:** For this subgroup, attendance rates increase by 5%. This year, the Director of Academic Support Services was at PCA an additional day each week. Many of our IEP and 504 students had more one-on-one time with these staff members which we believe attributed to the increase of attendance. Individual attention not only makes them feel successful academically, but it allows them to develop those personal relationships which connect them to the school encouraging daily attendance.
Court-Involved Youth: For this subgroup, daily attendance rates increased from 68% for the 2007-2008 school year to 76% for the 2008-2009 school year – an 8% increase. In addition, out of all the subgroups, court-involved youth are the closest (8% below the goal of 84%) to our year three attendance measures. This is a direct result of having a full time Dean of Students and full time Social Worker.

Previously truant and re-entering students: For this subgroup, daily attendance rates increased from 65% for the 2007-2008 school to 73% for the 2008-2009 school year – an 8% increase. This is also a direct result of having a full time Dean of Students and full time Social Worker.

2007-2008 Action Plan
In our 2007-2008 Annual Report, we listed three action plans that we planned to implement for the 2008-2009 school year. Each of these action plans are listed below with a brief explanation of their outcomes.

1. We added a full time Dean of Students and School Counselor for next year. In partnership with our Recruitment and Outreach coordinator, these individuals will help students address the emotional, behavior and practical considerations that cause their truancy.

   The increased daily attendances rates for our court-involved youth and previously truant and re-entering students is a direct result of having a full time Dean of Students and Social Worker this year. The Dean of Students is a direct contact to probation officers, which opened up communication between P.O.’s and the school. In addition, the Dean of Students was able to directly communicate with the court systems to schedule students court mandated appointments so they would not interfere with school. This decreased the number of absences. The Social Worker has been able to partner with many P.O.s to provide better case management support for PCA students. They have been able to cover all necessary agencies and advocacies for students. From this increased communication and support, PCA has been able to offer these students complete 360 support.

2. We know the schools that have had the most success combating truancy problems involved student families and the communities. Accordingly, we plan to redouble our efforts to reach out to these constituencies for help.

   In addition to what was stated above about attendance alerts, our front office receptionist made phone calls home on a daily basis to every absent student.

3. We’ve also invested in new software that will help us to nearly instantaneously communicate with all adult supporters (parents, social workers, probation officers, etc.) the moment we know a student is absent from school. These ‘real-time’ interventions may interrupt student truancy before it becomes a habit.

   This year PCA used new software of auto dial setup and parent portal. The parent portal software was used by about 10-15% of parents or adult supporters and enabled them to view their student’s grades, progress reports, disciplinary actions and attendance information online. The auto dial setup was used occasionally throughout the year to communicate schedule changes like snow days or early dismissals. Both of these software’s increased communication between PCA and parents or adult supporters. However, neither of them directly influenced daily attendance rates.
2008-2009 Action Plan

Serving students with histories of truancy is central to our mission, and while the daily attendance rates improved this year, we know we can do even better. Below is a list of new strategies that use lessons we’ve learned this year we plan to implement for the 2009-2010 school year.

1. Each quarter, students have a maximum number of absences they are allowed before they lose their spot for that quarter. We plan to lower this maximum number of days allowed absent.
2. We plan to have a new student orientation before the start of school. During this orientation we plan to learn ahead of time some of the students needs before they become issues.
3. The implementation of the Phoenix Urban Fellowship Program will increase daily attendance rates. For more information about this program, please see page 27.
4. Increase the number of students who meet with our Phoenix Through College Director to plan our their academic years at PCA.
5. Dean of Students and Social Worker plan to have beginning of the year meetings with all local probation officers and courts so they are aware of PCA’s hours and rules, and can work together to schedule students court appointments at certain times.

GOAL 5: PCA will demonstrate its continued effectiveness in earning parent and community approval and support sufficient to ensure the school’s long-term viability and effectiveness.

Parent/Adult-Supporter Satisfaction Measure:
A survey will indicate that 70% of parent respondents respond with an 8 or higher to the question below: Question: On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest score, how satisfied are you with PCA?

- **2007-2008 Results:** 95% of parents and adults supporters said they were either satisfied or highly satisfied with PCA.

- **2008-2009 Results:** 91.1% of parents and adult supporters said they were either satisfied or highly satisfied with PCA.

A survey will indicate that 80% of parents and adult supporters rate the quality of teaching and academics at PCA at 8 or above, as they respond to the question below:

Question: On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with the teaching and academics at the PCA?

- **2007-2008 Results:** 93% of parents and adult supporters said they were either satisfied or highly satisfied with teaching and academics at PCA.

- **2008-2009 Results:** 86.7% of parents and adult supporters said they were either satisfied or highly satisfied with the teaching and academics at PCA.
  We were only able to reach about 40% of the parents or adult supporters this year. Many of the phone numbers were disconnected or no longer in service.

90% or more of PCA students without parents (about 10% of our students) will have an adult supporter who comes to school at least three times during the year to check on the student’s progress. These supporters will be recruited from community partner organizations.
• **2007-2008 Results:** 80% of these students had an adult supporter come to school three times during the year to check on their progress.

• **2008-2009 Results:** 13.4% of the 2008-2009 student body had adult supporters. 100% of adult supporters engaged in school-based, home-based or phone meetings with PCA staff during the school year to discuss the students’ progress.

80% of PCA students will have at least 3 meetings annually with parents or an adult supporter about academic progress and graduation plans.

• **2007-2008 Results:** 108 or 64% of parents or adult supporters of our total of enrolled students engaged in school-based, home-based or phone meetings with PCA staff during the year to discuss student progress towards graduation.

• **2008-2009 Results:** 86.6% of parents or adults supporters of our total of enrolled students engaged in school-based, home-based or phone meetings with PCA staff during the year to discuss students’ progress.

PCA will demonstrate community demand for its services by maintaining a waitlist of at least 25 students for the first two quarters of each school year.

• **2007-2008 Results:** PCA maintained a waiting list of 25 applicants in the first two quarter of the 2007-2008 school year.

• **2008-2009 Results:** PCA had a waitlist of 19 students during the first quarter, 35 students during the second quarter of this school year, and 34 on the waitlist over the summer.

**GOAL 6: PCA will retain effective instructional staff.**

PCA will retain at least 75% of the staff we wish to rehire on a year-to-year basis.

• **2007-2008 Results:** 100% of the staff Phoenix Charter Academy wished to retain from the 2007-2008 school year (12 out of 18 staff members) are returning for the 2008-2009 school year.

• **2008-2009 Results:** 100% of the staff Phoenix Charter Academy wished to retain from the 2008-2009 school year are returning for the 2009-2010 school year.

**C. FAITHFULNESS TO CHARTER — IS THE SCHOOL FAITHFUL TO THE TERMS OF THE CHARTER?**

The Mission of Phoenix Charter Academy is to close the achievement gap that exists between academically underperforming, at-risk, and out-of-school teenagers in Chelsea, Revere, and Lynn, and their academically successful peers.

**GOAL 7: PCA will ensure that it serves its target student population (students 2-3 grade levels behind, students who dropped out of school, pregnant or parenting teens, court involved teens, and immigrant students).**
Student Recruitment:
Annual outreach (3+ times each year) will include conversations, meetings and follow-up with the following agencies and organizations:

- MA Department of Youth Services; MA Department of Social Services; Boston, Chelsea, and Lynn Juvenile Probation Offices, the courts and local police departments.
- Chelsea and Revere district schools truancy officers, guidance counselors, and other program staff.
- Street outreach organizations such as Roca, Inc., the Lynn and Chelsea Boys and Girls Clubs, and My Turn.

At least 40 applications in our first two years, 60 applications in our third year, and 80 applications in subsequent years will come from contacts at community organizations that serve the same youth.

- **2006-2007 Results:** 67 applicants came to PCA via local Jordan Boys and Girls Clubs, Roca, Inc., and the Department of Social Services, Harbor Area Office.
- **2007-2008 Results:** 69 applicants came to PCA through local community based organizations.
- **2008-2009 Results:** 78 applicants came to PCA though local community based organizations.

**GOAL 8:** PCA students will make healthy, informed decisions that support their educational advancement as they prepare for college admissions and other post-secondary educational options.

100% of PCA students will create a graduation plan, and select their own courses each quarter based on their academic needs.

- **2007-2008 Results:** Approximately 65% of students created a graduation plan while 100% selected their own courses each quarter.
- **2008-2009 Results:** 100% of students created an individualized graduation plan during the year and 100% of students selected their own courses each quarter based on their academic needs.

100% of graduating PCA students will apply to and be accepted by a post-secondary education program.

- **2007-2008 Results:** Of the six graduating students, 100% applied to and were accepted by post-secondary education programs.
- **2008-2009 Results:** Of the thirteen graduating students, 100% applied to and were accepted by post-secondary education programs.

60% of enrolled students will voluntarily choose to participate in PCA’s summer school, leadership, internships, Saturday programs, and/or training opportunities.

- **2007-2008 Results:** Over 70% of students enrolled at PCA participated in our 2007 Summer Institute, Saturday MCAS Prep Class, Wednesday Career Prep Class or school work programs.
2008-2009 Results: Approximately 70% of students enrolled at PCA voluntarily participated in 2009 Summer Academy, Friday MCAS Tutoring Program, Student Leadership Council, school work programs, PCA Basketball Team, Wellness Committee and local internships.

Starting in PCA’s 4th year, 65% of those PCA students who enroll in a post-secondary education program will still be enrolled after 2 semesters.

2008-2009 Results: Not yet applicable.

Phoenix Charter Academy launched the Phoenix Through College (PTC) Program in July 2008. Led by a former PCA teacher with great experience in working with non-traditional students in Chelsea and in Brooklyn, NY, the PTC Program created our first college office, worked to strengthen academics to better prepare students for college, and organized the college preparation, application and enrollment processes at PCA. Additionally they launched a part time work study tutoring program which showed big increases in MCAS scores for many PCA students. This year the small pilot tutoring program was just for students who have not taken or passed the 10th grade MCAS exams. Students received one-on-one or small group tutoring every Friday afternoon, 1:30pm to 4:00pm, beginning in January and taught by college work-study students. 100% of these PCA students showed increases in their MCAS scores and MCAS scores overall went up by an average of 4 points. We compared the retest MCAS scores of students enrolled in this program versus students who opted not to participate; results from 2008-9 showed that students enrolled in the MCAS tutoring program raised their math scores by an average of 9.86 raw points and English scores by an average of 2 raw points. To ensure all PCA students pass the MCAS with proficiency, we are building on the positive results of the pilot program and will be launching the Phoenix Urban Fellows Program. We are hoping the PUFP will positively impact MCAS scores, attendance rates, and student retention.

Phoenix Urban Fellowship Program

This year we started a small pilot tutoring program just for students who have not taken or passed the 10th grade MCAS exams. Students received one-on-one or small group tutoring every Friday afternoon, 1:30pm to 4:00pm, beginning in January and taught by college work-study students. 100% of these PCA students showed increases in their MCAS scores and MCAS scores overall went up by an average of 4 points. We compared the retest MCAS scores of students enrolled in this program versus students who opted not to participate; results from 2008-9 showed that students enrolled in the MCAS tutoring program raised their math scores by an average of 9.86 raw points and English scores by an average of 2 raw points. To ensure all PCA students pass the MCAS with proficiency, we are building on the positive results of the pilot program.

For 2009-10, following the lead of the MATCH School and City on a Hill Charter School, we plan the launch the Phoenix Urban Fellowship Program, an in house academic tutoring and support program, as the next piece of the Phoenix Through College Program. We have hired 10 recent college graduates as full time tutors. These tutors will live next door to the school building and tutor at least half of the school day, every day. We are excited for the impact of these Fellows on our students slated to take the MCAS exam to rapidly acquire much-needed skills.
V. Dissemination

Phoenix Charter Academy is founded on the belief that given the right environment and the right supports, out-of-school, underserved, and truant youth can reach high expectations, graduate from high school, and achieve success in college. After the conclusion of our third year, our model is on its way to producing replicable best practices for turning at-risk and truant students into college bound scholars.

Phoenix Charter Academy is able to recruit students. Since September of 2006, over students have applied to PCA in hopes of getting a second, third or even fourth chance of high school success. While students leave for all different reasons, PCA has been able to recover former dropouts. During the 2007-2008 school year, we recovered 25% of former dropouts, and this year we recovered 23%. Our unique model of 360 Support is showing that it is possible to get previously truant students back into school and keep them in school.

Not only does PCA get the most at-risk, underserved students back into school, we hold them to high expectations – the same expectations as high performing Boston based charter schools. Students must get a C- or above in order to receive course credit, a college acceptance letter is required for graduation and a 9 to 5 school day and longer school year. By holding our population to these high expectations, we are challenging the conventional thinking and showing that former dropouts can earn a high school diploma and attend college, that teen mothers can graduation from high school and college while being responsible parents, and that formerly low-achieving students can set their sights high.

After just three years of existence, Phoenix Charter Academy is seeing results. We have been able to recover 23% of former dropouts and increase students GPA by 100% in just one year (2007-2008 data, for students who are regular “attenders”). Recently, State Representative Marie St. Fleur said that Phoenix Charter Academy “has to be replicated” in order to combat the dropout crisis.
## VI. Data Section

### INSTRUCTIONAL TIME:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total number of instructional days for the 2008-09 school year:</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| First and last day of the 2008-09 school year:                              | First day: Thursday, August 28, 2008  
Last day: Friday, June 26, 2009                                             |
| Length of school day (please note if schedule varies throughout the week or the year): | Monday – Thursday: 8 hours  
Friday: 4 hours                                                                  |

### STUDENT ENROLLMENT INFORMATION:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of students who completed the 2007-08 school year but did not reenroll for the 2008-09 school year (excluding graduates):</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of students enrolled as of October 1, 2008:</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of students who enrolled during the 2008-09 school year, after October 1, 2008:</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of students who left during the 2008-09 school year, after October 1, 2008:</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total number of students enrolled as of the June 2009 SIMS submission:</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of students who graduated at the end of the 2008-09 school year:</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reasons for student departures:
- 12% had to work to support their family
- 7% transferred to a different school
- 15% attended PCA for 1 day or less
- 6% moved or lost their housing
- 7% were expelled from PCA or were arrested and locked up
- 31% were truant and could not make it to school more than 3 days a week
- 19% said the rules at PCA were too strict. Of this 19%, 42% said they were going to get their GED but none of them have to date.

### STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC AND SUBGROUP INFORMATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th># of students</th>
<th>% of entire student body</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African-American</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited English Proficient</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Income</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### ADMINISTRATIVE ROSTER FOR THE 2008-09 SCHOOL YEAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Brief Job Description</th>
<th>Start date</th>
<th>End date (if no longer employed at the school)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Executive Director</td>
<td>School Leader</td>
<td>8/1/05</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title</td>
<td>Brief Job Description</td>
<td>Start date</td>
<td>End date (if no longer employed at the school)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recruitment and Retention Coordinator</td>
<td>Oversees new student recruitment and enrollment</td>
<td>8/1/06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Language Learners Support Teacher</td>
<td>Supports Teachers with ELL students</td>
<td>10/30/06</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean of Student and Family Support</td>
<td>Oversees all Student Support and Student Support Center</td>
<td>7/1/08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Phoenix Through College Program</td>
<td>Oversees graduation plans and preparing students for college</td>
<td>7/1/08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On-site Social Worker</td>
<td>Oversees clinical support of students</td>
<td>8/15/08</td>
<td>3/26/09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Academic Support Services</td>
<td>Oversees students with special education plans</td>
<td>8/15/07</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part-time Social Worker</td>
<td>Part time counseling</td>
<td>4/30/09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Support Roster for the 2008-09 School Year

**Reasons for teacher and staff departures:**

* Medical reasons  
** 1 moving out of state, 1 attending graduate school, 2 leaving for non-renewal of contracts  
*** 1 left for personal reasons  
**** 1 attending graduate school
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Position on the Board</th>
<th>Committee affiliation(s)</th>
<th>Area of expertise, and/or additional role at school (parent, staff member etc.)</th>
<th>Number of terms served; Length of each term, including date of election and expiration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Edward F. McDonough III</td>
<td>Board Chair</td>
<td>Membership Committee</td>
<td>Organization Development and Leadership</td>
<td>2 terms 2/12/05 to present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Nicholas Hofer</td>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Finance Committee</td>
<td>Business and Finance</td>
<td>2 terms 2/12/05 to present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Neil S. Cohen</td>
<td>Trustee</td>
<td>Real Estate Task Force</td>
<td>Legal</td>
<td>1 term 5/21/08 to present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Jim Nicoletti</td>
<td>Trustee</td>
<td>Real Estate Task Force</td>
<td>Real Estate</td>
<td>1 term 6/1/09 to present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Colette L. Stanzler</td>
<td>Trustee</td>
<td>Development Committee</td>
<td>Non-profit organizations</td>
<td>1 term 8/30/07 to present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Greg Susco</td>
<td>Trustee</td>
<td>Development Committee</td>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>1 term 1/1/07 to present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Joan O. Gallant</td>
<td>Trustee</td>
<td>Development Committee</td>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>1 term 6/27/08 to present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Eric Obeng</td>
<td>Trustee</td>
<td></td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>3/30/09 to present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Manuel Lopes</td>
<td>Trustee</td>
<td></td>
<td>Health Care</td>
<td>6/11/09 to present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Patrick Monkiewicz</td>
<td>Trustee</td>
<td>Development Committee</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>6/11/09 to present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mrs. Beth Anderson</td>
<td>Ex-Officio</td>
<td>All Committees</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>2 terms 2/12/05 to present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### VII. Attachments

Unaudited Fiscal Year 2009 Statement of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Assets

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phoenix Charter Academy</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Profit &amp; Loss (unaudited)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>July 2008 - June 2009</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td>1,936,727.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal and State Entitlements and Grants</td>
<td>193,951.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fundraising</td>
<td>127,725.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicaid reimbursement</td>
<td>36,697.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nutrition Income</td>
<td>14,807.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributions - in kind</td>
<td>11,300.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Income</td>
<td>73,080.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td>2,394,288.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salaries, Benefits, and Taxes</td>
<td>1,430,800.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Services</td>
<td>51,330.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food Services</td>
<td>44,659.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Services</td>
<td>135,274.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities and Equipment</td>
<td>352,723.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>205,297.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Expenses</strong></td>
<td>2,220,085.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Operating Income</strong></td>
<td>174,203.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Income</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERate Reimbursement</td>
<td>104,328.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Other Income</strong></td>
<td>104,328.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other Expenses</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Miscellaneous Expense</td>
<td>42,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Other Expenses</strong></td>
<td>42,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Other Income</strong></td>
<td>61,828.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Income</strong></td>
<td>236,031.61</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Fiscal Year 2009 Statement of Net Assets

**Phoenix Charter Academy**

**Balance Sheet (unaudited)**

**As of June 30, 2009**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>ASSETS</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current Assets</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cash</td>
<td>$725,586.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Receivables</td>
<td>$6,940.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Current Assets</td>
<td>$31,299.74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Current Assets</td>
<td>$763,827.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fixed Assets, net</td>
<td>$332,286.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Assets</td>
<td>$4,790.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOTAL ASSETS</td>
<td>$1,100,904.69</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total</th>
<th>LIABILITIES AND EQUITY</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Current Liabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Accounts Payable</td>
<td>$30,822.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other Current Liabilities</td>
<td>$80,029.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Current Liabilities</td>
<td>$110,851.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Long Term Liabilities</td>
<td>$913.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Liabilities</td>
<td>$111,765.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Equity</td>
<td>$989,139.36</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY** $1,100,904.69
### FY2010 Operational Budget

#### Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>FY10 Budget</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tuition</td>
<td>$2,085,426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Grants - State and Federal</td>
<td>$240,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Private Fundraising</td>
<td>$172,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Nutrition Funding</td>
<td>$39,485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Other Income (restricted funds and PCA Childcare Center)</td>
<td>$82,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,619,621</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Expenses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Personnel Costs</td>
<td>$1,735,712</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Student Services</td>
<td>$98,188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Instructional Supplies and Services</td>
<td>$139,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Facilities and Equipment</td>
<td>$358,853</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Operations</td>
<td>$206,940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Special Programs - Fellows</td>
<td>$45,760</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Operating Expenses</strong></td>
<td><strong>$2,584,453</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Net Income</strong></td>
<td><strong>$35,168</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Students at Chelsea school to receive hard-won diplomas

By Nandini Jayakrishna, Globe Staff

CHELSEA -- Some struggled to learn English; others fought bouts of alcoholism.

Some went to school once every two weeks; others decided even that was too much.

They have battled behavioral problems, academic failures, personal tragedies, or substance abuse.

But Thursday, the 13 graduating seniors of Phoenix Charter Academy will prove they were able to pick up the broken pieces and move on, that they succeeded even when some told them they could not.

"We have all made mistakes," Senior Jessica T. Gedeus, 18, said at a class dinner Tuesday, amid smiles, cheers and unstoppable tears of gratitude. "But...look at us now: Class of '09."

Ranging in age from 18 to 21, most members of the school's second graduating class will be the first in their families to earn a high school degree.

Nicholas R. Marston, who coordinates individualized academic plans for each student and supports them during their first year of college, described the group as persistent and ambitious.

"There's a shared sense of mission," he said. "This is like We're all in this for the same thing. We need to reclaim ourselves."

A tuition-free public charter school, Phoenix Academy caters to about 150 students, including many who have tried their luck at regular public schools with little success. The school, which has no grade levels, combines traditional modes of learning with innovative, individualized classes and teaching techniques, serving students of different ages and backgrounds, said Beth E. Anderson, the school's executive director.

"I was tired of seeing so many older young people not in high school, and yet showing some major strengths and raw talent that, with a high school education, could probably turn into something great and resourceful for our communities," said Anderson, who founded the school in 2005.

Ashley S. Powell, this year's co-valedictorian, said she started her high school career at Medford High School, but quickly realized it wasn't the place for her.

"I had a really bad anger problem," said the 18-year-old, who got into fights and started skipping school.

One day, while she was at the library during school hours, she found the Phoenix Academy Web site. It was perfect: a small school that offered students like her another chance. She printed out the application and mailed it the day after.

"I was really happy because it was a chance for me to start over," said Powell who is heading to St. John's University in Staten Island, NY, this fall.
She hopes to go to law school eventually. "I think I'm good at arguing," she said with a laugh.

The school year at Phoenix Academy, housed in a building owned by the Archdiocese of Boston, runs from August through June. The slightly extended school year and an 8-hour school day allow students to earn more credits and make up for lost time. A day care facility in the school helps teenage mothers attend classes without having to worry about the safety of their children.

Like Powell, Josue Ithier, 18, another senior, had a history of truancy. At first his old habits followed him to Phoenix Academy, but the teachers didn’t give up on him.

They called, text messaged, and tried other threats. "They said, 'I'm going to come to your house and pick you up if you don't come,'" said Ithier, also attending St. John's University to study sports management.

The staff at Phoenix Academy practice a philosophy of "relentless support," said Olivia L. Lahann, director of assessment.

"I can't imagine a weekend without talking to a student," agreed Sarah C. Miller, dean of student and family support.

When they first come to Phoenix, a majority of students are two or more grade levels behind. Some have been out of school for years.

"We've had to teach how to add double digit numbers here," Anderson said.

Students take regular classes in English, history, math and science, but also learn about sexual violence prevention and parenting. To take a break from their often unstable lives outside school, they practice yoga. To simply have fun, they learn salsa.

But they are still held to high academic standards. They must have at least a C- average and be accepted to a two- or four-year college to graduate, Anderson said.

From asking students to sit up straight or tuck in their shirts, to making them rewrite literary analysis essays about 12 times, teachers don’t hesitate to crack the whip at Phoenix Academy. The discipline and support have inspired the soon-to-be graduates to dream big.

Maria G. Lara, 20, who arrived from Nicaragua three years ago and will be the school’s other valedictorian today, wants to become a pediatrician. Gedeus, who plans to study business administration, wants to become a fashion designer, and has even decided the name of her clothing line: Cherieamour.

For Maira B. Bonilla, 19, earning a diploma today will be more than a personal accomplishment: she hopes it will inspire her twin sister to do the same.

"I want to show her that she can do it; it’s not too late," Bonilla said. "It took me a long time but I did it. I’m so happy."

Graduation will be held Thursday at Bunker Hill Community College in Charlestown at 2 p.m.