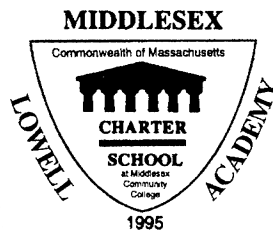


ANNUAL REPORT OF THE  
LOWELL MIDDLESEX ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL



JULY 31, 2009

**Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School (LMACS)**

at Middlesex Community College

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LMACS is accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC)

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## **Introduction**

The Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School, located in Lowell, Massachusetts, is a public charter high school catering to students who have left their district high school prior to graduation, and those significantly at risk of dropping out of these schools. We generally enroll students 16 to 21 years of age - primarily from Lowell - but also serve students from Billerica, Chelmsford, Dracut, Lawrence, Methuen, Rowley, Tewksbury, Tyngsboro and Westford. The program has grown from a dropout recovery program to a comprehensive program serving up to 150 students. Our curriculum and interventions are designed to meet the needs of over age students enrolling with very little high school credit and those who have on-going obstacles to regular school attendance. The school defines success through the emotional and mental health of our students, as well as college readiness and test scores. The school does not ask students to apologize for past school failures, but we do hold them to high standards – standards that reflect academic achievement, progress toward 10 Ethical Values, and the ability to make an informed decision about educational and career options when they graduate.

## **Letter from the Chair of the Board of Trustees**

July, 2009

Dear Friends of the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School,

It is my pleasure to report that this year the Charter School completed its 14<sup>th</sup> year and is currently preparing for two fall visits; a five year re-charter visit and its 10 year re-accreditation visit from the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Please join me in wishing the staff and students well as they prepare for these two important tasks.

In addition, 37 students were awarded diplomas this year and, I am pleased to report, all the graduates passed the MCAS in English Language Arts and Mathematics while one student received a Certificate of Attainment.

It was another busy year at the Charter School. The school year began with an expanded focus on the Ethical Values to include developing and nurturing a sense of Intellectual Curiosity within our students. The campaign was so successful that LMACS faculty and staff awarded the first annual scholarship to the most deserving student during the 2009 graduation ceremony.

The LMACS community welcomed a new Special Education teacher and new Life Skills/Social Worker. Despite the changes in staff, the students adjusted well and adapted to the new faces in faculty and student ranks. After an aggressive enrollment campaign, the 2008-2009 school year saw an increased and more stable student population. Students accepted throughout the school year participated in an extended orientation program that enabled faculty to properly place students and to develop programs designed to meet their specific educational needs.

Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School continues its partnership with the Project for School Innovation to disseminate findings from the successful programs and projects at the school. Teachers were asked to make several presentations at conferences throughout the year and administrators served on state evaluation teams.

I know you join me in expressing my appreciation to the faculty and staff for another successful year.

Sincerely,

Carole A. Cowan, Ed.D.

## School Mission Statement

The mission of Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School (LMACS) is to enable its students to achieve academic, social, and career success. This supportive school community identifies, encourages and develops interests and abilities, while acknowledging and respecting each student's personal and cultural identity.

### *Our Vision*

The curriculum of LMACS is built around a core of academic subject areas and is supplemented by required psycho-educational courses and groups. We require a school-to-work component, daily advising, and offer dual enrollment at Middlesex Community College. The LMACS curriculum reflects our small size and mission-driven culture. LMACS graduates will be able to:

- Read critically and analytically
- Communicate effectively in writing and orally to a variety of audiences
- Problem solve in a variety of circumstances
- Use technology as a tool to gather, analyze and present information
- Demonstrate a clear awareness of the rights and responsibilities of a community member
- Demonstrate an understanding and knowledge of a career or educational option in order to develop a plan for the future

LMACS is committed to the success of every student.

## School Performance and Planning

The following sections outline the school's progress towards objectives and measures contained in the school's current, approved accountability plan. For each listed measure, the school has provided evidence for whether the school has met (✓), is making progress toward meeting, or has not met the measure. In each section, LMACS provides information relative to both its accountability plan objectives that were developed by the school and approved by the Charter School Office, and the Common School Performance Criteria required of all charter schools.

### I. Faithfulness to Charter

*Performance Objective 1:* Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School will receive positive site-visit reports from the Department of Education.

- ✓ **In January of 2008, the Department of Education concluded in its Year Thirteen Site Visit Report: “[LMACS’] commitment to its population of at-risk students is manifested daily in the supports, programs, and curriculum modifications and adaptations the school provides in order to meet the varied needs of its student body. By addressing students’ personal needs as well as their academic ones, the school makes it possible to reach students in ways that these students’ previous schools have not managed to do (2007-2008 Site Visit Report, Year 13, pg. 13).**

*Performance Objective 2:* Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School will report school performance to the Department of Education and to the public-at-large.

- ✓ **LMACS publishes and distributes an Annual Report in hard copy and posted on the school’s website at [www.lmacs.org](http://www.lmacs.org)**

*Performance Objective 3:* Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School will request and receive feedback from parents on an annual basis and will report overall satisfaction with LMACS on an annual survey compared to their students’ previous high school.

#### **LMACS Annual Parent Survey Summary of Results:**

- ✓ **Overall Parent Satisfaction**

On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest score, parents who participated in the survey (~ 16% response rate) gave LMACS a mean rating of 9.6 points. The median score was 10 out of 10, and the lowest score was 8 out of 10.

✓ **Comparison of Overall Parent Satisfaction with Student's former high school**

Most students who enroll in LMACS have previously dropped out of their district high school or have not been previously successful in a high school. So, in addition to satisfaction with LMACS, parents were also asked to rate their child's former school on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the highest score. Parents' satisfaction with their student's former school averaged 3.2 points out of a possible 10. Parents' ratings of their student's former school ranged from a high of 10 to a low of 0 (which we scored as a 1).

*Performance Objective 4:* LMACS will maintain its accreditation with the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC).

- ✓ **LMACS is currently in its ninth year of a ten year NEASC accreditation and is scheduled for its 10 Year reaccreditation visit by NEASC in November of 2009.**

*Performance Objective 5:* LMACS will add to the body of knowledge for best practices for high school students who have previously dropped out of high school.

- ✓ **LMACS continued its relationship with the Project for School Innovation (PSI) as part of an "At-Risk Consortium" with three other charter public high schools in Massachusetts. The Consortium has developed a survey tool to develop assessments that measure sources of strengths and risk factors in our students. This work was profiled in the Massachusetts EASE's *Charter School Best Practices Guide* for 2009.**

- ✓ **A *Boston Globe* editorial recognized LMACS ("A Challenge To Charter Schools", February 5, 2009) in its opinion on raising the cap on charter school enrollment in Massachusetts.**

[http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial\\_opinion/editorials/articles/2009/02/05/a\\_challenge\\_to\\_charter\\_schools/](http://www.boston.com/bostonglobe/editorial_opinion/editorials/articles/2009/02/05/a_challenge_to_charter_schools/)

## **Common School Performance Criteria**

### *Implementation of Mission, Vision, and Educational Philosophy:*

Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School (LMACS) is a school model distinct from traditional high schools and “No Excuses” charter schools. LMACS caters to over age students who leave their district high schools without a diploma. Sometimes misidentified as an alternative school, the mission of LMACS is broader than serving “at-risk” students. LMACS teachers are preparing students for college and for work. We are helping future citizens cope with difficult challenges in their personal lives as they learn to contribute to a democratic society. This is public education - not alternative schooling.

LMACS was chartered to support high school dropouts to become graduates - and to do it quickly. Many students at LMACS say that this is the first time in their lives that a school-based adult believes they have potential, but the teachers at LMACS have to meet the students where they are - a complicated task. On one end of the spectrum, there are students who arrive at LMACS with nearly enough credits to graduate from high school, but were never inspired to do so. On the other end are students who arrive at LMACS at a second-grade reading level and without knowledge of basic multiplication tables. To achieve the school’s mission, teachers ensure that each child has an advocate, and that students are prepared for future challenges. It is a school that defines success through emotional health and self-expression, as well as college readiness and test scores. The faculty holds students to high standards – standards that reflect academic achievement, progress towards 10 Ethical Values, and the ability to make a decision around educational and career options when they graduate. In order to support this mission, the school developed a school-wide academic and civic rubric for our learning expectations, approved by NEASC in 2005:



**LEARNER EXPECTATION #1: Students will be able to read critically and analytically.**

LEARNER OUTCOME #1: Identify and discuss the main idea in reading selections.

- 1 Cannot select main idea
- 2 Can partially select main idea
- 3 Can select the main idea and restate with clarity
- 4 Can select the main idea all of the time and make connections with other reading selections

LEARNER OUTCOME #2: Use advanced vocabulary from reading selections in ways that show understanding.

- 1 Has difficulty comprehending advanced vocabulary
- 2 Shows some comprehension of advanced vocabulary
- 3 Can use advanced vocabulary in limited ways
- 4 Uses advanced vocabulary to discuss reading selection

LEARNER OUTCOME #3: Determine a point of view, bias, values or intent underlying presented material

- 1 Takes reading selection at face value without interpretation
- 2 Recognizes different points of view in a selection
- 3 Can articulate the background factors influencing point of view or intended consequences in a selection
- 4 Can articulate other or opposing points of view influencing a selection

**LEARNER EXPECTATION #2: Students will be able to communicate effectively in writing and orally to a variety of audiences.**

LEARNER OUTCOME #1: Use correct grammatical conventions including sentence and paragraph structure, punctuation, capitalization, and parts of speech.

- 1 Writing and oral presentations include basic errors of grammar
- 2 Makes few grammatical errors but with simple language and structure
- 3 Usually uses correct grammar and varies sentence structure to improve presentation
- 4 Consistently engages an audience by varying parts of speech and word choice

LEARNER OUTCOME #2: Present oral and written presentations in a way that suits the purpose of the writer and addresses the audience appropriately.

- 1 Material lacks clear focus, logically related ideas, and adequate details
- 2 Material reflects some clarity of purpose with some supporting details
- 3 Organizes written or spoken material with focus, related ideas, and adequate details.
- 4 Engages audience with clear focus, logically related ideas, and supporting details.

**LEARNER EXPECTATION #3: Students will be able to problem solve in a variety of circumstances.**

LEARNER OUTCOME #1: Organize information from a variety of sources.

- 1 Cannot identify useful sources
- 2 Can begin to identify and gather useful information
- 3 Can recognize patterns in information gathered from sources
- 4 Can categorize relevant information for optimal use

LEARNER OUTCOME #2: Interpret, analyze and evaluate information.

- 1 Cannot make use of information
- 2 Can interpret or paraphrase a problem but cannot structure a solution
- 3 Can analyze the problem and structure a solution without evaluation
- 4 Can evaluate the problem and potential solutions

**LEARNER EXPECTATION #4: Students will be able to use technology as a tool to gather, analyze and present information.**

LEARNER OUTCOME #1: Use Microsoft Word, Excel, and Power Point effectively.

- 1 Demonstrates some basic keyboarding and word processing for school reports
- 2 Can effectively and efficiently use Microsoft word
- 3 Can demonstrate basic functions and use of Excel and Power Point
- 4 Can effectively use Excel and Power Point to organize and present information

LEARNER OUTCOME #2: Utilize the Internet for gathering and selecting sources of information

- 1 Demonstrates basic knowledge of the Internet
- 2 Is conversant with basic data gathering websites
- 3 Can conduct a search using websites
- 4 Can evaluate the usefulness of information found on websites

**LEARNER EXPECTATION #5: Students will be able to demonstrate a clear awareness of the rights and responsibilities of a community member**

LEARNER OUTCOME #1: Understands the school's Ethical Values: Respect, Courage, Responsibility, Truthfulness, Justice, Unity, Agape, Achievement, Freedom, and Peace and how each relates to the individual's rights and responsibilities as a community member

- 1 Student is an uncooperative community member at times
- 2 Usually treats others with respect and accepts responsibility for their behavior
- 3 Treats others with respect, accepts responsibility for own behavior, and participates in some school activities in a meaningful way
- 4 Student is a school leader who understands and can model the school's Ethical Values

**LEARNER EXPECTATION #6: Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding and knowledge of a career or educational option in order to develop a plan for the future**

LEARNER OUTCOME #1: Complete an internship successfully

- 1 Has not demonstrated success at the worksite
- 2 Has satisfactorily completed an internship
- 3 Has completed internship with distinction
- 4 Has completed a challenging internship that has led to a paying job at the site

LEARNER OUTCOME #2: Reflect on and evaluate past choices

- 1 Is hesitant to identify past choices
- 2 Can identify past choices
- 3 Recognize the impact of past choices
- 4 Evaluate past choices in order to make new plans

LEARNER OUTCOME #3: Set goals for the future

- 1 Five year plan is vague
- 2 Five year plan contains some goals and strategies for achieving them
- 3 Five year plan contains a clearly articulated pathway and goals
- 4 Student completed an excellent five-year plan, which has high expectations for the future

## II. Academic Program Success

*Performance Objective 1:* LMACS will be designated as making Adequate Yearly Progress on its annual report card issued by the Massachusetts Department of Education when adequate data (i.e. number of students taking MCAS) is available to make such a determination.

- ✓ **The school was not given an AYP determination during the 2008-2009 school year due to the small cohort size of our 10<sup>th</sup> grade students.**

*Performance Objective 2:* Graduates of the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School will be able to place into a college-level English course at Middlesex Community College. LMACS graduates will receive a reading comprehension score of 68 or greater as measured by the ACCUPLACER test.

**TARGET NOT MET: The graduates in the class of 2009 scored, on average, 65 on the most recent ACCUPLACER test of Reading Comprehension, missing this target by three points.**

*Performance Objective 3:* Graduates of the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School will be able to place into a college-level mathematics course at Middlesex Community College. LMACS graduates will receive an Algebra score of 55 or greater as measured by the ACCUPLACER test.

- ✓ **The graduates in the class of 2009 scored, on average, 63 on the ACCUPLACER Test of Algebra.**

*Performance Objective 4:* Students at LMACS will improve reading skills during their first three trimesters at LMACS. They will demonstrate a 10% gain in their reading comprehension ACCUPLACER score during their first three semesters at LMACS.

- ✓ **Students entering in the fall of 2008 demonstrated, on average, a 12.5% gain in Reading Comprehension after three terms at LMACS. These students' average scores increased from 56 in the Fall of 2008, to 63 in the Spring of 2009.**

*Performance Objective 5:* Students at Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School will improve math skills during their first three trimesters at LMACS. They will demonstrate a 40% gain in their elementary algebra ACCUPLACER score during their first three trimesters at LMACS.

**TARGET NOT MET: Students entering in the fall of 2009 demonstrated, on average, a 31% gain in Algebra after three terms at LMACS. These students' average scores increased from 42 in the fall of 2008, to 55 in the Spring of 2009.**

*Performance Objective 6:* Students at Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School will demonstrate the ability to write coherent 5-paragraph essays. Using a rubric as an assessment

tool, students will present a clear thesis, provide supporting evidence, use a proper format, articulate a strong conclusion, and apply appropriate mechanics.

**MAKING PROGRESS: Although the school was not given an AYP determination this year due to a small cohort size in our 10<sup>th</sup> grade, 90% of these students passed the MCAS in English Language Arts (which includes an essay and writing component). 50% of the students tested scored at the Proficient level or above, and 20% scored Advanced.**

**All teachers assign and grade five paragraph essays in every course, and use a rubric developed by the school and approved by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) in 2005.**

### **Common School Performance Criteria**

#### *Curriculum:*

The core curriculum of the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School is contained in content specific binders for English, mathematics, History and Science and is aligned with the current Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

The charter school's curriculum is consistently implemented around these frameworks in all subject areas. However, LMACS teachers are guided in their daily decisions for how they will plan for and deliver lessons by the six Learner Expectations that were developed in conjunction with the New England Association of School's and Colleges in 2005.

#### 2008-2009 Course Offerings

\* (indicates required coursework for graduation)

##### English Language Arts

Literature and Composition\*

Advanced English

Research Writing\*

Critics Corner

Books

Developing Writers

Instructional Support Reading

##### Mathematics

Algebra I\*

Algebra II

MCAS Math\*

Financial Literacy\*

Foundations of Math

Instructional Support Math

History and Social Science

World History\*

US History\*

Ethics\*

Senior Seminar\*

Senior Civics\*

Science and Technology

Biology\*

Health and Wellness

Life Skills\*

(Mental Health and Wellness)

(Emotional Health and Wellness)

(Physical Health and Wellness)

Health\*

Non-violent Conflict Resolution\*

Man in Society

Men's Group

Women's Group

Internship\*

*Instruction:*

In addition to the school-wide rubric of Learner Expectations and Outcomes, all teachers use a Black Board Configuration with the following general structure:

Do Now

Aim

Class Activity

Homework

The Do Now signals the beginning of the class and is typically not more than five to ten minutes in length. Teachers use the Do Now to review previous content, ask students to write or reflect on what they already know, or to check for understanding from previous lessons. The AIM states the objective or learning standard that the lesson will address, and the class activity describes the tasks that students and teachers will actually complete together during the lesson.

*Program evaluation:*

Program Evaluation is a regular, on-going process at Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School. The school began a comprehensive analysis in 2008 of all of our programs, constituents, and policies as part of our ten-year reaccreditation with the New England Association of School and Colleges. We administered surveys of students, teachers and the Board of Trustees and formed committees around the following NEASC standards:

Committees for NEASC's Teaching and Learning Standards

Mission and Expectations  
Curriculum  
Assessment  
Instruction

Committees for NEASC's Support Standards

Leadership & Organization  
School Resources for Learning  
Community Resources for Learning

We will report the results of all of the surveys and the findings of the seven Committees to the Association in November of 2009.

However, the evaluation of our programs is not limited to these formal site visits. The school hosted Master's Degree candidates from the Harvard Graduate School of Education this year. Each student provided written feedback to the Executive and Assistant Director in the form of brief memos. In addition, the school allowed one of these students to write an in-depth "Portrait" of the school, which also contributed to our learning as a staff. The author of this piece conducted classroom observations, interviews with teachers and students, and drew on regular conversations with the Executive and Assistant Director. We believe this document is particularly informative because author compiled her notes over many weeks of observation in the winter and spring of this year.

*School culture:*

The school was founded on ten Ethical Values:

Respect  
Courage  
Responsibility  
Truthfulness  
Justice  
Unity  
Agape  
Achievement  
Freedom  
Peace

The school holds monthly assemblies focused each month around one of these values. Each assembly begins with a “Town Meeting” and includes an event or activity, which introduces or reinforces ideas, cultural activities or community resources that draw on the Ethical Value for the month.

The school admits new students three times per year, at the start of the trimester in August, November or March. Part of our orientation activities for new students includes activities meant to enhance new students’ understanding of the Ethical Values and the school culture at LMACS that is supported by these values.

The school’s policies and procedures are rooted in the Ethical Value of mutual Respect, and we have taken a conscious step to implement policies and procedures that operate in ways distinct from both traditional high schools and “No Excuses” charter schools. To this end, the school does not require uniforms of any kind, and has chosen to avoid the use of detentions, demerits, or in-school suspensions to monitor or deter student misbehavior.

Still, there are some basic “Non-Negotiables” around which the school refuses to bend and that may result in suspension or expulsion. LMACS uses an Ethical Review as part of a due process for students who violate our “Non-negotiables” and that can result in suspension or



expulsion for repeated or egregious behavior. In addition, all students sign, with their Advisor, an “Agreement for Success” that outlines some of our expectations for behavior and also explains the following:

LMACS Non-Negotiable Rules and Policies are founded on respect:

Respect Yourself:

To be part of the school, you must be working toward your goals for achieving a successful and healthy future.

Respect Others: You must treat all fellow students, LMACS staff, MCC staff, and school visitors with courtesy and respect.

Respect Property:

You must show care for all areas of the school, the college, and others' personal belongings.

*Diverse learners:*

Please see the Massachusetts Charter School Office’s concluding remarks from our 13-Year Site Visit, documented in our Accountability Plan above.

In addition to the policies and procedures outlined in the school’s Curriculum Accommodation Plan, the charter school has recently adopted several instructional technologies and strategies that increase the school’s capacity for identifying, meeting the instructional needs, and assessing the progress of our students.

During the 2007-2008 academic year, the school purchased the Achieve 3000 instructional software. This program is designed to quickly assess student reading levels and provide reading selections that are on-grade level. The program also provides assessments for reading comprehension so that teachers can monitor our students’ progress.

In addition, the school offers coursework across a range of levels that meet our students’ diverse needs. These course offerings include Dual Enrollment at Middlesex Community

College, advanced coursework in English at the school, and Instructional Support for students with specific, individual needs.

Finally, all graduating students complete a Five-Year Plan, which is the culminating project for seniors and outlines the students academic and career goals after they leave the charter school. This Plan allows students with varying interests and abilities to showcase what they have learned and are able to do, as well as what they have planned for their future.

*Professional development:*

The faculty and staff are engaged in professional development and on-going collaborations in several areas. LMACS social workers completed 20 hours of training to provide internship supervision to Boston University students who intern at our school. Each year, the charter school supervises college students who provide extremely valuable services to our students, and that contribute to our learning as well.

Our Executive Director, along with two other teachers, attended the Massachusetts Dropout Prevention and Recovery Conference. Our Special Education Director attended several workshops hosted by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

In addition, three teaching staff members have been planning this year to begin Instructional Rounds in the school in the Fall of 2009 (*Instructional Rounds in Education*, Harvard Education Press, 2009). This group met regularly this Spring, completed a book study, and distributed binders with our school's MCAS data to the English, math, and biology teachers. We believe Instructional Rounds are the best complement to our current efforts already underway as part of our Reaccreditation with NEASC and 15-Year Charter Renewal with the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

Finally, the school has continued to provide time and support for teachers to develop their own content-specific expertise. For example, our History teacher spends two weeks per year (one in the summer, one in the spring) studying with the US History Project. Another of our teachers has become well-versed in policies, procedures and supports for English Language Learners. She taught the rest of the staff how to develop daily lessons that meet our students' needs in this area.

### III. Organizational Viability

*Performance Objective 1:* Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School will have a student withdrawal rate comparable to the average for urban districts with high-risk populations similar to LMACS.

**MAKING PROGRESS: The adjusted drop out rate at LMACS was 30% in 2008, an historical low for the school, and a decrease from the 33% reported in 2007.**

*Performance Objective 2:* Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School will maintain a waiting list to ensure average yearly enrollment of at least 100 students. The school will establish and institutionalize the successful processes and procedures currently being explored with the community, schools, courts, and law enforcement groups to provide information to students who are currently not successful in their district high schools or are at-risk of dropping out.

- ✓ **The school maintained an average annual membership of 114 students during the 2008-2009 school year.**

*Performance Objective 3:* The school will improve student retention through improved attendance at LMACS. Students at LMACS will increase their attendance rate 2% each year as compared to the previous year, with the permanent goal of 90% or higher in accordance with NCLB.

**NOT MET: The school's attendance rate was 83.4% in AY 2008-2009 as compared to 84% in AY 2007-2008.**

*Performance Objective 4:* Each year, the Auditor of the Commonwealth will find that Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School complies with the audit requirements promulgated by the OSA and EASE.

- ✓ **The school received an unqualified opinion in its annual audit and all financial reporting documents have been presented to and approved by the LMACS Board of Trustees and recorded in the minutes.**

#### **Common School Performance Criteria**

##### *Policy decisions:*

There were no major policy decisions by the LMACS Board of Trustees in 2008-2009.

##### *Amendments to the charter:*

There were no amendments to the LMACS charter filed in 2008-2009.

*Complaints:*

There were no official complaints filed to the Board of Trustees in 2008-2009.

*Oversight:*

The executive director presents an oral and written report to the Board of Trustees at each meeting. Board members routinely ask questions and offer suggestions to the director.

Additionally, a parent and a student sit on the Board and are asked to provide their unique perspectives. The student representative provides an oral report on student activities including academic and social/cultural events. A member of the Board of Trustees writes a formal evaluation of the executive director and reports to the full Board.

Trustees serve on self-study committees that evaluate school performance and present evidence at reviews and site-visits by the Department of ESE.

*Board planning:*

LMACS is an established Charter School that has been fortunate enough to have stable board oversight throughout its existence. Goals outside of the Accountability Plan include tracking graduates to ensure that LMACS is preparing students for real life after high school. To that end, Board members regularly inquire about the alumni list. LMACS received a Peabody Grant to provide support to college-bound graduates. Each year, a student updates the alumni list with current telephone numbers, email address, and residences. However, Board members understand the issues around the transient nature of an at-risk population.

The school's lease expired June 30, 2009 and the Board members have been discussing the purchase of the current space or other downtown space given the positive real estate market.

While there was no formal building/space needs planning project, this topic arose at several meetings of the full board and the finance subcommittee.

*Family satisfaction:*

The parents, designated adults, and guardians of our students continue to indicate high levels of overall satisfaction with the school and its programs for supporting students. In addition to the general results of the parent survey reported in the Accountability Plan above, we collected the following additional survey information:

“On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with the teaching and academics at LMACS?”

On average, parents or designated adults who responded to the survey gave LMACS 9.3 points, indicating they are very satisfied with the teaching and academics at LMACS. When we asked parents about how often the school contacts them, we collected the following survey information:

“About how many times per month do you receive a call from the school about your student?”

On average, parents or designated adults who responded to the survey indicated that they received 2.5 calls per month from the school. This number is lower than we would like and we are working to increase the number of calls going out to parents each month. In addition, six (6) parents/designated adults either did not respond to the question in our survey or did not know the name of their student’s Advisor. This suggests an area of concern and improvement for us and a place to focus our efforts next academic year.

*Financial oversight:*

LMACS budget development typically begins with the Executive Director chairing faculty discussions about curriculum and instruction priorities and needs. For example, during the 2009 academic year, the faculty wanted to raise the education standards at LMACS through a focus on intellectual curiosity. Given that priority, faculty identified a need to improve reading skills in all students and recommended purchase of the reading program *Achieve3000* that presents content written at the students' reading level.

For the 2010 budget year, teachers recommended to the Executive Director the renewal of *Achieve3000*, hiring an additional part time paraprofessional to staff a resource/student hall, and generally expanding the course offerings as a way to lower class size. With these recommendations, the Executive Director met with the finance sub-committee of the Board of Trustees to present a tentative (or draft) budget. At the full meeting of the trustees, the 2010 draft budget was presented for full Board action.

### **Dissemination**

The school has regularly led or participated in a number of projects aimed at disseminating our support for students who have not previously been successful in high school. In addition to the two projects outlined in the Accountability Plan above, the school has also collaborated with the Project for School Innovation around the following publications:

#### **Building Supportive High Schools: Modeled on Four Successful Horace Mann and Commonwealth Charter Schools in Massachusetts**

Written by educators:

Jacqueline Elfiki, Ferdinand Fuentes, Margaret Maccini, Margaret McDevitt, John Roberts, and Virginia Warn

**Supporting At-Risk Students: Based on a Successful Program at:  
Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School**

Written by teachers:

Lorraine Bacos, Sarah Brock, Michael Chadwick, Paula Hamel, Reggina Kailin, Carole Levy,  
and Richard Phelps

**Counting What Counts: *Assessments that Matter for At-Risk Students*- Research and Tools  
from the Field**

Developed in conjunction with the Project for School Innovation and The Risk and Prevention  
Program at the Harvard Graduate School of Education.



## Selected Financial Reports

### LOWELL MIDDLESEX ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL

Pre - Audit Draft Statement

Statements of Revenues, Expenses, and Changes in Net Assets

Years ended June 30, 2009 and 2008

	2009	2008
Operating revenues:		
Chapter 70 state tuition	\$ 1,273,758	\$ 955,306
In-kind contributions	\$ 3,900	\$ 3,900
Total operating revenues	\$ 1,277,658	\$ 959,206
Operating expenses:		
Salaries	\$ 743,594	\$ 745,089
Payroll taxes	\$ 8,114	\$ 7,100
Unemployment taxes	\$ 200	\$ 258
Fringe benefits	\$ 77,900	\$ 131,888
Occupancy	\$ 169,658	\$ 128,152
Contracted services	\$ 36,963	\$ 25,775
Telephone and utilities	\$ 14,384	\$ 14,802
Food service program	\$ 53,047	\$ 43,360
Staff development (note 4)	\$ 525	\$ 1,542
Office supplies and materials	\$ 24,988	\$ 18,502
Computer equipment and classroom furnishings	\$ 12,102	\$ 19,059
Postage and shipping	\$ 34	\$ 19
Maintenance and repairs	\$ 7,156	\$ 8,075
Insurance	\$ 8,919	\$ 9,324
Travel	\$ 309	\$ 432
Student transportation	\$ 1,575	\$ 2,115
Dues and subscriptions	\$ 5,610	\$ 5,300
Scholarships	\$ 1,250	\$ 1,250
Miscellaneous	\$ 7,349	\$ 8,890
Indirect cost	\$ 73,458	\$ 67,375
Total operating expenses	\$ 1,247,135	\$ 1,238,307
Operating loss / gain	\$ 30,523	\$ (279,101)
Nonoperating revenues:		
State grants (note 10)	\$ 96,971	\$ 105,703
Private grants	\$ 8,200	\$ 38,000
Unemployment Insurance Refund	\$ -	\$ 1,695
Federal School Lunch program	\$ 16,931	\$ 13,527
Nonoperating income	\$ 122,102	\$ 158,925
<b>Increase / Decrease in net assets</b>	\$ 152,625	\$ (120,176)
Net assets, beginning of year	\$ 466,927	\$ 587,103
Net assets, end of year	\$ 619,552	\$ 466,927

**LOWELL MIDDLESEX ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL**

**Balance Sheet**

Pre-Audit Draft Statement

June 30, 2009

(with comparative totals at June 30, 2008)

	Current Funds		2009	2008
	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>Assets</b>				
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 635,512	(13,703)	621,809	468,045
Accounts Receivable	-	-	-	-
Grants receivable	-	15,000	15,000	17,588
Total assets	<u>\$ 635,512</u>	<u>1,297</u>	<u>636,809</u>	<u>485,633</u>
	=====	=====	=====	=====
<b>Liabilities and Fund Balances</b>				
Accounts payable	\$ 15,960	-	15,960	13,822
Deferred grant revenue	-	1,297	1,297	4,884
Total liabilities	<u>15,960</u>	<u>1,297</u>	<u>17,257</u>	<u>18,706</u>
Fund balances	<u>619,552</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>619,552</u>	<u>466,927</u>
Total liabilities and fund balances	<u>\$ 635,512</u>	<u>1,297</u>	<u>636,809</u>	<u>485,633</u>
	=====	=====	=====	=====

**LOWELL MIDDLESEX ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL**

**Statement of Changes in Fund Balances**

Pre-Audit Draft Statement

Year ended June 30, 2009

(with comparative totals at June 30, 2008)

	Current Funds		2009	2008
	<u>Unrestricted</u>	<u>Restricted</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Total</u>
Revenues and other additions:				
Charter School tuition	\$ 1,273,758		1,273,758	955,306
Government grants and contracts		96,971	96,971	105,703
Other Sources	29,031		29,031	57,122
Total revenues and other additions	<u>1,302,789</u>	<u>96,971</u>	<u>1,399,760</u>	<u>1,118,131</u>
Expenditures and other deductions:				
Education and general expenditures	1,150,164	-	1,150,164	1,132,604
Government grants and contracts		96,971	96,971	105,703
Total expenditures and other deductions	<u>1,150,164</u>	<u>96,971</u>	<u>1,247,135</u>	<u>1,238,307</u>
Net increase/decrease in fund balances	152,625	-	152,625	(120,176)
Fund balances at beginning of year	<u>466,927</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>466,927</u>	<u>587,103</u>
Fund balances at end of year	<u>\$ 619,552</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>619,552</u>	<u>466,927</u>
	=====	=====	=====	=====

*Fiscal Year 2010 approved school budget*

**LOWELL MIDDLESEX ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL**  
Fiscal Year 2010 Interim  
Spending Plan

	TOTALS
<b>Revenue</b>	
Tuition - Chapter 70	\$ 1,165,432
DOE Title I Grant	\$ 51,139
DOE Lunch Reimbursement	\$ 12,000
Entitlement Grants	\$ 28,632
Miscellaneous Grants	\$ 2,000
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b><u>\$ 1,259,203</u></b>
<b>Expenses</b>	
<b>Personnel Costs</b>	
Full-time Teachers/Counselors	\$ 567,021
Full-time management staff contract	\$ 233,801
Part-time Faculty/Staff	\$ 28,855
Subtotal Personnel Costs	\$ 829,678
<b>Direct Student Costs</b>	
Occupancy	\$ 171,523
MCC Fiscal Agent Contract	\$ 73,458
Other Contracted Services	\$ 24,600
Telephone and Utilities	\$ 17,640
Food Service Program	\$ 48,180
Office Supplies and Student Materials	\$ 23,296
Postage	\$ 1,350
Maintenance and Repairs	\$ 8,600
Insurance	\$ 10,788
Staff Travel / Professional Development	\$ 4,000
Student Travel	\$ 2,500
Dues and Subscriptions	\$ 6,110
Miscellaneous(Scholarships, Student Activities, Printing, advertising)	\$ 11,592
Subtotal Direct Student Costs	\$ 403,637
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 1,233,315</b>

**Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School Funders**

**Foundations**

The Aubert J. Fay Charitable Fund	\$ 2,000.00
Mass Cultural Council	\$ 200.00
Project for School Innovation	\$ 6,000.00

**Data Section**

<b>INSTRUCTIONAL TIME:</b>	
Total number of instructional days for the 2008-09 school year:	180
First and last day of the 2008-09 school year:	Aug 26-June 18
Length of school day:	M-Th 9am-3:30pm Friday 9am – 12pm

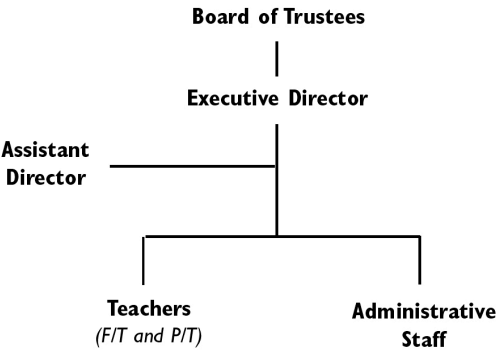
<b>STUDENT ENROLLMENT INFORMATION:</b>	
Number of students who completed the 2007-08 school year but did not reenroll for the 2008-09 school year (excluding graduates):	4
Total number of students enrolled as of October 1, 2008:	111
Total number of students who enrolled during the 2008-09 school year, after October 1, 2008:	50
Total number of students who left during the 2008-09 school year, after October 1, 2008:	50
Total number of students enrolled as of the June 2009 SIMS submission:	106
Number of students who graduated at the end of the 2008-09 school year:	37

<b>SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR STUDENT DEPARTURES:</b>	
Number of students expelled:	6
Number of students transferred – In state public:	4
Number of students transferred – In state private:	1
Number of students withdrawn - Pursuing GED	24
Number of students withdrawn – Entered Job Corps	1
Number of students withdrawn – Due to employment	1
Number of students withdrawn – Plans unknown	21

<b>STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC AND SUBGROUP INFORMATION (for students enrolled as of the June 2009 SIMS submission)</b>		
Race/Ethnicity	# of students	% of entire student body
African-American	5	5
Asian	14	13
Hispanic	25	23
Native American	0	0
White	61	58
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0	0
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	1	1
Special Education	21	20
Limited English Proficient	0	0
Low Income	69	65

<b>ADMINISTRATIVE ROSTER FOR THE 2008-09 SCHOOL YEAR</b>			
Title	Brief Job Description	Start date	End date (if no longer employed at the school)
Margaret McDevitt, Executive Director	The Executive Director is responsible for oversight of all personnel, programs, and activities of the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School.	7/1/2004	
Nancy Arseneaux, Assistant Director	Under the direction of the Director of the Lowell Middlesex Academy Charter School, the Assistant Director is responsible for providing leadership, management, and coordination for the school.	7/1/2008	

**Organizational Chart**



<b>TEACHERS AND STAFF ATTRITION FOR THE 2008-09 SCHOOL YEAR</b>			
	Number as of the last day of the 2008-09 school year	Departures during the 2008-09 school year	Departures at the end of the school year
Teachers	11	1	2
Other Staff	3	0	0

<b>REASONS FOR TEACHER DEPARTURES</b>		
	Reasons for departures during the 2008-09 school year	Reasons for departures at the end of the school year
Teachers	Took another position	Moved out of state
		Took another position

<b>BOARD MEMBERS FOR THE 2008-09 SCHOOL YEAR</b>				
Name	Position on the Board	Committee affiliation(s)	Area of expertise, and/or additional role at school (parent, staff member etc.)	- Number of terms served; - Length of each term, including date of election and expiration
Cowan, Carole	Chair		Academic	10/5/94-6/30/95 7/1/95-6/30/97 7/1/97-6/30/99 7/1/99-6/30/01 7/1/01-6/30/03 7/1/03-6/30/05 7/1/05-6/30/07 7/1/07-6/30/09
Sheehy, Molly	Clerk		Academic	10/5/94-6/30/95 7/1/95-6/30/97 7/1/97-6/30/99 7/1/99-6/30/01 7/1/01-6/30/03 7/1/03-6/30/05 7/1/05-6/30/07 7/1/07-6/30/09
Linnehan Jr., James	Treasurer		Academic	10/5/94-6/30/95 7/1/95-6/30/97 7/1/97-6/30/99 7/1/99-6/30/01

				7/1/01-6/30/03 7/1/03-6/30/05 7/1/05-6/30/07 7/1/07-6/30/09
Carvalho, Frank	Trustee	Finance Committee	Business	9/12/01-6/30/03 7/1/03-6/30/05 7/1/05-6/30/07 7/1/07-6/30/09
Coutu, JoAnn	Trustee		Parent	9/29/08-6/30/09
Cox, Colleen	Trustee	Finance Committee	Academic	9/12/01-6/30/03 7/1/03-6/30/05 7/1/05-6/30/07 7/1/07-6/30/09
Cunha, Maria	Trustee		Community	7/1/03-6/30/05 7/1/05-6/30/07 7/1/07-6/30/09
Khoeun, Samkhann	Trustee		Academic	2/7/96-6/30/97 7/1/97-6/30/99 7/1/99-6/30/01 7/1/01-6/30/02 9/17/07-6/30/09
Lopez, Maria	Trustee		Community	9/17/07-6/30/09
Meehan, Michelle	Trustee	Finance Committee	Community	7/1/03-6/30/05 7/1/05-6/30/07 7/1/07-6/30/09
Mitchell, Kent	Trustee		Academic	11/11/00-6/30/01 7/1/01-6/30/03 7/1/03-6/30/05 7/1/05-6/30/07 7/1/07-6/30/09
Okafor, Cecelia	Trustee		Community	7/1/03-6/30/05 7/1/05-6/30/07 7/1/07-6/30/09
Xaykosy, Julie	Trustee		Student	9/29/08-6/30/09