

DeKalb PATH Academy
2006 - 2007 Charter School Annual Report
Submitted to Office of Policy and External Affairs
Charter Schools
Georgia Department of Education

School Information

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Summary of School Demographical Information

Number of students: 270 fifth-eighth grades
Diversity: 15 Nationalities
Hispanic: 65%
Black: 26.5 % (African refugees and African-American born in the U.S.)
Asian: 6.5 %
White: 1%
Mixed racial: 1 %
Free and reduced lunch recipients: 86.5%
Students whose first language is not English: 75%
Students in ESOL program 22.6% (County ESOL 6%-7%, State: 5%)
Students who have exited ESOL program within 2 years: 10%
AYP: YES
Daily Attendance rate 98.5-99.6% in the past 4.5 years

Test Scores

Based on your 2006-2007 standardized test results, answer the questions below (500 words maximum each):

1. Did your students' standardized test results meet your expectations? Explain.

The students standardized test results exceeded our expectation. The outcomes and measurement stated in our charter are:

- 80% of the students excluding students with IEP, ELL (ESOL), and ELL-M19 (ESOL students who exited ESOL program less than 2 years) whose previous standardized test records can be obtained will increase their test scores in reading and mathematics each year by 3-5%ile.
- The school will decrease the percentage of students excluding IEP, ELL (ESOL), scoring at Level 1 in grades 5 through 8 on the Georgia Criterion Referenced Competency Test in mathematics and reading by a minimum of 2% each year until a rate of 100% has been achieved.

- ELL (ESOL) students will increase their raw scores in Language Battery Test or ACCESS by a minimum of 5 points each year.

Our standardized test results revealed that in ITBS the average gain of students in 7th and 8th grade was 3-7 %ile. The results of CRCT revealed that the average percentage of meet and exceed the minimum requirement in mathematics of all students is 81.1 % and 83.8% in reading and English language arts. A closer look in comparison of CRCT scores of 2006 and 2007 of each student whose scores could be obtained and compared showed that in 6th-8th grades the average gain of the students is 6 points in reading and 12 points in math. English language learners increased their raw scores by more than 10 points in LAB or ACCESS.

2. Highlight areas of success and progress revealed by your test scores. For these areas, did you use any particular instructional strategy or approach to achieve the desired result?

The area of greatest success was in mathematics. Our school ranked first among middle schools in DeKalb County in 6th grade CRCT math with 75% meet and exceed, tied first with a magnet school in 8th grade with 98% meet and exceed, and ranked third in 7th grade with 87% meet and exceed. Other areas of success are social studies and science in 7th and 8th grades and reading in all grade levels especially native English speakers. Our approaches are commonsense approaches which follow our vision and goals. They have been implemented school-wide and they are:

- setting high and clear expectations of student achievement that are upheld by faculty and staff, students, and parents throughout the year through communication and collaboration
- hiring good teachers who are knowledgeable, dedicated and committed to school mission
- maintaining small class size
- having extended school days to meet individual needs of students by providing them with tutorial, remedial, and enrichment lessons
- giving the teachers freedom to explore new ideas and approaches in their own classrooms
- providing teachers with meaningful, up-to date, and relevant staff development and teacher training sessions
- providing common planning time in which teachers can collaborate during grade level meetings and subject matter meetings
- providing teachers and students with adequate supplies and materials
- engaging all students in learning
- celebrating success for all students

Academic Performance

- 1. Describe the grades and content areas in which your students' performance improved from the previous year. Describe the grades and content areas in which your students' performance did not improve or regressed.**

The grades and content areas in which our students' performance improved from the previous year were mathematics and science in 6th, 7th, and 8th grades; reading in 6th grade and 8th grade; social studies and science in 6th grade; and science in 7th grade. The grade and content area in which our students did not improve was reading in 5th grade.

2. Do you track student achievement from year-to-year by comparing, for example, the scores of last year's sixth grade to this year's seventh grade? (i.e., comparing the same group of students as they move from grade to grade). Explain.

Yes, we have been tracking our student achievement in CRCT in math and reading from year-to-year from the first year of our operation in 2002. By tracking each individual student's CRCT scores from one grade to the next grade, we are able to assist our students in the specific areas of their academic need in reading and mathematics. We have learned that students who started their 5th grade at PATH and continued until they graduated at the end of 8th grade had the most average gain. In the fifth grade test results showed that the average gain in mathematics was 16 points, whereas in reading there was a two point average loss. A closer look revealed that many of these students had been in ESOL programs for many years and had regressed through the years. Despite the fact that approximately 27%-35% of our student population was English language learners who function up to four grades below grade level in all subjects, especially English, our test scores in 6th-8th grades are compatible to or better than those of other middle schools in DeKalb County with very few English language learners.

3. Describe particular areas of concern revealed by your students' standardized test results and how you plan to address them. In addressing this question, describe the efforts you have made or plan to make to disaggregate test data among subgroups (e.g., identified special education students; students who qualify for free or reduced lunch; ESOL students; etc.) and address any lagging achievement scores that may exist.

The areas of concern revealed by our students' standardized test results are in reading and English language arts for English language learners, especially those who have only a few years of formal education. Many of these students' academic needs had not been identified in their previous schools. Thus, they had not been appropriately served until they came to our school. PATH has addressed this problem by identifying students' academic needs and providing academic assistance accordingly. At PATH various types of academic assistance have been implemented. These students have been placed in small classes in language arts and math. They have received individualized instruction, extra tutorial, and one-on-one assistance. In the past 5 years our tracking of student test results has shown that the English language learners' competency in English increased as they progressed into the next grade. The test results of English language learners who graduated in 2006 revealed that only 7% of the students did not pass math and reading. The test results of English language learners who graduated in 2007 showed that all students passed CRCT math and reading. It should be noted that some of these students may still need some English assistance in their high school classes even though they have exited the ESOL program because of their ACCESS and CRCT test scores.

Academic Highlights

This information reflects the state Report Cards data which include data from all students, not just Full Academic Year (FAY) students. Performance Highlights list the academic measurement for this school that meet or exceed 80%

8th grade –CRCT Mathematics: **97.56%** Percent Meeting and Exceeding Standard
8th grade –CRCT English Language Arts: **95.12%** Percent Meeting and Exceeding Standard
8th grade –CRCT Social Studies: **95.12 %** Percent Meeting and Exceeding Standard
8th grade –CRCT Reading: **87.8 %** Percent Meeting and Exceeding Standard
8th grade –CRCT Science: **87.8 %** Percent Meeting and Exceeding Standard
7th grade –CRCT Mathematics: **86.84%** Percent Meeting and Exceeding Standard
7th grade –CRCT English Language Arts: **84.21%** Percent Meeting and Exceeding Standard
7th grade –CRCT Social Studies: **92.11%** Percent Meeting and Exceeding Standard
6th grade –CRCT Reading: **94.85 %** Percent Meeting and Exceeding Standard
6th grade –CRCT English Language Arts: **85.57 %** Percent Meeting and Exceeding Standard
6th grade –CRCT Social Studies: **84.97%** Percent Meeting and Exceeding Standard
5th grade –CRCT Mathematics: **83.02%** Percent Meeting and Exceeding Standard
5th grade –CRCT Social Studies: **84.91%** Percent Meeting and Exceeding Standard

Academic - Other Measure

In the space below, select up to five (5) other academic measures (e.g., SAT scores, promotion rates, AP test results, ITBS performance, etc.) stated in your charter and report on your progress in each of these areas. Item (1)

Item 1

Our 8th graders ranked third in 2007 Middle Grade Writing Assessment in DeKalb County behind DeKalb County School of the Arts* and Chamblee Middle School.**

Item 2

Our 8th graders rank second in 2007 Algebra I End of Course Test behind Chamblee Middle school.

Item 3

For the ITBS, we were able to track only the results of 7th and 8th grade students because DeKalb County discontinued Grade 6 ITBS in fall 2006. The average gain in 7th grade was 8 %ile in reading and 5%ile in math. The average gain in 8th grade was 3% in reading and 4% in math.

Note: DeKalb County School of the Arts has 39.96 % of gifted students with no ESOL students whereas Chamblee Middle School has 41.4% with 5.1% ESOL students. PATH has 22.6% ESOL students and 7.8% gifted students.

Other Goals

Our school has been successful in upholding high expectations in student daily attendance for the past 5 years. In 2006-07 our average attendance was 98-99%.

About 20 percent of our 2007 graduates have been admitted to private high schools on scholarships, a magnet school, and DeKalb Early College Academy.

How do you measure the level of parental and community involvement in your school? Report on the outcome of each of those measures.

We measure our level of parental and community involvement by tracking participants in all meetings and activities that take place at our school. All participants must sign in. Prior to admission of a student, both the parents and the student are encouraged to visit and spend time at the school. The parents also receive an orientation concerning school mission, high expectation, and personal accountability. Parents and students also sign the PATH to Excellence, a compact that outlines their commitments to the school mission. PATH believes that good communication is essential to students' success. At PATH parents and students are encouraged to ask questions and discuss concerns promptly. All teachers provide students and their parents with their cell phone numbers for communication. Teachers are responsible to call parents for any concerns they may have immediately.

Since PATH is a school of choice, it accepts students from different areas of DeKalb County. Approximately 75% of the students reside within a 5-10 mile radius, and the other 25% reside 10 miles but within a 30 mile radius. Therefore, to encourage participation from parents who live far away from school, PATH provides after school service for children of these parents. For parents who lack transportation, PATH provides transportation. For parents who need child care services, PATH provide them. In short, PATH will do whatever it takes to encourage parents to come to the meetings. It is of no surprise that in some of the meetings the participation rate was as high as 80%. PATH conducts parental meetings at least six times a year. These meetings are designed to assist parents in developing parenting skills and supporting their children to be more academically successful. Fun activities, such as Talent Show, International Potluck, cultural celebrations, Music Festival, Art Show, and Science Fair are also planned throughout the year, either during the day, evening, or Saturday so that parents will be able to participate at least in one event.

Volunteers from Oglethorpe University, the Dunwoody Women's Club, Hands-on Atlanta and other non-profit organizations have logged in hundreds of hours at PATH in different kinds of activities including school beautification, our reading program, tutorial program, and sport programs.

3. What efforts do you plan to make to encourage additional parental and community involvement in your school?

PATH has been actively seeking out ways to encourage additional parental and community involvement by designating out-reach liaisons and parent volunteers.

Financial Report

Did your school receive any state or federal grant funds during the 2006-2007 school year? If so, please specify type(s) and amount(s) and explain the purposes for which those funds were used.

Yes, our school received several state and federal grant funds during the 2006-2007 school. They are:

- State Charter School Allotment Funds in the amount of \$1,203, 493

Purpose: School operation

- State K-8 School-wide Program in the amount of \$5,679

Partial salaries for teachers in after school tutorial and enrichment program

- Federal Title I Grant in the amount of \$60,000

Purpose: Partial salaries of Title reading and math teachers

- Federal School Lunch Program in the amount of \$175,701

Purpose: Cost of meals for disadvantaged students

- Federal Title III Program in the amount of \$32,000

Purpose: Partial salaries for teachers in tutorial program for English language learners

- Federal Charter Schools Facility Grant in the amount of \$35,000

Purpose: Roof repair, carpet replacement, vinyl floor installation, and new air conditioners

For additional academic achievement and other information go to The Governor's Office of Student Achievement <http://www.gaosa.org>