

Renewal Inspection Report

**BOSTON COLLEGIATE CHARTER SCHOOL
BOSTON, MA**

Office of Educational Quality and Accountability
September 24-27, 2007

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About the Renewal Process and Site Visit Report

Beginning in the spring of the third year of its charter (and ending August 1st following its fourth year), a school may apply for renewal of its charter for another five-year term. Following guidelines set forth in the *Application for Renewal of a Public School Charter*, an application for renewal should be an articulate, affirmative response, based on clear, credible evidence, to the questions that guide charter school accountability. It must also offer compelling answers to questions about the school's plans for the future. The application should be a sound, well-supported explanation of why the Board of Education should renew a school's charter.

Once this application has met a minimal review of its clarity and coherence, the Department of Education (DOE) will appoint an evaluation team to conduct a three- to four-day visit of the school to corroborate and augment the school's application for renewal. This report is the result of one such evaluation.

The renewal site visit process and report provide a detailed and current portrait of a public charter school at the time of its application for renewal. While the renewal site visit report itself is a vital source of information within the renewal process, it is most effective when used in conjunction with the longitudinal school performance data available to the Department of Education. The combination of more general long-term data with the detailed information gathered by the renewal visit constitutes an evidence base rigorous enough to inform decisions about the future of public charter schools responsible for the education of students in the Commonwealth. In keeping with the Massachusetts Board of Education's commitment to a public charter school accountability system that is based on robust and diverse performance data, the renewal site visit report does not make recommendations about whether or not a school's charter should be renewed. It presents a detailed picture of the present state of the school as one of several key sources of information to be considered by the Board of Education in its renewal decision.

How to Read This Report

The first section of this report describes the school's setting. Included in this section are information on the origin and history of the charter, student demographics, staffing, and the school's educational program. This section also includes information on the school's organizational history, such as changes in the board and leadership or challenges the school has faced and its response to those challenges.

The core of the report is the Renewal Inspection Team's findings. The findings represent the team's assessment of the school's strengths and areas for improvement that, in the team's judgment, have the greatest bearing on the school's achievement of its defined goals. Findings are organized under each of the four renewal questions:

1. *Is the academic program a success?*
2. *Is the school a viable organization?*
3. *Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter?*
4. *If the school is renewed, what are its plans for the next five years?*

The team's comments on the fourth question reflect its judgment of the quality of the school's proposed new goals and its assessment of the school's capacity to fulfill those goals. Each finding is a bolded statement followed by explanatory paragraphs reporting the evidence supporting the team's judgments. Finally, Appendix A provides biographies of the inspection team members (with names given below), and Appendix B provides the team's schedule during the renewal visit.

Renewal Inspection Team

James Hearn, Coordinator
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Setting

The Boston Collegiate Charter School (BCCS) opened in 1998 as the South Boston Harbor Academy Charter School, at which time the school enrolled 120 students in grades 5-7. Since that time, the school has expanded and now serves approximately 400 students in grades 5-12. The school was originally located in South Boston; however, in the summer of 2003, the school purchased a new facility and moved to a newly renovated building in Dorchester in January 2005. At the same time, the school changed its name to Boston Collegiate to reinforce its mission to prepare students from all over the city of Boston for college.

Since it opened, the school added one new fifth grade per year until it reached the grade span of 5-12 in school year 2003-2004. The school enrolled 315 students in school year 2003-2004; 364 students in 2004-2005; 364 students in 2005-2006; and 382 students in 2006-2007. The school does not enroll new students in grades 9-12. Enrollment is determined by lottery with preference given to siblings.

In 2006-2007, the school's enrollment was 69 percent White, 22 percent African-American, and nine percent Hispanic, Asian, Native American, and multi-race combined; 18 percent special education; and 41 percent low income (students participating in the free or reduced-cost lunch program). The school had no students identified as limited English proficient or English language learners. Fifty-six percent of the students were female and 44 percent were male. See Table 1.

Table 1. Demographic Composition, 2007
Boston Collegiate Charter School Compared to Boston and the State

Student Subgroup	Percentage of Students		
	BCCS	Boston	State
African-American	22.6	40.9	8.2
Asian	2.0	8.5	4.8
Hispanic	5.8	35.2	13.3
Native American	0.5	0.5	0.3
White	68.8	13.5	71.5
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.0	0.1	0.2
Multi-race, Non-Hispanic	0.3	1.3	1.7
First Language Not English	4.3	38.9	14.9
Limited English Proficient	0.0	18.3	5.6
Low Income	41.1	72.7	28.9
Special Education	15.5	19.7	16.9

Source: Department of Education

The school has a waiting list policy for three applicant cohorts: one for siblings, one for Boston residents, and one for non-residents. Grade 5-8 applicants are offered a slot if an opening is available; they are notified both by letter and by telephone. As of September 2007, the school had 1,262 students on the grade 5-8 waiting list. In 2007-2008, the school received applications from applicants residing in 13 Boston neighborhoods. Almost 57 percent of the applications came from applicants residing in South Boston and Dorchester. Student attrition averaged 12.3 percent across school years 2004-2005, 2005-2006, and 2006-2007. During that period, 140 students withdrew during the school year or did not return from the prior year. Most attrition

occurs after grade 6 and more than half the students who withdraw from the school leave to attend the exam schools in Boston.

In school year 2006-2007, Boston Collegiate had 38 full-time teachers, including three special needs teachers and two paraprofessionals. Ninety-nine percent met the No Child Left Behind designation of 'highly qualified' and 97 percent had a Massachusetts teaching license. Teacher retention averaged 77.3 percent across school years 2004-2005, 2005-2006, and 2006-2007. During that period, 26 teachers left the school. The primary reasons teachers left were to move, to teach at another school, or to attend graduate school.

The school's educational program reflects the school's mission—to prepare students for college. The school has a structured academic environment that encourages creativity and high academic and behavioral expectations, and the school believes excellent teachers are at the heart of the school's success. The curriculum of the school follows the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, and students must master basic academic skills before they progress to higher level skills. The school has a myriad of detailed and organized curriculum binders that include lesson plans, classroom assignments, and assessments.

The school had one principal for the first four years of its existence. In 2002-2003, the founding principal became the executive director and focused on the long-term needs of the school as well as on school programs. The curriculum coordinator became the principal and focused on the academic program and the management of students, parents, and the teaching staff. The school now has a management team comprised of an executive director, a high school principal, a middle school principal, a dean of administration, a dean of curriculum and assessment, a dean of students, and a director of strategic development. During school year 2006-2007, the bylaws of the Board of Trustees allowed for 12 members. Presently, the board has three open positions. Trustees have responsibility for all fiduciary, legal, and regulatory compliance matters as well as the responsibility to ensure that the school is operating in accordance with its charter. One primary task of the board is to select and evaluate the executive director.

Boston Collegiate engages an outside audit firm to review the financial stability of the school and conduct an annual audit. Since FY 2004, a review of annual audited and unaudited revenues and expenses showed the school finished each fiscal year with a surplus. The school had no audit findings during this period.

Parents are required to attend one school orientation session and each year sign a contract of mutual responsibilities and the student handbook. Also, parents must sign student progress reports, grade reports, and report cards and are asked to attend three conferences annually to discuss student progress. Parents are surveyed during and at the end of the school year to provide feedback on school performance as well as their experiences at the school. A weekly newsletter is sent to parents with information on activities, volunteer opportunities, and student achievement. A parent group named the Family Involvement Group (FIG) promotes family involvement and brings together families, students, teachers, and administrators to review and discuss school programs. The school also puts on a number of events such as orientation nights and open houses and has created parent committees to support other school activities.

The school faces several challenges as it moves forward. As in 2002, the school is planning to expand middle school enrollment, which will necessitate locating a site, developing financing, preparing the site for occupancy, and adding teachers and administrators. The school is in the process of meeting this challenge and plans to utilize a nearby building or build on a nearby site to expand middle school enrollment in school year 2008-2009. Concomitantly, school leaders and teachers will be challenged to maintain the high standards for students as the school adds students. Parents expressed this sentiment and noted that the small, intimate nature of the school as it currently exists was a principle reason students thrived there.

Findings

To answer the four renewal questions, the four-member site team conducted a document review and an on-site visit from September 24-27, 2007, consisting of a tour of the school facility, interviews with stakeholders at all levels, and classroom observations. Before the on-site portion of the renewal visit, the site team reviewed the school's renewal application, organizational chart, demographic and performance data, annual reports, site visit reports, board by-laws and minutes, financial records, personnel report, faculty and student handbooks, and internal and external program evaluations, and used information from these documents as sources for this report. The team reviewed the curriculum, personnel files, and other documents during the four-day site visit. The team interviewed the Board of Trustees, school administrators, a parent focus group, teacher focus groups at the middle school and high school levels, and student focus groups at the middle and high school levels. The team observed 36 classrooms, 16 at the middle level and 20 at the high school level; of the total, 10 were ELA classes, eight were math, seven were social studies, six were science, and five were world languages classes.

Renewal Question 1: Is the academic program a success?

Finding 1: Boston Collegiate students have performed strongly on the MCAS tests and generally have had higher proficiency rates than students in the Boston Public Schools and the state.

Since 2003, Boston Collegiate had higher proportions of students in the 'Advanced' and 'Proficient' categories combined on all MCAS exams compared to Boston. Also since 2003, Boston Collegiate had higher percentages of students attaining proficiency compared to statewide averages on all tests with the exception of grade 5 ELA in 2007, grade 5 math in 2006 and 2007, grade 5 science in 2003 through 2007, grade 8 math in 2003 and 2006, and grade 8 science in 2003 through 2005.

In grade 5 ELA, BCCS students outperformed students in the Boston Public Schools (BPS) by 26 percentage points (61 v. 35 percent) and their peers statewide by three percentage points (61 v. 59 percent) in 2006. In 2007, BCCS students outperformed Boston students by 13 percentage points (53 v. 40 percent), but underperformed the state by 10 percentage points (53 v. 63 percent). There was an eight percentage point decline in ELA proficiency of BCCS grade 5 students from 2006 to 2007, although the percentage of students scoring in the 'Warning/Failing' category declined from six to one percent. See Table 2.

**Table 2. Grade 5 English Language Arts MCAS Results, 2006-2007
Boston Collegiate Charter School Compared to Boston and the State**

Year		n	Percentage of Students				
			A	P	A/P	NI	W
2006	BCCS	85	20	41	61	33	6
	Boston	3,999	7	28	35	43	22
	State		15	44	59	31	9
2007	BCCS	71	8	45	53	45	1
	Boston	3,800	7	33	40	40	21
	State		15	48	63	28	9

Source: Department of Education. n=number of students tested, A=Advanced, P=Proficient, A/P=Advanced/Proficient (at or above the proficiency level), NI=Needs Improvement, W=Warning/Failing. Note: the state did not administer this test prior to 2006.

In grade 5 mathematics, the percentage of Boston Collegiate students attaining proficiency in 2006 was seven percentage points above their Boston peers (32 v. 25 percent) but 11 percentage points below their statewide peers (32 v. 43 percent). In 2007, BCCS grade 5 students continued to perform better than their Boston peers, scoring eight percentage points higher (41 v. 33 percent); they performed below their statewide peers by 10 percentage points (41 v. 51 percent).

From 2006 to 2007, the percentage of BCCS grade 5 students attaining proficiency in mathematics increased by nine percentage points, from 32 to 41 percent. The percentage of students scoring in the 'Warning/Failing' category declined by three percentage points, from 21 to 18 percent. See Table 3.

**Table 3. Grade 5 Math MCAS Results, 2006-2007
Boston Collegiate Charter School Compared to Boston and the State**

Year		n	Percentage of Students				
			A	P	A/P	NI	W
2006	BCCS	86	5	27	32	48	21
	Boston	4,011	8	17	25	35	40
	State		17	26	43	34	23
2007	BCCS	71	11	30	41	41	18
	Boston	3,807	11	22	33	34	33
	State		19	32	51	31	18

Source: Department of Education. n=number of students tested, A=Advanced, P=Proficient, A/P=Advanced/Proficient (at or above the proficiency level), NI=Needs Improvement, W=Warning/Failing. Note: the state did not administer this test prior to 2006.

In grade 5 science, the percentage of BCCS students attaining proficiency increased from 38 percent in 2003 to 45 percent in 2007. While the BCCS students outperformed their Boston peers from 2003 through 2007, they underperformed their statewide peers during this period. See Table 4.

**Table 4. Grade 5 Science & Technology/Engineering MCAS Results, 2003-2007
Boston Collegiate Charter School Compared to Boston and the State**

Year		n	Percentage of Students				
			A	P	A/P	NI	W
2003	BCCS	66	3	35	38	50	12
	Boston	4,590	4	13	17	41	42
	State		18	33	51	34	15
2004	BCCS	87	5	36	41	49	10
	Boston	4,462	5	17	22	42	36
	State		20	35	55	33	13
2005	BCCS	65	3	31	34	48	18
	Boston	4,096	3	14	17	47	36
	State		16	35	51	38	12
2006	BCCS	86	8	40	48	45	7
	Boston	4,007	4	15	19	47	34
	State		17	33	50	39	11
2007	BCCS	71	4	41	45	54	1
	Boston	3,811	4	17	21	48	32
	State		14	37	51	37	12

Source: Department of Education. n=number of students tested, A=Advanced, P=Proficient, A/P=Advanced/Proficient (at or above the proficiency level), NI=Needs Improvement, W=Warning/Failing.

In grade 6 ELA, the percentage of BCCS students attaining proficiency increased by 11 percentage points between 2006 and 2007, from 66 to 77 percent. In 2006, BCCS students outperformed their Boston peers by 30 percentage points (66 v. 36 percent) and their statewide peers by two percentage points (66 v. 64 percent). In 2007, the percentage of BCCS students attaining proficiency in grade 6 ELA was 38 percentage points higher than Boston (77 v. 39 percent) and 10 percentage points higher than the state (77 v. 67 percent). See Table 5.

**Table 5. Grade 6 English Language Arts MCAS Results, 2006-2007
Boston Collegiate Charter School Compared to Boston and the State**

Year		n	Percentage of Students				
			A	P	A/P	NI	W
2006	BCCS	66	5	61	66	30	5
	Boston	3,785	4	32	36	42	22
	State		10	54	64	28	8
2007	BCCS	88	11	66	77	22	1
	Boston	3,612	4	35	39	42	20
	State		9	58	67	25	7

Source: Department of Education. n=number of students tested, A=Advanced, P=Proficient, A/P=Advanced/Proficient (at or above the proficiency level), NI=Needs Improvement, W=Warning/Failing. Note: the state did not administer this test prior to 2006.

In grade 6 mathematics, BCCS students performed strongly in 2007 and the proficiency rate increased substantially by 18 percentage points from 2006; 77 percent attained proficiency in 2007 compared to 59 percent in 2006. BCCS students in 2007 outperformed their Boston peers in grade 6 mathematics by 48 percentage points (77 v. 29 percent) and their statewide peers by 25 percentage points (77 v. 52 percent).

From 2003 to 2006, the percentage of Boston Collegiate students attaining proficiency in grade 6 mathematics has fluctuated (60 percent in 2003, 43 percent in 2004, 67 percent in 2005, and 59 percent in 2006); however, BCCS students outperformed their peers in Boston and statewide in each of those years. See Table 6.

**Table 6. Grade 6 Math MCAS Results, 2003-2007
Boston Collegiate Charter School Compared to Boston and the State**

Year		n	Percentage of Students				
			A	P	A/P	NI	W
2003	BCCS	45	31	29	60	27	13
	Boston	4,696	7	13	20	30	51
	State		16	26	42	32	26
2004	BCCS	66	14	29	43	33	24
	Boston	4,166	6	12	18	29	54
	State		17	25	42	32	25
2005	BCCS	85	21	46	67	24	9
	Boston	3,958	8	15	23	28	49
	State		17	29	46	30	23
2006	BCCS	66	20	39	59	35	6
	Boston	3,789	6	14	20	30	50
	State		17	29	46	29	25
2007	BCCS	88	33	44	77	19	3
	Boston	3,636	9	20	29	31	41
	State		20	32	52	28	20

Source: Department of Education. n=number of students tested, A=Advanced, P=Proficient, A/P=Advanced/Proficient (at or above the proficiency level), NI=Needs Improvement, W=Warning/Failing.

In grade 7 ELA, BCCS students in 2007 had a higher proficiency rate than their Boston peers by 29 percentage points (78 v. 49 percent) and their statewide peers by nine percentage points (78 v. 69 percent). From 2003 through 2007, 100 percent of BCCS students passed the grade 7 ELA test, with the exception of 2006. During this period, the percentage of BCCS students attaining proficiency has tended to move up and down (84 percent in 2003, 93 percent in 2004, 71 percent in 2005, 83 percent in 2006, and 78 percent in 2007). However, the proficiency rate of BCCS students was greater than that of students in Boston and statewide in each year of this period. See Table 7.

**Table 7. Grade 7 English Language Arts MCAS Results, 2003-2007
Boston Collegiate Charter School Compared to Boston and the State**

Year		n	Percentage of Students				
			A	P	A/P	NI	W
2003	BCCS	39	5	79	84	15	0
	Boston	4,880	3	39	42	42	16
	State		8	57	65	28	7
2004	BCCS	44	2	91	93	7	0
	Boston	4,720	3	44	47	37	15
	State		9	59	68	25	7
2005	BCCS	65	5	66	71	29	0
	Boston	4,406	4	40	44	40	17
	State		10	56	66	27	7
2006	BCCS	64	13	69	82	16	3
	Boston	4,308	4	39	43	36	20
	State		10	55	65	26	9
2007	BCCS	58	9	69	78	22	0
	Boston	4,072	3	46	49	33	18
	State		9	60	69	23	8

Source: Department of Education. n=number of students tested, A=Advanced, P=Proficient, A/P=Advanced/Proficient (at or above the proficiency level), NI=Needs Improvement, W=Warning/Failing.

In grade 7 mathematics, BCCS students performed strongly in 2007 and the proficiency rate increased substantially by 20 percentage points from 2006; 72 percent attained proficiency in 2007 compared to 52 percent in 2006. In 2006, BCCS grade 7 students had a higher proficiency rate than their Boston peers by 30 percentage points (52 v. 22 percent) and their statewide peers by 12 percentage points (52 v. 40 percent). In 2007, BCCS grade 7 students outperformed their Boston peers by 46 percentage points (72 v. 26 percent) and their statewide peers by 26 percentage points (72 v. 46 percent). See Table 8.

**Table 8. Grade 7 Math MCAS Results, 2006-2007
Boston Collegiate Charter School Compared to Boston and the State**

Year		n	Percentage of Students				
			A	P	A/P	NI	W
2006	BCCS	64	5	47	52	33	16
	Boston	4,318	6	16	22	33	45
	State		12	28	40	33	28
2007	BCCS	58	22	50	72	19	9
	Boston	4,095	6	20	26	30	44
	State		15	31	46	30	24

Source: Department of Education. n=number of students tested, A=Advanced, P=Proficient, A/P=Advanced/Proficient (at or above the proficiency level), NI=Needs Improvement, W=Warning/Failing. Note: the state did not administer this test prior to 2006.

In grade 8 ELA, 100 percent of BCCS students passed the MCAS test in both 2006 and 2007, and the percentage of BCCS students attaining proficiency was high and stable at 91 percent in 2006 and 90 percent in 2007. The proficiency rate of BCCS students was higher than that of students in Boston by 37 percentage points in 2006 (91 v. 54 percent) and 35 percentage points

in 2007 (90 v. 55 percent), and it was higher than that of students statewide by 17 percentage points in 2006 (91 v. 74 percent) and 15 percentage points in 2007 (90 v. 75 percent). See Table 9.

**Table 9. Grade 8 English Language Arts MCAS Results, 2006-2007
Boston Collegiate Charter School Compared to Boston and the State**

Year		n	Percentage of Students				
			A	P	A/P	NI	W
2006	BCCS	56	7	84	91	9	0
	Boston	4,337	5	49	54	30	16
	State		12	62	74	19	7
2007	BCCS	57	16	74	90	11	0
	Boston	4,208	4	51	55	30	14
	State		12	63	75	18	6

Source: Department of Education. n=number of students tested, A=Advanced, P=Proficient, A/P=Advanced/Proficient (at or above the proficiency level), NI=Needs Improvement, W=Warning/Failing. Note: the state did not administer this test prior to 2006.

In grade 8 mathematics, the percentage of Boston Collegiate students attaining proficiency increased substantially from 36 percent in 2006 to 75 percent in 2007, a gain of 39 percentage points. After increasing from 29 percent in 2003 to 51 percent in 2005, the proficiency rate of BCCS students had declined by 15 percentage points from 2005 to 2006 before rising to 75 percent in 2007. See Table 10.

**Table 10. Grade 8 Math MCAS Results, 2003-2007
Boston Collegiate Charter School Compared to Boston and the State**

Year		n	Percentage of Students				
			A	P	A/P	NI	W
2003	BCCS	41	2	27	29	51	20
	Boston	4,882	5	15	20	25	54
	State		12	25	37	30	33
2004	BCCS	45	11	29	40	47	13
	Boston	4,775	7	17	24	29	47
	State		13	26	39	32	29
2005	BCCS	43	14	37	51	30	19
	Boston	4,609	6	17	23	27	50
	State		13	26	39	30	31
2006	BCCS	56	7	29	36	48	16
	Boston	4,331	7	16	23	29	48
	State		12	28	40	31	29
2007	BCCS	57	14	61	75	21	4
	Boston	4,211	7	20	27	31	42
	State		17	28	45	30	25

Source: Department of Education. n=number of students tested, A=Advanced, P=Proficient, A/P=Advanced/Proficient (at or above the proficiency level), NI=Needs Improvement, W=Warning/Failing.

In grade 8 science, the percentage of BCCS students attaining proficiency was higher than that in Boston in every year from 2003 through 2007. BCCS students underperformed students statewide in 2003 through 2005, but outperformed the state in 2006 and 2007. The proficiency rate of BCCS students in grade 8 science increased steadily from 24 percent in 2003 to 42 percent in 2007. See Table 11.

**Table 11. Grade 8 Science & Technology/Engineering MCAS Results, 2003-2007
Boston Collegiate Charter School Compared to Boston and the State**

Year		n	Percentage of Students				
			A	P	A/P	NI	W
2003	BCCS	41	0	24	24	68	7
	Boston	4,883	1	8	9	29	62
	State		4	28	32	38	30
2004	BCCS	45	0	27	27	49	24
	Boston	4,776	1	9	10	27	63
	State		5	28	33	35	31
2005	BCCS	43	2	28	30	51	19
	Boston	4,605	0	10	10	33	58
	State		4	29	33	41	26
2006	BCCS	56	2	32	34	52	14
	Boston	4,328	0	8	8	34	58
	State		4	28	32	43	25
2007	BCCS	57	2	40	42	49	9
	Boston	4,207	0	8	8	38	54
	State		3	30	33	44	24

Source: Department of Education. n=number of students tested, A=Advanced, P=Proficient, A/P=Advanced/Proficient (at or above the proficiency level), NI=Needs Improvement, W=Warning/Failing.

In grade 10 ELA, the proficiency rate of Boston Collegiate was higher than that of Boston and across the state in every year from 2003 through 2007. BCCS students in 2007 outperformed their Boston peers by 33 percentage points (83 v. 50 percent) and their statewide peers by 12 percentage points (83 v. 71 percent). Each year from 2003 through 2006, 100 percent of BCCS students passed the grade 10 ELA test, and 97 percent passed in 2007. The proficiency rate varied over this period, from 87 percent in 2003, 95 percent in 2004, 73 percent in 2005, 78 percent in 2006, and 83 percent in 2007. See Table 12.

**Table 12. Grade 10 English Language Arts MCAS Results, 2003-2007
Boston Collegiate Charter School Compared to Boston and the State**

Year		n	Percentage of Students				
			A	P	A/P	NI	W
2003	BCCS	23	22	65	87	13	0
	Boston	4,083	9	27	36	34	30
	State		20	41	61	28	12
2004	BCCS	18	17	78	95	6	0
	Boston	3,907	9	29	38	37	25
	State		19	43	62	27	11
2005	BCCS	22	5	68	73	27	0
	Boston	4,255	11	27	38	35	27
	State		23	42	65	25	10
2006	BCCS	23	13	65	78	22	0
	Boston	3,988	9	42	51	35	15
	State		16	53	69	24	7
2007	BCCS	29	14	69	83	14	3
	Boston	4,044	11	39	50	37	13
	State		22	49	71	24	6

Source: Department of Education. n=number of students tested, A=Advanced, P=Proficient, A/P=Advanced/Proficient (at or above the proficiency level), NI=Needs Improvement, W=Warning/Failing.

In grade 10 mathematics, BCCS students in 2007 outperformed their Boston peers by 34 percentage points (89 v. 55 percent) and their statewide peers by 20 percentage points (89 v. 69 percent). Each year from 2003 through 2007, 100 percent of Boston Collegiate students passed the grade 10 math test. Furthermore, in 2006, 100 percent of BCCS students scored in the ‘Advanced’ and ‘Proficient’ categories. Although there was an 11 percentage point decrease in the proficiency rate from 2006 to 2007, BCCS students continued to perform well on the test. See Table 13.

**Table 13. Grade 10 Math MCAS Results, 2003-2007
Boston Collegiate Charter School Compared to Boston and the State**

Year		n	Percentage of Students				
			A	P	A/P	NI	W
2003	BCCS	23	17	65	83	17	0
	Boston	4,176	19	17	36	27	37
	State		24	27	51	28	21
2004	BCCS	18	61	22	83	17	0
	Boston	4,008	21	21	42	31	27
	State		29	28	57	28	15
2005	BCCS	22	41	45	86	14	0
	Boston	4,269	22	17	39	28	33
	State		35	27	62	24	15
2006	BCCS	23	65	35	100	0	0
	Boston	3,925	32	21	53	25	22
	State		40	27	67	21	12
2007	BCCS	29	55	34	89	10	0
	Boston	3,951	33	22	55	27	18
	State		42	27	69	22	9

Source: Department of Education. n=number of students tested, A=Advanced, P=Proficient, A/P=Advanced/Proficient (at or above the proficiency level), NI=Needs Improvement, W=Warning/Failing.

Finding 2: BCCS met adequate yearly progress (AYP) requirements for ELA and mathematics for all students in the aggregate and students in all subgroups from 2003 through 2007.

Boston Collegiate has met its accountability goal of making AYP every year in accordance with No Child Left Behind (NCLB) guidelines. Boston Collegiate has made AYP every year since 2003 in both ELA and mathematics and is on target to achieve 100 percent student proficiency in ELA and mathematics by the 2013-2014 school year. See Table 14.

Table 14. Adequate Yearly Progress, 2003-2007

		Adequate Yearly Progress History					Accountability Status
		2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	
ELA	Aggregate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No Status
	All Subgroups	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Math	Aggregate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No Status
	All Subgroups	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	

Source: Department of Education

Finding 3: Boston Collegiate’s grade 12 median SAT scores were higher than the Boston Public Schools but lower than the state. The school met half of its accountability goal.

Boston Collegiate has met half its accountability goal to have its grade 12 student cohort median SAT scores be higher than those of the Boston Public School’s student cohort. With the exception of the SAT verbal exam in 2004, comparable student cohorts in Massachusetts consistently outscored Boston Collegiate on the SAT. The school is working to meet the second

half of this accountability goal, which is to have its students score higher than comparable student cohorts statewide. School leaders and staff members told the Renewal Inspection Team that they have analyzed the results and in the 2007-2008 school year are implementing an SAT skill building program that includes “College Prep Days” to give students practice with a mock SAT exam along with immediate feedback on their performance. The school’s college readiness committee wrote a grades 9-12 collegiate skills curriculum, which includes an SAT prep class.

Finding 4: Boston Collegiate High School has a well developed curriculum that consists of a scope and sequence of curriculum objectives, curriculum binders with teacher-developed lessons which address the objectives, and assessments to measure student attainment of the objectives.

The school’s mission, to prepare students for college, and one of its accountability goals, to have 100 percent of grade 12 students accepted into at least one four-year college, drives the development of the curriculum. Teachers and administrators initiate development of the curriculum by deciding which content and skills are required for a student to gain college admission. They include all the learning objectives in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks and add objectives essential to the education of a BCCS student. Staff members plan backward from the list of essential skills and content to create a vertical progression of objectives for grades 5-12. The learning objectives for each grade and content area become each course’s scope and sequence.

Each teacher then builds the learning activities for a specific course upon student mastery of the course’s agreed upon scope and sequence objectives. Textbooks are available as a resource for most courses, but most lessons are developed by the teacher. Teachers, as they teach specific courses, collect their individual lessons in a curriculum binder that is available to other teachers, both present and future, who teach the course. Administrators and teachers periodically analyze the results from formative assessments such as the Massachusetts Public School Performance (MPSP) and summative assessments such as the MCAS tests and midyear and final exams to adjust the curriculum in response to student need.

Finding 5: The BCCS has a comprehensive academic support system to help students meet the school’s high expectations.

The BCCS has high expectations for all its students in that it expects each of them, regardless of background or limitations, to gain admission to a four-year college. The school doesn’t give up on students; instead, it creates a comprehensive support system. Teachers pay close attention to assessment results and modify their classroom curricula to address student needs. In addition, the school provides a number of after-school programs. Teachers review homework early in the day and require students to attend the Homework Club after school if homework is not done or not done properly. Also, both middle and high school teachers are available after school at least two days a week for tutoring, and frequently invite particular students to come for tutoring. As positive support in addition to Homework Club and tutoring, the school offers enrichment activities such as piano and desktop publishing. Finally, the school uses its Title I monies to offer Saturday School for students who are failing or in danger of failing a course.

Furthermore, families have access to teachers via phone and email, and teachers are expected to be in regular contact with students' families. Teachers have phones on their desks to make it easier for parents to contact them. In keeping with its mission to prepare students for college, BCCS retains a full-time college counselor who works regularly with students to clarify their college aspirations and who leads numerous trips to college campuses as well as college-related programs.

In the 2007-2008 school year, in response to concerns about the achievement gap between the school's regular education and special education students, BCCS changed the model of its support for special education students. In the preceding years, many special education students had received separate instruction in pull-out classes. In 2007-2008, however, special education students have no more than one pull-out class, and the school has begun to offer co-teaching involving both a regular education and special education teacher. Also new in 2007-2008, each regular education teacher has a meeting with a special education teacher/liaison at least once every two weeks to discuss in-class modifications for their students with special needs.

Finding 6: Classroom observations reveal strong instructional practice.

The team observed 36 classrooms, 16 at the middle level and 20 at the high school level. Of the total, 10 were ELA classes, eight were math classes, seven were social studies classes, six were science classes, and five were world languages classes. Using an instructional inventory tool, team members checked off practices they observed in the areas of classroom management, instructional practice, expectations, student activity and behavior, and climate for learning. Instructional practice was the largest category reviewed by the examiners.

Past evidence indicated that the classrooms generally reflected the prevalence of teacher-centered instruction. To counteract this, administrators, during classroom visits, have been making teachers aware that the teachers, rather than the students, were "doing the heavy lifting." Three indicators in the instructional inventory tool used by examiners for classroom observations probe the question of whether only teacher-centered instruction prevailed. A compilation of data for these three indicators showed that teachers used a variety of instructional techniques in 78 percent of the classrooms observed, students were actively involved in learning in 92 percent of the classrooms observed, and classroom space was used flexibly to accommodate a range of learning activities in 72 percent of the classrooms observed. This evidence indicates classroom instruction has moved from teacher-centered to student-centered instruction.

Finding 7: Boston Collegiate uses a variety of summative and formative assessments to determine individual, subgroup, and aggregate student achievement levels. School leaders and staff members use the assessment data to inform instruction, provide support services, modify the curriculum, and evaluate programs.

The school uses a variety of student assessments, analyzes assessment data, and uses the data to modify instruction to improve student achievement. Frequent assessments allow school leaders and staff members to diagnose student needs and measure instructional programs and the impact of those programs on student achievement. School leaders and staff members continually meet to reflect upon programs and find ways to improve their quality as needed.

The school provided the inspection team with a list of assessments used at each grade level. The school's assessments include the MCAS tests, the Stanford 9 at grades 5-9, the PSAT at grades 10-11, the SAT at grades 11-12, teacher-generated tests, and the Massachusetts Public School Performance (MPSP) formative assessment tool at grades 5-8.

MCAS

School leaders told the inspection team that when the MCAS test results become available, the staff receives and discusses the MCAS test data at department meetings, grade-level meetings, and staff meetings. Teachers in focus groups confirmed that they receive MCAS test results as well as other assessment results. Some of the ways school leaders and staff members said they use the data include identifying student needs, making decisions about curriculum modifications, placing students in tutoring programs, and making changes to existing programs. For example, subgroup analysis revealed an achievement gap between regular education and special education students. School leaders stated that they analyzed the data and made appropriate changes to the special education program regarding how instruction is delivered to special education students. Examples of changes include less pullout, co-teaching by the regular education teacher and the special education teacher, and scheduled consultation time with the special education liaison and other teachers.

Stanford 9

The Stanford 9 tests are used to pre- and post-test students in grades 5-9. Students new to the school take the Stanford 9 in the fall, and all students, both new and returning, take the exam in the spring. School leaders stated that they are updating to the Stanford 10.

PSAT/SAT

Boston Collegiate has met the first part of a two-part accountability goal, which is to have its grade 12 student cohort median SAT scores be higher than those of the Boston Public School's student cohort and higher than the statewide student cohort. The school has not met the second part of this goal, as students statewide have consistently outscored Boston Collegiate students on the SAT. In working to achieve the goal, the school's college readiness committee, comprised of teachers and school leaders, met several times throughout the year and analyzed the released sections of the SAT. One of the outcomes of the meetings was to create an in-school program that provides support to grade 9-11 students in taking the PSAT and SAT. For example, on College Prep Days, the high school students take practice SAT tests and teachers analyze the results so they can adjust their instruction. In addition, a curriculum of collegiate skills was developed. The high school principal provided the EQA team with a course syllabus for each grade 9-12. The Collegiate Skills classes include skills such as PSAT and SAT prep, research skills, test-taking skills, career discovery, identifying colleges, and developing job and professional skills.

Teacher Generated Tests, Quizzes, and Projects

Internal assessments include teacher-generated common midterm and final exams, unit tests, quizzes, and projects. Teachers who teach the common courses said they work together to

develop exams. They told the inspection team that all teacher-developed tests are on the school's computer network and any staff member can access the tests to see what the expectations are.

Massachusetts Public School Performance (MPSP)

Starting in 2005, Boston Collegiate began using the MPSP to assess student progress throughout the year to address student need. The teachers said that they administer formative assessments in reading and mathematics at grades 5-8 six times per year. The tests align with the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks, and the test reports provide aggregate and subgroup data.

School leaders told the team that students in grades 5-8 take the tests on a Wednesday and the school receives the results within 48 to 72 hours. At the Monday staff meeting, the staff meets by grade level or in groups. Staff members review the results and identify topics to re-teach or recommend targeted tutoring for students who need it. One teacher stated, "If we see a deficit, we take action." Teachers identify strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and develop BCCS Assessment Action Plans to address the gaps. The dean of curriculum and the department chairs review the action plans and supervise and support classroom implementation.

The EQA team reviewed the grade 5-8 action plans for the first interim assessments in reading and mathematics. Each action plan included a list of curricular strengths and curricular gaps. An action planning section identified a specific strand, standard, or skill to focus on and listed the possible ways to address gaps in student learning. Furthermore, the plan included individual student analyses; individual student names and scores were listed with accompanying instructional strategies for implementation.

Renewal Question 2: Is the school a viable organization?

Finding 1: The school's mission is clear and well defined: to prepare all students for college. It is a mission that students, parents, the staff, and trustees understood and supported.

The Renewal Inspection Team members met with groups of parents, teachers, trustees, and students as part of the charter renewal process. All group members understood and accepted the mission of the school and praised the quality and high expectations of school leaders and teachers, the positive energy and safe climate of the school, and the open lines of communication between school personnel and parents. All stakeholders interviewed were satisfied with the academic standards of the school; however, some parents indicated enrollment growth, if not managed correctly, could affect the success the school has achieved.

Parents

In the parent focus group interview, reasons given by parents for entering their children in the lottery to attend the school included high MCAS test scores, the emphasis on attending college, and that the school challenges students academically. Most parents were familiar with charter, private, and parochial school options in Boston, and considered BCCS one of the best options. When asked how satisfied parents were with the educational programs and the academic success of their children, many gave anecdotes of how their child struggled in other public schools, or

how the child had a newly found enthusiasm for school, or about the tools BCCS gives to students to help them learn. The school has an accountability plan goal to have at least 95 percent of parents satisfied with the school. School leaders stated that 100 percent of families who responded to surveys were satisfied with the school's educational programs, according to the school's end of the year survey; however, the school reported in the accountability application that the response rate of the survey was only 35 percent.

Students

The EQA team interviewed 13 high school and 13 middle school students. Students in the focus groups told the EQA team that they understood the rules, and they felt safe in school. High school students said their teachers were not overbearing. Middle school students stated that even if one gets detentions and has bad behavior, the teachers do not give up on the student. When asked about the academic rigor, most students felt the work was just right. They also said that teachers know where they are academically. One student said, "If it's too hard, you can get tutoring."

Teachers

Teachers expressed in focus group interviews that the school fosters a culture of growth and a collegial teaching climate. Department heads and teachers work together in grade-level and department teams to develop a rigorous and live curriculum for the student body. They have high expectations for their students, and they provide tutoring opportunities at the end of the school day to help those students who have trouble learning. The teachers made the following comments: "We see a deficit and take immediate steps.... We discuss what is rigor and how can we increase the rigor in our classrooms.... We lean on each other always looking for ideas.... There is lots of planning going on."

Board of Trustees

The Board of Trustees created a culture of high expectations for all stakeholders which has led to high levels of student achievement. The school's mission provides the guiding principles behind the founding of the school and underlies all board decision-making. Board members stated that the board develops policy with a focus on long-term planning and development. The board failed to achieve the accountability plan goal related to self-evaluation. In fiscal year 2004, only 75 percent of board members completed the board self-evaluation and trustee performance plan; in fiscal year 2005, 70 percent completed the self-evaluation; in fiscal year 2006, 90 percent completed it; and in fiscal year 2007, 90 percent of the board members did so. Based upon the self-evaluation and performance plan of participating board members, the board developed an Action Plan 2007-2008 that includes three areas: board structure and performance, with three action steps; oversight of school strategy and management, with three action steps; and development committee action plan, with six action steps.

Board members and school leaders indicated that clearly defined roles and responsibilities at BCCS existed. Job descriptions existed for every position, with goal-based annual evaluations for the board members and school leaders and regular evaluations of the teaching staff. The Board of Trustees has three standing committees for governance, finance, and development that meet monthly. Other committees address specific concerns and meet as required.

Finding 2: The school implemented procedures and policies to improve teacher retention and employs an experienced and highly qualified and trained teaching staff.

Teaching positions are in demand at Boston Collegiate. In 2006-2007, the school received over 700 applications for nine open positions, and consistently receives over 500 applications each year for teaching positions. As a result, the school is able to be selective and hire the so called “best and brightest.” Ninety-nine percent of the 2006-2007 faculty members were ‘highly qualified’ under the No Child Left Behind standards, and 97 percent held certification in Massachusetts. Almost half the staff has a master’s degree, and another quarter is in the process of obtaining one. On average, the faculty members have almost six years of teaching experience. However, since school year 2002-2003 approximately 20 percent of the teachers, on average, left the school annually. In recognition of this issue, the school had a goal in the accountability plan to “demonstrate low or no teacher turnover.” In its new accountability plan, the goal was revised to “maintain a teacher retention rate of 85 percent.” Some reasons teachers leave the school include moving out of Boston, teaching at another school, and attending graduate school.

The school has taken several decisive actions to retain teachers. In 2005, the school created a teacher retention committee to examine the reasons teachers come to or leave the school and recommend changes in policy and practice to increase teacher retention. As a result, the school implemented longevity bonuses, enhanced the after-school enrichment programs, and increased professional development opportunities. Also, in recognition of the importance of teacher and staff member retention, the Board of Trustees included in the 2007 Strategic Plan an objective “to maintain a supportive, professional work environment, and monetary and non-monetary benefits to ensure Boston Collegiate is attractive and retaining the most qualified teachers.” The Strategic Plan also had an objective to “recruit teachers, staff, and trustees.” The board developed action steps to meet these goals and supported those steps with approximately \$40,000 in funding. The school leadership realizes that there are pragmatic reasons why teachers leave the school, and that the school must compete with other schools and school districts for experienced and qualified teachers. To meet this challenge the school offers a competitive salary structure, two health plan options, dental benefits, a life insurance plan, a flexible spending plan, and monetary bonuses for teachers who stay three, five, or seven years. The school also provides teachers new to the school with mentors and significant professional development opportunities.

Finding 3: The school has high expectations for teachers and supports those expectations with professional development opportunities, a mentoring program, and a substantive evaluation process.***Professional Development***

The school focuses on the growth of teachers and school leaders and has high expectations for teachers. The school supports professional growth in a number of ways. The school provides teachers with a \$500 course reimbursement stipend and includes in the school budget substantial funding for teachers to attend workshops and seminars. In 2007-2008, the school scheduled five professional development days that include a morning workshop and time for teachers to collaborate and plan in the afternoon. Professional development is also embedded in the regular school week. On Monday afternoons, teachers attend a staff meeting from 2:30-5:00 p.m., which

consists of grade-level and department meetings that focus on such areas as planning, student needs, behavioral issues, instruction, and assessment. Inquiry groups develop essential questions and strategies to answer the essential question relative to a topic of interest to the group. The school has developed a professional development calendar for school year 2007-2008 that outlines the agenda for each Monday professional development session. Principals maintain the individual professional development plans of teachers.

Mentoring

The school assigns a mentor to any teacher new to the school, regardless of prior teaching experience. Although they do not receive a stipend, being selected as a mentor is considered an honor at the school. Principals select mentors and match mentors with teachers. The selection process occurs in the spring, and the teacher and the mentor correspond in the summer and, if possible, meet to discuss the curriculum. The principal develops a calendar for mentors and mentees and modifies expectations for the mentors and mentees relative to the experience of the teacher.

Teacher and Staff Evaluations

The school has a teacher evaluation and observation process that focuses on feedback that “can positively influence teaching and learning and raise the bar for student achievement.” The observer provides the teacher with feedback in areas such as instruction, assessment, and classroom management and discipline. During the year, principals, the dean of curriculum, or a department chair observes teachers. The school created a formative classroom observation tool used by observers to conduct 5- to 10-minute informal classroom observations. Teachers also receive a 20-minute prescheduled visit including a minute-by-minute transcript of the class. Finally, each teacher receives a full formal class observation annually with pre- and post-meetings. Department chairs are required to observe all department members annually. The dean of administration reviews the administrative staff annually, and the executive director annually reviews the leadership team. Staff members complete annual evaluations of the school leadership team via an anonymous, online survey. The Board of Trustees evaluates the executive director each year.

Finding 4: Demand for seats at the BCCS exceeds supply, and attrition at the school has ranged between six percent and 10 percent, excluding students who leave for Boston’s exam schools.

Members of the parent focus group indicated the principal reason they wanted their children to attend the school was that the school had high academic standards and was successful. Clearly, that message has been heard throughout the Boston educational community. The school is near capacity and annually receives three applications for every seat available. For example, for the 2007-2008 school year, the school received 254 applications for 88 seats. The process of admission is by lottery with sibling preference. In 2007-2008, the school received applications from families in 13 communities. The current waiting list exceeds 1,200 and most applicants on the waiting list live in South Boston and Dorchester. The school advertises throughout Boston and publishes advertisements in multiple languages, such as Spanish, Vietnamese, and Haitian Creole, for posting in community locations. The Board of Trustees has approved a substantial advertising budget, and the school provided the inspection team with an enrollment process

timeline. The school also provides information to other Boston public elementary schools regarding admission to the school.

Although the school is in demand, some students do leave each year, the majority to attend Boston's exam schools. Other reasons students leave include a desire for athletic programs or less structure, grade retention, and to attend private or parochial school. The attrition rate has prevented the school from meeting its accountability plan goal of retaining 95 percent of students, excluding those who leave to attend Boston's exam schools.

Finding 5: The school and the school's foundation are financially healthy.

School Finances

The BCCS Accountability Plan 2005-2008 has the following four goals related to finance: first the BCCS will meet its annual operating budget; second, the BCCS will meet its budgeted fundraising goal; third, the BCCS will not exceed budgeted annual per pupil expenditures by more than \$500 per student; and fourth, the BCCS will complete an annual audit and will receive an unqualified opinion from the auditor. The BCCS did not exceed budgeted expenditures by more than \$500 per student, except in fiscal year 2003 because of a change in the state's tuition calculation. BCCS met its annual operating budget and posted an operating surplus from the school's inception through fiscal year 2007, with the exception of fiscal year 2003. Since 2004 the BCCS has retained the accounting firm of Alexander, Aronson, Finning & Co., P.C. to complete the required annual audit. During this time, BCCS received an unqualified opinion from the auditor.

Foundation Finances

The BCCS established a 501 (c3) foundation for the purpose of seeking private grants and contributions. The school employs a director of strategic development who leads efforts to secure the resources necessary for the school to achieve its mission. The director of strategic development creates and implements an annual development strategy and also leads marketing and public relations efforts and special event planning. The school exceeded its annual fundraising goal of \$325,000 for the past four years. The foundation owns the building that houses the school and assumes responsibility for capital expenses exceeding \$100,000. The school leases the facility from the foundation, with lease expenses in fiscal year 2007 totaling \$492,000. The rent increases 2.5 percent annually and in fiscal year 2008 will total \$504,300. The school assumes responsibility for all repairs under \$100,000, which is included in the school budget.

In the Boston Collegiate Charter School's 2007 Strategic Plan, the Board of Trustees indicated a desire "to ensure that the school has a secure future." The board affirmed the need for a long-term financial plan, a strategy for repaying the facility debt, and the need for scenario planning given the uncertain fate of charter school funding in Massachusetts. A development strategy will help to address how funds will be raised to support a second campus and possibly to pay down the debt.

Finding 6: The Boston Collegiate Charter School provides a safe environment for children.

Parents, teachers, administrators, students, and board members highlighted the positive attitude that exists at the BCCS. Classroom observations indicated polite interaction between students and teachers, and between students and staff. Students welcomed all visitors with a “hello” and a handshake, and teachers knew students by their first name. A strong culture of collaboration exists at the BCCS. The school follows a team oriented approach to instruction. Teachers consider the BCCS a great place to teach with smart and capable staff members. The school is clean, well lit, and secure. A tour of the building showed a well maintained facility. All outside doors were locked with the exception of the main entrance, which is unlocked and monitored during student arrival until 8:00 a.m. Visitors need to ring a buzzer and identify themselves. The school then activates a camera monitor at which time an administrative assistant in the high school office remotely unlocks the door. Visitors sign in and out and wear a visitor’s pass. An exit plan for fire drills was located on the wall in each classroom. The school developed a multi-hazard manual, and all teachers receive professional development in school security. The school holds regularly scheduled fire drills and lockdown drills. To accommodate handicapped individuals and allow them access to all areas, the school installed two elevators.

Renewal Question 3: Is the school faithful to the terms of the charter?**Finding 1: The BCCS has achieved most of the academic performance goals in the 2005-2008 Accountability Plan.**

Boston Collegiate students have consistently performed well on the MCAS tests. During the term of the charter, BCCS has fully or partially met all four academic performance goals included in the accountability plan. All grade 10 students passed the MCAS ELA test in four of the last five years; no grade 10 students failed the MCAS mathematics test in the past five years; and 100 percent of grade 10 students scored in the ‘Advanced’ or ‘Proficient’ categories on the 2006 MCAS mathematics test, although in 2007 this percentage decreased to 89 percent. With few exceptions, BCCS students had higher rates of achievement on the MCAS tests than students in the Boston Public Schools and across the state. BCCS subgroups of students, such as low-income students, African-American students, and students with disabilities, regularly outperformed their peers in Boston and the state on the MCAS tests. The school has made AYP for the aggregate population and for all subgroups every year since 1999. On the SAT, BCCS students outperformed Boston students, but lagged behind students statewide.

One area of concern to school leaders was the grade 8 mathematics scores. In 2006, 36 percent of grade 8 students scored in the ‘Advanced’ or ‘Proficient’ categories in mathematics compared to 51 percent in 2005, a decline of 15 percentage points. School leaders and staff members were disappointed with the scores. They told the EQA team that they analyzed the data, looked at curriculum and instruction, and took specific action steps to improve student scores in 2007. As a result, 75 percent of the students scored in the ‘Advanced’ or ‘Proficient’ categories in 2007. The school provided targeted tutoring, changed the format of internal tests to include MCAS-type questions, and used interim assessments to track student progress.

Finding 2: The Boston Collegiate Charter School has met eight of the 11 organizational goals included in the 2005-2008 Accountability Plan.

The BCCS showed strong performance in attaining the 11 organizational goals in the 2005-2008 Accountability Plan. They are as follows.

- *Student attendance will be 95% or higher.* The school met this goal as student attendance rates were 95 percent or higher each year since 2003.
- *Teacher attendance will be 98% or higher.* The school met this goal as teacher attendance rates were 98 percent or higher during the term of the charter.
- *Boston Collegiate will retain 95% of non-graduating students each year, excluding students who leave for Boston's exam schools.* The school did not meet this goal as student retention ranged from 90 to 94 percent during the last five years.
- *The BCCS will demonstrate low to no teacher turnover from year to year.* The school did not meet this goal as teacher retention rates averaged approximately 80 percent during the term of the charter.
- *The BCCS will receive at least twice as many applications as spaces available for each incoming 5th grade class.* The school met this goal as the BCCS consistently received three applications for each available seat during the term of the charter and has a waiting list of over 1,200.
- *At least 95% of the families will consider themselves satisfied or very satisfied with the school according to the school's annual end-of-year survey.* The school met this goal as 100 percent of the families responding to the end of the year survey reported being satisfied with the school; however, the response rate of the survey was 35 percent.
- *100% of the Board of Trustees will complete an annual Board self-evaluation and an individual Trustee performance evaluation. The Board will develop an annual action plan to address areas for enhancement identified in the Board evaluation.* The school did not meet this goal. Since 2004, approximately 80 percent of the board members completed the board self-evaluation and trustee performance plan annually. Based upon the self-evaluation and performance plan of participating board members, the board developed an Action Plan 2007-2008.
- *Boston Collegiate will meet its annual operating budget.* The school met this goal as the BCCS met its budget with a substantial surplus each year during the term of the charter.
- *The school will meet its budgeted fundraising goal.* The school met this goal as the school met its budgeted fundraising goal each year during the term of the charter. Fundraising was managed by the director of strategic development.

- *Boston Collegiate will not exceed annual per pupil expenditures (per pupil funding plus public entitlement grants) by more than \$500 per student.* The school met this goal as the BCCS did not exceed per pupil expenditures by more than \$500, except in fiscal year 2003 when the state changed how it calculated tuition.
- *Boston Collegiate will complete an annual audit and will receive an unqualified opinion from the auditor.* The school met this goal as the BCCS retained an auditor each year since it opened and each year received an unqualified opinion from the auditor.

Finding 3: The Boston Collegiate Charter School has a best practices dissemination process.

The BCCS was selected in 2006 to participate in a three-year federally funded grant program overseen by the Massachusetts Charter Public School Association (MCPSA). The program is entitled Keeping the Promise: the Massachusetts Charter School Dissemination and Replication Project. The product of the project will include a book, a documentary film, and training of other schools and educators. As part of this project, several staff members of the BCCS, including the executive director, the dean of curriculum and assessment, a co-founder and trustee, and a department chair, authored a paper entitled *Five Keys to Creating a Successful College-Prep Program*. This paper will be shared with schools and educators across the country.

During the term of the charter, the BCCS participated in other forms of dissemination of best practices through the MCPSA, such as presenting at charter school conferences or various successful learning and school programs. The BCCS is also a member of the Project for School Innovation (PSI) and works through this network to share best practices with other charter and public schools, particularly in the area of after-school programming. The school joined the Massachusetts Public School Performance Project in 2005 to participate in a formative assessment system that would enhance student achievement. The school shares this method of using data to drive instruction across the MPSP network.

Renewal Question 4: If the school's charter is renewed, what are its plans for the next five years?

Finding 1: The School Accountability Plan included in Appendix C of the renewal application contains measurable goals related to academic and organizational performance, and faithfulness to charter; however, the goals are essentially the same as the goals in the prior accountability plan, which the school generally has met each year.

The BCCS has met or partially met all four of the goals related to academic success; met or partially met 10 of the 11 goals related to organizational viability; and the one goal relative to faithfulness of charter has been met every year. The academic goals in the new accountability plan are the same as the goals in the prior accountability plan, in spite of the continued success of the school in meeting all or part of most of the targets in the goals year after year. Organizational goals in the new plan remained essentially the same as the goals in the prior plan, with some minor language changes. The school added two goals related to faithfulness to charter regarding

college preparation and matriculation. The accountability plan goals are measurable but lack rigor in that the school attains the goals consistently and will undoubtedly continue to attain the goals in the future. Every year the school leadership team sets rigorous internal goals to advance student and overall school achievement based on the previous year's performance; these goals are separate from and in addition to the goals in the accountability plan.

Finding 2: The BCCS has embarked on a dual track planning process to ensure the academic success and organizational viability of the school.

The school had two main planning and operating documents in place during the period of the school's last charter: the amended August 2005-June Accountability Plan and the 2007 Strategic Plan, which was a revision of the 2004 Strategic Plan. While somewhat different, they do not operate in isolation and both have standards-based goals and objectives that support the mission of the school. The Board of Trustees began a renewed strategic planning process in 2007 to develop a vision and plan that would operate together with the Accountability Plan articulated in the charter renewal application.

The Strategic Plan has three main goals that carried over from the 2004 plan:

- *Continue to build a great school.* To meet this goal the trustees developed nine objectives, such as increasing the percentage of students who stay at the school in grades 9-12 and implementing an Advanced Placement (AP) strategy.
- *Ensure the school has a secure future.* To meet the goal the trustees developed eight objectives, such as developing a five-year financial plan, expanding enrollment, and having a larger high school by 2012.
- *Share work with others (dissemination).* To meet this goal the trustees developed three objectives including effectively communicating and marketing the school's success and establishing a second middle school.

All of the objectives include action steps, dates of implementation, and resources. According to the charter renewal application, the focus of the BCCS for the next five years will be to implement the expansion of the school and increase enrollment. School leaders project enrollment will grow to 620 students by school year 2012-2013. The school plans to begin the expansion in the fall of 2008 with a projected enrollment of 483.

Finding 3: The BCCS has the capacity to achieve the goals in the Accountability Plan included in the renewal application.

The BCCS and its foundation are in excellent financial condition and the school is in high demand. The school annually ends the year with a substantial surplus and the foundation exceeds fundraising goals each year. The waiting list for admission to the school exceeds 1,200 and the school receives at least three applications for each seat available. Teachers want to teach at the BCCS, with hundreds applying each year. The school has implemented a teacher retention plan to increase teacher retention to 85 percent, a goal in the new Accountability Plan. The school has

shown that it can meet challenges and be responsive to change. Originally located in South Boston, the Board of Trustees and schools leaders effectively managed a move to a new building in Dorchester and at the same time changed the name of the school from the South Boston Harbor Academy to Boston Collegiate to put more emphasis on the mission of the school. Sound financial capacity combined with a strong Board of Trustees and highly trained and creative school leaders will support the expansion the middle school next year.

Appendix A: Renewal Inspection Team Members

James Hearn, Coordinator. Mr. Hearn has over 25 years experience in state government policy and budget analysis, performance auditing, program evaluation, health care management, and university teaching and student advising. Mr. Hearn served for almost a decade as a Senior Policy Analyst for the Senate Post Audit and Oversight Committee of the Massachusetts Senate. In that capacity, he performed a number of performance and policy audits, including an audit of the Commonwealth's Division of Inmate Training and Education. This was a comprehensive review of the state's adult correctional education programs administered by the Department of Correction. He has also performed extensive policy reviews of the Massachusetts health care system for the state Senate on subjects such as hospital mergers, state employee health care costs, and the distribution of primary care physicians. Mr. Hearn is a former member of the Executive Committee of the National Legislative Program Evaluation Society and served a term as the editor of its newsletter. From 1982 to 1996, he served as an Adjunct Lecturer in Health Management at University College at Northeastern University. Mr. Hearn also acted as an Academic/Registration Advisor for University College for 15 years. Mr. Hearn earned his bachelor's degree in Business from Boston College and holds a master's degree in Business from Suffolk University.

Helen Apostolides, Examiner. Ms. Apostolides has over 34 years of experience as both a teacher and administrator in public education. Ms. Apostolides worked for 11 years as an elementary school principal in Peabody, Massachusetts. She instituted the Skills for Life program at her school, which won national recognition. Her school was the first to collaborate with the Lesley University Literacy Collaborative and then restructured the reading program to the Collaborative's standard. She was an assistant principal for 14 years and a reading teacher at numerous grade levels for over 10 years. Ms. Apostolides received the Pride of Peabody award in 2003 and was a semi-finalist in Massachusetts in NASA's Teacher in Space program. Ms. Apostolides earned a Master of Education in Elementary Education from Boston State College and a Master of Teaching in History at the secondary level from Salem State College.

Lincoln DeMoura, Examiner. Dr. DeMoura has 38 years of experience in education as a teacher, mentor, and administrator, recently serving as the Superintendent of Schools in Norton and before that superintendent of schools in Mashpee. Dr. DeMoura also served as the Assistant Superintendent of Schools, principal, and teacher in Taunton. In addition to his administrative experience, Dr. DeMoura has extensive experience in curriculum development and school finance. Dr. DeMoura earned a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and a master's degree in Elementary School Administration from Bridgewater State College, a C.A.G.S. in Systems Development and Adaptation from Boston University, and a doctorate in Educational Leadership from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. Dr. DeMoura is the past president of the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents and the Superintendent's Center at Stonehill College.

Patricia Williams, Examiner. Ms. Williams's most recent position was as principal of Londonderry High School in Londonderry, New Hampshire, where she served from 1996 to 2004. Before that, from 1991 to 1996, she was an assistant principal in two Fairfax County, Virginia high schools. Also in Fairfax County, from 1989 to 1991, she was an area office English Language Arts Specialist. Prior to that, she was the English Language Arts Specialist for state of Maryland from 1982 to 1989. Ms Williams worked in the Prince George's County (VA) Public Schools as a curriculum developer and as an English and reading teacher. Ms Williams also taught English at Needham High School in Massachusetts. She began her career teaching English at Marygrove College in Detroit, Michigan, and then at Emmanuel College in Boston. Ms Williams is a member of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and the Principals' Center at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Her bachelor's degree is from Emmanuel College, and she has an M.A. from the University of Detroit and an M.Ed. from Boston State College.

Appendix B: Schedule of the Renewal Inspection Visit

Day 1: September 24, 2007

	Team Member A	Team Member B	Team Member C	Team Member D
7:30-8:00	Team Arrival			
8:00-8:30	Orientation to the Five-year Renewal Process: Charter school leader/principal and members of the leadership team			
8:30-9:00	School Tour			
9:00-11:00	Document Review or Random Classroom Observations			
11:00-12:00	Working Lunch			
12:00-3:00	Document Review or Random Classroom Observations			
3:00-4:00	Team Corporate			
4:00-5:00	Note Writing; Evidence Sorting			

Day 2: September 25, 2007

	Team Member A	Team Member B	Team Member C	Team Member D
7:30-8:00	Team Arrival			
8:00-9:00	Parent Focus Group			
9:00-12:30	Classroom Observations			
12:30-2:00	Team Meeting and Lunch			
2:00-3:00	Interview with Instructional Leaders		Interview with School Leaders	
3:00-4:00	Student Focus Group A: Middle school students		Student Focus Group B: High school students	
4:00-4:30	Team Meeting			

Day 3: September 26, 2007

	Team Member A	Team Member B	Team Member C	Team Member D
8:00-8:30	Team Arrival			
8:30-9:30	Interview with Board Members		Interview with Leadership Responsible for Curriculum and Instruction (High School)	
9:30-10:00	Team Meeting			
10:00-12:00	Classroom Observations			
12:00-1:00	Team Meeting and Lunch			
1:00-2:30	Interview with Leadership Responsible for Student Support Programs		Interview with Leadership Responsible for Financial Management	
2:30-3:00	Team Meeting			
3:00-4:00	Teacher Focus Group A: Middle school teachers		Teacher Focus Group B: High school teachers	
4:00-4:30	Team Meeting			

Day 4: September 27, 2007

	Team Member A	Team Member B	Team Member C	Team Member D
8:00-8:30	Team Arrival			
8:30-10:00	Classroom Observations			
10:00-11:00	Interview with Leadership Responsible for Human Resources		Interview with Leadership Responsible for Curriculum and Instruction (Middle School)	
11:00-12:00	Follow-up Interviews		Follow-up Interviews	
12:00-1:00	Team Meeting and Lunch			
1:00-3:00	Follow-up Interviews and Observations			
3:00-4:00	Exit Interviews			
4:00-4:30	Team Meeting			