

Renewal Inspection Report

STURGIS CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL
HYANNIS, MA



APRIL 2 – 5, 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 will appoint an evaluation team to conduct a 3-4 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 Massachusetts Board of Education's commitment to a public charter school accountability system that is based in robust and diverse performance data, the renewal site visit report does not make recommendations about whether or not a school 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 is also an opportunity to include any 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. Findings are the team's assessment of the school's strengths and areas for improvement that, in their judgment, have the greatest bearing on the school's achievement of its defined goals. Findings are organized under each of the renewal questions: *Is the academic program a success? Is the school a viable organization? Is the school faithful to the terms of its charter?* The team's comments on the fourth question, *If the school is renewed, what are its plans for the next five years*, reflect their judgment of the quality of the school's proposed new goals and their 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** illustrates the team's schedule during the renewal visit.

RENEWAL INSPECTION TEAM

Aretha Miller. Aretha is a Project Manager at SchoolWorks. She worked as a special education teacher and literacy specialist in Boston Public Schools where she taught for eight years. Prior to joining the SchoolWorks team, Aretha was the curriculum coordinator for the Diploma Plus initiative – a nationally recognized alternative education model designed to re-engage at-risk and out-of-school youth to the learning process – at the commonwealth Corporation’s Center for Youth Development and Education. Aretha graduated from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst with a Bachelor of Arts in Spanish. She holds a Masters in Special Education from Lesley College.

Ann Dinsmoor, Ed.D. Ann began her career in public schools as a speech/language therapist working with children pre-school to high school. Following middle school and central office administrative positions in special education and her tenure as Assistant Superintendent of Student Services for the Public Schools of Wellesley, Massachusetts, she developed a private practice team that consulted to school districts about the effectiveness of special education services. Her work has included publication, training, facilitation of strategic planning and organizational development. She has three degrees in education from Boston University: Speech/Language Therapy, Guidance and Counseling and Educational Leadership.

Tom Harvey, Ed.D. Tom served 28 years in public education in Maine. His career included positions in teaching, coaching, school counseling and school administration at levels spanning kindergarten through post-graduate. He has worked as a consultant with Maine’s Department of Education and as a facilitator with the Professional Development Program at Hurricane Island Outward bound. Currently he works as an independent consultant and as an adjunct faculty member at Endicott College. He holds a Master’s degree and Certificate of Advanced Study in the field of School Counseling and a Doctorate in Educational Leadership.

Tom Johnson, Ed.D. Dr. Johnson has worked in public education for 43 years. He was chief personnel officer in three school districts in two states for 20 years, in Needham and Cambridge, Massachusetts, and in Broward County, Florida. For a 10-year period, he was a consultant and, later, a staff member for the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards. He is on the advisory committees for ASPIRE Schools in the Bay Area of California and Conservatory Prep in Fort Lauderdale. He holds degrees from Boston College, Stanford University and holds a Doctorate in Administration, Social Policy and Planning from Harvard University.

SETTING

Sturgis Charter Public School (Sturgis), a small high school located in Hyannis, serves students in grades nine through twelve. Sturgis opened in September 1998 with 162 freshmen and added a grade each year until it became a full high school in 2001-2002. Currently serving 340 students, Sturgis became an International Baccalaureate (IB) school in 2004. Academic year 2005-2006 was the first year for students to earn an IB diploma. All students in grades 11-12 take the IB program. Students in grades 9-10 take courses that are pre-IB and aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks.

The mission, which is commonly understood by all stakeholders, is “IB for All.” Virtually unique among IB schools internationally is the commitment to make the Sturgis IB program accessible to all students who want a rigorous academic program and who are willing to work hard. As of March 2007, Sturgis had a waiting list of 36 for admission to grade 9 for the next school year.

Sturgis is a regional school serving diverse students from 15 districts – from Plymouth to Provincetown. Highest enrollments are from Barnstable, Dennis-Yarmouth, Sandwich, Falmouth and Plymouth. The program draws on Barnstable’s marine environment and maritime heritage to enrich its culture and curriculum. The current student population at Sturgis is 88.8 percent White, 3.2 percent African American and 3.2 percent Hispanic – with 11.2 percent special education, 4.4 percent low income and 3.8 percent First Language Not English.

Sturgis employs three administrators: the executive director, associate director and assistant director of operations. Currently there are 32 classroom teachers, 27 (84.1%) of whom meet the state standard of being highly qualified in their subject area. Two of the 34 teachers serve part-time as IB coordinators and seven others serve as lead teachers. Another two of the 34 teachers, plus a coordinator, provide special education services to students in a full inclusion model. Sturgis has also hired a part-time speech and language therapist to provide additional services to students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs). In addition, the school employs two librarians, a full-time nurse, two full-time guidance counselors and a registrar.

The Sturgis Board of Trustees has 14 members, recruited from parents and community leaders who have expressed interest in the school. The executive director and a teacher representative also serve on the Board. The organizational structure for the Board includes four standing committees.

FINDINGS

In preparing this report, the Renewal Inspection Team (the team) spent three-and-a-half days at the Sturgis Charter Public School from April 2–5, 2007. During that time, the team observed 30 classroom lessons. Focus group interviews were conducted with 8 Board members, 10 parents, 12 students, 3 administrators, 13 members of the Faculty Leadership Council, 2 guidance counselors and the registrar, the special education coordinator, 2 special education teachers and 2 IB coordinators. In addition, the team interviewed the assistant director for operations and conducted several other brief, unscheduled meetings to pursue specific information. As the schedule allowed, the team made additional brief classroom visits.

The team reviewed a variety of documents. These included financial statements, student and teacher handbooks, policy manuals, minutes of Board meetings, Board by-laws, annual reports, Accountability Plans, the charter renewal application, renewal inspection reports, enrollment data, professional development notes, samples of teacher and administrator performance evaluations, curriculum materials, samples of student work, test results (MCAS, ERB, IB and classroom quizzes), and various public relations and International Baccalaureate Organization materials.

RENEWAL QUESTION 1: IS THE ACADEMIC PROGRAM A SUCCESS?

1. Student performance on MCAS is strong.

Tenth graders at Sturgis performed very well on the MCAS for four consecutive years – that is, from 2003-2006. The students consistently outperformed their peers from Barnstable Public School, as well as those statewide.

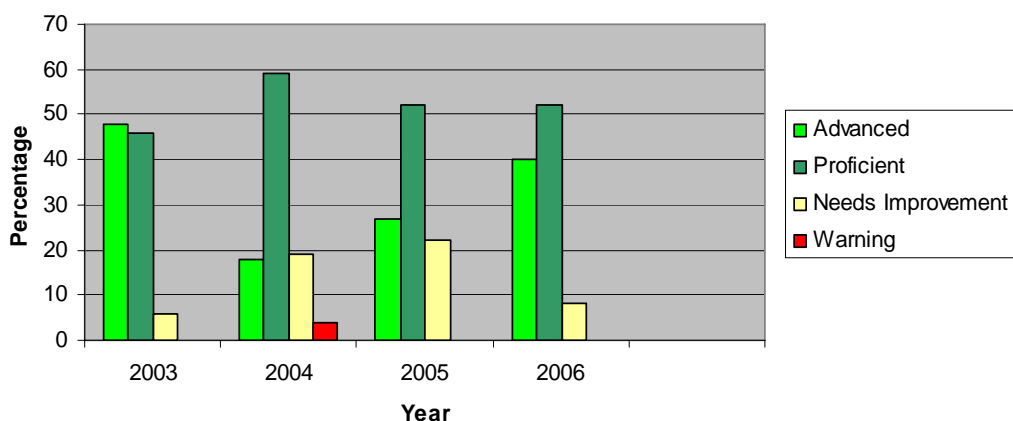
Despite students' strong performance on the MCAS, Sturgis did not consistently achieve its accountability goal to have "at least 80% of sophomores score in the Advanced or Proficient categories on MCAS sub-tests." Sturgis exceeded its accountability goal in 2003 (94 percent of students scored Advanced and Proficient) and in 2006 (92 percent of students scored Advanced and Proficient), but failed to do so in 2004 (77 percent) and 2005 (79 percent).

**Table 1: Sturgis Charter Public School MCAS 2003-2006
Percentage of Students in each MCAS Performance Category
Grade 10 – English Language Arts**

		N	%A	%P	%NI	%W
2003	Sturgis	96	48	46	6	0
	Barnstable	466	27	43	23	7
	State		20	41	28	12
2004	Sturgis	90	18	59	19	4
	Barnstable	465	20	46	26	9
	State		19	43	27	11
2005	Sturgis	93	27	52	22	0
	Barnstable	446	25	44	23	7
	State		23	42	25	10
2006	Sturgis	89	40	52	8	0
	Barnstable	477	22	53	19	6
	State		16	53	24	7

N = number of students tested; A = Advanced; P = Proficient; NI = Needs Improvement; W = Warning

**Chart 1: Sturgis Charter Public School MCAS 2003-2006
Percentage of Student in each MCAS Performance Category
Grade 10—English Language Arts**



The performance of tenth graders on the MCAS mathematics subtest is comparable to their performance on the English language arts subtest in that they demonstrated strong performance for four consecutive years. Again, tenth graders at Sturgis outperformed their peers from Barnstable Public School, as well as their peers statewide.

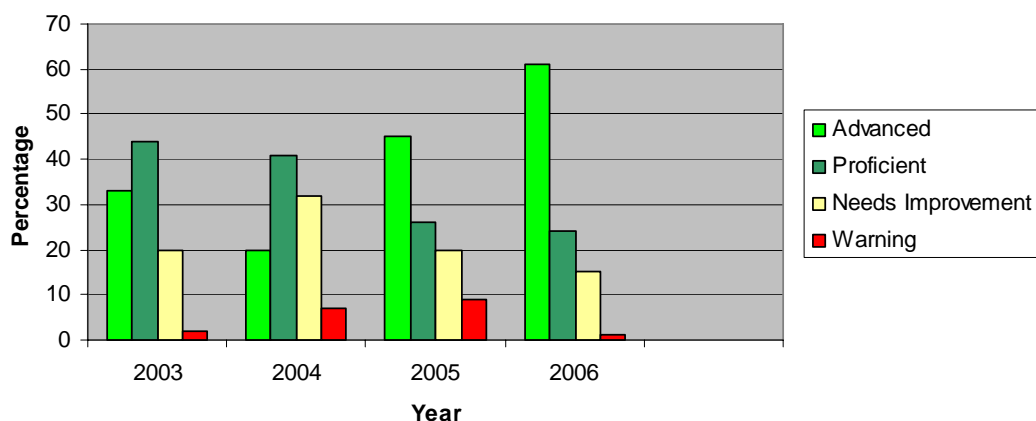
Sturgis met its accountability goal to have “at least 80% of sophomores score in the Advanced or Proficient categories on MCAS sub-tests” in 2006 only, with 85 percent of tenth graders scoring Advanced and Proficient. The school failed to achieve its goal in 2003 (77 percent), 2004 (61 percent) and 2005 (71 percent).

**Table 2: Sturgis Charter Public School MCAS 2003-2006
Percentage of Students in each MCAS Performance Category
Grade 10 – Mathematics**

		N	%A	%P	%NI	%W
2003	Sturgis	99	33	44	20	2
	Barnstable	478	31	28	23	19
	State		24	27	28	21
2004	Sturgis	90	20	41	32	7
	Barnstable	466	29	30	27	14
	State		29	28	28	15
2005	Sturgis	93	45	26	20	9
	Barnstable	447	43	26	20	12
	State		35	27	24	15
2006	Sturgis	89	61	24	15	1
	Barnstable	471	36	29	23	12
	State		40	27	21	12

N = number of students tested; A = Advanced; P = Proficient; NI = Needs Improvement; W = Warning

**Chart 2: Sturgis Charter Public School MCAS 2003-2006
Percentage of Student in each MCAS Performance Category
Grade 10—Mathematics**



2. Sturgis made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for four consecutive years.

Sturgis made Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for English language arts every year of its second charter. Sturgis made AYP for English language arts for students in the aggregate and for statistically significant subgroups.

In English language arts, Sturgis had a composite performance index (CPI) of 97.2 for students in the aggregate. Males performed stronger than females on the ELA subtest and, as such, received a CPI of 98.8, while females received a CPI of 95.7. Sturgis received a Cycle IV determination of “No Status” for English language arts for its second charter term.

Sturgis also made AYP for mathematics every year of its second charter. Sturgis had a CPI of 93.8 for students in the aggregate. Again, the male students outperformed the females on the mathematics subtests to receive a CPI of 97.1, compared to 90.8 for females. Sturgis received a Cycle IV determination of “No Status” for mathematics.

**Table 3: Adequate Yearly Progress Report
Sturgis Charter Public School
2006 MCAS Results by Subgroups for English Language Arts**

	Student Included	AYP Participation (%)	% of Student at Each Performance Level				CPI
			A	P	NI	F	
All Students	89	100	40	52	8	0	97.2
White	81	100	42	51	7	0	97.2
Male	43	100	47	49	5	0	98.8
Female	46	100	35	54	11	0	95.7
Non-Title I	89	100	40	52	8	0	97.2
Non-Low Income	82	100	41	51	7	0	97.3

**Table 4: Adequate Yearly Progress Report
Sturgis Charter Public School
2006 MCAS Results by Subgroups for Mathematics**

	Student Included	AYP Participation (%)	% of Student at Each Performance Level				CPI
			A	P	NI	F	
All Students	89	100	61	24	15	1	93.8
White	81	100	62	25	12	1	94.4
Male	43	100	77	16	7	0	97.1
Female	46	100	46	30	22	2	90.8
Non-Title I	89	100	61	24	15	1	93.8
Non-Low Income	82	100	61	24	13	1	93.9

**Table 5: Sturgis Charter Public School
Overview of AYP Performance (2003-2006)**

		2003	2004	2005	2006	Status
ELA	Aggregate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No Status
	Subgroups	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Math	Aggregate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No Status
	Subgroups	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	

3. Students at Sturgis perform well above the national norms on the Education Records Bureau Comprehensive Testing Program 4 (ERB CPT4) assessments on all subsets in all years of participation.

Students at Sturgis demonstrated extremely strong performance on the ERB CPT4 subtests. In every instance, regardless of grade level cohort, students performed significantly above the national norm (50 percentile). (According to the test creators, the ERB CPT 4 is a “rigorous battery of tests designed to help schools collect basic information about student achievement in [high performing schools].”)

Despite students’ strong performance, Sturgis did not achieve its goal to have students “improve [their] mean score by at least five percentile points in the national percentile rank on each subtest.” The class of 2006 achieved this goal for writing mechanics only. The class went from the 68 percentile in 2003 to the 73 percentile in 2004. The class of 2007 achieved this target for three subtests only between 2004 and 2005: verbal reasoning, writing mechanics and quantitative reasoning. Students in the class of 2007 achieved this target for one subtest only between 2003 and 2004 – writing concepts and skills. Students in the class of 2008 met the target for the writing mechanics subtest only.

**Table 6: Education Records Bureau (ERB)
Sturgis Charter Public School
Results in Mean Percentiles**

	Class 2006		Class 2007			Class 2008	
	03	04	03	04	05	04	05
Verbal Reasoning	76	73	79	80	88	85	87
Vocabulary	80	73	86	85	81	88	86
Reading Comprehension	77	73	77	78	81	86	85
Writing Mechanics	68	73	63	68	75	78	83
Writing Concepts & Skills	76	73	66	77	76	82	84
Quantitative Reasoning	73	62	77	78	83	84	78
Mathematics 1 & 2	62	66	70	84	79	79	76

4. Students at Sturgis demonstrated strong performance on the initial batteries of International Baccalaureate Programme (IB) tests.

Sturgis administered the first round of IB exams to students in 2005. IB is a challenging two-year curriculum designed to prepare students for admissions to the world's leading universities. Graduating seniors at Sturgis in 2006 took an average of 4.3 IB exams, which resulted in Sturgis achieving its goal to have "the average number of IB exams taken by students in each graduating class [be] three or higher."

Sixty-nine students, including seven students with IEPs, took a total of 249 IB exams. Students passed 203 of the 249 IB exams, with a score of three (3) or higher. (A score of three is passing; seven is the highest mark awarded). More specifically, students passed 82 percent of the IB exams that were administered. Of the seven students with special needs who took the IB exams, six passed the exams.

5. The IB program provides coherence, cohesion and rigor to the Sturgis academic program for grades 9-12.

The IB program is the backbone of the Sturgis curriculum and philosophy. The IB curriculum is the only curriculum for students in grades 11 and 12. Students in grades 11 and 12 choose either to engage in the full IB diploma program, to sit course exams and assessments for an IB certificate or to complete coursework and assessments for a Sturgis diploma. IB courses are "Standard Level" or "High Level." The curriculum for grades 9 and 10 is aligned with the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and is also "pre-IB;" that is, aligned with the 11th and 12th grades IB curriculum.

High expectations and rigor characterize the Sturgis IB curriculum and philosophy. The program is billed as "university prep." Graduation requirements include four years each of mathematics, science, English and history, as well as six credits of foreign language – of which two are Latin – and two credits in the arts. The program demands high effort from students, with an average of two to three hours per night of homework a typical expectation.

The two part-time IB coordinators oversee the school's implementation of the program. The coordinators are responsible for curriculum materials, exams and monitoring of timelines to ensure that students are on schedule to participate in the IB program they have chosen. Within parameters specified by the IB program, they share responsibility with lead teachers for curriculum development. The IB program provides a set calendar of deadlines, available to teachers on-line, with which the internal calendar needs to be aligned. Both the lead teachers and IB coordinators assist teachers with pacing of the curriculum to ensure that coverage of the content corresponds to the school calendar and IB exam schedule.

Teachers at Sturgis have deep content knowledge. Eighty-four percent of classroom teachers (27/32) are either highly qualified in their subject area or have this designation pending. In 2005-2006, the average number of years of teaching experience for the staff was eleven. Many have experience teaching IB around the world. It was evident from classroom observations that teachers had planned their lessons and had a high level of awareness of what is to be taught.

The curriculum is accessible to all students. Classroom observations revealed that, in almost all classrooms, students were focused on learning and engaged in the content for sustained periods

of time. Behavior management was not an issue – either observed or reported. The “IB for All” philosophy and the fact that all students participate as juniors and seniors in the IB curriculum also indicate that the staff is committed to making the IB program effective for all Sturgis students. Several parents in the parent focus group or who are trustees spoke of the success of their children who have IEPs. These parents also noted that their children are successful in college and they attribute their children’s success to their participation in the IB program. Study groups, peer tutoring and staff, such as special educators and counselors, all contribute to supporting students’ success.

6. Teachers do not use a variety of instructional strategies to deliver the curriculum.

Instruction was primarily teacher-centered. Teachers predominantly asked questions, called on a student or asked for volunteers, sometimes expanded on the answer and then asked another question, etc. Many of the questions asked were open-ended and/or called for higher-order thinking. For example, teachers asked students to explain the author’s purpose, identify themes from a text or compare and contrast the themes from two different novels.

Teachers were not observed lecturing beyond short expansions of students’ answers. In contrast, very few instances of student-directed learning, in which students learned through interactions with each other, were observed. No cooperative learning was observed. Only a few questioning practices observed had wait time and there were wide variations in checking for understanding. There was limited pairing of students, limited hands-on activities and only one instance of lesson objectives posted to signal students what learning outcome was expected.

The table below outlines the instructional practices that school leaders informed members of the renewal site visit team they should see during class observations. The renewal site visit team, therefore, tabulated the number of instances that each instructional strategy was observed. School leaders explained that the high number of lesson reviews can be attributed to students preparing for the IB exams.

Table 7: Instructional Strategies Observed

1.	Teacher-directed	23
2.	Teacher-facilitated	21
3.	Students focused on learning	21
4.	Higher-level thinking	15
5.	Open-ended questioning	14
6.	Review	13
7.	New material	5
8.	Text-based discussion	3
9.	Student reporting	3
10.	Socratic method	3
11.	Students worked in pairs	3
12.	Graphic organizers used	3
13.	Student-directed	2
14.	Debate	2
15.	Test	1

7. Though Sturgis is data rich, the collection, analysis and use of data have not been systematized.

Sturgis is data rich in that it collects a lot of information about student performance on the various assessments that are being administered in the school. Sturgis, however, does not systematically use the data to improve the overall quality of instruction to increase the performance of individual students. The school administers MCAS, ERB and IB assessments. MCAS data have been compared to IB results. The school has recently requested detailed information about individual student performance from the IB Organization. School leaders informed the renewal site visit team that they received this information in September/October 2006 but could not use the data to improve student performance for those individual students who took the tests since they had already graduated from the school. School leaders stated that they are using the data to inform the instruction for the students who are currently preparing for the exams in May 2007. ERB data are not being used to analyze ways in which individual students may be helped to improve their performance. Differences in MCAS scores by gender have not been disaggregated and analyzed to consider why there are differences in female/male scores. (Refer to table on page 7.)

Sturgis has just begun using MCAS scores of incoming freshmen in an effort to measure progress and efficacy of the academic program over time. They plan to compare these scores with students' performance on ERB. School leaders are aware that there are limitations to this approach to data analysis but they want to have some way to measure the impact of the academic program on student learning.

Sturgis is not systematically using data to inform instructional practice. Administrators confirmed they are using assessment data only to modify curriculum but not to drive instruction. In interviews, most teachers could not articulate how they use data to inform their practice. Although interviews indicated a general assumption that teachers will use their own internal assessments to get immediate feedback about individual student performance, a direct connection between this information and teachers changing their practice to be more effective in their instruction was not frequently articulated.

Departments are beginning to analyze IB assessment data in order to improve students' performance on their IB exams. Some of this analysis relates to developing instructional strategies and some might be characterized as instructional activities. Described either as "suggestions" or as "What specific changes will we make to improve our students' preparation for the IB assessments?" the English department has a full page of ideas, e.g., "create writing portfolios...provide more opportunities for sustained writing...model what is expected...provide glossaries...keep a binder of sample student work to model good structure." The following are samples from other departments. The mathematics department wrote: "We need to rearrange the curriculum so that there is more time for review. In general, this means covering more material in year 1." The Latin department wrote: "more reading practice...with dissection of the language. Proper use of dictionaries will be taught..." The science department wrote: "...more practice with multiple-choice questions...have students make large index cards through the course...increase emphasis on vocabulary and the use of action verbs."

Although data about student turnover have been reported in consistent format from 2002-2003 to the present, the primary reasons for students leaving have not been explored with great specificity. Data indicate that “academic difficulty” and “prefer district schools” account for a majority of reasons for leaving, but further analysis of reasons within these categories has not been undertaken. Administrators reported no clear set of reasons. The general understanding expressed by staff is that many students leave school because “they do not want to do the work.” Counselors reported that students who leave do so because of poor academic performance, despite support and intervention, and also because of social/emotional issues. Some of these students go to alternative programs or for their GED. Some juniors and seniors leave because they have gotten behind in credits at Sturgis and could go back to their district school with less ambitious credit requirements. Other students wanted to avoid the rigor of the senior year requirements, particularly in the spring term.

Parents in the focus group indicated additional reasons: that students find the quantity of seven courses plus homework too much, cannot handle the freedom of lunch on Main Street or want more sports. Some who have not been successful in a big school because of acting-out behavior cannot make it at Sturgis because it is not tolerated there, either. Specific reasons for leaving have not been related to the many interventions already available or that might be provided at the school. Students leaving have not been reported by variables such as grade level, report card grades, attendance and distance from school. The team did not hear the question, “What is it about the hard work that is too much for the 35-50 students who leave each year and is there anything we at the school could do to address that?”

Table 8: Student Turnover Annual Report Data

Reason	#	#	#	#
	02-03	03-04	04-05	05-06
Academic difficulty	4	2	16	14
Prefer district school	13	23	19	16
Moving	8	3	6	4
GED	5	6	5	2
Voc/tech school	4	2	4	3
Other	3	-	-	-
Total for year*	24 + 13	29 + 7	29 + 21	28 + 11

*Number left during school year plus number left after end of school year

8. Sturgis provides varied and effective support for all students.

School leaders and the Board of Trustees are responsive to the needs of students. The Board, in collaboration with school leaders, is engaged in an ongoing discussion about the meaning of “IB for All” and has allocated resources to fund support services. The associate director serves as academic advisor for all incoming students. Small classes allow teachers to address the needs of the students in their classes. Teachers are available to provide academic support to individual and small groups of students during bi-weekly advisory periods and after school. Students and parents reported that teachers are always available for individual assistance.

Guidance counselors provide both individual and group services. When particular academic concerns arise, counselors frequently convene a three-way meeting with a student and teacher to identify strategies that might be effective. To address broader concerns of students, counselors have instituted a developmental guidance program that provides a forum for all students to learn and talk about issues of common interest. Counselors also guide students through the college selection process. One aspect of this program is to invite back, in the fall, members of the previous year's graduating class who are attending college to meet with Sturgis students. It was reported that as many as 50 percent of the previous seniors attended the event.

In order to address the needs of all students, school leaders at Sturgis have recently added a special education teacher and a second counselor to the staff. Special education staff includes two special education teachers and a part-time speech language therapist. At the time of the renewal visit, school leaders were seeking a part-time occupational therapist.

Administrators have organized study groups of students with similar academic needs and a peer tutoring program. Students with IEPs take all their subjects in the regular classrooms and receive extra support – particularly with study skills – in resource rooms. Accommodations that are appropriate to each student's learning needs include strategies such as modified test formats, language course requirements changed from six to four courses and three-tier mathematics courses. Assessment data for students with IEPs are being analyzed so that instruction may be adapted to address student needs. Currently, 42 Sturgis students have IEPs and 16 have 504 plans. The staff is proud of the success, including successful college acceptance, of their students with special needs. Parents reported both small, but significant, successes and some extraordinary successes of their children. This is a significant improvement for the school. In 2003-2004, parents of students with special needs expressed strong dissatisfaction with the way in which their children were being supported in the school. School leaders were very responsive to the feedback and addressed it in a timely manner.

Despite extensive support, some students are not successful at Sturgis. Students who are struggling leave every year.

RENEWAL QUESTION 2: IS THE SCHOOL A VIABLE ORGANIZATION?

1. School administrators provide strong oversight of daily operations, management and planning.

The assistant director of operations, with the executive director, develops the annual budget with faculty input and Board oversight. Early in the process, departments are asked what materials and supplies they need. Lead teachers and the faculty leadership council provide vehicles for teacher input. In focus groups, teachers reported that their needs for instructional materials are met. As one teacher said, "I usually get what I ask for." In collaboration with the Board's finance committee, administrators take a conservative approach to budget development, basing projections on a low enrollment count. In each of the past three years, a surplus of \$100,000 has been realized. While this is a hedge against unknowns in state reimbursement, it has also allowed expenditures for improvements in facilities at year's end and purchase of materials for the upcoming year.

Clear roles and responsibilities for trustees, administrators and teachers have been established. Written job descriptions and policies have undergone recent review and revisions and the Faculty Handbook and Policy Manual of the Board give direction and help structure effective institutional practices. The Board evaluates the executive director who, in turn, evaluates the associate director of academics and the assistant director of operations. The executive director and associate director of academics share in the evaluation of the faculty. Lead teachers of each department provide supervision, but no evaluation, of teachers. They may meet periodically with new teachers in a mentoring relationship.

The teacher supervision and evaluation process at Sturgis calls for three classroom observations annually by lead teachers and two by the executive director or associate director. Evaluations are based on performance specified in job descriptions. Although Sturgis has a well-developed process for supervision and evaluation, there was limited evidence that it was actually being fully implemented in the school. In interviews, teachers frequently spoke about the informal feedback they receive from school leaders about their performance but did not describe the process that was used to formally evaluate their performance. In fact, at the time of the renewal visit, some teachers had not received a formal evaluation for the 2006-2007 year.

Decision making typically follows a distributive leadership model in which faculty are involved, but the executive director and his associate and assistant make final decisions. Administrators take issues for discussion to the faculty leadership council, which meets bi-monthly and is comprised of lead teachers, counselors, the librarian and the IB and special education coordinators. Following discussion in that forum, matters are often taken to department and/or faculty meetings for further discussion and input, prior to decisions being made by the administration. The executive director is in frequent communication with Board officers and committees, but the Board is not involved in matters of day-to-day management.

The executive director and faculty have a variety of ways they communicate with and involve parents. Parents reported they appreciate having monthly newsletters, mid-quarter progress reports and report cards mailed home. While some parents indicated in surveys that administrators and teachers were not sufficiently available or responsive, those interviewed reported that phone and e-mail communication was highly effective and responsive in meeting

their needs to support their own children. Guidance counselors occasionally meet with a student and parents in a three-way conference to resolve individual issues. The Sturgis parent association is available for parents who are able to be engaged in school activities. It was reported, however, that parent participation in the Sturgis parent association is low and has caused concerns among school leaders who would like to increase the number of parents who become actively involved in the group.

Teachers generally report a high level of job satisfaction. Teacher satisfaction has been reported by surveys in the past three years. Levels of satisfaction in 2005-2006 were very high for administration, non-teaching responsibilities, staff development, and instructional materials. Although the data collected in 2004-2005 were different and, therefore, not comparable to the previous or following years, some results demonstrate improved satisfaction. For example, satisfaction with fellow teachers and with students increased in the two years from 2003-2004 to 2005-2006, up from 73% to 100% and 97%, respectively. Likewise, following the introduction of a new salary and fringe benefits package in September of 2004, satisfaction about fringe benefits increased from 33% to 60%. The surveys also show that satisfaction with the physical facilities remained relatively low, 33% - 37%.

Professional development for teachers is well-funded and focused primarily on the IB program, differentiated instruction and special education guidelines and procedures. Teachers reported that approximately half of them participated in training by Research for Better Teaching (RBT) some years ago. Teachers are expected to participate in 25 hours of professional development per year and they exceeded that in 2005-2006 by attending 6.5 days in the calendar year. Much additional professional development occurs in bi-monthly faculty meetings. During the summer and other vacation times, teachers are often compensated to travel nationally to present a workshop or visit another IB school.

2. Governance and leadership ensure the long-term success of Sturgis.

The Board of Trustees and school leadership are committed to the IB program and the high standards it embodies. Founded in September 1998 with a freshman class, by the 2001-2002 school year, Sturgis enrolled students in each grade 9-12. Application to become an IB school was sought in 2003. Authorization was granted in February 2004, at which time the current executive director was hired, bringing a background of experience with the IB program to Sturgis. As expectations developed for teachers to commit to the IB program, the retention rate that year fell to 47%. Three were not rehired, three retired and ten left voluntarily. Although this turnover was challenging, it afforded the school the opportunity to recruit teachers who were trained and experienced in the IB curriculum. According to annual reports, at the end of the 2004-2005 school year, the retention rate was 70%, with six teachers not being renewed, two retiring and four leaving voluntarily. At the end of the 2005-2006 school year, the retention rate had increased to 93%, with two teachers not renewed and one leaving voluntarily. (Note: The Renewal Application reports slight differences in teacher retention rates: 64% for 2004-2005 and 91% for 2005-2006.)

All stakeholders consistently and clearly communicate the school's mission and values. The page-long mission statement from prior years has been revised for the Renewal Application:

“Sturgis Charter Public School is dedicated to an ‘International Baccalaureate for All’ philosophy, preparing high school students for higher education in a supportive learning environment. Sturgis provides each student a rigorous world-class educational program, encouraging academic achievement, intellectual confidence and personal growth.”

When asked to articulate the mission of the school, Board members, school leaders, teachers, students and parents all immediately responded “IB for All.” All constituents interviewed expressed pride in the effectiveness of the IB program for the diverse students who attend Sturgis. Even as trustees are striving how to concretize “IB for All,” administrators and teachers have opportunities to interpret their mission and program to others – not only among Sturgis constituents, but also more widely to other schools and families. Word is spreading in the wider community – regionally, nationally and internationally – that the program is successful and that many students with IEPs are meeting with success at Sturgis. As a result, by the first enrollment period in January 2007, the school had received a 50% increase in applications, including many more from students with IEPs.

Trustees and school administrators report that Sturgis is financially stable. Trustees provide fiscal oversight, direct the audit process and undertake annual fund raising. The Board reviews the budget at each meeting after close scrutiny by the finance committee. Savings in facilities costs were realized when the school building, occupied since opening in 1998, was purchased. The William Sturgis Friends of Education Foundation, a 509(a) support organization, was formed as a holding vehicle for the facility. The Board of Trustees president and treasurer are ex-officio members of the Foundation.

In addition to the active finance committee, the Board also has three other active standing committees. The personnel committee, with the executive director, reviews and revises personnel policies, the Faculty Handbook, job descriptions and salary and benefits packages. The Board development committee is responsible for board succession – recruiting and orienting new members who bring a balance of experience and talent to the Board. The resource development committee annually raises funds through an auction and donations from the annual appeal. The annual target is \$30,000. The Sturgis Board has presented several workshops to other school Boards, sharing their wisdom about Board governance.

The Board has successfully established organizational and management systems. These are designed to create a culture of governance that is strong enough to survive any changes in its membership that might occur and to provide a stable school environment. Policies are current in written by-laws, faculty and student handbooks and job descriptions. Processes for collecting data are in place and annual reports are being written. Written evaluation of the executive director’s performance is conducted biannually by the Board president and vice president, and based on established goals. The process for evaluating teachers is clearly specified in the Faculty Handbook. A twelve-month agenda of annual tasks for the Board guides development of monthly meetings. The Board has implemented an annual planning process that includes assessing progress as seen in documents such as student, staff, parent and Board surveys; data from administration; the annual report; and, Board goals of the previous year. With the help of an outside facilitator, annual goals for the new year are drafted.

In order to expand advocacy for the school and provide a source of resources for the Board, the Community Advisory Board was convened in 2003. Comprised of community leaders, it meets twice during the year with a mission of providing “an interactive forum for community leaders to make occasional contributions of their expertise, support and guidance to the school.”

3. The climate and culture at Sturgis are very positive.

Students, parents and teachers described Sturgis as a learning community in which student success and high expectations for academic performance and student behavior predominate in day-to-day interactions. Teachers’ passion for their content and students’ engagement in response to this enthusiasm were notable in classroom observations. Rapport between students and teachers, administrators and support staff was consistently evident, in and out of the classroom. Commitment to “IB for All” seems to provide grounding for high academic expectations but it is the process of participating in the IB way – not just the final outcome – that is highly valued. A Sturgis diploma is just as fine as an IB diploma if students have demonstrated positive attitudes about learning and high levels of effort.

By all measures, Sturgis provides an emotionally and physically safe environment for students. Relationships were widely reported as tolerant, supportive, caring and trusting. Students reported good relationships with teachers. Behavior management was not a remarkable problem, reported or observed. Most students appeared relaxed and comfortable with their peers. Parents and administrators particularly commented about the school being safe and welcoming to students who represent the diversity spectrum. Some see Sturgis as a school for students who do not fit in the typical large high school environment.

Sturgis also provides an intellectually safe environment. A parent commented, “At Sturgis, it’s cool to be smart and it’s cool to learn.” Another parent reported that her child with an IEP is learning to advocate for herself. Yet another reported her child is self-actualizing at Sturgis, “happier than she’s ever been.” Parents appreciate the regular communications that are mailed home and the accessibility of teachers and administrators by phone and e-mail. Small class sizes (average class size is 17) and availability of teachers during advisory periods, after school and, often, at lunchtime contribute to the success of the diversity of Sturgis students.

RENEWAL QUESTION 3: IS THE SCHOOL FAITHFUL TO THE TERMS OF THE CHARTER?

1. The Sturgis mission is well communicated and internalized by all constituents.

Sturgis revised its mission for the charter renewal process. The former mission was one page in length and did not concisely and directly articulate the commitment to provide IB for every student. This new mission is focused and memorable with “IB for All” directly stated:

Sturgis Charter Public School is dedicated to an “International Baccalaureate (IB) for All” philosophy, preparing high school students for higher education in a supportive learning environment. Sturgis provides each student a rigorous world-class educational program, encouraging academic achievement, intellectual confidence and personal growth.

Constituents readily articulated the mission and are actively seeking to concretize its meaning. Parents, staff, administrators and students all expressed the mission as “IB for All.” All students in grades 11 and 12 participate in the IB program. All students in grades 9 and 10 participate in the pre-IB curriculum. In an effort to support the academic success of all students, needs for support services have been analyzed and addressed.

When “IB for All” became the core of the new mission, the Cape and Island’s marine environment and maritime heritage became less central and was dropped from the mission statement itself. However, the school continues to draw on its community’s marine environment and maritime heritage to enrich the academic program and culture of the school. The goal remains and a second measure has been added in the new Accountability Plan:

Goal: Sturgis’ curriculum will reflect the (Cape and Islands’) marine environment and maritime heritage.”

Measure #1: An annual curriculum audit in each subject area will document the inclusion of materials and the implementation of activities related to these themes.

Measure #2: Sturgis will develop and maintain maritime-themed traditions and activities including elements in grade nine orientations and graduation ceremonies.

2. While students are achieving at a high level, it is difficult to determine whether all of the measures have been met.

Goal: All students will demonstrate high levels of academic accomplishment on both internal and external measures.

Sturgis met its performance measure #1: “All students will pass all MCAS tests by spring of their senior year.” All students in the class of 2005, 2006 and 2007 passed the MCAS tests by the spring of their junior year.

Sturgis partially met its performance measure #2: “At least 80% of sophomores will score in the Advanced or Proficient categories on all MCAS sub-tests and Sturgis will achieve Adequate Yearly Progress each year.” In 2006, 92% of sophomores scored Advanced or Proficient in ELA and 85% scored the same in mathematics. Sturgis, however, did not meet this performance measure in 2004 and 2005. In 2005, 79% of all students in ELA and 71% of all students in mathematics scored Advanced or Proficient. In 2004, 77% in ELA and 61% in mathematics

scored Advanced or Proficient. Sturgis met AYP in all four years of its current charter term for ELA and mathematics in aggregate and all subgroups.

Whether Sturgis met performance measure #3 is unknown. *“Sturgis will rank in the top 25% of secondary schools statewide on the basis of the Composite Performance Index.”* The Massachusetts Department of Education does not provide this information.

The following table shows that Sturgis did not consistently meet its performance measure #4: *“At least 80% of Sturgis students will earn a grade average of C or better on their final report cards each year and at least 40% will earn a B average or better on their final report cards.”*

Table 9: Report Card Results

	Report Card of C or Better	Report Card of B or Better
Performance Measure	80%	40%
2005-2006	75%	58%
2004-2005	81%	54%
2003-2004	59%	24%

A determination cannot be made on whether performance measure #5 has been met: *“Sturgis students will improve its mean score by at least five percentile points in national percentile rank on each sub-test of the Education Records Bureau test battery between grades nine and ten, and by at least five additional percentile between grades ten and eleven.”* Data were reported as median scores; the measure asks about mean scores.

Goal: *“Sturgis students will be well prepared to continue their education at the college or university level.”*

Sturgis met performance measure #6: *“Beginning with the class of 2006, the average number of IB exams taken by students in each graduating class will be three or higher.”* Graduating seniors took an average of 4.1 IB exams.

Data available to the team are inconclusive about whether performance measure #7 was met: *“At least 95% of Sturgis seniors will attend post-secondary education within one year of their graduation from Sturgis with at least 65% attending 4-year colleges.”* The Renewal Application reports, “100% of the graduates in the class of 2006 were accepted into college, with 70% attending 4-year colleges. Undated information provided by counselors shows that 93% were enrolled in college, 63% in 4-year colleges. The difference may be due to variation in dates of the counts, or that confusion exists based on status as “accepted,” “attending,” or “enrolled.”

Data are not yet available to determine whether performance measure #8 is met: *“Beginning with the class of 2009, 100% of the graduates will apply and be accepted to post-secondary education.”*

Only ten out of 76 questionnaires (13 percent) were returned, making the outcome of performance measure #9 unreliable: *“On a questionnaire survey completed during their freshman year in college, at least 90% of Sturgis students will indicate that they were well prepared for the academic challenges of college.”* Of the students who did respond, the average rating was 91%.

Goal: Sturgis will prize individual responsibility and initiative, respect for self and others, self-discipline and moral integrity, creativity and leadership.

Sturgis did not meet performance measure #10 in 2006, although it was virtually met in the two previous years: “At least 80% of parents will agree that Sturgis has contributed to their children’s sense of individual responsibility, respect for self, respect for others, self-discipline, moral integrity, creativity, leadership, and tolerance. Three hundred and three (303) surveys were sent out and 100 families responded. Results item by item are mixed. The significance of the number of responses is unknown.

Table 10: Percent of Parents Satisfied with Sturgis’ Contribution

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Responsibility	81	96	95
Self respect	82	95	91
Respect for others	79	99	89
Self discipline	70	93	84
Moral integrity	68	99	85
Creativity	79	97	84
Tolerance	85	96	94
Leadership	68	86	73
% surveys returned	33	NA	NA

It is difficult to determine whether performance measure #11 was met: “All students will participate in activities in the three areas of creativity, action, and service (as defined by the International Baccalaureate Organization) and will write reflections on their activities.” Reports indicate that in 2005-2006, as part of the Advisory program, all students participated in their advisory group service projects, 30 minute-per-week walks in the community and wrote reflections and discussed their involvement in their service activities. Additionally, more than 97% participated in creative activities.

3. Sturgis has met the majority of its organizational viability goals.

Goal: Sturgis will maintain full enrollment.

Performance measure #1, “Sturgis will maintain an enrollment of 90-110 in its ninth grade class,” has been met. Reports indicate enrollment in October 2006 of 105; 94 for 2005-2006; 105 for 2004-2005; and 97 for September 2003.

Sturgis has met performance measure #2 for the 2006-2007 school year: “At least 85% of those who complete grade nine will return for grade ten; at least 85% of those who complete grade ten will return for grade eleven, and at least 85% of those who complete grade eleven will return for grade twelve and graduate from the school.” Data for current and prior years are undated and, therefore, not comparable.

Performance measure #3 was met on some items only: “At least 85% of parents responding to an annual survey will report that they are either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” (as opposed to “uncertain,” “not too satisfied,” or “quite dissatisfied”) with each of the following features of the school: curriculum, quality of teaching, academic standards for students, individual attention by teachers, accessibility and openness, information provided to parents,

administration, Board of Trustees, opportunities for parents to participate, sports program, extra-curricular activities, class size, school size, and school facilities.”

Table 11: Percent of Parents Satisfied with these Features of the School

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Curriculum	83	85	92
Individual attention by teacher	86	77	88
Class size	96	92	96
School size	92	86	84
Sports program	40	59	42
Other extracurricular activities	52	63	48
Administration	80	72	74
Board of Trustees	52	58	70
Opportunities for parent to participate	78	68	86
Academic standards for students	86	86	89
Quality of teaching	82	75	92
School facilities	58	63	73
Accessibility and openness	83	81	94
Information provided to parents	77	82	89
Lunch arrangements	NA	NA	88

Note: Rates of return for surveys were not available.

Goal: Sturgis’ fiscal management will reflect sound practices that support fulfillment of its charter’s essential commitments.

Sturgis has maintained full commitment to ensuring full budget support for the IB program since it became an IB school. Performance measure #4 has been met: *“The actual and proposed budget for each fiscal year will be sufficient to support membership in the I.B.O. and insure students’ achievement of all related academic program goals.”*

Success in meeting performance measure #5 has varied over the past three years: *“The Board will undertake an annual fund drive with the goal of raising \$30,000 each year.”*

Table 12: Fund Raising by Board of Trustees

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Annual Appeal	\$15,800	17,700	
Auction	11,000	7500	
Grants	142,000		
Total	\$168,000	\$25,300	\$26,200

Audit reports are mixed for the past three years for performance measure #6: *“A yearly independent audit will give clear evidence of sound financial practices and no significant findings.”* In 2005-2006, one reportable condition was noted. In 2004-2005, five reportable conditions were noted. Annual reports for these two years say, *“The school has fully addressed the reportable conditions ... and is in compliance with all requirements of Government auditing Standards.”* In 2003-2004 there were no instances of non-compliance.

Goal: *The Board of trustees will provide sound and effective governance.*

Performance measure #7 has been met: *“The Board, through the President and Vice-President, will evaluate the chief executive at mid-year and at the end of the year and help set his/her goals for the coming year. The evaluation procedure will follow the guidelines described in the Policy Manual of the Board.”* The evaluation procedure followed the guidelines described in the Policy Manual of the Board. For the past two years, goals were set with the executive director in September; mid-year and end-of-year evaluations were completed. The process was also followed in the 2003-2004 school year for the outgoing and incoming directors.

Performance measure #8 has essentially been met: *“The Board will annually have a retreat or special Board meeting for the purposes of setting Board goals for the coming year. At the May meeting, the Board will evaluate its progress in meeting its goals.”* The Board met in each of the three previous years to assess prior goals and set new goals for the coming year. In 2005-2006 and 2004-2005, summer planning retreats were held, following the schedule in this performance measure. In 2003-2004, no retreat was held but previous goals were assessed and, in October, new goals were established for the year.

Performance measure #9 has been partially met: *“The Board will convene an Advisory Council for the purpose of fostering productive relationships with the local community. On an annual survey, members of the Advisory Council will develop a list of the ways that the council has achieved productive relationships during the year.”* The Board of Trustees convened a Community Advisory Board (CAB) in 2003-2004. It met twice that year and in 2004-2005 and once during the 2005-2006 school year. In the last two years, the CAB met with a group of students to hear firsthand about the program at the school. Reports of any CAB surveys were not available.

Goal: *Sturgis will maintain a stable faculty, who express a high degree of satisfaction with the conditions of their employment and are actively involved in professional development.*

Reports indicate that teacher turnover stabilized in 2005-2006, meeting performance measure #10 in that year: *“Voluntary teacher turnover will not exceed 10% per year except for retirement or health reasons.”* Data for 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 are confusing because annual report and renewal application data differ slightly. Both turnover and retention rates are reported. Data do clearly show, however, that turnover was significant in 2003-2004 – retention was reported as 47%.

In June 2006, 85 percent of the staff responded to the staff survey. The table on the following page shows that performance measure #11 was partially met in 2005-2006 and not met in 2003-2004: *“At least 90% of teachers will respond, on annual surveys, that they are either “very satisfied” or “somewhat satisfied” (as opposed to “uncertain,” “not too satisfied,” or “quite dissatisfied”) with each of the following features of the school: educational philosophy, fellow teachers, students, parent involvement, administration, governing board, teacher participation in school decisions, physical facilities, instructional materials, staff development, non-teaching responsibilities, salary, fringe benefits.”*

Table 13: Faculty Survey, Percent Satisfied with These Features of the School

Area	2005-2006	2003-2004
Fellow teachers	100	73
Educational philosophy	97	86
Students	97	73
Administration	97	NA
Non-teaching responsibilities	96	NA
Staff development	87	NA
Instructional materials	83	NA
Governing Board	74	NA
Parent involvement	74	77
Salary	71	NA
Staff role in school decisions	70	NA
Fringe benefits	60	33
Physical facilities	37	33
Response rate	85	NA

Note: A different survey format was used for 2004-2005.

Goal: *To foster international awareness and understanding and ensure world-class standards of academic achievement, Sturgis will maintain membership in the I.B.O.*

By all indicators, Sturgis is committed to maintaining their status as an IB school, meeting performance measure #12: *“Sturgis will maintain ongoing membership in the I.B.O.”*

Performance measure #13 has been met: *“In Sturgis’ first year of eligibility to administer the IB examinations at least 20% of seniors will sit for two examinations. Of those who sit for exams, 80% students will earn at least one certificate.* The Renewal Application states: *“In 2006, 92% of graduating seniors sat for at least two IB exams. Of the graduating seniors taking IB exams, 93% earned at least one IB Certificate.”*

Performance measure #14 was partially met: *“In Sturgis’ first year of eligibility to earn I.B. Diplomas, at least 20% of the members of the graduating class will attempt to fulfill all the requirements for the diploma and at least 70% of those who try will earn I.B. diplomas. The number attempting to earn diplomas will increase each year until 30% of the class aspires to earn the diploma and 70% of those are successful. All other students will sit for at least two exams and will earn at least one certificate.”* The Renewal Application indicates that, in June 2006, 26% of graduating seniors attempted the IB Diploma and 25% of these students earned the IB Diploma.

4. Administrators, board members & faculty are actively engaged in disseminating information about the school’s practices.

Goal: *Sturgis will engage the community in thoughtful discussion of the goals and methods of public education.*

Teachers meet in weekly department and faculty meetings to present and share best practices with their colleagues. Additionally, they present and facilitate workshops during Sturgis professional development days. Although documentation of this dissemination was not recorded,

performance measure #1 has essentially been met: *“Teachers in each department will identify at least two Best Practices and formally document the results of their efforts to develop those practices.”*

Likewise, performance measure #2 has essentially been met: *“Teachers in the school will participate in at least one activity each year designed to share those practices with teachers in other schools (both charter and non-charter) as well as the larger public.”* Records documenting the number of teachers participating in all the activities were not reported. However, many instances of sharing information were reported – locally, nationally and internationally. School administrators and board members also presented workshops to share information about Sturgis.

RENEWAL QUESTION 4: IF THE SCHOOL'S CHARTER IS RENEWED, WHAT ARE ITS PLANS FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS?

1. Goals in the revised Accountability Plan are credible and measurable

Goals in the Accountability Plan reflect the rigor of the IB program. All members of the Sturgis community are committed to the IB program with its demanding course and assessment requirements. The Board and staff regularly discuss what "IB for All" means and how best to fulfill this mission through programs, services, organizational structure and the relationships that are valued at Sturgis. All constituents hold high expectations for students' achievement and successful high school experience.

The goals are coherent with the mission and cover a range of indicators that are expressed in measurable terms. Goals are quantifiable or otherwise expressed in terms that can be measured. They are not far different from those of the previous year. Some of the quantitative standards have been raised, due to the success of the program. None have been lowered. One new goal with two measures has been added: "Sturgis' curriculum will foster international awareness and cultural understanding."

2. Sturgis has the capacity to achieve the goals in its Accountability Plan; however, school leaders do not have a plan for strengthening instructional practice so that all students can achieve at even higher levels.

Sturgis has policies in place that address instructional excellence and practice. For example, the compensation system for teachers in the Faculty Manual includes a requirement that teachers demonstrate improved teaching competence over time in the Principles of Effective Instruction (required under Massachusetts Department of Education CMR 35:00). In February 2006, the Board approved "Principles and Procedures for Supervision and Evaluation," which includes, among others, these direct references to instructional practice: "identify, share and commend effective teaching strategies and best practices," "obtain a comprehensive and continuous record of the school's overall quality of instruction and professionalism, and determine general professional development needs." The Annual Self-Assessment document lists ten questions for teachers' responses, some of which directly reference instructional practice, e.g., "In what instructional areas would you consider yourself as having 'grown' most this year..., What adjustments in your 'teaching style/approach' have you made...."

Policies that address instructional excellence and practice do not appear to be fully implemented. Although documents indicate that teachers will be observed annually three times by lead teachers and two times by administrators, the two sample personnel records available for review by the team indicated that a single observation and the end-of-the-year self assessment constituted the entire annual evaluation. The 2003-2004 Annual Report stated, "In the 03-04 school year, teachers were evaluated using criteria from the standards for highly effective teachers to reinforce the RBT instructional strategies that staff learned during last school year. Beginning in SY 04-05, teachers will be evaluated using both measures plus criteria established in the Board approved job descriptions." However, the limited review of teacher evaluation documents revealed that school leaders did not use the principles of effective instruction as outlined by RBT to evaluate teacher performance. To further support this, many teachers interviewed could not

articulate how school leaders are using the principles of effective practice to give them feedback about their performance in the classroom.

Expectations that Sturgis teachers can learn to become highly effective teachers are not well-developed. When asked about roles and responsibilities, administrators and a few other personnel revealed an emphasis on recruiting and hiring good teachers in contrast to supporting all teachers to become highly effective in their instructional practice. Some reported that teachers are told which areas to improve upon and, if there is no improvement, their contract is revisited. In at least some instances, information about teachers' instructional practice is limited to five (three lead teacher, two administrator) or fewer classroom observations per year. Lead teachers, that is, those individuals who are also responsible for monitoring the overall quality of instruction in the school as well as providing professional support to the teachers in their departments, rely primarily on their colleagues' self-assessment and report instead of direct classroom observation to make a determination about a teacher's ability to deliver instruction well in his/her classroom. As such, it is not clear that teachers, especially those who are new to the profession, receive timely and meaningful feedback about their instructional practices.

Teachers do not use a common language to describe their instructional strategies, despite having a variety of opportunities to share information about their teaching practice. Differentiated instruction has been the topic of professional development. The special education coordinator presents monthly workshops on supporting students. Some teachers in past years have been trained in instructional practice by RBT. Others reported the "big red" (RBT) book is given to teachers. Still others indicated their pre-service training included instructional methods. Additionally, teachers reported they share information in department meetings about what is and is not effective in delivery of their curriculum. Nevertheless, these opportunities have not served to provide a common language to talk about instruction that would support development of a "toolkit" of strategies for implementation in the classroom.

Professional development appears generous in quantity, primarily focused on the IB curriculum but not explicitly focused on improving instruction. Titles of professional development offerings did not contain language to indicate that sessions were about developing instructional practice – for example, "Implications of Asperger's on Learning," "Using Technology to Enhance Learning" and "Classroom Management." The team was not able to find any formal calendar of professional development or any stated goals or outcomes for professional development.

Sturgis is operating from a point of great success and now has the challenge of concretizing "IB for All," with the opportunity to bring an increasingly diverse student body to new heights in learning. Scores are high, teacher-centered instruction is highly effective for many Sturgis students, support services are already in place. Despite the rigor of the academic program, the number of applications from students with IEPs is increasing. The number of students leaving Sturgis is not declining. The challenge of teaching a more diverse student body is present. Administrators acknowledged that they have spent a lot of time helping teachers understand what IB is and believe that the next phase is to focus on addressing the issue of quality instruction in the school.

APPENDIX A: SCHEDULE OF THE RENEWAL INSPECTION VISIT**Monday, April 2, 2007—Day 4**

Time	Team Member A	Team Member B	Team Member C	Team Member D
10:45-12:50	Initial Team Meeting			
1:00-1:40-G-A	Team Arrival & Tour of School			
1:45-3:00-A-B	Initial Meeting with School Leaders in Team Room			
3:00-5:00	Team Meeting & Debrief			
5:30	Team Departure			

Tuesday, April 3, 2007

Time	Team Member A	Team Member B	Team Member C	Team Member D
7:30-8:00	Team arrival & preparation			
8:20-8:50-E	IB Environ. SL 2 Rm. 205	English 2 Rm. 204	Chorus 9 Rm. 211	IB English SL1 Rm. 209
8:50-9:20-E	Interview w. Bus. Manager (8:50-9:30)	Teacher Interview* in Rm. 101	Teacher Interview* in Rm. 101	Interview w. Bus. Manager (8:50-9:30)
9:20-9:40-E	Inter. w/ G. Counselors (9:30-10:00)	Document Review	French 2 Rm. 103	Interv. w/ SPED (9:30-10:00)**
9:40-10:00	FLOAT			
10:00-10:30-F	Algebra 2 Rm. 210	Int. Sci. 1A Rm. 205	IB Math HL1 Rm. 213	English 1 Rm. 212
10:30-10:50-F	Document Review	IB Art SL1 Rm. 110	Latin 1 Rm. 102	Spanish 1 Rm. 105
10:55-11:30-G	Teacher Interview*** in Rm. 208	Teacher Interview*** in Rm. 208	Document Review	Document Review
11:30-12:30	TEAM LUNCH & DEBRIEF			
12:30-1:00-A	IB Bio HL2 Rm. 206	US History 1 Rm. 107	IB Music SL1 Rm. 211	English 2 Rm. 209
1:00-1:20-A	Feedback to School Leaders (1:00-1:45)	IB ITGS SL Rm. 213	IB Chem SL1 Rm. 208	Feedback to School Leaders (1:00-1:45)
1:45-2:00-B	Team Organize Notes			
2:20-2:50-C	IB Math Stan. SL2 Rm. 213	IB Art HL/SL2 Rm. 110	Int. Sci. 2A Rm. 208	
2:50-3:55-C	Team Meeting			
4:00-5:00	Board Interview in Room 108			
5:15	Team Departure			

Wednesday, April 4, 2007

Time	Team Member A	Team Member B	Team Member C	Team Member D
7:30-8:00	Team arrival & preparation			
8:20-8:50-F	Parent Focus Group (8:00-8:45) in Library		Student Focus Group (8:00-8:35) in Rm. 101	
8:50-9:20-F	US Hist 2 Rm. 108	French 1 Rm. 104		
9:20-9:40-F	Teacher Intr^ in Rm. 101			Teacher Intr^ in Rm. 101
9:40-10:00	FLOAT			
10:00-10:30-G		Feedback to School Leaders (10:00-10:40)	IB History HL2 Rm 111	Feedback to School Leaders (10:00-10:40)
10:30-10:50-G				
10:50-11:20-A	IB History SL1 Rm. 111		IB Latin SL2 Rm. 101	
11:50-12:30	Lunch Interview w/ Faculty Leadership Council in Rm. 104			
12:30-1:30-B	Team Lunch & Debrief			
1:30-2:00-C	Tchr Intr^^ in Rm. 104	Tchr Intr^^ in Rm. 104	IB Theater HL1 Rm. 204	
2:20-2:50-D	Algebra 1 Rm. 203	IB French HL1 Rm. 104	IB Th. of Knowl. Rm. 200	Document Review
2:50-4:20-E	Team Debrief			
4:30	Team Departure			

Thursday, April 5, 2007

Time	Team Member A	Team Member B	Team Member C	Team Member D
7:30-8:00	Team arrival & preparation			
8:20-8:50-G	Inter. w/ Ex Director (8:20-9:00)			Inter. w/ Ex Director (8:20-9:00)
8:50-9:20-G				
9:20-9:40-G				
9:40-10:00				
10:00-2:00-A-D	Team Deliberations & Lunch			
2:00-2:45-D-E	REPORT OUT TO SCHOOL LEADERS in Team Room			
3:00	Team Departure			