



HILLTOWN
COOPERATIVE
CHARTER
PUBLIC
SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT 2011-2012

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Dear Commissioner and Charter School Staff,

18 July 2012

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School (HCCPS) continues to be a vibrant and welcoming school community, providing an excellent education to its students. Enabled by the committed teachers, staff, and families, the school nurtures its students, encouraging academic and social development.

Securing a suitable long-term site that meets the physical needs of the school remains an important quest for HCCPS. The Finance Committee has analyzed the finances necessary to facilitate an improved site and, in particular, how much we could sustainably borrow given different student enrollment numbers. Simultaneously, the Long Range Planning committee and the Board of Trustees endorsed a larger school size and engaged in strategic planning, including the implications of a larger school size. The Board and the Site Committee met with consultants from a non-profit real-estate development company to facilitate our site investigation and decision making process. Equipped with the outcomes of these discussions and reports, the Site Committee continues to pursue viable options, including more in-depth evaluation of the building in which we currently reside. We will all work closely together over the next year to pursue collectively the common goal of an improved site.

In terms of curriculum, the school's program remains fairly similar to the previous year, with a strong focus on integration across multiple disciplines, including art and music. As in past years, each class completed substantial projects this year demonstrating the effectiveness of such integration. The teachers also selected and implemented a set of organizational tools school-wide to assist students in visual organization and planning throughout the curriculum. And the teachers adopted a new math curriculum for grades 6-8.

We have had 2 teachers and 2 staff members leave the school at the end of the 2011-2012 year, but have successfully completed hiring new employees for these positions. The largest change will be with the music and movement position, as the teacher who retired has been with the school since its founding and personally shaped the vast majority of the music and movement curriculum. New hires bring new energy and ideas to the school, however, so we are optimistic about the infusion of new talent to our already strong staff.

Our community continues to remain strong with over 97% participation from HCCPS families. Fundraising is still a top priority, so as to offer the educational program that our students deserve. In 2011-2012, our Annual Fund surpassed the ambitious goal of \$25,000, representing a 22% increase in cash gifts from the previous year. We are continuing efforts to build a culture of philanthropy in the school to secure much-needed funds to support our educational mission.

It has been a pleasure to serve as the Board of Trustees President. I respectfully hand over the role to the new President, but look forward to remaining on the Board for one more year.

Sincerely,

Susannah Howe

President, Board of Trustees

INTRODUCTION

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School opened its doors in 1995 with 40 students, grades kindergarten to 3rd grade. On the brink of our eighteenth year we are a school of 172 students, kindergarten to 8th grade, with a maximum enrollment of 180. Intentionally, we will not reach full enrollment until we are in an improved facility. Our current charter expires in June 30, 2015. We are in our original leased building, a turn of the century brass works factory in the village of Haydenville. Our waiting list currently has 230 students. Our students come from the districts of Hampshire County (Amherst-Pelham, Belchertown, Central Berkshire Regional, Easthampton, Gateway Regional, Granby, Hadley, Hampshire Regional, Hatfield, Mohawk Regional, Northampton, South Hadley and Ware) and Franklin County (Erving, Frontier Regional, Gill/Montague Regional, Greenfield, Hawlemont Regional, Leverett, Mohawk Regional, New Salem-Wendell, Orange (Mahar Regional) and Pioneer Valley Regional).

MISSION

The Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School was founded in 1995 as a Massachusetts Public Charter School. Our mission is:

- *To engage students in a school which uses experiential, hands-on activities, the arts and interdisciplinary studies to foster critical thinking skills and a joy of learning.*
- *To sustain a cooperative, intimate community of students, staff, families and local community members, which guides and supports the school and its educational program.*
- *To cultivate children's individual voices and a shared respect for each other, our community and the world around us.*

EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

The Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School was founded in 1995 as Massachusetts Public Charter School. Inspired by the pre-schools of Reggio Emilia in Italy, our educational approach is grounded in knowledge of children's development and in a commitment to teaching creative, critical thinking skills, and strong basic skills.

At HCCPS, we believe that children construct their understanding of the world through direct experience, with teachers serving as guides and resources. We create an engaging and joyful learning environment using an interdisciplinary, project-based curriculum. Emphasis is placed on asking children and adults to reflect on and document the learning process. The expressive arts play a critical role in the academic and social curriculum, and create a common language that brings our community together in meaningful ways.

HCCPS welcomes and relies on family involvement. Children, families, staff and community form an integrated, interdependent system whose governance structures guide and support the school and its educational program. Beyond academic curriculum, children learn essential life

skills through participation in an intimate, whole school cooperative. Involvement in the local environment and its communities inspires learning and encourages social and civic responsibility as well as stewardship for the earth.

Parents and teachers help children to care for and respect themselves and each other. We strongly believe that cultivation of each individual voice within a community leads to inclusion of and respect for differences and multiple perspectives.

PERFORMANCE AND PLANS

Faithfulness to the Charter

OBJECTIVE A: HCCPS is faithful to the mission, vision and educational philosophy defined in the charter application and any subsequent approved amendment(s).

Measure 1: 90% of families who respond to the annual satisfaction survey will report that there exists a strong sense of community among students, staff, and families. At least 40% of families will complete the survey.

We have consistently met this goal. This year 100% of respondents to our School Satisfaction Survey either agreed or strongly agreed that Hilltown "has built a strong sense of community among students, staff and families." Just over 50% of our families responded to the annual survey.

Measure 2: The school, via its volunteers, will sponsor monthly events- social, cultural, and educational in nature

We, once again, successfully met this goal. A community event was held each month from August to July, beginning with a social picnic in August prior to be the beginning of the year. The events included family events like movie night or an all-school sleepover, cooperative meetings with the topics of long-range strategic planning, school expansion and new site possibilities, educational forums around our new pedagogical tools and a review and reconsideration of homework expectations, adult social events/ fundraisers, and a variety of school-wide celebrations.

Measure 3: Community compacts will be signed by 100% of families annually.

This year every family completed a Community Compact (*see Attachments*), a signed statement of agreement among all of the constituents in the school —parents, teachers, administration and students —outlining our intention to work together to create a supportive learning environment.

OBJECTIVE B: The HCCPS Board of Trustees implements the governance and leadership structure as defined in the charter application and any subsequent approved amendment(s).

Measure 1: Board of Trustees decisions will be made using a consensus model of decision making at least 90% of the time as indicated in Board minutes. Majority votes will only be taken if consensus cannot be reached in a timely manner.

100% of the decisions of the Board of Trustees were made by consensus process during the 2011-2012 school year. Voting was not necessary except when required by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education - such as when entering into and exiting from Executive Session. The members of the cooperative voted at the Annual Meeting for new Board of Trustee members and the Board of Trustees ratified this vote.

Measure 2: Board committees will meet monthly, as indicated in committee minutes.

Except in August, all committees met monthly.

OBJECTIVE C: HCCPS establishes an academic program that includes the pedagogical approach, curriculum, assessment, and other unique elements defined in the charter application and any subsequent approved amendment(s).

Measure 1: Each classroom will produce two documentation projects annually detailing the purpose, scope, and implementation of interdisciplinary projects. These documentations will be on display at school and digitally archived.

The purpose of this goal is to emphasize the process of learning for our students and broader community. We achieved this goal, and in many cases, classes documented more than two projects. Among the projects we documented this year were:

- A Family Study by Kindergarten and First Graders.
- A study the Underground Railroad by Second and Third Graders.
- A study of the Human Body by Fourth and Fifth graders.
- A study of Ancient Greece by Sixth Graders.
- A study of United States History from 1789-1880s by Seventh and Eighth graders.

Measure 2: Each Grade 8 student will design, develop, and present an independent culminating project which will demonstrate what s/he has gained from the HCCPS experience. 100% of these students will achieve a passing score on the Grade 8 culminating project rubric.

Each eighth grader is required to create an independent project, using the skills they developed at Hilltown. This year's projects represented an incredible array of diversity. Students completed projects that used art, music, video, writing, science, and social studies as major learning modalities. All students achieved a passing score on the Culminating Project Rubric. The following is a list of project topics for the 2011-2012 academic year:

- Environmental impact of dams
- Cultural and social value of bread making
- How nuclear power plants work
- Political and cultural importance of women's fashion in the 1920s

- Synesthesia
- Comparing the engineering of typewriter and computer keys
- The use of cantilevers in architecture
- Fashion in the Renaissance
- Cheese making
- The science of tornados
- The roots and history of animation
- The life and impact of Andy Warhol
- Robotics
- Light refraction
- Forensic criminology
- Uses and types of camouflage
- What is Qui (chi)

Common School Performance Criteria

Implementation of Mission, Vision, and Educational Philosophy

When the school set out on a long-range planning process in 2002, one of the first tasks was to revise the mission statement. Following adoption of the new mission and accompanying educational philosophy, a document was created and called Critical Elements of Classroom Practice. The Critical Elements covers the following areas: Learning Environment; Curriculum; and Relationships. It provides a guide to the type of academic and social program envisioned in the Mission. That document in turn was used to create the HCCPS Job Responsibilities and Standards, ensuring that teachers' job descriptions are mission based. (*3 documents attached*)

Over the last 17 years Hilltown has developed a shared language - from the songs that we sing, to our mission statement, to the student-generated "code of cooperation" and Community Compact – which gives both students and their families a powerful sense of belonging. Major traditions at the school - including All School, (an assembly of sharing that happens every Friday morning), Il Teatro, (a talent show that takes place four times a year), a Martin Luther King Celebration where each class has a voice, a winter solstice celebration right before the break in December, a mid-winter all-school sleepover, a Spring Music Festival, a summer celebration with our Community Service Learning partners at the Overlook Nursing Home and a very personal graduation ceremony – all reinforce the collaborative identity of our school.

The consistent pursuit of multi-age learning experiences and the inclusion of parents in all aspects of the school are ways that Hilltown builds this community beyond the boundaries of each classroom. Parents are welcome in any class at almost any time and they are regularly present there. Younger and older students meet each other in mini-courses, at lunch, on the

playground, as “Buddies” and by doing special projects together, as well as during their time at our weekly All-School Assembly.

Part of sustaining an intimate community for us here at school includes reaching out and sharing ourselves with others. Hilltown has developed a strong ongoing Community Service Learning relationship with The Overlook at Northampton, a nearby nursing home, which involves every student in the school every year. Classes rotate weekly visits on a monthly basis engaging with the residents at Overlook in a wide variety of endeavors, many of which are connected to the curriculum. This year students explored reading, science, writing, art, music, gardening, and physical education with the residents, as well as entertaining them with performances. At the end of each year we have a culminating Summer Celebration including all of our school community and many of the residents and staff at Overlook.

Special family or all-adult social events are also held on a regular basis to provide a way for parents to connect with one another and with the teachers and staff in an out-of-school environment. Assigned “Link Families” and school-sponsored social gatherings during the summer offer incoming families a connection with returning families so that no one enters the school without knowing at least one other person here.

Many of the goals and measures found elsewhere in this report point to the multitude of ways in which the school is faithful to what is described in our charter application and are further evidence of our emphasis on community, respect, experiential learning and the cultivation of the individual voices of our students.

Implementation of the Governance/leadership Structure

The Board of Trustees consistently operates using consensus process for its decision-making based on a founding principle of the school - that consent by the whole group is more inclusive than majority rule, where some opinions can be overridden. Consensus process necessitates listening to all and considering compromise rather than dominance and though it sometimes takes a little longer than voting, the board continues to find it valuable.

The Board of Trustees supervises three Coordinators who collaborate closely and make up the leadership team of the school. The Administrative Coordinator oversees school operations, admissions, the building, finances and state reporting. The Education Coordinator is responsible for the supervision of faculty and other educational staff and for leading the faculty in creating curriculum. The Community Coordinator reaches across boundaries to engage parents and community members in the program at Hilltown, including special programs, the coordination of Community Service Learning and the school's fundraising efforts

Academic Program Success

MCAS Performance, Growth, and AYP

MCAS Results, Spring 2011

Grade and Subject	Proficient or Higher		Advanced		Proficient		Needs Improvement		Warning/ Failing		Students Included	CPI	SGP	Included in SGP
	SCHOOL	STATE	SCHOOL	STATE	SCHOOL	STATE	SCHOOL	STATE	SCHOOL	STATE				
GRADE 03 - READING	90	61	11	11	79	50	5	30	5	9	19	93.4	N/A	N/A
GRADE 03 - MATHEMATICS	73	66	5	14	68	52	21	25	5	10	19	89.5	N/A	N/A
GRADE 04 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	21	53	0	10	21	43	74	35	5	12	19	71.1	N/A	18
GRADE 04 - MATHEMATICS	42	47	5	15	37	32	58	42	0	11	19	82.9	N/A	18
GRADE 05 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	68	67	5	17	63	50	32	24	0	9	19	90.8	N/A	19
GRADE 05 - MATHEMATICS	52	59	26	25	26	34	37	26	11	15	19	78.9	N/A	19
GRADE 05 - SCIENCE AND TECH/ENG	69	50	16	14	53	36	32	36	0	15	19	90.8	N/A	N/A
GRADE 06 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	95	68	42	17	53	51	5	23	0	9	19	98.7	N/A	19
GRADE 06 - MATHEMATICS	79	58	53	26	26	32	16	25	5	16	19	90.8	N/A	19
GRADE 07 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	100	73	29	14	71	59	0	21	0	6	17	100.0	N/A	14
GRADE 07 - MATHEMATICS	88	51	53	19	35	32	12	27	0	22	17	95.6	N/A	14
GRADE 08 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	88	79	13	20	75	59	13	15	0	6	16	96.9	N/A	15
GRADE 08 - MATHEMATICS	50	52	31	23	19	29	38	27	13	21	16	73.4	N/A	15
GRADE 08 - SCIENCE AND TECH/ENG	63	39	0	4	63	35	31	42	6	19	16	82.8	N/A	N/A
ALL GRADES - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	77	69	17	17	60	52	22	23	2	8	109	91.5	48.0	85
ALL GRADES - MATHEMATICS	64	58	28	24	36	34	30	27	6	15	109	85.3	63.0	85

2011 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Data - Summary

[Summary Data](#) | [Detailed Data](#)

	NCLB Accountability Status	Improvement Rating
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	No Status	No Change
MATHEMATICS	No Status	No Change

To make AYP in 2011, a student group must meet (A) a student participation requirement, either (B) the State's 2011 performance target for that subject or (C) the group's own 2011 improvement target, and (D) an additional attendance or graduation requirement.

Student Group	(A) Participation Did at least 95% of students participate in MCAS?		(B) Performance Did student group meet or exceed state performance target?		(C) Improvement Did student group meet or exceed its own improvement target?		(D) Attendance Did student group meet attendance (G1-8) or graduation rate target (G9-12)?		AYP 2011
	Met Target	Actual	Met Target (95.1)	Actual	Met Target	Change from 2010	Met Target	Actual	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS									
Aggregate	Yes	99	No	91.5	No	-2.2	Yes	95.6	No
Lim. English Prof.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Special Education	-	-	-	81.3	-	-	-	-	-
Low Income	-	-	-	91.4	-	-	-	-	-
Afr. Amer./Black	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Asian or Pacif. Isl.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hispanic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Native American	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
White	Yes	99	No	93.1	Yes	0.1	Yes	95.5	Yes
MATHEMATICS									
Aggregate	Yes	99	No	85.3	No	-1.4	Yes	95.6	No
Lim. English Prof.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Special Education	-	-	-	70.0	-	-	-	-	-
Low Income	-	-	-	81.0	-	-	-	-	-
Afr. Amer./Black	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Asian or Pacif. Isl.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Hispanic	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Native American	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
White	Yes	99	No	86.4	No	-0.4	Yes	95.5	No

Adequate Yearly Progress History										NCLB Accountability Status	
		2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011		
ELA	Aggregate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No Status	
	All Subgroups	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		
MATH	Aggregate	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No Status	
	All Subgroups	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No		

OBJECTIVE A: Students at the school demonstrate proficiency, or progress toward meeting proficiency targets on state standards, as measured by the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS) exams in all subject areas and at all grade levels tested for accountability purposes.

Measure 1: HCCPS shows an annual increase in the CPI in ELA and mathematics in the aggregate and for all statistically significant subgroups

In ELA, our CPI was 93.7 in 2010 and 91.5 in 2011. In mathematics, our CPI was 86.7 in 2010 and 85.3 in 2011. While we did not meet targets for either improvement or performance, over the past five years our scores have been relatively strong and stable, and because they are at a high level, we believe we can continue fine tuning our program and not make major changes at this time.

Measure 2: HCCPS shows an annual decrease in the percentage of students scoring Warning/Failing on standard MCAS tests in ELA and mathematics in the aggregate and for all statistically significant subgroups

In ELA less than 1% of students were at the Warning/Failing level in 2010, and less than 2% in 2011. In mathematics, there were less than 5.6% at the Warning/Failing level in 2010, and 5.5% in 2011. In all cases, because the population of the school is small, and number of students at this level is also small, we are not concerned about these changes at this time. We continue to work towards the goal of having no students in this category.

OBJECTIVE B: HCCPS achieves and maintains a median student growth percentile (SGP) of 40 or higher in the aggregate and for all statistically significant sub-groups in all subject areas tested for accountability purposes.

Measure 1: Each year, the median students growth percentile is 40 or higher in the aggregate and for all statistically significant sub-groups in all subject areas tested for accountability purposes.

This year, Hilltown students achieved a median student growth percentile (SGP) of 48.0 and 63.0 respectively in the ELA and mathematics tests. No sub-groups were reported due to small sample size.

OBJECTIVE C1: HCCPS makes Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the aggregate and for all statistically significant sub- groups in English language arts and mathematics.

Measure 1: Each year, HCCPS makes Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the aggregate and for all statistically significant sub- groups in English language arts and mathematics.

Hilltown did not make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the aggregate for English language arts or mathematics. This is the first time this has happened in nine years. We did make AYP for all subgroups in ELA. As previously noted, because our achievement levels have been consistently high, we are not concerned at this time.

OBJECTIVE C2: HCCPS does not have a status for accountability purposes of Improvement, Corrective Action or Restructuring.

Measure 2: Each year, HCCPS does not have a status for accountability purposes of Improvement, Corrective Action or Restructuring

Hilltown does not have, and has never had a status for accountability purposes of Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring.

OBJECTIVE D: If externally- developed assessments other than the MCAS are administered, student performance is strong and demonstrates improvement over time on those assessments.

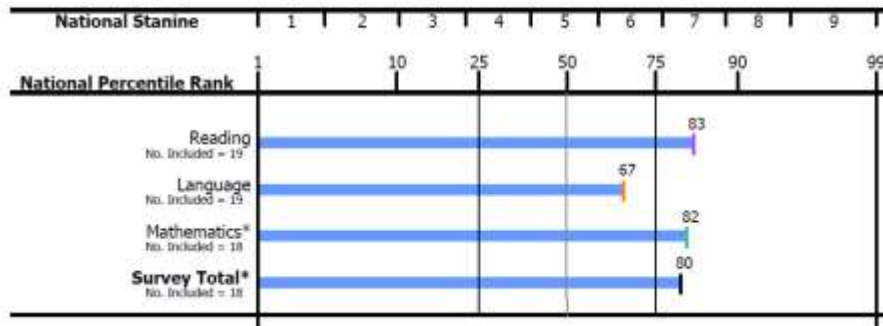
Measure 1: Each grade, 3-8, will score in the top quartile annually in the tested areas of reading, math, language, and Core Total on the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills;

Students of third through eighth grade age take the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) in reading, language and math. We view our ITBS results as helpful because of the long history of validity and reliability of the ITBS and because of its broad, national student base. Our ITBS scores continue to be strong in all areas of the test.

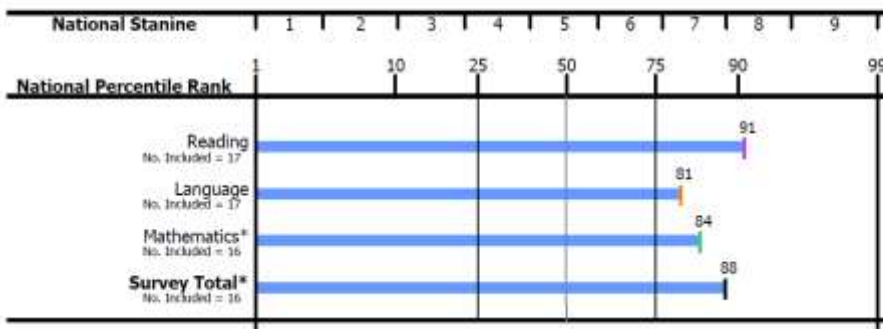
We met our goals in 22 of 24 subtest areas. In the remaining 2, scores were on the 6th stanine and therefore so close to the top quartile that we are not concerned about the differences.

Iowa Test of Basic Skills, December 2010

Group Display			
Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) Form: A Test Date: 12/01/2011 Norms: 12/01 2005	Grade: 3 Level: 9 Building: Hilltown Charter	System: Hilltown Charter State: MA	Disaggregation: All Students Score Type: National Percentile Rank Admin. Type: Print

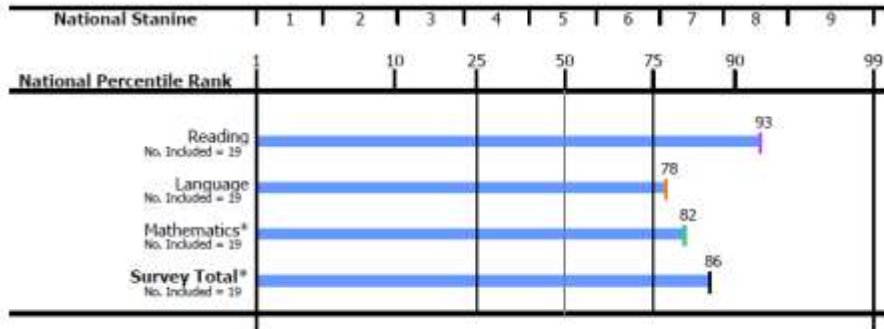


Group Display			
Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) Form: A Test Date: 12/01/2011 Norms: 12/01 2005	Grade: 4 Level: 10 Building: Hilltown Charter	System: Hilltown Charter State: MA	Disaggregation: All Students Score Type: National Percentile Rank Admin. Type: Print



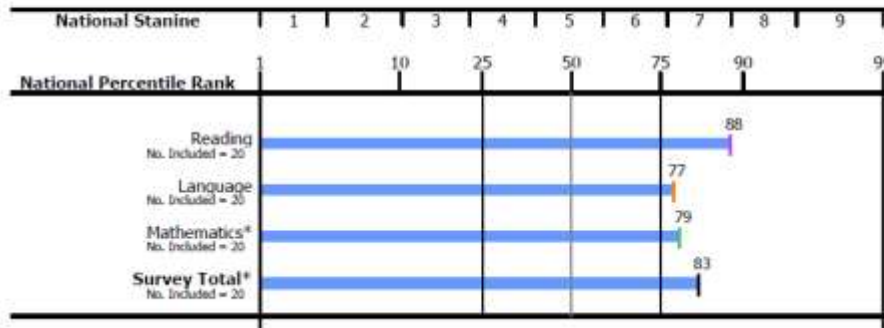
Group Display

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) Form: A Test Date: 12/01/2011 Norms: 12/01 2005	Grade: 5 Level: 11 Building: Hilltown Charter	System: Hilltown Charter State: MA	Disaggregation: All Students Score Type: National Percentile Rank Admin. Type: Print
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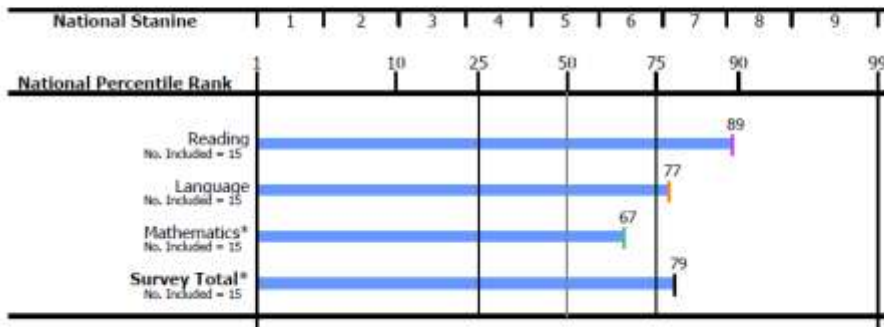
Group Display

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) Form: A Test Date: 12/01/2011 Norms: 12/01 2005	Grade: 6 Level: 12 Building: Hilltown Charter	System: Hilltown Charter State: MA	Disaggregation: All Students Score Type: National Percentile Rank Admin. Type: Print
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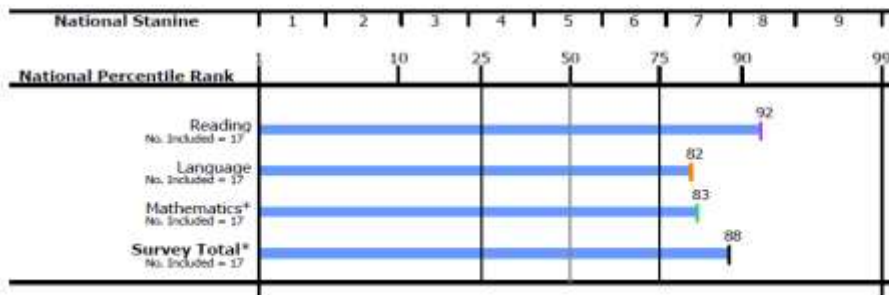
Group Display

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) Form: A Test Date: 12/01/2011 Norms: 12/01 2005	Grade: 7 Level: 13 Building: Hilltown Charter	System: Hilltown Charter State: MA	Disaggregation: All Students Score Type: National Percentile Rank Admin. Type: Print
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Group Display

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) | Grade: 8 | Level: 14 | System: Hilltown Charter | Disaggregation: All Students
 Form: A | Building: Hilltown Charter | State: MA | Score Type: National Percentile Rank
 Test Date: 12/01/2011 | Admin. Type: Print
 Norms: 12/01 2005



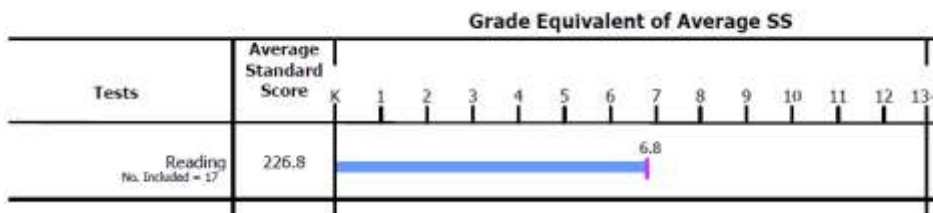
Measure 2: 90% of all 4th graders will test at or above grade level in the area of reading on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.

This year, 95% of all 4th graders tested at or above grade level in the area of reading. The average grade level for this group was 6.8 and median was 7.4.

Fourth Grade Reading Scores, Iowa Test of Basic Skills, December 2010

Group Display

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) | Grade: 4 | Level: 10 | System: Hilltown Charter | Disaggregation: All Students
 Form: A | Building: Hilltown Charter | State: MA | Score Type: Grade Equivalent
 Test Date: 12/01/2011 | Admin. Type: Print
 Norms: 12/01 2005



Internal assessments of student achievement

OBJECTIVE E: Student performance is strong and demonstrates improvement on Internally-developed assessments of student achievement

Measure 1: 80% of all students in grades K-3 will annually gain at least one previously defined level on the HCCPS reading, writing and math assessment;

Hilltown Reading Assessment Results, K-3rd Fall 2010-Spring 2011

Level (1 level = 1 Grade Level)	Percentage of Students
Less than 1 Level	10%
1 Level progress	52%
2 Levels progress	27%
3 Levels. progress	11%

Hilltown Writing Assessment Results, K-3rd Fall 2011-Spring 2012

Level (1 Level = 6 points, HCCPS Rubric)	Percentage of Students
Lost One Level	3%
No Gain	19%
One Level Gain	47%
Two or More Level Gains	31%

Hilltown Mathematics Assessment Results, K-3 Fall 2011-Spring 2012

Level (1 Level = 20 percentage points)	Percentage of Students
Less than 1 Level	12%
1 Level progress	53%
2 Levels progress	35%

Measure 2: Eighty percent of all students in grades 4-8 will score at the predetermined proficient level on the spring Hilltown math and writing assessments.

Hilltown Mathematics Assessment Results, 4th-8th Spring 2012

Level (Proficient =70%)	Percentage of Students
0-69%	9%
70-100%	91%

Hilltown Writing Assessment Results, 4th-8th Spring 2012

Hilltown Writing Rubric (Proficient = 15 on 4-8 rubric)	Percentage of Students
Advanced	0%
Proficient	47%
Just Below Proficient	47%
Novice	6%

Common School Performance Criteria

Curriculum and Instruction:

Curriculum at HCCPS contains both open-ended and established components. We work to help children develop their basic skills in reading, writing, and mathematics. Often, this instruction occurs in the context of teaching a larger theme or concept. Other times, skills are taught directly, and practiced regularly through a variety of curricular projects. We use some published materials in the reading, writing, mathematics and spelling. These are supplemented by a

variety of teacher generated materials. We look at students as individuals, and work to meet their needs through a variety of instructional strategies.

Topics from the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks are used to identify themes of study and determine content areas. Over the course of the years, we have worked with the Frameworks to define the course of studies in our mixed age classrooms. As the frameworks have changed, particularly in Social Studies and Science, we have modified the program. Grade level competencies have been developed using the Frameworks as a basis, and form a core scope and sequence. This year, we began the process of aligning our curriculum with the Common Core Standards. Teachers engaged in the process of examining the math curriculum and making necessary adjustments. Ongoing professional development sessions addressed these issues (we meet bi-weekly) and as a result, next year will be using a new curriculum with Grades 6-8. We selected the Big Ideas Math program for a variety of reasons, and its alignment with the Common Core was high on the list. Next year we will be selecting a new math program for Grades K-5 and again alignment is an essential quality for any program under consideration.

At the same time, we value giving students the opportunity to steer the direction of the curriculum in any given year. Based on a given topic, teachers pose an initial, open-ended question. Exploration (research, study, experiments, and other activities that come out of this inquiry: typically what the children want to know more about), happens next. This exploration naturally leads to more opportunities for further questioning. Throughout this process, teachers look to integrate the arts—visual art and music, into the integrated study. This is accomplished through intensive collaborative processes. Teachers meet three times each month to collaborate in the creation of an interdisciplinary curriculum. For K-5 teachers, this happens on Wednesday afternoons, and for 6-8 teachers, it occurs during lunchtime meetings. We consider being facile with the curriculum to be essential to the mission of the school, and paramount to offering the kind of experiential, arts- based, interdisciplinary program described in the mission.

As indicated by both internal and external assessments, the curriculum is addressing essential skills and concepts. Over the past decade, student achievement has been consistently high. Still, there remain areas where we seek to improve, in particular writing skills, written responses to open response questions, and mathematical fluency for students moving into the middle school years.

Texts that are used in the school are as follows:

Heads Up Math: Grades 1-4

Explode the Code: Grades K-3

Math's Mate: Grades 5-8

Primary Phonics: Grades K-2

Investigations in Number, Data, and Space, 1st Edition: Grades K-5

Megawords: Grades 4-5

Math In My World: Grade 4-6

Wordly Wise: Grades 4-6

Connected Mathematics: Grade 7-8

Handwriting with Tears, Grades K-1

Supervision and evaluation of teachers:

Annual evaluation includes:

- ◆ Observation reports provided by the Education Coordinator.
- ◆ Summaries of parent feedback.
- ◆ Annual self-evaluation report completed by teacher.
- ◆ Annual evaluation report from Education Coordinator addressing all five major areas of HCCPS Job Responsibilities and Standards.

Soliciting parents from feedback, both about individual teachers and the school in general allows us to examine any trends or patterns and make adjustments.

Informal feedback is ongoing through the process of collaboration in creating the curriculum, and in working through a myriad of school issues. Teachers meet weekly to either work together on curricular professional development projects or to tackle ongoing school wide issues that fall outside the boundaries of traditional curriculum. Teachers are expected to have an active voice, and share ideas and feedback with one another.

Professional development:

Hilltown is committed to ensuring that teachers stay current in their fields, continue to be stimulated and supported and grow in new skill areas every year. This year, our staff participated in ten full professional development days, 18 after school sessions, and weekly meetings regarding curriculum integration and peer mentoring.

This year was the final year of a three-year commitment to work with the Center for Collaborative Education to both refine our own internal assessment systems, and to develop performance assessments in English Language Arts that can be used throughout the Commonwealth. Several sessions of professional development were devoted to performance assessment, specifically modifications to the writing assessments we developed last year.

As noted earlier, a major focus this year was Mathematics, and through a series of professional development sessions, the teaching staff came to the conclusion that we needed to adopt a new math program. We developed a list of criteria and priorities for the new curriculum, and began examining published programs. By the end of the year, the 6th-8th grade team recommended adopting the Big Ideas Math curriculum, and funding was approved by the Board of Trustees. In the fall of 2012, we will begin using this program.

Teaching staff also participated in the school's Long Range Planning process. One of our staff development days was spent in part looking at questions related to expanding the size of the school. Staff members shared potential problems as well as explored the many benefits of potential expansion. Ultimately, teachers made recommendations to the Long Range Planning Committee.

Additionally, staff went to many conferences outside of school on a wide range of topics including the following:

- Supporting English language learners.
- Lindamood Bell Reading Method
- Autism Spectrum Disorders
- Literacy for All
- Engineering in the Elementary School Classroom
- Reading Recovery Institute
- KIDS CONSORTIUM Community Service Learning Conference

Professional Climate:

The focus at Hilltown, which is shared by teachers, staff members, and parents, is on creating an intimate learning community. The many structures we use to create this community, from our weekly “all schools” to our cooperative meetings are aimed at creating the best conditions for teaching and learning. We have historically had very little attrition among staff. Next year we will have two teachers on leave, and two additional new teachers. There is again no turnover in the administration.

Collaboration:

Regular collaboration among staff is a key to Hilltown’s success. As noted earlier, regular meetings between administrators, classroom teachers, special subject teachers, teaching assistants and special education teachers are built into the weekly schedule and ensure that close communication and planning occurs. Making time for collaboration in all areas is key to the “cooperative” aspects of our mission.

School culture:

At the beginning of the first year of the school (1995), the students developed a four-point “Code of Cooperation”. This has evolved into our Community Compact, an agreement which is now signed by students, parents, teachers and administrators at the beginning of each school year. During the first weeks of school, all classes review and re-commit to this code, discussing strategies for inclusion, respect and conflict resolution. Throughout the year students are encouraged to engage directly with their peers to resolve conflict and, when necessary, to use the assistance of an adult mediator. Because of the schools’ emphasis on these values, we see very little bullying or seriously aggressive behavior during the year. We do have the normal problems that any group of children may have when they work so closely together. We try and address these problems directly.

In individual cases, behavioral plans and/or contracts are developed. These involve teachers, parents, and the student. The Education Coordinator works with teachers to implement these plans.

There are many formal structures in place to ensure that classrooms support student learning. Behavioral expectations are reviewed by all staff members at the beginning of the year. Weekly teacher meetings, as well as monthly professional development sessions focus on maintaining high quality experiences in the classroom. Regular meetings of curriculum integration teams

ensure that the interdisciplinary aspect of our mission is fulfilled. And a weekly Community Time ensures that all school community experiences are active in every child's life.

Diverse learners:

The curriculum is designed to meet the needs of many types of learners. The hands-on experiential nature of the program emphasizes discovery through a variety of modalities. The integration of the music and visual art expands opportunities for students to practice skills and concepts from many different perspectives. That being said, it is essential to have other systems in place to ensure that all students' needs are met. The district accommodation plan (DCAP) was developed in part to provide strategies for teachers to use when students struggle. It outlines possible interventions for teachers depending on the presenting issues. A child study process (which is essentially the same as an RTI process) has been in place for many years and allows any teacher or parent to refer a child to the team which consists of the education coordinator, the consulting psychologist, the school counselor, and other staff members as needed. The team recommends interventions and tracks progress. The child study process is often successful at addressing the need of different kinds of learners, and identifies both strategies and supports within the regular education program that are able to meet a student's needs. Sometimes, the child study process becomes the referral for eligibility for Special Education.

We have a part time ESL teacher, two full time Special Education teachers, and a part time Speech and Language therapist, physical therapist, occupational therapist, and school counselor. These professionals work with students with identified special education or English language learner needs, but are also able to work with regular education students as needed.

Organizational Viability

OBJECTIVE A1: The school develops an annual budget that can be sustained by enrollment and is in support of student academic achievement.

Measure 1: The school's annual budget is sustained by its enrollment.

The FY 12 budget was 90 % supported by state tuition for 165 students all of whom were enrolled for the full year. The remaining 10 % of revenue came from private grants and fundraising. (see financial reports on pg 27)

OBJECTIVE A2: The school demonstrates a history of positive assets, adequate cash flow to sustain operations and support the academic program, and consistently operates within budget.

Measure 2: Each year, the school demonstrates a history of positive net assets, adequate cash flow to sustain operations and support the academic program, and consistently operates within budget.

FY 12 is the first year that HCCPS ended with a deficit. During the course of the year new students' IEPs necessitated the hiring of two new one-on-one assistants, we had a higher than anticipated enrollment in health insurance, and late summer hires came in at higher salary steps than expected. However, as you can see on the attached Balance Sheet we still have been able

to maintain a Contingency Fund of 15% of our operating budget to help us manage these unanticipated expenses. (see financial reports on pg 27). The Board adopted a zero balanced budget for FY 13, with very realistic expectations.

OBJECTIVE A3: The school's annual independent audit is free of material or repeated findings.

Measure 3: There is an absence of material or repeated audit findings in annual audits by qualified independent auditor

The school's FY 11 audit and all annual independent audits have been free of material or repeated findings.

OBJECTIVE B: The HCCPS board of trustees and school leadership implement effective structures and systems to enable responsible fiscal oversight of the school.

The HCCPS board of trustees demonstrates long-term fiscal oversight through appropriate planning processes.

Measure 1: Quarterly fiscal balance sheets will show that the school maintains 15% of its total operating budget as cash reserves.

The Finance Committee and the full Board reviewed financial statements quarterly and, in the process, assured that cash reserves (contingency fund plus undesignated fund balance) equaled at least 15% of the total operating budget.

OBJECTIVE C: The school implements the student recruitment, retention, and enrollment process intended in the charter to ensure sufficient enrollment.

Measure 1: The ratio of student applications to available openings will average at least 3:1 annually.

We had a total of 270 applicants for 25 spots in FY 12 for over a 10:1 ratio.

OBJECTIVE D: HCCPS has realistic plans for program improvement, possible future expansion, and adequate facilities based on evaluation and analysis of data

Measure 1: By the fall of 2012 The Board will adopt a new strategic plan to serve the school through 2020.

The Long Range Planning Group, comprised of 2 board members, 2 parents, 2 faculty and 3 administrators, has continued to meet and make significant progress toward framing the goals and priorities for the strategic plan. One primary recommendation proposed by the Long Range Planning Group, increasing our enrollment cap, has already been initiated with an amendment request to DESE in July, 2012. In addition, our Site Committee is working with consultants in our continuing efforts to procure an improved facility.

Measure 2: The Board will incorporate ideas and input from staff, parents, and community members via 2 focus groups, committee membership and 2 surveys.

This year we held two meetings of the Cooperative during the year, in addition to the Annual meeting where Board of Trustees elections are held. At the fall meeting, the discussion was around new site possibilities and at the second meeting the focus was on school expansion and long-range planning. Both meetings provided an opportunity for parent/Board interaction and discussion about issues that will have an impact on Board decision-making

Several meetings were held with staff about these same topics including groupings of teachers only, teaching assistants only and all staff together.

Friends of Hilltown, a parent-led 501c3 organization, assumes the major fundraising responsibility for the school. It reports monthly to the Board and with guidance from our Development Associate has significantly increased the effectiveness of our annual fund which the Board factors into the budget each year.

As usual, we conducted a parent satisfaction survey which will have an impact on Board and management discussions and decisions in the coming year. We received 77 responses, representing a little more than 50% of our families We used a scale of 1-5 where 5 was "strongly agree" and 1 was "strongly disagree. A summary of the results follows in the next section. The Long Range Planning Group is using these results as part of their data as well.

OBJECTIVE E: The school involves parents/guardians as partners in the education of their children.

Measure 1: 100% of families will be actively involved in the school through membership in its consensus based governing structures, participation in community meetings, and/or participation in the activities in its classrooms.

We have successfully met this goal. There is not a family currently in the school who has not been involved actively in one of these areas. We ask for 40 hours of volunteer time per family each year and parents volunteer because they believe in the mission and goals of Hilltown and they are drawn to a school that is truly a community.

While we understand that every family cannot offer the full 4 hours each month, we do our best to find ways for each one to be involved as much as they are able in whatever capacity works for them. Our Community Coordinator, Deirdre Arthen, acts as a resource to both parents and teachers and continually networks with Board, staff, teachers and parents to match volunteer skills with school needs in a cohesive fashion. Ninety-seven percent of families volunteered actively in the school during the course of this year; 44 of them put in 40 hours of time or more and an additional 7 of them served over 80 hours during the school year.

On a classroom level, parents teach mini-courses, help with the music program, lead choice activities, give special presentations on areas of knowledge, assist teachers with classroom activities and documentation and coordinate field trips. Parents participate in staff hiring, write articles for our weekly newsletter and help with physical plant management and site renovations. Parents also organize the annual Winter Fair and Art Spark, which are keystones of our yearly fundraising

This year parents again rallied behind the Friends of Hilltown, a non-profit 501-c3 with the mission of raising funds for the school. This active and enthusiastic parent group, with the support of the school's Development Associate, has been very successful, meeting challenging goals and significantly increasing both the amount of money raised in the Annual Fund and the participation percentages.

On a governance level, parents serve on the Board of Trustees and as members and chairs of the standing Board committees - Finance, Personnel, Governance and Site.

Parents who do not directly serve in governance positions have ample opportunity to give input in Co-op meetings and special forums. Parents are asked to complete evaluation forms on teachers and staff and a school satisfaction survey, and parent meetings are also held each year to allow for input on budget priorities.

Measure 2: *Class meeting and family conferences will be attended by 100% of school families.*

Class meetings and family conferences are essential to building strong partnerships between parents and teachers. This year 100% of families attended either class meetings, family conferences or both.

Common School Performance Criteria

Policy decisions:

The Board of Trustees (BOT) was quite productive in FY 2012. After extensive review of potential renovation costs the Board decided not to pursue the Hatfield facility project which had been in the last in the prior year. While it was hard to walk away from this historic and vacant building it was a prudent decision. The Board actively pursued another site in Easthampton only to lose out to a faster bidder. The search for an improved site goes on.

As mentioned elsewhere, the BOT has begun its second long range planning process which will continue in the coming year. The first half of the year was spent debating the pros and cons of expanding our school size. As a small, intimate educational community this decision has greater impact than it would in a school twice our size. After meeting with the staff and hearing from the parent community the Board decided to pursue an enrollment cap increase via the charter amendment process. We expect to hear from the Board of Education in late 2012. Implementation will not take place until we acquire more space.

The Board of Trustees also approved some minor changes to our Employee Handbook, clarifying use of leave time for 12 month employees. They also approved the adoption and purchase of a new math curriculum as recommended by the Education Domain.

Amendments to the charter:

We did not request amendments this past year. As a result of our long range strategic planning we have recently submitted an amendment to increase our enrollment cap from 180 to 220. We anticipate a response in November.

Complaints:

No official complaints were received in FY 2012.

Oversight:

The Board of Trustees oversees and evaluates the three Coordinators to ensure that the mission of the school is at the core of all decision-making, that policies set forth by the Board are being implemented and that the three Coordinators are performing their respective responsibilities as required. A Supervisory Team, comprised of the president and vice-president, works with the Coordinators through the school year, meeting with each Coordinator individually, agreeing on goals for the year which relate to institutional goals, offering suggestions for problems and reporting to the BOT when necessary. Full annual evaluations of the Coordinators, reflecting the success or failure in meeting goals for the year and proposing new goals for the coming year, are written by this team. The evaluation process includes a self-reflection submitted by each Coordinator, feedback from board members and other staff members and input from parents via the annual school satisfaction survey. This data, along with the results of the ongoing meetings, testing scores, annual audits, and direct observation, are compiled and reviewed by the team prior to writing the formal evaluation for each Coordinator.

In addition, as you will see below under "Family Satisfaction" we had great success with an online School Satisfaction survey this year. Ours is a school with high transparency and open doors, with an active grapevine and many avenues for communication. If someone, student, parent or staff, is unhappy or questioning, the administration will hear about it quickly.

Board planning:

Our current long range strategic plan covers 2003-2013. The compilation of that plan, our first, was the result of an exhaustive, inclusive 18 month process. We have used this as a guiding document in most critical areas of decision making since its creation. During the 2011-2012 year, planning for a new site continued to be a major Board focus. As mentioned elsewhere a Long-Range Planning Committee has been formed to offer the Board a plan for our next five to ten years. We expect their work to be finalized and a new plan to be adopted by the end of 2013.

Resolution to our site concerns remains a major Board focus. This year we continued extensive work with the Site Committee to find the best permanent location for the school.

Our third year with our new Development Associate saw significant improvement in our annual fund drive, and further strengthening of our affiliated fundraising group, Friends of Hilltown, Inc. We look forward to even greater growth in the year to come.

Family Engagement:

Family engagement and participation in the day to day workings of the school is a high priority for Hilltown. As you read in Objective 5 in the previous section, our families are very involved in all aspects of the school - from the classrooms, to governance committees. We make every

effort to reach out not only to parents, but to grandparents to draw them into the school community. Once a year we host grandparents and "special friends" for an afternoon where they can visit the classrooms and participate in activities with the students. This has served to draw in a number of grandparents as volunteers and active community contributors. Older and younger siblings are welcome in the school as well, to such a degree that when some of our siblings finally are old enough to enter kindergarten, they already feel like they are a part of the school and belong here.

Family satisfaction survey results:

The overall results of the Family Satisfaction Survey were not surprising. Families are very happy here and many parents wrote notes of thanks and appreciation while still offering suggestions for improvement. A report from the survey has been shared with the Board of Trustees' strategic planning committee as they work to shape the future of the school.

We are especially encouraged by the fact that the questions regarding elements of our core mission were answered in the most positive manner. Every respondent either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "Hilltown has built a strong sense of community among students, staff and families.". Not a single respondent felt that there was too much arts and academic curriculum integration or that their child spent too much time doing community service learning. It is clear that these aspects of our mission are both valued and appreciated by our parents.

The greatest concern exhibited, which was no surprise to us, was about our facility, with 33% of respondents expressing dissatisfaction with our interior space. The exterior space is an issue as well with unease shared about the safety of the playground, the age and condition of the building and the presence of other tenants in the building. This has been under consideration for years and our Site Committee and Board of Trustees have been working closely with the administration to address it – through improvements to our space, negotiations with the landlord about repairs and a search for a new home for the school. These are ongoing.

Some parents wanted to know more about our curriculum, particularly about our writing and math programs. Each year we hold two "Education Forums" where aspects of the school's academic curriculum are discussed by our Education Coordinator and some of the teachers. We will address these questions during those this year.

A few people said that they would love to have second language instruction begin earlier. The challenges to adding in early instruction have been the obvious ones – time and money. We are a school with a lot of wonderful programs squeezed into every week, music, art, mini-courses, Community Service Learning... all of these are valuable parts of what makes our school so exceptional. We just can't do everything and provide an excellent basic academic too.

When asked to enumerate the school's greatest strengths, 60 parents responded as follows:

Community – 35

Arts / Integration – 22

Personnel – 17

Ed philosophy/teaching style – 10

Teacher-student ratio/small school size - 5

"Knowing" and honoring students as individuals – 10

Mixed-age classes and activities– 8

Parents' access and involvement – 5

Respect evident among students, staff & families – 5

Also mentioned – parent inclusion, values, emotional safety, communication, inspiring curriculum and All School (our weekly gathering).

When asked about our greatest challenges, 55 parents responded:

Space - 41

Curriculum Consistency – 8

Money/funding – 4

PE and outdoor time – 4

Also mentioned: increasing diversity, maintaining great staff, student behavior/social issues, decision-making process

Safety

We are located in a multi use building. Last year we added hall stairwell lights, closed off some entrances during the school day and instituted a buddy system for younger students crossing a common hallway. These were pre-emptive changes, not in response to any actual problems. Our sticker system allows us to identify approved visitors to the school easily. Preventively, we also added a parking lot guard at pick up time to ensure safe travel by students to their cars.

HCCPS is glad to have a half time counselor on staff. Not only is she available to respond to student emergencies but her prevention based curriculum touches all grades throughout the year. Its orientation is developmental while the foci for the year are designed in conjunction with the classroom teachers. Our counselor can also respond to group situations that may arise in classrooms throughout the year. As an example, we struggled with some 5th grade girl dynamics in one of our rooms, so we began a weekly lunch meeting with this group of girls who were able to talk about how they felt when someone whispers or excludes them. These meetings proved extremely effective at shifting the dynamics amongst that particular group, which, of course, had a ripple effect throughout the class.

After participating, last year, in an extensive training in a multi- purpose health curriculum developed by Planned Parenthood, our nurse and counselor implemented the new program in FY 12. Sixth-8th graders benefited throughout the year from workshops and discussions

featuring decision making, informed choices, peer pressure, contraception, STD's and healthy relationships. It was phenomenally successful and the staff are eager for year 2.

Employee Qualifications:

All our employees, teachers and teaching assistants, are currently “highly qualified” according to applicable federal and state standards. This is a minimum requirement for hiring and applicants are informed of such as part of the hiring process. When our first ELL student enrolled 6 years ago we began sending teachers at several grade levels to all 4 levels of training for certification as ELL teachers and now have several fully certified teachers.

Financial oversight:

The HCCPS budget process begins in January/February depending on the state's fiscal situation. It is an incremental process where input from the community is solicited and incorporated along the way. In some years several of these steps are repeated. It is a transparent process that any and everyone may join. Domain Council is responsible for proposing the budget and the Board of Trustees approves the final version by June 30.

1. Domain Council (composed of the 3 coordinators and the president and vice president of the Board of Trustees) begins identifying known changes to expense/ revenue for the next year and listing possible new expenses.
2. Board of Trustees (BOT) is informed as to whether we anticipate the need for budget cuts or level funding. This may happen multiple times depending on the nature of the fiscal situation. The Board may be asked by Domain Council to make specific line item decisions in advance of the full budget proposal.
3. Staff meet to discuss budget priorities/ realities and give input to Domain Council.
4. Personnel Committee makes recommendation to Domain Council re salary/wage raises for the coming year.
5. Meetings are held for parent discussion, priorities and input.
6. Domain Council synthesizes and prioritizes input from Personnel, staff and parents.
7. Finance Committee vets Domain Council's proposed budget.
8. Domain Council proposes annual budget to the Board with sufficient time to allow approval by June 30.

Recruitment and Retention Plan

I. Recruitment Plan- Report on Implementation in School Year 2011-2012

General Recruitment Activities List recruitment activities undertaken each year which apply to all students.
Display ads in local newspapers; posters/flyers in area post offices, libraries, community centers, public service announcements.

Group	Strategy	Evidence of Implementation	Proposed Strategy changes for SY 12-13
Demographic Group A: Special Education students	Strategies: Revise brochure to include a statement about welcoming and serving students with special needs. Add a section to our website about our services to students with disabilities and our identification and valuation process Our education coordinator will formalize connections with the Northampton and Easthampton	Brochure revisions made; website section added	Due to recent changes in Northampton Special Education Director we will establish a new relationship during the fall. Have special education staff member attend Information Night. Application needs revision
Demographic Group B: Limited English-proficient students	Strategies: add a link to our website for Google Translator; meet with the director of the Center for New Americans to get advice regarding outreach; Advertise at the local language institute.	Google Translator added to website. Established relationship with Center for New Americans	Repeat advertisement at local language institute
Demographic Group C: Students eligible for free lunch	Strategies: meet with director of area community action agency; advertise in their newsletter; put flyers in local public assistance offices.	Advertised in community action newsletter; flyers posted in public assistance offices	No change; repeat
Demographic Group D: Students eligible for reduced price lunch	Using the Maximum Comparison we have a higher % of families who qualify for "reduced lunch" than all our potential sending districts. No goal needed.	No goal in FY 12- already at Comparison Maximum	No change

Demographic Group E: Students who are sub-proficient	Our entry point is kindergarten. Students of this age are too young to have academic proficiency determined so a comparison to sending districts is difficult.	NA	NA
Demographic Group F: Students at risk of dropping out of school	Not applicable. All our students leave us after 8 th grade, in good standing.	NA	NA
Demographic Group G: Students who have dropped out of school	Our entry point is Kindergarten and our oldest students are 14 years old when they graduate. No goal applicable.	NA	NA

II. Retention Plan- Report on Implementation in School Year 2011-2012

Overall Student Retention Goal		Actual student retention SY 2011-12	
SY 11-12 student retention goal was 98%		We retained 99% of our students in SY 11-12	
Goal	Strategy	Evidence of Implementation	Proposed strategy changes for SY 12-13
Keep parents involved	weekly newsletter; transparency of decision making; monthly family events (social and educational); open door practice for school leaders	Family events held 9/2, 9/12, 9/13, 9/15, 9/20, 10/4, 10/20, 11/4, 12/3, 12/23, 1/10, 1/13, 1/19, 2/3, 3/2, 3/31, 4/5, 5/4, 5/16, 6/5, 6/12/20. Weekly email newsletter	No change; repeat
Help students who are struggling	small class size with low adult to child ratio; 3x/week after school homework club; daily non-academic after-school program; frequent parent conferences; child study process for early intervention on a pre-special education evaluation basis	Regular attendance at homework club and after school; 20 child study meetings held	No change; repeat

III. Recruitment Plan for School Year 2012-2013

Group	Goal	Strategy
A. Special Education	To increase outreach activities to Whole Children, a local non-profit that serves children on the autism spectrum and other disabilities	Meet with director of Whole Children; hold an information session on site Establish relationship with the newly hired Director of Special Education for Northampton, our largest sending district.
B. Limited English-proficient students	To increase outreach efforts to new immigrant communities in our area.	Advertise at the local language institute. Continue to communicate with staff from the Center for New Americans
C & D. Students eligible for free or reduced lunch	To increase outreach efforts to low income populations We exceed the Maximum Comparison with the 89 comparison schools for students eligible for reduced lunch. No goal needed.	Continue to advertise in community action agency newsletter; put flyers in local public assistance offices and Northampton City Hall
E. Students who are sub-proficient	Our entry point is kindergarten. Students of this age are too young to have academic proficiency determined so a comparison to sending districts is difficult.	
F. Students at risk of dropping out	Not applicable. All our students leave us after 8 th grade, in good standing.	
G. Students who have dropped out of school	Our entry point is Kindergarten and our oldest students are 14 years old when they graduate. No goal applicable.	

IV. Retention Plan for School Year 2012-2013

Annual goal for student retention	Our goal is 98% student retention
Goal	Strategy
Facilitate a smooth entry for new students and families beyond kindergarten age	spring family orientation meeting; link family hook-ups during the summer; new family breakfast in October; new student/returning student buddies
Keep parents involved	weekly newsletter; transparency of decision making; monthly family events (social and educational); open door practice for school leaders
Help students who are struggling	small class size with low adult: child ratio; 3x/week after school homework club; daily non-academic after- school program; frequent parent conferences; child study process for early intervention on a pre-special education evaluation basis

Dissemination

This year, we finished a three-year commitment to work with BQPAI (Building Quality Performance Assessment Initiative) through the Center for Collaborative Education to develop performance assessments in English Language Arts that can be used throughout the Commonwealth. All of our classroom teachers participated in the training and development of these assessments. BQPAI continued to use our Eighth Grade Project materials and process as a model assessment. A team from BQ visited Hilltown during the 8th graders' presentations, and will be sharing this practice with other schools.

This year, one of our teachers did a great deal of work with the Teaching American History programs, and was a presenter in Emerging America's Teaching with Primary Sources program, and did a presentation for the Boston Public Schools in May. For her work, she was awarded Ronald McDonald House Charities of Connecticut and Western Massachusetts Local Hero Award. In addition, we have had a large number of visiting professionals from local districts, other districts in Massachusetts and from other states.

Finally, we support a regular flow of student teachers from several local universities and colleges. This year we had 4 practicum students from the University of Massachusetts, one from Smith College, and one from Antioch University.

One of our 4/5th grade teachers has been chosen by Westfield State College to be a "Teacher in Residence" for the FY 13 school year. She will be teaching college courses and supervising student teachers. This is a one year appointment and we look forward to what she will share with us upon her return.

This year we created an after- school Community Service Club which developed a strong relationship with Whole Children, a local non-profit organization for children on the autism

spectrum. We spent many afternoons working/playing with their members and jointly performed in three concerts with their chorus. At the annual Massachusetts Service Learning Conference our students lead a workshop on setting up a service learning club and the benefits of their experience.

FINANCIAL REPORTS

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School Unaudited FY 2012 Income & Expenses

	<u>Jul '11 - Jun 12</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
State Sources	1,853,830
State Grants-DOE Administered	54,122
Friends of HCCPS Grant	13,739
Private Grants	5,113
Fundraising Income	40,081
Other sources	19,910
Afterschool Income	39,421
Homework Club	4,854
Student Activity Fees	6,429
Miscellaneous Income	1,129
Total Income	<u>2,038,628</u>
Expense	
Personnel Costs	1,656,063
Consultant & Other Svcs-Fixed	94,386
Consultant & Other Svcs	12,250
Occupancy	284,825
Supplies	31,846
Equipment	15,460
Grant-funded expenses	11,419
Depreciation Expense	30,514
Fees and Licenses	32
Fundraising Projects	55
Interest Expense	572
Other expenses	14,933
Coordinator Discretionary Fund	293
Total Expense	<u>2,152,648</u>
Net Ordinary Income	(114,020)
Other Income/Expense	
Other Income	
Board Designated Income	44,688
Total Other Income	<u>44,688</u>
Other Expense	
Board Designated Expenditures	14,688
Total Other Expense	<u>14,688</u>
Net Other Income	<u>30,000</u>
Net Income	<u><u>(84,020)</u></u>

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School
Unaudited FY 2012 Balance Sheet
as of June 30, 2012

ASSETS	June 30, 2012
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
Easthampton Savings	637,473
Florence Savings	302
Total Checking/Savings	<u>637,774</u>
Accounts Receivable	
Revenue Receivable(Prepayment)	304
Total Accounts Receivable	<u>304</u>
Other Current Assets	
Prepaid Expenses	712
Security Deposit	18,271
Undeposited Funds	45
Total Other Current Assets	<u>19,028</u>
Total Current Assets	657,107
Fixed Assets	
Property and Equipment	34,349
Leasehold Improvements	393,532
Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(369,374)</u>
Total Fixed Assets	<u>58,506</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>715,613</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
Accounts Payable	20,912
Total Accounts Payable	<u>20,912</u>
Credit Cards	
VISA	578
Total Credit Cards	<u>578</u>
Other Current Liabilities	
Accrued Expenses	3,198
Accrued Payroll	153,742
Copier Lease - Current	2,497
Payroll Liabilities	17,345
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>176,782</u>
Total Current Liabilities	198,272

Long Term Liabilities	
Capitalized Lease Obligation	671
Total Long Term Liabilities	<u>671</u>
Total Liabilities	198,943
Equity	
Reserved for Brassworks Improve	20,000
Reserved for Long range planning	572
Reserved for New Site Fund	7,240
Donor Restricted Music Fund	647
Contingency Fund	308,580
Investments in Fixed Assets	55,338
Reserved for Building Fund	1,350
Reserved for Major Equip	1,200
Undesignated Fund Balance	205,762
Net Income	<u>(84,020)</u>
Total Equity	<u>516,670</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u><u>715,613</u></u>

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School FY 2013 Operating Budget

Approved by Board of Trustees June 12, 2012

INCOME

State Per Pupil PPE	1,974,444
Grants- Mass DOE SPED 240	27,709
Grants- Mass DOE 140, Title II,A	4,480
Grants- Mass DOE Title I 305	17,468
Grants- MASS DOE 274	4,421
REAP Grant	10,000
Community Foundation Class Grants	3,500
Friends of HCCPS Rolling Arts Grants	1,500
Friends of HCCPS Field Trip Grants	5,000
Fundraising-pizza	2,500
Fundraising - general	36,000
After School Income	35,000
Homework Club	5,000
Student Activity Fees	7,000
Medicaid/SPED Income	9,000
Misc Income	1,000
Interest income	2,000
Total Income	2,146,022

EXPENSES

Personnel

Teachers - all teachers, ELL S/L, OT	815,348
Teaching Assistants- all TA hrs in all roles	192,599
Summer SPED services	2,400
Substitutes	11,000
Administrative Coordinator	78,023
Education Coordinator	78,023
Community Coordinator-.5 fte	29,258
Administrative Assistant	38,132
Bookkeeper/Purchasing agent-.60 fte	30,000
Nurse/Health Educator -.85 fte	40,324
Counselor-.5 fte	28,609
Development Associate-.5fte	29,467
Longevity Pay	7,738
Payroll subtotal	1,380,919
Taxes @1.571% (MTRS staff)	15,710
Taxes @7.771%	29,411
Health Insurance	200,850
Health Diversion Benefit	14,000
Workers Compensation	9,000
FSA Administrative Cost	2,500
Total Personnel Costs	1,652,390

Consultants and Outside Services

Accounting Consultant	3,500
SPED Contractors	41,465
SPED Advisor	2,000
Auditor	6,700
Payroll Service	3,000
Professional Development	6,000
College Credit Reimbursement	1,000
Technology Instructor/Coor-.6fte	40,826
Movement Consultants	3,500
Child Care Services	300
Legal Fees	4,000
subtotal	112,291

Occupancy

Insurance	8,000
Cleaning Services	54,000
Minor Repair/Maintenance	3,000
Fire/Sprinkler Alarm Services	2,700
Copier Service Contract	2,000
Telephone	3,000
Utilities	12,000
Rent	221,000
subtotal	305,700

Supplies

Household Supplies	5,500
Educational Supplies	16,515
Playground supplies	500
Office Supplies	4,500
Testing/Evaluation Supplies	3,500
Postage	1,500
Printing	600
Food	700
Minor Equipment<\$500 ,	2,000
SPED Equipment	7,000
subtotal	42,315

Miscellaneous

After School Program Expenses	2,000
Student Activity Expenses (stipends, supplies)	2,500
Prisms Trip	500
Advertising	1,000
Travel	500
Tech Repair/Replacement	6,000
Graduation Expenses	600
Miscellaneous	376
Community Events	600
MCPSA Dues	4,000
Student Council	250

School lunch expense	2,500
Friends of HCCPS Class Grants	1,500
Friends of HCCPS Field Trip Grant Expense	5,000
Cmnty Fnd. Class Grant expenses	3,500
Coordinator's Discretionary Fund	2,500
subtotal	33,326
Total operating expenses	2,146,022
Over/Under	0

FY 2013 Capital Plan

HCCPS has been searching for a new site for the past decade. We have been hamstrung by the lack of existing and appropriate buildings for renovation in our area and our limited finances, given the small size of our school. Our Site Committee of the Board has invested considerable time over the years pursuing any potential options.

Sadly, the building project we had been pursuing for several years, in the town of Hatfield, was finally deemed unaffordable this past year. We worked with a non-profit development consultant in FY 12 who helped the Board and Site Committee refocus on a more realistic approach to a better facility. This, in conjunction with the Long Range Planning effort, has brought us to the decision to increase our school size. We will continue the search for a more affordable solution.

The Board has allocated funds for new site exploration (\$20,000) and summer improvements in our current site (\$20,000) We are replacing old vinyl floor tiles, repainting and improving our HVAC system for improved air quality.

DATA SECTION

Instructional Time:	
Total number of instructional days established in the school's charter or subsequent amendments	180
Total number of instructional days for the 2011-12 school year	180
First and last day of the 2011-12 school year	08/31/11-06/15/12
Length of school day (please note if schedule varies throughout the week or the year)	GR K-5 : M,T,Th,F 8:30-3, W 8:30-12:30 GR 6-8: M-F 8:30-3

STUDENT Enrollment Information:	
Number of students who completed the 2010-11 school year but did not reenroll for the 2011-12 school year (excluding graduates)	13
Total number of students enrolled as of 10/01/11	165
Total number of students who enrolled during the 2011-12 school year after 10/01/11	1
Total number of students who left during the 2011-12 school year after 10/01/11	1
Total number of students enrolled as of the June 30, 2012 SIMS submission	165
Number of students who graduated at the end of the 2011-12 school year	17
Number of students on the waitlist as of June 30, 2012	227

Reason for Departure	Number of Students
Transferred to other public schools at end of 10-11 school year	12
Transferred to private school at end of 10-11 school year	1
Returned to home district school during 11-12 school year	2

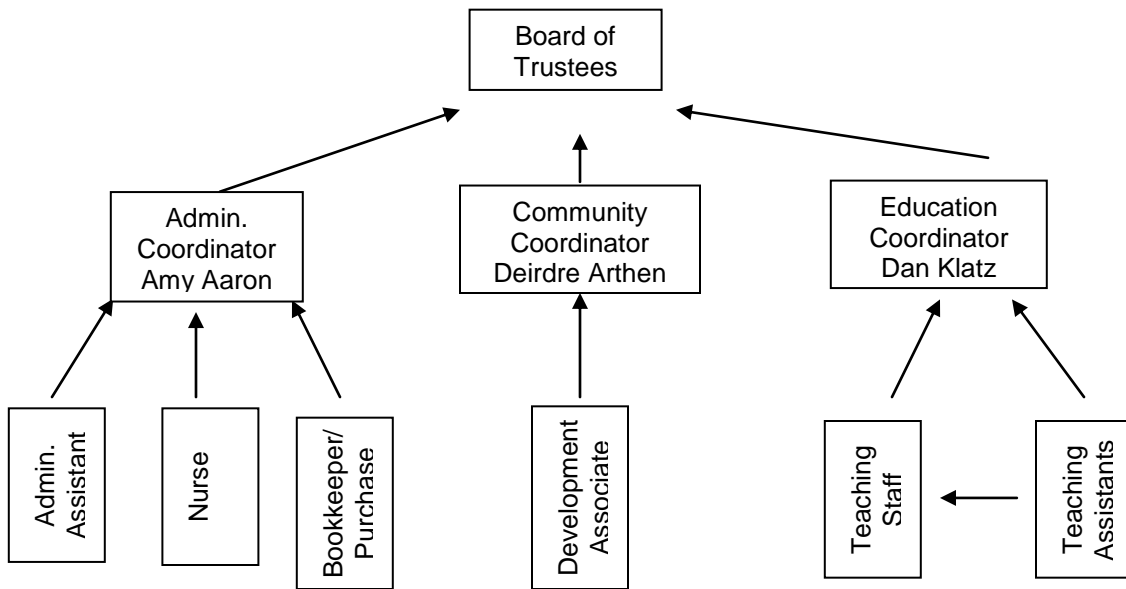
STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC AND SUBGROUP INFORMATION**(for students enrolled as of the June 2012 SIMS submission)**

Race/Ethnicity	# of students	% of entire student body
African-American	3	1.8%
Asian	2	1.2%
Hispanic	5	3.0%
Native American	1	0.6%
White	143	86.7%
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0	0.0%
Multi-race, non-Hispanic	11	6.7%
Special education	29	17.6%
Limited English proficient	1	0.6%
Low income	32	19.4%

ADMINISTRATIVE ROSTER FOR THE 2010-11 SCHOOL YEAR

Title	Brief Job Description	Start date	End date (if no longer employed at the school)
Amy Aaron, Administrative Coordinator	Responsible for financial oversight, admissions, site issues, legal issues, liaison to DESE, policy implementation	7/1996	NA
Dan Klatz Education Coordinator	Responsible for student support services, including discipline; supervision of teaching staff; curriculum development; education policy and implementation	7/2001	NA
Deirdre Arthen Community Coordinator	Responsible for parent /community volunteers; community service learning program; community events planning	4/2000	NA

HCCPS Organizational Chart



TEACHERS AND STAFF ATTRITION FOR THE 2011-12 SCHOOL YEAR			
	Number as of the last day of the 2011-12 school year	Departures during the 2011-12 school year	Departures at the end of the school year
Teachers	15	0	2 and 1 leave of absence
Other Staff	25	1	2 and 1 parenting leave

One teacher is retiring after 35 years of teaching; another is moving to a school much closer to home. Our technology coordinator is leaving for a fulltime position and a teaching assistant is leaving for other work. Our bookkeeper left mid-year to pursue silver-smithing.

BOARD MEMBERS FOR THE 2011-12 SCHOOL YEAR

Name	Position on the Board	Committee affiliation(s)	Area of expertise and/or additional role at school	# of terms served-length of each term, including date of election & expiration
Susannah Howe	President	Domain Council	Engineering Professor, Parent	3 rd term; 7/10-6/13
Kipp Armstrong	Vice President	Domain Council	Counselor, Parent	2 nd term; 7/12-6/15
James Burke	Treasurer	Chair of Finance Committee	Economist, Parent	2nd term;7/10-6/13
Bill Summers	.	Liaison to Friends of Hilltown, Inc	Technology Specialist, Parent	1 st term;7/10-6/13
Tom Sippel	Committee Chair	Chair of Site Committee	Cabinet maker, Parent	1 st term; 7/10-6/13
Peter Flynn	Committee Chair	Chair of Personnel Committee	Teacher, Former Parent	1st term; 7/10-6/13
Dan Levy		Strategic Planning Committee	Physician, Former Parent	1st term; 7/10-6/13
Jane Percival			Teacher	1 st term, 7/11-6/14
Alison Gomes		Governance committee	Parent	1 st term, 7/11-6/14
Ellen Brown	clerk		Parent	1 st term, 7/11-6/14

ATTACHMENTS

Community Compact of Understanding

At the Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School we believe that education works best as a cooperative process among teachers, staff, parents, students and the community at large. Parents' involvement in their children's education contributes greatly toward their success and this school relies on its cooperative structure to create the innovative and alternative educational environment that is at the core of its mission. This compact of understanding is a way of clearly stating our common commitment to collaboration in creating a learning community that nourishes and supports all of its members. If a situation ever arises in which the spirit or words of the compact is consistently not being met, all involved parties gather for a Compact Meeting to discuss and plan solutions. It is through this level of commitment and cooperation that we are able to successfully fulfill the school's mission.

The Student pledges to:

- do my best to learn while in classes and when doing the home-study I am assigned.
- show respect, through my words and my actions, for myself, my school, my teachers, other people, and materials.
- be inclusive of others and resolve conflicts in a positive, non-violent manner.
- take responsibility for my actions and my safety.
- believe that I am a person who can learn in many different ways.

I _____, Student, will do my best to keep this agreement. **Date:** _____

The Parents pledge to:

- read the school handbook and abide by the policies and guidelines set out in it.
- to the very best of my ability, give 4 hours of volunteer service per month, or 40 hours per year, that will benefit the school and help my child and others learn.
- ensure that my child arrives at school on time (8:15 am), rested and ready to learn.
- ensure that my child comes to school dressed appropriately for the weather and with a nutritious lunch and snack.
- help my child take responsibility for completing home-study assignments in a timely manner.
- keep myself informed and up to date about events and issues at school by reading the notices in my mailbox, newsletters, e-mails and posted announcements.
- attend *at least* two individual parent/teacher conferences and one classroom meeting per year.
- help strengthen the school community by participating in events and discussions whenever possible.
- show respect and support, through my words and actions, for my child, other students, the staff and the school.

I, _____ (and) _____, Parent(s)/ guardian(s), agree to do my best to follow through with the responsibilities listed above. **Date:** _____

The Administration and Staff of the Hilltown Cooperative Charter School pledge to:

- provide a safe, cooperative and respectful environment for learning.
- believe that all students can succeed and learn.
- nurture each child's innate creativity and encourage his/her self-expression using many modalities.
- communicate and work with each family to support their child's learning.
- have challenging expectations for students and staff.
- seek out and value parent participation and input in all areas of the school community.
- respect and honor the cultural differences of students and their families.
- seek to improve our program through an ongoing cycle of planning, evaluation and refinement.

We, _____ **Teachers**

and _____ **Coordinator**

Pledge the school staff's commitment to the above stated responsibilities and ideals. **Date:** _____

What the Compact means for students:

The Student pledges to:

- **do my best to learn while in classes and when doing the home-study I am assigned.**

This means:

No disruptive behavior in class: Interrupting, side conversations or physically

No distracting others

No refusing assignments in or out of class

- **show respect, through my words and my actions, for myself, my school, my teachers, other people, and materials.**

To show respect for:

The authority of adults – respond to adult direction

Each other– no teasing or put-downs

Equipment – no stealing, throwing or damaging objects

Our community – no vulgar language

- **be inclusive of others and resolve conflicts in a positive, non-violent manner.**

This means:

No threats or intimidation No exclusion

No hurting others – hitting, kicking, biting

- **take responsibility for my actions and my safety.**

This means:

No lying

No running indoors

No leaving supervised areas

No wrestling or inappropriate rough play

- **believe that I am a person who can learn in many different ways.**

We want everyone to try – just give it a shot, even if it's new.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF CLASSROOM PRACTICE

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS CREATE A SAFE, NUTURING CLASSROOM COMMUNITY

- Being a part of this community is necessary for the academic success of all students.

Teachers are flexible in their use of time.

- Schedule changes are required for in-depth studies.
- Flexibility is necessary based on the needs of different groups.

Students have cross age experiences.

- Multi-age classrooms foster these experiences.
- Mixed-aged opportunities throughout the school foster these experiences.

Teachers understand and utilize different learning styles.

- Teaching practice is adapted to meet various ways of learning.
- All classrooms have a materials rich environment.
- Teachers use a variety of assessment tools to evaluate student academic and social progress.

Curriculum

STUDENTS' IDEAS, QUESTIONS AND INTERESTS ARE PART OF THE CURRICULUM AND THE CLASSROOM COMMUNITY

- The spark of interest in study comes from students in the context of the classroom community.
- Students' shared experience fires the imagination and builds the community.
- Students share expertise and inquiry.
- Students' authentic questions allow learning to grow from their perspective.
- Students have choices and options in learning.

STUDENTS BUILD BASIC AND LIFE SKILLS

- Students develop basic skills as a means of communicating ideas, opinions, and knowledge.
- Some students require skills as a means of participating.

TEACHERS DEVELOP AN INTERDISCIPLINARY, PROJECT BASED CURRICULUM

- Students understand the interconnected nature of what they learn.
- Hands-on projects facilitate learning.
- The arts are a valued means of expression.
- Technology is used as one of a variety of educational tools and as a means of expression.

Relationships

Teachers engage in substantial collaboration with one another.

- Teachers work in small groups and teams.
- Teachers and staff work together.
- Teachers and staff use and model the process of consensus.

STUDENTS ENGAGE IN SUBSTANTIAL COLLABORATION WITH TEACHERS AND OTHER STUDENTS.

- Students learn and practice the process of consensus.
- Teachers and students work as partners and in small groups in the classroom and throughout the school.

TEACHERS AND STUDENTS USE OUR COMMUNITY RESOURCES

- Parents are used as classroom volunteers and resources.
- Children are connected with local community members and have opportunities to explore and appreciate our local environment.

HCCPS Teacher Job Responsibilities and Standards

Overview: The mission of the Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School is:

- To engage young people in a school which uses experiential, hands-on activities, the arts, and interdisciplinary studies, to foster critical thinking skills and a joy of learning.
- To sustain a cooperative, intimate community of students, staff, families and local community members which guides and supports the school and its educational program.
- To cultivate children's individual voices and a shared respect for each other, our community, and the world around us.

In the cooperative and collaborative spirit of this mission, the following description of expectations for teachers has been developed.

1. Facilitate the creation of a respectful, safe, and nurturing classroom environment.

- a) Establish, model, and maintain high standards of classroom behavior, and engage students in the process of developing social skills.
- b) Provide opportunities to include all students in the full range of classroom activities
- c) Demonstrate knowledge of and sensitivity to differences in abilities and learning styles.
- d) Develop and implement strategies for meeting the social and emotional needs of all students in the classroom.
- e) Create and maintain a safe physical space for learning that is aesthetically pleasing and educationally engaging.

2. Actively work as part of a teaching team.

- a) Develop and effectively implement an arts-integrated curriculum with appropriate colleagues
- b) Work effectively with colleagues in developing and assessing curriculum, student assessments, and classroom and school management systems.
- c) Attend Staff Meetings, All-School Meetings when appropriate, participate in Committees when necessary, and attend appropriate special education meetings.
- d) Contribute to the Management Team through direct participation or via representation.
- e) Participate in rotating lunch and recess supervision as needed.
- f) Participate actively in the school's staff development program.
- g) Supervise, together with Education Coordinator, classes Teaching Assistant.

3. Establish a learning environment which utilizes the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks and the HCCPS Competencies, and that is responsive to and supportive of the needs and interests of the whole class and of individual students.

- a) Ensure that a range of appropriate educational materials and equipment is available in the classroom.
- b) Ensure that students' ideas, questions and interests are a part of curriculum and classroom community.
- c) Provide opportunities for students to engage in substantial collaboration with other students.
- d) Ensure that students develop age appropriate basic skills utilizing the HCCPS competencies as reference.

- e) Create a class schedule and effectively manage and be flexible in using time to meet the needs of the group.
- f) Create meaningful experiences in the classroom, and with others classes that mix students of different ages and abilities.
- g) Create projects and organize curricular experiences that effectively develop students' understanding the interconnected nature of what they learn.
- h) Adapt and effectively implement daily teaching practices to support all modes of student learning.

4. Create, administer, and maintain appropriate student records.

- a) Organize and maintain work sampling for students in the classroom.
- b) Document student performance, ensuring progress towards individualized educational goals.
- c) Organize and implement performance based assessments.
- d) Administer standardized tests as needed.
- e) Complete semi-annual progress reports on each student and meet with families for discussion.

5. Work With Parents:

- a) Organize and conduct two annual parent conferences in the fall and spring plus additional conferences as needed.
- b) Develop and maintain good working relationships with families of classroom students.
- c) Effectively utilize community resources (parents, local community, environment, etc)
- d) Effectively utilize parents as classroom volunteers/resources
- e) Hold two parent classroom evenings annually.