



HILLTOWN
COOPERATIVE
CHARTER
PUBLIC
SCHOOL

ANNUAL REPORT

2012-2013

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Name of School: <i>HILLTOWN COOPERATIVE CHARTER PUBLIC SCHOOL</i>			
Type of Charter (Commonwealth or Horace Mann)	Commonwealth	Location	Haydenville, MA
Regional or Non-Regional?	Regional	Districts in Region (if applicable)	Amherst-Pelham, Belchertown, Central Berkshire Regional, Easthampton, Gateway Regional, Granby, Hadley, Hampshire Regional, Hatfield, Mohawk Regional, Northampton, South Hadley, Ware, Erving, Frontier Regional, Gill/Montague Regional, Greenfield, Hawlemont Regional, Leverett, Mohawk Regional, New Salem-Wendell, Orange (Mahar Regional) & Pioneer Valley Regional
Year Opened	1995	Year(s) Renewed (if applicable)	2000, 2005, 2010
Maximum Enrollment	218	Current Enrollment	175
Number of students enrolled as of 8/1/2013	175	Students on Waitlist	220
Chartered Grade Span	K-8	Current Grade Span	K-8
# of Instructional Days during the 2012-2013 school year	180	School Hours	Gr K-5: M,T,Th,Fr-8:30-3; Wed-8:30-12:30 Gr 6-8: M-F-8:30-3:00
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.			

Dear Commissioner and Charter School Staff,

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School (HCCPS) is a spirited and successful school community offering students a superior education and preparing them for success in high school and in life. The extraordinary efforts of our tremendously talented staff along with generous volunteer hours from community members enhance each of our children's experience, and the excellence of Hilltown.

This year we were supported by two fantastic one-year teachers filling in for staff on sabbatical. We are very pleased that one of these teachers has accepted our offer to continue as a permanent 2/3rd grade teacher with us. We also continued to thrive with music at the core of our community in our first year with a new music director.

The new math curriculum in grades 6-8, Big Ideas, was successfully implemented, and a new math program for the younger grades, Math Expressions, was chosen to be introduced fall, 2013.

The Board and its subcommittees focused a majority of its energy on development and adoption of our broad- reaching 10 year Long Range Plan, as well as making significant progress in our 15 year quest to secure a long-term stable site. The Long Range Plan commits us to prudent fiscal planning, allowing for both growth and stability and ensured that we ended FY 13 with a positive contribution to our fund balance. Impacting the school's fiscal and physical plant projections is the approval by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education of our request to increase our enrollment cap from 180 to 218 students. Planning for this increase in school size usurped a significant portion of the Long Range Plan agenda and is detailed in the completed document.

Our community continues to thrive with nearly 100% volunteer participation from HCCPS families, and continued increase in the percent of community members contributing to our annual fund.

It has been my pleasure to serve as the Board of Trustees President this year, and I look forward to continuing as President next year as well.

Sincerely,

Kipp Armstrong

President, Board of Trustees

FAITHFULNESS TO CHARTER:

	2012 – 2013 Performance (Met/Not Met)	Evidence
Objective: HCCPS is faithful to the mission, vision and educational philosophy defined in the charter application and any subsequent approved amendment(s).		
Measure: 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.	met	Nearly 50% of families completed the survey and 98% of those answered the question affirmatively.
Measure: The school, via its volunteers, will sponsor monthly events- social, cultural, and educational in nature.	met	At least one community event was held each month. (school calendar).
Measure: Community compacts will be signed by 100% of families annually.	met	Every student and their family signed the Community Compact.
Measure: 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.	met	All Board of Trustees decisions were made by consensus. (Board minutes)
Measure: Board committees will meet monthly, as indicated in committee minutes.	met	Minutes and reports from committee meetings.
Objective: 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.		
Measure: 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.	partially met	All classes had major interdisciplinary projects, and many were documented and displayed throughout the school. Not every class produced <i>two</i> documentation projects.
Measure: 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.	Met	All sixteen Grade 8 students completed their projects and achieve a passing score.

COMMON SCHOOL PERFORMANCE CRITERIA:

Vision and Educational Philosophy

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. Long-standing weekly and yearly traditions at the school serve to 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. 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.

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.

Board Committees at HCCPS are composed of a mix of parents, staff and community members. The practical work of the Board is accomplished largely in committee meetings with proposals brought to the Board as a whole where decisions are made at meetings.

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.

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.

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.

Academic Program Success

	2012 – 2013 Performance (Met/Not Met)	Evidence
Objective: 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: HCCPS shows an annual increase in the CPI in ELA and mathematics in the aggregate and for all statistically significant subgroups.	Mixed	ELA 93.6—up from 91.5 Math 83.0 down from 85.3 <i>See Table 1 below</i>
Measure: The school 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.	Mixed	ELA 1% down from 2% Math 12% up from 6% <i>See Table 1 below</i>
Objective: The school 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: Each year, the median student growth percentile is 40 or higher in the aggregate and in all statistically significant sub-groups in all subject areas tested for accountability purposes.	Met	ELA Median growth was 70% Math Median growth was 60% <i>See Table 1 below</i>
Objective: The school makes Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the aggregate and for all statistically significant sub-groups in English language arts and mathematics.		
Each year, the school makes AYP in the aggregate and for all statistically significant sub-groups in English language arts and mathematics.	Met	See table below
Objective: The school does not have a status for accountability purposes of Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring.		
Measure. Each year, the school does not have a status for accountability purposes of Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring	met	We are a Level 1 School.

Measure Each year, the school does not have a status for accountability purposes of Improvement, Corrective Action, or Restructuring.	met	We are a Level 1 School.
Objective: If externally-developed assessments other than the MCAS are administered, student performance is strong and demonstrates improvement over time on those assessments		
Measure: 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 Test of Basic Skills.	met	See Table 2 below for specific data.
Measure 90% of all 4 th graders will test at or above grade level in the area of reading on the Iowa Test of Basic Skills.	met	See Table 2 below for specific data. The grade equivalent of the average standard score was 6.6. 19/20 students were above grade level.
Objective: Student performance is strong and demonstrates improvement on internally-developed assessments of academic achievement.		
Measure 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.	met	See table 3 below
Measure 80% of all students in grades 4-8 will score in the pre-determined proficient level on the HCCPS writing and math.	met in Math; not met in writing	See table 3 below

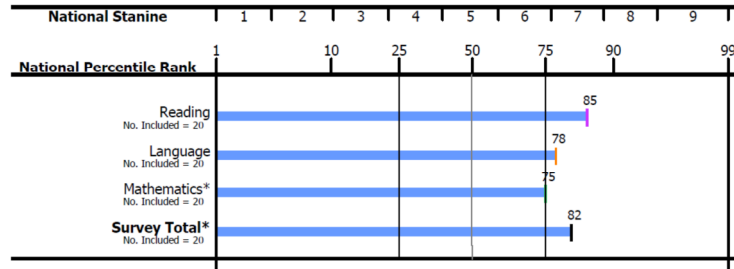
Table 1: MCAS Results 2012

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	63	61	16	15	47	46	37	30	0	9	19	89.5	N/A	N/A
GRADE 03 - MATHEMATICS	63	61	16	27	47	34	16	25	21	14	19	78.9	N/A	N/A
GRADE 04 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	63	57	0	13	63	44	32	30	5	14	19	85.5	N/A	18
GRADE 04 - MATHEMATICS	43	51	11	16	32	35	47	36	11	12	19	77.6	N/A	18
GRADE 05 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	90	61	11	17	79	44	11	28	0	11	19	96.1	N/A	19
GRADE 05 - MATHEMATICS	63	57	21	25	42	32	32	26	5	17	19	82.9	N/A	19
GRADE 05 - SCIENCE AND TECH/ENG	89	52	33	22	56	30	11	34	0	14	18	97.2	N/A	N/A
GRADE 06 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	90	66	45	18	45	48	10	22	0	11	20	97.5	N/A	19
GRADE 06 - MATHEMATICS	70	60	40	27	30	33	20	24	10	16	20	87.5	N/A	19
GRADE 07 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	81	71	31	15	50	56	19	21	0	7	16	93.8	N/A	14
GRADE 07 - MATHEMATICS	50	51	19	20	31	31	38	30	13	18	16	78.1	N/A	14
GRADE 08 - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	100	81	35	18	65	63	0	14	0	6	17	100.0	N/A	16
GRADE 08 - MATHEMATICS	82	52	35	22	47	30	12	28	6	19	17	92.6	N/A	16
GRADE 08 - SCIENCE AND TECH/ENG	83	43	18	5	65	38	18	38	0	20	17	94.1	N/A	N/A
ALL GRADES - ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	81	69	23	19	58	50	18	22	1	9	110	93.6	70.0	86
ALL GRADES - MATHEMATICS	62	59	24	27	38	32	27	26	11	15	110	83.0	60.0	86
ALL GRADES - SCIENCE AND TECH/ENG	86	54	26	17	60	37	14	32	0	13	35	95.7	N/A	N/A

Table 2: Iowa Test of Basic Skills, December 2012

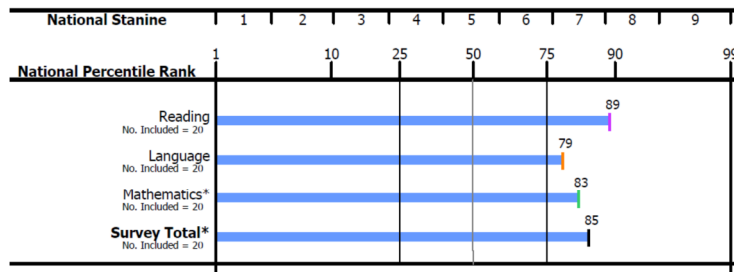
Group Display

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) Form: A Test Date: 12/01/2012 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
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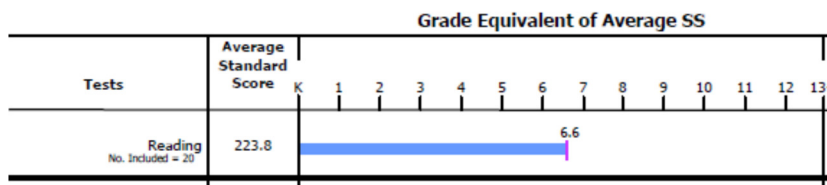
Group Display

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) Form: A Test Date: 12/01/2012 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
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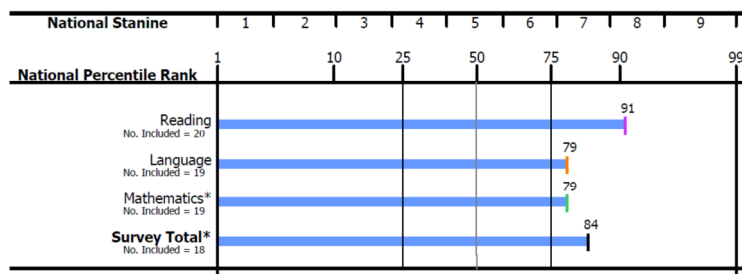
Group Display

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) Form: A Test Date: 12/01/2012 Norms: 12/01 2005	Grade: 4 Level: 10 Building: Hilltown Charter	System: Hilltown Charter State: MA	Disaggregation: All Students Score Type: Grade Equivalent Admin. Type: Print
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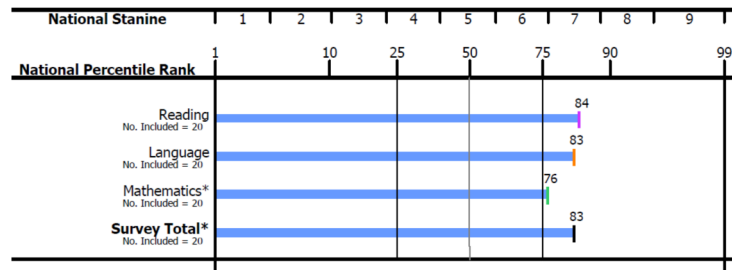
Group Display

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS) Form: A Test Date: 12/01/2012 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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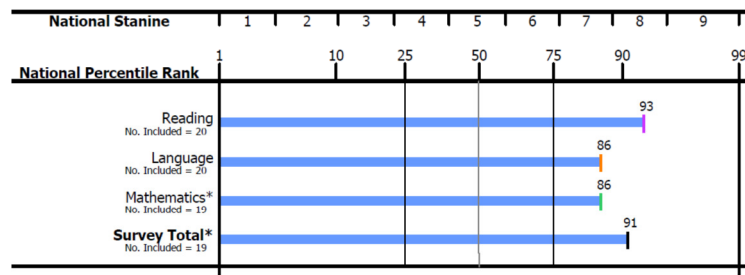
Group Display

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS)	Grade: 6	Level: 12	System: Hilltown Charter	Disaggregation: All Students
Form: A				Score Type: National Percentile Rank
Test Date: 12/01/2012	Building: Hilltown Charter	State: MA		Admin. Type: Print
Norms: 12/01 2005				



Group Display

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS)	Grade: 7	Level: 13	System: Hilltown Charter	Disaggregation: All Students
Form: A				Score Type: National Percentile Rank
Test Date: 12/01/2012	Building: Hilltown Charter	State: MA		Admin. Type: Print
Norms: 12/01 2005				



Group Display

Iowa Tests of Basic Skills (ITBS)	Grade: 8	Level: 14	System: Hilltown Charter	Disaggregation: All Students
Form: A				Score Type: National Percentile Rank
Test Date: 12/01/2012	Building: Hilltown Charter	State: MA		Admin. Type: Print
Norms: 12/01 2005				

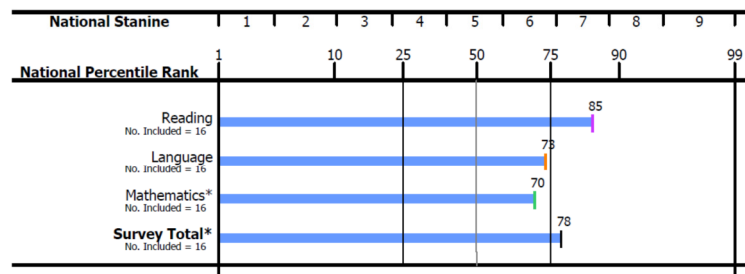


Table 3: Internal Assessments

Hilltown Reading Assessment Results, K-3 rd Fall 2012-Spring 2013	
Level (1 level = 1 Grade Level)	Percentage of Students
Less than 1 Level	6%
1 Level progress	48%
2 Levels progress	38%
3 Levels. progress	8%

Hilltown Writing Assessment Results, K-3rd Fall 2012-Spring 2013	
Level (1 Level = 6 points, HCCPS Rubric)	Percentage of Students
Lost One Level	2%
No Gain	9%
One Level Gain	57%
Two or More Level Gains	32%
Hilltown Mathematics Assessment Results, K-3 Fall 2012-Spring 2013	
Level (1 Level = 20 percentage points)	Percentage of Students
Less than 1 Level	9%
1 Level progress	54%
2 Levels progress	36%
Mathematics Assessment Results, 4th-8th Spring 2013	
Level (Proficient =70%)	Percentage of Students
0-69%	11%
70-100%	89%
Hilltown Writing Assessment Results, 4th-8th Spring 2013	
Hilltown Writing Rubric (Proficient = 15 on 4-8 rubric)	Percentage of Students
Advanced	1%
Proficient	53%
Just Below Proficient	44%
Novice	2%

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 continued the process of aligning our curriculum with the Common Core Standards. Teachers engaged in the process of examining the math curriculum in K-5 and selecting a new program. Ongoing professional development sessions were dedicated to examining the options based on a set of criteria we established in advance. As a result, next year will be using a new curriculum with Grades K-5 (note: we began using the Big Ideas Math program this past year for grades 6-8). We selected Math Expressions for a variety of reasons, and its alignment with the Common Core was high on the list.

Teachers at Hilltown also 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 math fluency, essay writing, and written responses to open response questions.

Texts that are used in the school are as follows:

Big Ideas Math: Grades 6-8

Megawords: Grades 4-5

Explode the Code: Grades K-3

Wordly Wise: Grades 4-6

Primary Phonics: Grades K-2

Handwriting with Tears, Grades K-3

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.

Several sessions of professional development were devoted to performance assessment, specifically the writing assessments we have developed over the past several years. We will continue to use these assessments, but with less emphasis on “blind” scoring, and use the time for more frequent assessments. As noted earlier, a major focus this year was Mathematics. During the previous year, 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 that year, the 6th-8th grade team adopting the Big Ideas Math curriculum and funding was approved by the Board of Trustees. This year, a great deal of professional development time was devoted to Math in Grades K-5. We continued the process of examining curriculum, analyzing three programs in depth. In the end, we decided to adopt Math Expressions as our new math curriculum and once again funding was approved by the Board of Trustees.

Teaching staff also participated in the school’s Long Range Planning process. One of our staff development days was spent in part looking at a draft of the plan. Staff members shared concerns, identified potential problems, and affirmed many of the benefits of plan.

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. It also includes a number of focused early intervention strategies involving the Occupational, Physical, and Speech Therapists working with our youngest classes. A child study (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:

	2012 – 2013 Performance (met/Not met)	Evidence
Objective: 1. The school develops an annual budget that can be sustained by enrollment and is in support of student academic achievement. 2. 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. 3. The school's annual independent audit is free of material or repeated findings.		
Measure: The school's annual budget is sustained by its enrollment.	met	End of Year FY 13 Statement of Revenue/Expenses
Measure: 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.	met	End of Year FY 13 Balance Sheet
Measure: There is an absence of material or repeated audit findings in annual audits by qualified independent auditor.	met	FY 12 Financial Audit
Objective: 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: Quarterly fiscal balance sheets will show that the school maintains 15% of its total operating budget as cash reserves.	met	End of Year FY 13 Balance Sheet
Objective: The school implements the student recruitment, retention, and enrollment process intended in the charter to ensure sufficient enrollment.		
Measure: The ratio of student applications to available openings will average at least 3:1 annually.	met	With 264 applicants we had a 10:1 ratio.
Objective: 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.	met	After significant committee work, the Board of Trustees completed a new 10-year strategic plan for the school. Final approval took place in April of 2013.
Measure: 2. The Board will incorporate ideas and input from staff, parents, and community members via 2 focus groups, committee membership and 2 surveys.	met	Monthly meetings of Board Committee meetings – which are made up of parents staff and community members, special staff meetings, 3 Co-op meetings with parents, a parent satisfaction survey and feedback survey about the staff all provided ideas and input to the Board during the year.
Objective: 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.	met	There is not a family currently in the school who has not been involved actively in one or more of these areas.
Measure 2. Class meeting and family conferences will be attended by 100% of school families.	met	This year 100% of families attended either class meetings, family conferences or both.

COMMON SCHOOL PERFORMANCE CRITERIA:

Amendments

In July 2012 the Board of Trustees requested an amendment to our charter to raise our enrollment cap to 218 students. This was approved by the BESE in November 2012. Our cap was raised from 180-218. This change allows us to further develop our middle school program both academically and socially as well as come closer to affording anew facility.

Complaints/Conditions/Structure

No complaints were received in SY 12-13. There are no conditions on our charter.

There have been no changes to our organizational structure.

RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION PLAN:

This year we established a positive, collaborative relationship with the new director of Special Education for the Northampton Public Schools, our largest spending district. She has a solid understanding of what we can offer students with a range of needs. We continue to receive students transferring in our upper grades whose special education needs are not being met in their home district. Our annual open house included a new presentation on our approach to student learning needs and how our special education services are provided.

General Recruitment Activities	
Display ads in local newspapers; posters/flyers in area post offices/libraries; public service announcements.	

Recruitment Plan – Goals and Strategies 2013-2014	
Demographic Group	Goals and Strategies
Special Education	Ensure that brochures are available at the REACH project, the area early intervention program. Outreach to Whole Children, a non-profit organization providing afterschool services for children with special needs. A new director there necessitates repeating this strategy.
Limited English-proficient students	Advertise on the local Spanish radio stations; distribute brochures at Casa Latina, local social service agency; outreach to churches with Hispanic congregations Advertise at the local language institute.
Students eligible for free or reduced lunch	Distribute brochures at local food pantries and soup kitchens; put flyers in local public assistance offices.
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.
Students at risk of dropping out of school	Not applicable. Our students leave us after 8 th grade, in good standing. Those who leave before 8 th grade enroll in other schools.
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.

Retention Plan 2013 – 2014

In SY 12-13 our retention efforts were effective. When students leave HCCPS prior to 8th grade graduation it is most often to attend a local 7-12th grade school option. Since 7th grade is the entry point for those schools they leave us after 6th grade. That accounts for 7 of our non-returning students. Another three students moved out of the region; another returned to his home district for 8th grade to ease the transition back to his local high school and one moved to an independent school that his father will be directing. These departures do not impact our school wide percentage of special education, LEP, or low income students.

Overall Student Retention Goal	
Annual goal for student retention (percentage):	96%

Retention Plan – Goals and Strategies List goals and strategies for retention activities for <u>each</u> demographic group.	
Demographic Group	Goals and Strategies
Special education students	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; teaching assistants in all classrooms.
Limited English-proficient students	Ensure that classroom teachers are adequately trained; 3x/week after school homework club; daily non-academic after- school program.
Students eligible for free or reduced lunch	Ensure that we have no income- based barriers to services; ensure that application for free/reduced lunch is easily and confidentially accessible.
Students who are sub-proficient	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; individualized reading instruction.
Students at risk of dropping out of school	Not applicable. Our students graduate after 8 th grade, in good standing. If they leave prior to 8 th grade it is to attend another school. (see paragraph above re: SY 12-13 retention).
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.

SCHOOL AND STUDENT DATA:

STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC AND SUBGROUP INFORMATION		
Race/Ethnicity	# of students	% of entire student body
African-American	3	1.7
Asian	1	0.6
Hispanic	6	3.5
Native American	1	0.6
White	151	87.8
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	0	0.0
Multi-race, non-Hispanic	10	5.8
Special education	24	14.0
Limited English proficient	1	0.6
Low income	36	20.9

ADMINISTRATIVE ROSTER FOR THE 2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR			
Name, Title	Brief Job Description	Start date	End date (if applicable)
Amy Aaron, Administrative Coordinator	Responsible for financial oversight, admissions, site issues, legal issues, liaison to DESE, supervision of administrative staff, 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, online presence, supervision of development staff.	4/2000	NA

TEACHERS AND STAFF ATTRITION FOR THE 2012-2013 SCHOOL YEAR			
	Number as of last day of 2012-2013 school year	Departures during 2012-2013 school year	Departures at end of school year
Teachers	16	0	1
Other Staff	23	1	2

BUDGET AND FINANCE REPORTS:

Unaudited HCCPS FY 2013 Income & Expenses

	Jul '12 - Jun 13
Income	
State Sources	1,942,191.00
State Grants-DOE Administered	70,646.00
Friends of HCCS Grant	9,046.00
Private Grants	2,955.00
Fundraising Income	46,935.58
Other sources	82,089.47
Kid's Club Income	49,249.59
Student Activity Fees	6,430.00
Miscellaneous Income	132.28
Total Income	2,209,674.92
Expense	
Personnel Costs	1,743,120.21
Consultant & Other Svcs-Fixed	58,222.16
Consultant & Other Svcs	10,230.30
Occupancy	276,400.56
Supplies	27,723.00
Equipment	17,407.85
Grant-funded expenses	11,195.49
Depreciation Expense	15,256.72
Interest Expense	12.70
Other expenses	29,036.98
Coordinator Discretionary Fund	1,453.93
Total Expense	2,190,059.90
Net Ordinary Income	19,615.02
Other Income/Expense	
Board Designated Income	41,454.29
Board Designated Expenditures	41,454.29
Net Other Income	0.00
Net Income	19,615.02

Unaudited HCCPS FY 2012 Balance Sheet
as of June 30, 2012

	<u>Jun 30, 13</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Easthampton Savings	604,081.44
Florence Savings	301.58
Due from employees	-502.55
Grant Receivable	20,588.00
Prepaid Expenses	19,865.00
Security Deposit	<u>18,270.83</u>
Total Current Assets	662,604.30
Fixed Assets	
Property and Equipment	34,348.80
Leasehold Improvements	393,531.57
	-
Accumulated Depreciation	<u>369,373.82</u>
Total Fixed Assets	58,506.55
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>721,110.85</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	26,872.99
Credit Card - VISA	3,890.62
Accrued Expenses	7,117.29
Accrued Payroll	163,580.11
Copier Lease - Current	671.19
Payroll Liabilities	<u>12,508.65</u>
Total Liabilities	214,640.85
Equity	
Res'd for Capital Building Fund	5,319.62
Res'd for Math Texts Purchase	273.44
Donor Restricted Music Fund	917.92
Contingency Fund	321,903.30
Investments in Fixed Assets	57,835.36
Undesignated Fund Balance	100,605.34
Net Income	<u>19,615.02</u>
Total Equity	506,470.00
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>721,110.85</u>

FY 2013 HCCPS Operating Budget
Approved by Board of Trustees June 12, 2012

INCOME

State Per Pupil PPE	2,016,826
Grants- Mass DOE SPED 240	27,173
Grants- Mass DOE 140, Title II,A	4,321
Grants- Mass DOE Title I 305	14,904
Grants- MASS DOE 274	2,740
Community Foundation Class Grants	3,500
Friends of HCCPS Rolling Arts Grants	1,500
Friends of HCCPS Field Trip Grants	5,610
Friends of HCCPS- Community Service	1,200
Fundraising-pizza	3,000
Fundraising - general	46,000
Kids Club Income	43,000
Student Activity Fees	7,000
Medicaid/SPED Income	9,000
Miscellaneous Income	1,000
Interest income	1,200
REAP Grant- federal	21,508
School Lunch receipts	10,000
Special Field Trip Fundraising	<u>6,000</u>
Total Income	2,225,482

EXPENSES

Personnel

Teachers	868,788
Teaching Assistants	198,357
Kids Club/Recess Coordinator	21,136
Substitutes	9,884
Administrative Coordinator	79,349
Education Coordinator	79,349
Community Coordinator-.50 fte	29,755
Administrative Assistant	38,780
Bookkeeper/Purchasing agent-.60 fte	30,510
Nurse/Health Educator -.85 fte	41,993
Counselor-.50 fte	29,513
Development Associate-.50 fte	29,968
Tech Coordinator- .50 fte	26,000
Longevity Pay	8,500
Stipends- expansion planning	1,000
Medicare- all staff-.0145	21,663
FICA- non MTRS-.062	27,094
SUTA-.008	11,952

UHIC-.0048	7,171
Health Insurance	176,129
Health Diversion Benefit	13,300
Workers Compensation	9,700
College Credit Reimbursement	<u>1,000</u>
Total Personnel Costs	1,760,892

Consultants and Outside Services

FSA/HRA Administrative Cost	4,000
Accounting Consultant	2,000
SPED Contractors	43,000
SPED Advisor	1,000
Summer SPED services	1,615
Auditor	6,700
Payroll Service	2,500
Professional Development	8,500
Movement Consultants	2,500
Child Care Services	300
Legal Fees	<u>4,000</u>
subtotal	76,115

Occupancy

Insurance	8,500
Cleaning Services	30,000
Minor Repair/Maintenance	3,500
Fire/Sprinkler Alarm Services	3,000
Copier Service Contract	2,000
Telephone	2,500
Utilities	8,500
Rent	<u>230,100</u>
subtotal	288,100

Supplies

Household Supplies	4,500
Educational Supplies	16,515
Playground supplies	500
Office Supplies	2,500
Testing/Evaluation Supplies	3,500
Postage	1,000
Printing	600
Food	<u>700</u>
sub total	29,815

Equipment

Minor Equipment<\$500 ,	2,000
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SPED Equipment	7,500
Tech Repair/Replacement	<u>6,000</u>
subtotal	15,500
Miscellaneous	
Kids Club Program Expenses	2,000
Student Activity Expenses (stipends, supplies)	2,500
Special Field Trip Expenses	6,500
Prisms Washington DC Trip	5,000
Advertising	1,000
Travel	500
Graduation Expenses	600
Community Events	600
MCPSA Dues	4,000
Student Council	250
School Lunch Expense	11,500
Friends of HCCS Class Grants	1,500
Friends of HCCS Field Trip Grant Expense	5,610
SPED Contingency- new account	5,000
Site Transition Fund	2,500
Community Foundation Class Grant expenses	3,500
Coordinator's Discretionary Fund	2,500
subtotal	55,060
Total operating expenses	<u>2,225,482</u>
Over/Under	0

Capital Plan for FY 14

After 15 years of site searching we have finally located a feasible facility. In July 2013 HCCPS submitted an amendment to DESE to relocate to a new leased facility in Easthampton. Should this be approved the following capital plan will cover move-related expenses:

Phone and Data Systems	\$15,000
Moving Expenses	15,000
Legal Costs	5,000
Landscape Architect	5,000
Playground and Related Site Work	100,000
Fixtures and Furnishings	<u>25,000</u>
TOTAL	\$165,000

Assuming DESE approval, the planning work will begin in September, 2013. We will incur many of the above expenses in FY 14. Actual moving, if all goes well, would occur July 1, 2014. The playground and site related work will cross FY 14 and FY 15; likewise for the fixtures and furnishings. The phone and data system will be installed according to the owner's renovation schedule during FY 14.

Once DESE approves our amendment the Board of Trustees will designate a capital project account to cover all move related expenses. That fund will be financed from our undesignated fund balance and from a small directed capital campaign. We have a substantial donation lined up to use as a match for that campaign.

ATTACHMENTS:

HCCPS Long Range Plan 2013-2023

Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School Long Range Plan 2013-2023

The publication of this Long Range Plan for Hilltown Cooperative Charter Public School (HCCPS) comes in the 18th year since the school first opened in 1995. It is only the second such plan which has been produced. Our first plan, 10 years ago, was a statement of hopes and aspirations—the dreams of a young institution and its community. HCCPS is now a matured idea; a tested, stable institution; and a proven structure for excellence in education. We continue to have big dreams and directions—but central to this plan has been a recognition that blueprints for the future must include specifics that strengthen and stabilize what we have already built. *This plan prioritizes the broad goals and objectives for the coming 10 years. It does not attempt to describe the many details of implementation; that is left to those carrying out the daily operations of the school.* New ideas are understood as a cautious modification to a well-orchestrated and functional whole.

Early in the long range planning process, our committee identified a number of core strengths of HCCPS which should be maintained over the next ten years. The areas we identified were as follows:

- A strong intimate community.
- A distinct, arts integrated, interdisciplinary curriculum.
- A program that fosters the development of strong critical thinking skills
- A program that fosters the development of individual student voices.
- Cross age experiences.
- A wide variety of intentional celebrations, traditions and community events.
- Collaborative administrative structure and *inclusive decision making process*.
- An open and welcoming community for parents.

At the same time, we found areas where specific attention over the next 10 years would improve an already solid program. New proposals must pass the test of fiscal viability as our financial resources do not allow us to continue as we have. The discussion and research that went into this plan make it clear that the school's vibrancy, institutional durability, and continual refinement of existing programs require a dynamic process.

The initial focus of the Long Range Planning (LRP) Committee was to consider “the big picture”, namely those factors essential to the long term financial stability and larger programmatic needs of HCCPS. Specifically, we discussed several broad considerations: 1) The school's established plan to find and move to an improved site; 2) The question of appropriate school size and; 3) Limits to revenue generation and limits to growth. The LRP Committee spent a great deal of time reviewing these questions in conjunction with the Board of Trustees (BOT), the Site Committee, the Finance Committee and with the school community at large at a Cooperative meeting in January 2011. The LRP Committee reached several conclusions as a result of this work:

- To afford an improved site, and to maintain and expand current programs, the school needs to improve total revenue and the ratio of revenue to expenses.
- The most secure mechanisms for improving revenues are to increase school size and modestly increase the student-teacher ratio. Improved fundraising and additional grants may further improve the picture, but their contribution will be minor.
- HCCPS has been and must continue to be a close community offering highly interactive, personalized instruction—total size should not exceed 220 students and class size should not exceed 22 pupils. It was felt that the school's character and mission can continue to thrive within this framework. These numbers are also sufficient to allow for a significantly improved site and to develop an enhanced curriculum.

- While there are various ways in which the school can take on new students, we are most enthused by a plan to add the majority of these students in grades 6-8, thus expanding the Middle School program. Particular advantages in taking this route include providing an expanded and more diverse group of peers at an age where many HCPPS students are eager for new faces and new horizons, while maintaining a more intimate setting for the younger grades.

The expansion of the school is an overarching goal that framed many of the more detailed proposals in this plan. Growth brings new opportunities and new needs, which we have addressed with proposals to modify the age distribution and instructional supports—a larger and more substantial 6th – 8th grade program is introduced.

As the school moves into its third decade, we need to continuously invigorate the involvement of families and the broader school community. We seek mechanisms to insure that, whatever the school's size, the sense of individuality, of belonging, and of ownership are critical to the student experience. In a similar vein, we recognize that staff and faculty also need a sense of ownership and recognition. One such approach we have suggested is to formalize the school as a site for *placing teachers in training*—a model for innovative education.

In the Sustainability section, plans are presented with the purpose of better insuring budgetary stability and to further expedite decision making around the establishment of a permanent home for the school—in both cases, the ideas largely come from ongoing discussions at meetings of the Board of Trustees. Lastly, the school needs to develop a structured process that prepares for changes in school leadership in the coming years. The insights, shared vision, and experience of coordinators who have led the school since its early years are great assets upon which we want to build. We offer plans for the challenging process of succession and better defining the qualities and abilities essential for our future administration.

This plan is the outcome of almost 2 years of meetings, discussions and research by the LRP Committee (LRP). Tasked by the Board of Trustees with generating a new long-range plan, the Committee, made up of the 3 administrators, 2 teachers, 2 board members and 2 parents, has charted a path reflecting, to the extent possible, the combined desires and ideas of this community—the students, faculty, parents, administrators, and supporters of HCCPS. During the past 2 years, we have met monthly, joined briefly by outside consultant Gaelen Canning, who helped develop a process for generating the plan. The LRP Committee also hosted a Cooperative meeting to discuss the ramifications of an increased school size, resulting in a recommendation to the BOT to increase the school size. As we started developing the plan, we broke into sub-committees to focus on specific areas of interest (educational program, site, community, finance, staffing). The resulting plan is the culmination of this work.

Our plan is divided into 4 sections: Program Quality, Community Building, Sustainability and Administrative Capacity and Succession Planning. Please recognize that many topics fall into more than one category and choice of section name should not be taken as emphasizing or de-emphasizing particular aspects. Also, in considering and interpreting this plan, the point made above deserves restating: We are trying to make improvements and innovations to a great school with a great community, a very full daily and yearly schedule, a stretched budget, and a busy faculty. New plans must substitute for or modify current operations—there is no room for a wholesale addition! We offer these plans as, essentially, a “rebalancing”; changes designed to secure the character, finances, educational quality, and dynamism of the school for the next ten years.

(Approved by the BOT 6/2013)

PROGRAM QUALITY

Since its inception, HCCPS academic and co-curricular programming has evolved to address student needs, build upon faculty strengths, be responsive to parents, and take advantage of relationships with local community organizations. The school offers strong academic and social emotional skill building in a culture that promotes community connections. As we look toward the future, it will be important to assess and prioritize program offerings and develop resources and organizational relationships to ensure that student needs are addressed through effective and sustainable programs.

Goal 1: Grades 6-8 Program Reorganization

Purpose: To better serve the academic and social needs of students in grades 6-8

Rationale/Context: Over the past twelve years, the school added seventh and eighth grades. With the expanded school size, the maturing of our program, and the programmatic and social needs of middle school aged students, it is necessary to restructure grades 6-8. This recommendation is consistent with a conclusion that was reached in the *Report on Configuration of Multi-Age Classrooms: Spring, 2009*.

Accountability: Education Coordinator

Activities/Steps:

- a. Formulate recommendations to restructure the educational program for grades 6-8 to accommodate 30 students in each grade. Recommendations should address teaching responsibilities, advising, and class configuration for different disciplines (FY 2014)
- b. Implement new structures gradually, 2014-2017.
- c. Consideration should be given to the academic needs of students transitioning into the HCCPS program and how they will be addressed.
- d. Evaluate middle school program and use findings to revise. Full scale evaluation in 2020.

(Note: see also Community-Building goals 2 and 4 that outline plans to support and integrate an expanded 6-8 grade population.)

Fiscal implications: This will have implications on staffing, facility and materials. At a minimum, there will be 2 additional full time teachers, *an expansion of the special education department* and several part-time positions. Additional space and associated costs will be based on broader site considerations.

Progress Monitoring: The Education Coordinator will be responsible for the implementation of program adjustments and for a formal review after three years of full implementation. Minor and urgent programs changes can be made as needed during the gradual and then full-scale implementation.

Goal 2: K-8 Curriculum Review

Purpose: To maintain and strengthen core academic programs

Rationale/Context: The school has a long standing strong record of academic performance by students and many strengths identified by teachers and parents. Maintaining and improving our program necessitates regular, systematic review. In reflecting on particular areas of strengths and weaknesses, we found that areas in the humanities and social sciences have historically been strong, while areas in math and science are weaker in

comparison. The math curriculum is currently under review and many changes are being implemented. It is critical to apply similar reviews to science and all academic areas.

Accountability: The Educational Coordinator

Activities/Steps:

- a. Implement a system of regular review of the following major curricular areas: English Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, Science, Physical Education, Health, Foreign Language, Art, Music and Technology. Begin with areas where alignment with the Common Core is required (Math, ELA) followed by Science, Physical Education, and Social Studies. Initial reviews will begin in 2013 and be completed no later than June 2020. Each review should be no longer than one year and some may occur concurrently.
 1. *Each review should include ways the curriculum addresses the needs of the full range of learners in the school.*
 2. *Each review should include ways to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented within the curriculum area.*
- b. Following each review, a set of concrete recommendations, *including professional development*, will be *identified and* implemented by the Education Domain.
- c. Establish a schedule and structure for subsequent reviews.

Fiscal Implications: Reviews may indicate the need for new curriculum and/or training for staff, **resources for special education** and/or additional staff. Depending on the recommendations, some areas may require funding outside of the current budget framework. Other areas may require reallocation of resources within the budget.

Progress Monitoring: The Educational Coordinator will create a schedule for reviews and report annually to the BOT.

Goal 3: Scope of Program

Purpose: To achieve a balance between high-quality program options and effective use of staff time and resources, maintain fiscal and programmatic viability, provide students with meaningful interactions in community settings, and ensure programs are supporting the school's educational and community-building goals

Rationale/Context: The school culture and student growth is supported through curricular and co-curricular activities, as well as through projects with local community organizations. Given that the school and school community have limited resources to address the school's primary mission, it is important to periodically and systematically review which school activities warrant continued, increased or decreased resources. The growth of the school over the past two decades raises questions regarding which programs beyond the core curricular areas are essential to the school. We have added a number of excellent activities, but we need to reflect on which ones are sustainable given budget and human resource limitations.

Accountability: The Educational Coordinator in cooperation with the Community Coordinator and other stakeholders (staff, parents, and students).

Activities/Steps:

- a. Evaluate school programs beyond core curricular areas for the purpose of establishing key priorities. The evaluation will include service learning, mini-courses, instrumental lessons, student council, recess, buddy classes, after-school, cross-age lunch rooms, and All School. This list is not exhaustive. The initial evaluation will begin in 2014-2015 school year and be conducted through the 2016-2017, after which there will be reviews every three years.

- b. Determine clear time and resource allocations for ancillary programs -- Foreign Language, Physical Education, and Technology instruction.
- c. Assess relationships with local community organizations (e.g., SCA and Overlook), and make recommendations to build upon these partnerships, discontinue partnerships and/or establish others to address identified priorities.
- d. Establish a regular review cycle for these and other potential partnerships.
- e. Develop recommendations for priorities to support and modify as needed to accommodate the needs of an expanding student population (with input from staff, parents, and students).
- f. Identify programs and, as appropriate, suggest possible funding sources for activities such as afterschool clubs, arts and athletic programs, conferences, festivals and tournaments that serve to expand HCCPS students' connections beyond our school community.
- g. Evaluate current length of school day and school year, and make recommendations as needed.

Fiscal implications: To be determined by recommendations. Generally speaking, unless self-funded, new programs will require deletion of existing programs, or other budget modifications.

Progress Monitoring: The Educational Coordinator in collaboration with the Community Coordinator. Annual report on funding for "co-curricular activities" will be provided to the Board of Trustees.

Goal 4: Formal Academic Affiliation and Teaching Interns

Purpose: Ensure that HCCPS teachers utilize and disseminate best practices and maintain two adults in most classrooms in a financially viable manner

Rationale/Context: A goal for every charter school is to share best practices with the wider educational community. It is both important to promote and improve our approach through ongoing professional collaboration, outreach, and exchange. Over the coming years, the school should develop a formal academic affiliation with an area college or university. This affiliation could serve both the need for more dissemination by the school, and help address the financial issues we encounter with our current staffing pattern of placing two adults in most classrooms by using **graduate interns as the second adult** in some of these classrooms. In addition, staff will pursue other opportunities for HCCPS teachers to share effective practices and exchange information with professionals from other schools and institutions. *The process will begin in 2013 and be completed no later than 2020.*

Accountability: The Educational Coordinator

Activities/Steps:

- a. Assess the viability of developing a formal academic affiliation with one or more area colleges or universities for the purposes of supporting and growing our academic program. The affiliation should include placing year-long teaching interns in the school, and professional development opportunities for HCCPS teachers. *If an affiliation is formed, then proceed to step b. If it is not possible to partner with another institution, the Board of Trustees should decide to either continue pursuing options or discontinue this goal.*
- b. Establish and implement a pilot program in *1-4 classrooms over 2 years and place interns as the second adult* in classrooms where teachers are interested and able to be effective teacher trainers.
- c. Assess the pilot program. *Evaluation should include but is not limited to classroom effectiveness of interns, ability to meet other school needs (i.e. lunch, recess, after school), ability to meet the needs of the interns and affiliated institutions, and a fiscal analysis of expenses and savings. Based on this evaluation determine whether to continue or expand the pilot program. Evaluate expansion and or changes using similar criteria.*

- d. Identify other opportunities and develop relationships with organizations to increase access to professional development for HCCPS teachers and to allow HCCPS teachers to disseminate best practices.

Fiscal Implications: *Potential costs associated with implementing and sustaining an internship program.* The use of interns in the classroom could free some existing funds *currently used for teaching assistants* and ease budget constraints depending on how widespread the implementation is. Potential savings range from quite small if the program has limited viability, to more significant amounts. There are also potential savings in professional development expenses.

Progress Monitoring: The Educational Coordinator will submit an annual report to the Board of Trustees on the progress of the affiliation with input from the Finance Committee on budget implications.

BUILDING COMMUNITY

An identified strength of HCCPS is the strong sense of community that the school fosters. As the school continues to come of age and grows in size, we must consider how to continue to develop this community among students, families, and the broader community.

Goal 1: Community Team

Purpose: Create a sustainable and effective structure that brings together students, parents, and staff to support school culture, family participation and connections, integration across constituencies, and achievement of the community-building goals outlined in this plan

Rationale/Context: Building community requires multiple perspectives, and involvement from all stakeholders in the school. The Management Team, before it was discontinued, was an effective mechanism to bring together parents and staff to address school community issues, but its charge was not as clear as the one to this new group. Currently this communication happens indirectly through the coordinators.

Accountability: Community Coordinator with support from the Community Team

Activities/Steps:

- a. Starting in 2013, assemble a Community Team that includes the Community Coordinator, teacher, student, and parent representatives.
- b. Regularly solicit input from Student Council.
- c. Develop methods to connect class parents, Friends of Hilltown, staff, and students.
- d. Build structures and communication tools that enhance access to volunteer opportunities.
- e. Develop strategies to better share the HCCPS experience with parents who are unable to be physically present during the day (e.g., enhance website with videos, photos, on-line collections of art or written work, etc.; evaluate social media as means of communication).

Fiscal Implications: Possible technology costs and additional administrative and technical staffing support.

Progress Monitoring: Community Coordinator will report annually to the Board of Trustees on family-networking and community building priorities and challenges.

Goal 2: New Student/Family Integration

Purpose: Build strong parent investment and involvement for parents of students in all grades

Rationale/Context: HCCPS has a strong community, rich with school traditions. As the school grows in size and as the older class sizes increase, we need to ensure that incoming students and families are made to feel a part of the culture of the school and are full participants in the cooperative.

Accountability: Community Coordinator in collaboration with Education Coordinator.

Activities/Steps:

- a. Evaluate and improve beginning of the year and summer community building activities to help build connections among existing families and integrate all new families, particularly those with students in grades 6-8.
- b. Develop and implement an orientation program (employing significant student assistance) for incoming older students and their families.
- c. Assess and develop recommendations for opportunities throughout the year to enhance parent connection to the school community.

Timeline: Activities will start in 2013. Implementation continues in alignment with the growth in the 6th-8th grades. The efforts will be reviewed beginning in 2016-2017.

Fiscal Implications: increased administrative time either by increasing Community Coordinator's hours and/or adding additional administrative support staff.

Progress Monitoring: Annual parent surveys developed and implemented by the Community Coordinator will allow monitoring of parent engagement and satisfaction.

Goal 3: Traditions supporting school culture

Purpose: Continual development of strong sense of school culture and community among students in all grades

Rationale/Context: Increasing the size of the middle school will meet the needs of many students to be part of a larger social group. This change will also require new approaches to support the transition to middle school and the maintenance of a whole K-8 experience.

Accountability: Community Coordinator in collaboration with Community Team

Activities/Steps:

- a. Build structures, activities, or processes that maintain a sense of unity within the school and implement beginning in 2013, and continuing as the new middle school model is implemented.
- b. Starting in 2013, work with stakeholders to develop and put in place structures and activities that build strong connections and sense of identity among students in grades K-5 and 6-8.
- c. Develop an appropriate transitional ritual for moving from grade 5 to 6 once full second 6th grade is added.

Fiscal Implications: Increased administrative time either by increasing Community Coordinator's hours and/or adding additional administrative support staff.

Progress Monitoring: Community Coordinator (Community Team)

Goal 4: Student Leadership Training

Purpose: Older students recognize and are acknowledged for their role in building school community

Rationale/Context: With the proposed increase in the middle school population, there is a risk of a social separation between the older and younger classes. Older students at HCCPS have traditionally taken on leadership roles that continue to connect them to students in the lower grades and that establish a vision for student responsibility and growth as they progress through the grades. It's important to develop and formalize some of these structures.

Accountability: Education Coordinator in collaboration with Middle School Teachers and Community Team

Activities/Steps:

- a. Beginning in 2015, establish concrete and visible leadership roles for **7/8th grade** students.
- b. Beginning in 2015, assess student participation and effectiveness in creating meaningful linkages between older and younger students.

(Note: connection between these activities and the Scope of Program review)

Fiscal Implications: Potential curriculum materials and/or consultants.

Progress Monitoring: Education Coordinator will consult annually with members of the Education Domain and Community Coordinator.

SUSTAINABILITY

HCCPS's sustainability, for the past 18 years, has been supported by sufficient waiting lists and enrollment, conservative budgeting and cautious facility expansion and maintenance. We have had flush times and lean times, usually a function of both the state's fiscal health and the specific economies of scale of a given year's enrollment. Good business practice has guided us to date. The goals in this section provide needed guidance to ensure that HCCPS has the essential infrastructure to support the future growth of the institution.

GOAL 1: Site

Purpose: Ensure that HCCPS has a financially viable home suitable to the expanded enrollment and program that meets current and future needs over the next 20 years and that is educationally, environmentally, and financially sustainable.

Rationale/Context: For the past 13 years the Board of Trustees, and its committees, have attempted, unsuccessfully, to find an affordable and suitable alternative to our current facility. Through extensive research, consultation and budget calculations, we have determined that new school construction is beyond our fiscal means. Suitable buildings for renovation are scarce and, those that have been explored have also proved too costly. We need to make a decision about the nature of our long term tenure at the Brassworks and only consider alternative sites if the Brassworks proves non-feasible.

Accountability: Administrative Coordinator, in conjunction with the Site and Finance Committees, will lead and monitor progress of these activities. The Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for lease/purchase decisions.

Activities/Steps:

- a. Fully explore the feasibility of purchasing the Brassworks as a permanent home. Decision regarding lease vs. purchase will be made in 2013.
 - (1) Negotiate to purchase the Brassworks if it has been deemed an advantageous purchase.
 - (2) Develop a capital improvement plan, as owners, and budget accordingly.
- b. (1) Renegotiate a long term lease at the Brassworks if purchase is disadvantageous or unsuccessful.
 - (2) Develop a prioritized and modified capital improvements plan for leasehold improvements, upon lease renewal of the building.
 - (3) Determine (by the middle year of the lease) whether to pursue a longer lease renewal or resume search for another location.
- c. Site assessment and improvement plans should include environmental and economic sustainability planning.

Fiscal Implications: to be determined, by Site and Finance, once purchase vs. lease decision has been resolved.

Purchase will entail financing long term loans and debt service, within the limits of our budget. The guiding principle will be to maintain the current ratio of occupancy expenses to total expenditures.

Progress Monitoring: Administrative Coordinator, in conjunction with the Site and Finance Committees, will monitor progress of these activities. The Board of Trustees is ultimately responsible for lease/purchase decisions. Several of these activities will include more detailed timelines that will support progress monitoring.

Goal 2: School Finance

Purpose: Establish policies that ensure long term fiscal stability, allowing for both growth and savings

Rationale/context: For most of our early history HCCPS generated a budget surplus. This has been increasingly difficult in the past five years. Budget creation and financial management have been carried out in the absence of an overarching philosophy or strategy. In order to provide fiscal sustainability in the long term we must develop a strategy to ensure that we live within our financial means and maintain an emergency cushion.

Accountability: Board of Trustees with input from the Finance Committee and the Administrative Coordinator

Activities/Steps:

- a. Adopt a policy that requires maintenance of a contingency fund of 12% of operating budget at the start of every fiscal year. Clearly define this fund for emergency purposes only, e.g., drop in PPE rates, physical site emergency. Implemented with the FY 14 budget cycle and ongoing. (Responsibility: BOT decision in concert with Finance Committee and Administrative Coordinator)
- b. Commit to approval of zero-balanced annual operating budgets, including an account designated for unanticipated, non-negotiable, and necessary expenses. Implemented with the FY 14 budget cycle and ongoing. (Responsibility: Board of Trustees after recommendation of Domain Council, Finance Committee)
- c. Annually designate a capital expenditures fund for building improvements and equipment, that fall outside the scope of an annual operating budget- i.e., one-time expenditures that will benefit the school for the long term. Funds for this purpose will be redirected from the undesignated fund balance at the start of each fiscal year. Implemented with the FY 14 budget cycle and ongoing. (Responsibility: BOT decision based on input from Finance and Site Committees and Administrative Coordinator)
- d. Assess sustainability of current employee compensation methodology. If necessary, research and implement alternate approaches in order to assure fiscal sustainability for the next decade.

(Responsibility: BOT decision based on input from Finance and Personnel Committees, and Education and Administrative Coordinators)

- e. Support the efforts of FOH to make an annual, undesignated donation to HCCPS operating budget, with a desired 5% annual increase in the size of their donation. (Responsibility: Community Coordinator and Development Associate)

Fiscal Implications: While these steps should result in long term fiscal stability there is the potential for budget cuts in any given year. This could impact staffing or benefits.

Progress Monitoring: Ongoing, quarterly and annually by the BOT based on input from the Finance Committee.

ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY AND SUCCESSION PLANNING

The abilities of our current coordinators do “what needs doing” to make the school work and to step in and make things happen when other resources have been lacking or inflexible has been a tremendous asset to the school. It has also led to a gradual expansion of their responsibilities and roles. At this time, as the school increases in size and complexity, demands on administrative resources insist on a re-evaluation of current administrative responsibilities, a reorganization of administrative support to maximize effectiveness, and a general clarification of duties. The intent is to make those duties more doable in the present and, in the long run, to establish a process to insure a smooth transition of leadership at such time as the current administrators may elect to retire.

Goal 1: Maximize Administrative Effectiveness

Purpose: To better define and support the roles and functions of the current three coordinators for the purpose of enhancing and augmenting their ability to dedicate themselves to administering a larger and increasingly complex institution.

Rationale: Since the school’s beginnings the roles of the coordinators have been defined by evolution as well as design. With the school’s expansion, it is time that an objective review of the current workload, demands, distractions, and frustrations impacting the coordinators’ jobs be undertaken for the purpose of improving the effectiveness and workability of these positions.

Accountability: BOT or committee thereof

Activities/ Steps:

- a. Review current job descriptions and duties of the coordinators. The review process should base its findings on interviews with the current coordinators, with faculty/staff, and with select community members and evaluate these findings in light of relevant practices and standards at similar institutions. (Initial review, 2013-2014, continuing through school expansion)
- b. In light of above findings and in conjunction with board and community wishes, revise current coordinator responsibilities.
- c. In light of above plans, adjust administrative support for the purpose of relieving the coordinators of some portion of these duties. Consider recruiting and training several staff to serve in leadership roles for the purposes of: 1. Assisting in eventual transition and 2. Minimizing the disruptiveness of an unfilled vacancy or long-term unplanned absence 3. Serve as School Leaders when coordinators are absent.

(Note: The question of a wholesale review of the structure of the school administration was entertained by the LRP, but we found no compelling reason to do so—and we advise against it.)

Fiscal Implications: cost of hiring of consultant review of administrative structure; cost additional administrative support staff, leadership stipends.

Goal 2: Plan for Administrative Succession

Purpose: To develop a plan for the smooth transition and incorporation of new leadership at such time as the current coordinators may elect to retire.

Rationale: Our current three coordinators have unique and often unrecorded knowledge about the institution and their roles. As the time approaches when they may be considering retirement, their duties, plans, schedules, contacts, etc. need to be captured in a form which is suitable for hand-off to a successor. The institution needs to better define what qualities it seeks in their successors. And the school as a whole needs a general plan for appropriately integrating a new administrator into the life of the school.

Accountability: BOT or committee thereof
Current coordinators

Activities/Steps:

- In conjunction with the findings discussed in Goal 1 above for revision of coordinator duties, develop a (simple) manual outlining each of the coordinators' duties, schedule, etc.
- If no staff members have been appointed as a result of Goal 1c above, recruit and train several staff to serve in leadership roles for the purposes of: 1. Assisting in eventual transition and 2. Minimizing the disruptiveness of an unfilled vacancy or long-term unplanned absence.
- Develop with current coordinators a satisfactory transition plan anticipating their role in recruitment and training of a successful candidate.

Fiscal implications: Costs associated with added staff/roles, stipends for staff in leadership roles

Goal / Activity	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Program Quality											
Goal 1: Grades 6-8 Reorganization											
Develop recommendations / implementation plan											
Implement new model gradually											
Full-scale implementation											
Comprehensive evaluation of model implementation											

