

March, 2008

Dorchester, Massachusetts

Codman Academy Charter Public School (Codman), a Commonwealth charter school, is located in the Codman Square area of Dorchester. The school opened in September of 2001. Codman is chartered to serve grades 9 through 12 with a maximum enrollment of 120. In 2007-2008, Codman is serving 119 students in grades 9 through 12. The school draws its students from the surrounding neighborhoods of Dorchester, Roxbury, and Mattapan.

The mission of Codman is “to prepare students for full participation in the intellectual, economic, and civic life of society, by ensuring their preparation for and access to further education, the skills and vision to undertake a rewarding career, and the motivation and character needed to engage deeply and productively in community life. We view parents and community members as integral partners in this endeavor.”

Codman’s student body in 2007-2008 is 78.4% African American, 10.8% Hispanic, 1.6% Caucasian, and 9.2% other. Seventy-two students, or 61% of the student body, are eligible for free or reduced lunch. Thirty students, or approximately 25% of the student body, receive special education services.

The following participants conducted the site visit on March 18, 2008:

- Anthony Ashton, MA ESE Charter School Office
- Alison Bagg, MA ESE Charter School Office
- Emily Lichtenstein, ESE Charter School Office
- Judy Miller, ESE Charter School Office
- Noelle Thurlow, Outward Bound International / USA
- Steve Watson, Josiah Quincy Upper School
- Brandon Wong, MATCH Charter Public High School

Before the visit, the site team reviewed the school’s 2006-2007 annual report, the 2005 Summary of Review, board materials, and recent internal and external assessment data. On site, the team reviewed curricular documents and other information provided by the school. The team conducted approximately [25] classroom observations and interviewed [three] trustees, [two] administrators, [five] student service team faculty, [four] teachers, [one] parent, and [11] students.

The purpose of this visit was to corroborate and augment the information contained in the school’s annual report, to investigate the school’s progress relative to its Accountability Plan goals, and to collect information that will help the Commissioner and Board of Elementary and Secondary Education make a renewal recommendation for the school’s charter. The focus of the visit is on three central areas of inquiry:

- Faithfulness to the terms of the school’s charter;
- Academic program success;
- Organizational viability.

The team’s findings in each of these areas are presented below.

I. Faithfulness to the Terms of the Charter

Are the school’s mission, vision, educational philosophy, and pedagogical approach, as articulated in the charter and subsequent amendments, clear and understood by the school community?

Finding: All stakeholders could express the mission in their own words. Teachers, administrators, board members, students, and family members articulated that the school’s mission is to provide students with an education rooted in real experiences that prepares students for college and to be responsible members of their community.

All stakeholders were able to discuss the mission of the school. All groups interviewed emphasized specific parts of the mission, but all agreed that Codman students are expected to go to college, achieve academically, and be responsible members of the community. Board members reported that the school helps students achieve academically through an expeditionary learning model that also allows students to feel part of a community. Students stated specifically that the mission of Codman was to help them serve their community, get into college, and build character. Teachers and administrators reported that college acceptance was a central part of the mission, but more importantly they want Codman graduates to see themselves as responsible citizens who have the power to positively affect their community.

How is the school’s mission and vision integrated into day-to-day operations?

Finding: The mission and vision are strongly integrated into the school program.

Site visitors observed that the mission and vision of the school are strongly integrated into day-to-day operations. As reported by teachers and corroborated by observations, the expeditionary learning model is consistently applied as a pedagogical approach in the classroom. The school upholds high academic standards for students, with a 70% passing requirement for all classes. Codman seniors receive guidance about applying to college in the form of periodic financial aid sessions and a Humanities class that helps students write their college essays. Students are provided programmatic support to become productive citizens in their community through the senior social action project (all seniors take a class that involves creating a social justice action project), the Learning Through Internship program (a senior year internship requirement), and a variety of Saturday classes that involve students helping their community. Additionally, the school provides ample supports to enable the character development and overall health of students. The school has a Student Service Team comprised of seven staff members. As a part of the Student Service Team a full-time social worker runs small group counseling sessions, teaches students peer mediation skills, and holds a weekly social skills group for students.

Finding: This year the school has started to systematically reach out to alumni as part of a goal of increasing communication and maintaining a connection to alumni.

Beginning in the fall of 2007, Codman created a system and staff position to reach out to alumni. The new Dean of Alumni’s goal is to increase communication and maintain a connection to Codman’s 56 alumni. So far, the dean has visited 40% of alumni at their college campuses. She reported that for now her role was to gather information to better inform curricular and support programs offered to 11th and 12th grade students, but eventually she will be able to guide and be a resource for alumni. The Student Service Team as well as administrators reported that Codman has created a culture in which the school will continue to support alumni.

Has the school met or is it making progress toward meeting the faithfulness to charter goals set out in its Accountability Plan?

Finding: The school has met the majority of goals outlined in its annual report.

At the time of the site visit, Codman Academy did not have an approved Accountability Plan. However, Codman Academy's 2006-2007 Annual Report did contain the following goals grouped under the heading: "Are we true to our mission?" .

Goal # 1: Complete an annual independent evaluation and/or school review and report to the board of trustees.

The school met this goal. Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound completed a year end assessment of Codman Academy in June 2007. This review occurs each year.

Goal # 2: Offer rich interdisciplinary Expeditionary Learning education steeped in innovative literacy program, liberal, and performing arts. Ensure that curriculum is rigorous and college preparatory in nature.

Measure # 1: Offer rich interdisciplinary curriculum based on Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound design principles, including extensive field work in all core classes.

The school has met this measure. According to the 2007 Expeditionary Learning evaluation, Codman Academy "continues to develop rich expeditions... (that create a connection between learning experiences and the desired outcome." Furthermore, according to Expeditionary Learning's 0-4 point rubric, Codman scored threes for "fieldwork, service, experts", "lesson design", and "quality and frequency of learning expeditions."

Measure # 2: Interweave the use of technology into teaching and learning both inside and outside of the classroom.

The school has met this measure. As reported further in a finding below, the school has met this measure.

Goal # 3: 94% daily average attendance for a six day school week.

The school has met this goal. The school's 2006-2007 annual report states that the school achieved a 96% daily average attendance rate.

Goal # 4: Students develop positive attitudes towards college.

Measure # 1: 100% of students apply for and are accepted into college.

The school has met this measure. According the 2006-2007 annual report, 100% of the classes of 2005, 2006, and 2007 were accepted to four year colleges. The school also reports that 78.4% of Codman Academy alumni are currently enrolled in college.

Measure # 2: Codman Academy offers on-going alumni support to its graduates.

The school has begun to meet this measure. As reported above, the school has started to systematically reach out to alumni.

Goal # 5: Parent/family members are active partners with Codman Academy Charter Public School.

Measure: 100% participation in faculty/student/parent conferences.

The school has nearly met this measure. Codman's 2006-2007 annual report states that 99% of parents attended conferences.

Goal # 6: Maintain strong partnerships with *The Boston Globe*, Codman Square Health Center, The Huntington Theatre, Epiphany School, Citizen Schools, and Boston Modern Orchestra Project.

The school has nearly met this goal. According to the school's 2006-2007 annual report, Codman maintains strong partnerships with the organizations listed above. Incoming students receive free home delivery of the Boston Globe. Codman Academy uses the Epiphany School's gym for physical fitness classes. The school's humanities curriculum includes twice monthly visits to the Huntington Theatre. Likewise, the 11th grade curriculum includes working with the Boston Modern Orchestra to create and perform a lyrical opera. However, the school did not report on, and site visitors did not ask about, the relationship with Citizen Schools.

II. Academic Program Success

A. Curriculum

***What is included in the documentation of the curriculum and what form does it take?
Is the school's documented curriculum aligned with state standards?***

Finding: The school has documented the core curriculum and has begun documenting it electronically.

Administrators and teachers reported that the school has documented the core curriculum and has begun to electronically document curricular materials. Site visitors observed that each grade level and content area has created course syllabi and scope and sequences. The scope and sequences illustrated skills, concepts, and themes that students would gain from the core curriculum. Currently, Codman core academic teachers keep curricular binders that contain instructional materials. Teachers report that they have begun to document these materials electronically in public folders. Instructions and expectations for documenting curriculum electronically are found in the faculty handbook. Each expedition has an electronic folder in which the teacher saves weekly lesson plans, learning targets, activities, assessments, and other curricular documents. Teachers reported that this is a transition year in which some documents are stored electronically, and some are still kept in physical binders.

The curriculum is aligned with state standards.

Teachers reported a curriculum planning process in which teachers start with the Massachusetts State Frameworks and work backwards to create expeditions (units of study that involve time outside of the classroom). Teachers did report that they post learning targets for each class everyday that are all connected to state standards. Furthermore, teachers reported that each teacher is able to alter the curriculum as they see fit, as long as they are covering the state standards.

Does it articulate skills and concepts that each student should know?

Finding: Expeditionary learning is a driving force behind the creation of curriculum. Teachers develop expeditionary units. Students display their learning through authentic assessments. Teachers report that expeditionary learning provides a theme and makes the learning purpose clear to students. Each core academic class has an overarching theme per trimester. Within these larger themes, teachers develop inquiry based expeditionary units of study. These expeditionary units include time outside of the classroom in which students may interview experts in the field, visit places of interest (religious institutions, colleges, companies), or conduct research. Additionally, the curriculum includes the use of authentic products in which students have a variety of ways to express what they learned. Learning expeditions result in projects, papers, or presentations that require students to develop and showcase academic skills.

How is the curriculum reviewed for quality and effectiveness?

Finding: Curriculum development is an iterative process in which teachers informally review curriculum and revise it as needed.

Teachers and administrators report that curriculum development is an ongoing, iterative process in which teachers use data and feedback to alter the curriculum as needed each year. For example, teachers reported that two years ago the school decided to create a two year physics sequence for 9th and 10th grades based on MCAS requirements as a way to support science and math skills acquisition. While teachers have the ability to alter the curriculum as needed, the faculty handbook lists required elements such as expeditionary learning expectations, common classroom procedures, and expectations for documenting curriculum.

The curriculum is reviewed for effectiveness in a number of informal ways. Administrators reported that last June the faculty conducted an intensive review of the curriculum and came up with a sequence that satisfied community members. The principal reviews general overviews for expeditions, and subject area teams review the full expedition plans during the summer. New teacher lesson plans are reviewed more carefully by the principal, but he does not review the daily lesson plans of veteran staff members.

Finding: The principal is the clear instructional leader.

Teachers reported that the principal is the school's instructional leader. All teachers stated that the principal is very accessible and supports teachers in a variety of ways. A new teacher reported that the principal has set up systems to facilitate a review of her performance that involved self-assessment, goal setting, two meetings with the principal, and an observation by the principal. The principal also formally observes all teachers once a year.

B. Instruction and Learning

Is the observed instructional practice aligned with what is described either verbally or in writing?

Finding: For the most part, site visitors saw instructional methods, classroom routines, use of technology, structures, and grouping methods that aligned with what was described verbally and in writing.

During the site visit, team members observed instructional practices that aligned with the verbal and written description of school wide routines. In many classrooms, team members observed that teachers used similar classroom structures such as board configuration, Do Now, review of homework, small group work, project based learning, a student feedback routine called “kudos and deltas”, and classroom cleanup. Teachers also listed appropriate objectives for the class period on the board; these learning targets clearly illustrated skills or content which students should acquire by the end of class. Team members also observed that teachers often reviewed Codman expectations for “habits of work” and provided tools, such as binder organization time, to support student acquisition of those habits. However, site visitors noted that not all of the students achieved the learning targets within the class period in some classrooms. Furthermore, observers did not see evidence of differentiation within all of the classrooms. In a few classrooms, team members observed that technology was used as a differentiation tool and that students had choices to create different assessment products. Observers were also told that they would see learning assessments in all classrooms at the end of the period, and this was not seen in all classes.

Finding: Presentation skills are emphasized as a part of the core curriculum.

Codman Academy emphasizes the acquisition of presentation skills as a part of the core curriculum. All students in the 10th grade must complete a Passage Portfolio in the core academic classes (math, science, and humanities) in order to be promoted to 11th grade. The process asks students to work on their public speaking skills and requires students to achieve a grade of 80% on a twenty-minute public portfolio presentation. Students may choose which one of their three portfolios they would like to present publicly in June of their 10th grade year. Likewise, in 12th grade students must complete a senior portfolio requirement to graduate. This senior portfolio includes shaping their college essays into senior talks that are delivered orally to the entire school community. This talk is called an apologia, or defense of life. Additionally, the project-based curriculum gives students in all grades many opportunities to develop and display presentation skills by creating videos, websites, PowerPoint presentations, or a social action project.

How does the school environment support student learning?

Finding: Classrooms are students centered and tend to have an informal atmosphere. Students have leadership roles within the classroom.

Codman Academy’s classroom environments are student centered and tend to have an informal atmosphere. As reported by school administrators, students call teachers by their first names. Students reported that close relationships between students and staff members and the family atmosphere are school strengths. Students reported that they have a friendly and comfortable rapport with teachers and team members witnessed this in the classroom. In the classroom, the “family” environment takes many forms. Within each classroom, team members observed that students have jobs, leadership opportunities, and often take the role of teacher. The small class sizes and emphasis on group work sometimes results in an engaged class where the majority of students actively participate in the learning task in a helpful and respectful manner. The “kudos and deltas” system allows teachers and students to give positive and constructive feedback about behavior and learning targets at the end of the class period. However, site visitors noted that the project based learning instructional method also lends itself to many casual conversations

between students. Team members also saw instances where the level of student comfort in the classroom led to misbehavior or lower levels of student engagement.

Finding: The school culture reflects a tension between enforcing rules and expectations and fostering democratic participation by students.

Codman Academy staff members continually face a dynamic tension between enforcing school rules and fostering the free speech and expression of students. The school has established programmatic elements that support student self-expression such as a Saturday class named “Fairness at Codman” that teaches students to develop proposals and work collaboratively with staff to make changes for the school. During Codman’s advisory program, called “Crew”, students have a forum for offering feedback about school wide policies and activities. In November 2007, Codman Academy seniors brought a proposal to the board of trustees to alter the school’s dress code policy to respect certain students’ religious beliefs. The board voted to adopt the proposal which had been voted on by the entire school body. In addition, Codman seniors must complete a year long social action project in which they investigate a social justice issue and implement an action plan to address it. All of these programs were developed with the explicit purpose of fostering student voice and democratic expression, which is evident in the school and the classrooms.

While Codman has created specific rules and expectations for student behavior, site visitors observed that the democratic culture of the school creates a degree of flexibility and a dialog around those rules. Site visitors observed an inconsistent enforcement of the dress code, different expectations for student talk in class, and some students wearing headphones, using cell phones, or chewing gum in class. Additionally, team members viewed a range of student behavior and teacher expectations for behavior. In some classrooms, teachers monitored student behavior and had management systems in place. In others, teachers did not interrupt instruction to redirect off task students and some misbehavior (like inappropriate language, disengagement, or misuse of technology) was ignored.

Finding: Technology is widely used to support student learning.

Site visitors observed that technology is widely used to support student learning. More than half of the observed classrooms used some sort of technology, such as laptops, LCD projectors, or graphing calculators, during the class period. During classes, site visitors observed students using laptops to complete assignments, to make PowerPoint presentations, to conduct research, to revise papers, to take quizzes, and to make web pages. The school has a program that loans a laptop to every junior and senior for use during the school day.

Do the school’s instructional practices include the implementation of strategies that address the needs of diverse learners, including special education students?

Finding: The school provides ample and necessary supports for students to succeed.

Student services are an essential component of the educational program. The school focuses on supporting each individual student and provides ample services to help students succeed. As previously mentioned, Codman has created a Student Service Team comprised of the following staff members: Dean of Alumni, Dean of Enrichment, Wellness Director, Tutoring Coordinator, Social Worker, and a Director of Technology. This team provides many services including counseling, health services, and college preparation. Additionally, the school has a Student

Support Team comprised of the special education director, the learning institute team (special education teachers), the principal, and the social worker. This team meets regularly to discuss individual student's academic and social / emotional needs and formulates plans to address those needs. One parent representative reported that the teachers are able to provide for the needs of all students within an entire class and that school programs provide emotional support for students.

Finding: The school sets high academic standards and holds all students to the same high bar. While students are offered many academic and social / emotional supports, students understand that it is ultimately their responsibility to seek the help they need to meet the high academic standards.

Codman sets high academic standards for all students. As mentioned previously, 70% is a passing score for all academic classes and students have to pass the 10th grade Passage Portfolio in order to be promoted to 11th grade. If students do not receive an 80% or higher on their 10th grade Passage Portfolio they face a choice: repeat the 10th grade or return to the district public school. If Codman sophomores fail the Passage Portfolio the first time, the school does give them the chance to revise their work and present one more time. However, even with the school wide emphasis on revision, it is common for students to repeat 10th grade; teachers reported that approximately one out of seven students is retained. The 2006-2007 annual report stated that the promotion rate for sophomores in 2007 was 74%. Students reported that they can easily receive individual help from teachers after school or from tutors who are available at the school until 7 p.m. each evening. Students clearly stated that while the school gives them many supports to succeed, they understood that ultimately it was up to them to complete their work.

Finding: The school's special education program effectively serves a broad array of student needs.

Codman's special education enrollment, at the time of the site visit, is 30 students or 25.2% of the school's overall population. The school has a part-time, (0.25 FTE) director of special education whose is responsible for overseeing the special education "Learning Institute" program, services and staff. The special education staff is comprised of a full-time Humanities teacher, who coordinates the Learning Institute program and provides both substantially separate and inclusion English language arts instruction; a full-time inclusion mathematics teacher and a half-time inclusion Science teacher. Codman provides for a full continuum of Individual Education Program (IEP) services to meet the needs of all students with disabilities. The majority of students with disabilities receive their IEP services within a full inclusion model. In addition to a full-time social worker, the school has service and evaluation contracts with licensed services providers and a school psychologist.

Finding: The school's English Language learner program is becoming more formalized.

Codman currently has a low incidence of English language learners and is developing its English language learner (ELL) program. The school has developed a home language survey to screen all incoming students who may be English language learners and has implemented practices to identify students who are limited English proficient and to assess their level of English proficiency. Codman has embarked on a plan to further train all teachers in Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) techniques by enrolling all teachers in the SEI Category 1: Second Language Learning and Teaching training. The director of special education, a qualified MELA-O trainer (QMT), oversees the administration of the MELA-O assessment.

Finding: Based on classroom observations, students with disabilities benefit from a wide array of support structures and services.

Classroom observations were conducted in two academic classrooms – a substantially separate Humanities class with a 1:6 teacher-student ratio and an inclusion mathematics class with a 2:14 teacher-student ratio. Each classroom observation was for approximately 45 minutes. The school currently has 2.5 FTE special education teachers with a 0.25 FTE director of special education. Documentation reviewed of eleven students' IEP 2 Forms indicates a consistent well-detailed summary of how each student's disability(ies) affect their progress in the curriculum areas. Additionally, numerous types of general curriculum accommodations are prescribed for each eligible student as appropriate. As an Expeditionary Learning school, Codman's emphasizes learning outside the classroom. In particular, the partnership with Huntington Theatre offers students with disabilities another alternative to express themselves outside of traditional academic activities. The multi-graded special education program, led by a teacher-coordinator, provides ongoing consultation and collaboration between special education and general education teachers, related service providers and social workers.

Finding: Accommodations and modifications are consistently made in the classrooms.

The school's special education services are integrated into the regular education program providing IEP services to the majority of eligible students within a co-taught inclusion model. Codman has a full-time technology director who oversees the implementation of technology in the classroom. In one co-taught mathematics class, every student had a laptop computer and used it to work on a geometry triangle angle sum activity. In one substantially separate Humanities class, two students used laptops to access the curriculum through Kurzweil software which scans classroom materials and textbooks. The Kurzweil assistive technology is used by students for decoding, reading fluency and writing instruction as specified in their IEP goals and objectives and for related classroom assessments

How and from whom do teachers receive feedback and guidance to improve instructional practice and student achievement?

How and by whom are teachers evaluated?

Finding: Codman is in the process of strengthening the system of faculty evaluation.

Within the Faculty Handbook, Codman has outlined a system of faculty evaluation entitled the Teacher Development Program. It is influenced by the National Board Certification process. The school had planned to implement the Teacher Development Program and to develop a rubric for effective teaching during the 2007-2008 school year, but has not yet been accomplished these tasks. Currently, teachers set goals at the beginning of the school year, are formally observed by the principal and a peer teacher, and complete a self-evaluation. The principal also regularly conducts informal observations. Teachers also reported that they observe two or three of their colleagues during the year as a part of the peer evaluation component.

How is qualitative and quantitative data used to inform planning and improve student achievement?

Finding: The math department has piloted a comprehensive system of using 9th and 10th grade mock MCAS results to create individualized targeted extra help for students. The school is working to develop a similar system for the other core content areas.

This year, the math department has piloted a new program that uses data to better prepare students for the MCAS. During the 9th and 10th grade, Codman students take mock MCAS exams and the results are used to create individual targeted extra help for students. Students who need help get extra work and additional problem sets that target their area of need. Additionally, these students are offered Saturday classes that focus on MCAS preparation. Teachers said that this pilot program has been successful and the school will use this same process for other content area classes.

Finding: The school has created systems to analyze and track data, and has created a plan with which to use the data to inform planning and improve student achievement.

Codman has established systems for collecting, analyzing, and tracking student data. The school uses a “Student Management Dashboard” that is accessible for all staff. The “Dashboard” tracks student academic class grades, attendance, behavior, and standardized testing results for DRP and MCAS. Additionally, Codman has created extensive analyses of the 2007 MCAS results and drafted plans for improving student scores. The plans to improve student performance on the math MCAS include augmenting and revising the curriculum, establishing a new sequence for math instruction, making individualized student MCAS performance data available to teachers and tutors, and establishing a teaching focus on open response questions.

Finding: The school makes use of assessment data, parent, teacher and student satisfaction rates, and drop-out and promotion rates in conducting its special education program evaluation.

Codman conducts ongoing review of its special education program through parent, teacher and student satisfaction surveys and other informal means. The school also reviews information from IEP reviews, analyzes data based on eligible students’ statewide assessment results and drop-out and promotion rates vs. non-IEP students. During the 2008-2009 school year, Codman plans to implement more special education support for 11th and 12th graders; tutoring for eligible students during after school study hall; classroom assignment modifications; and including Learning Institute students in the freshman seminar.

C. Student Achievement

Are students reaching Proficiency on state standards, as measured by the Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System (MCAS)?

Tables I-III: Codman Academy MCAS Results by Performance Category Annual Comparisons 2003-2007

Finding: MCAS test scores have been slightly variable for English language arts and shown steady increases in mathematics for Codman Academy students over the past five years.

All MCAS results for ELA and mathematics that are available from the last five years are presented below in Tables I and II. Table III shows MCAS results for science from 2007, the first year the test was administered. These tables include the Composite Performance Index (CPI), which reflects the distribution of student scores over the four MCAS performance

categories. The CPI is a 100-point index that measures the extent to which students are progressing towards proficiency.

Table I: Codman Academy ELA MCAS Test Results, 2003-2007

ELA	Students Included	% Warning/ Failing	% Needs Improvement	% Proficient	% Advanced	CPI
Grade 10						
2007	33	6	33	61	0	84.1
2006	20	5	50	45	0	78.1
2005	28	0	46	36	18	83.9
2004	20	0	25	65	10	92.5
2003	25	0	56	44	0	80.0

In 2007, Codman Academy's ELA MCAS score improved from the previous year. Over the last five years, scores have been variable.

Table II: Codman Academy Mathematics MCAS Test Results, 2003-2007

Math	Students Included	% Warning/ Failing	% Needs Improvement	% Proficient	% Advanced	CPI
Grade 10						
2007	33	12	42	30	15	73.5
2006	20	15	50	30	5	71.3
2005	28	25	36	32	7	65.2
2004	21	19	62	10	10	61.9
2003	25	32	44	16	8	61.0

In 2007, Codman Academy's math MCAS score improved. Each year since 2003, Codman has shown an increase of the math CPI.

Table III: Codman Academy Science MCAS Test Results, 2007

Science	Students Included	% Warning/ Failing	% Needs Improvement	% Proficient	% Advanced	CPI
Grade 10						
Physics						
2007	35	37	37	26	0	55.0

Last year, 10th grade students took the physics MCAS for the first time. The majority of students did not reach proficiency and over a third scored in the Warning/Failing performance category.

Is the school making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) in the aggregate and in all statistically significant subgroups?

Finding: Codman Academy made AYP in the aggregate in 2007.

Table IV provides information about Codman Academy's AYP status. Codman Academy's performance ratings were "High" for ELA and "Moderate" for mathematics. Due to the small number of students attending Codman, they did not have any statistically significant subgroups.

Table IV: Adequate Yearly Progress History

		Adequate Yearly Progress History									Accountability Status
		1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	
ELA	Aggregate	-	-	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No Status
	All Subgroups	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
MATH	Aggregate	-	-	-	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No Status
	All Subgroups	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Has the school met or is it making progress toward meeting the academic success goals set out in its Accountability Plan?

Finding: The school has shown variable progress toward meeting the academic performance goals as outlined in its annual report.

As stated above, Codman does not have an approved accountability plan. Codman’s 2006-2007 Annual Report contained four goals grouped under the heading: “Performance Goals” that were all academic goals. Based on information reported in the school’s 2006-2007 annual report and corroborated through interviews with stakeholders, Codman Academy is making variable progress on its academic performance goals.

Goal # 1: By graduation, students should increase reading proficiency as assessed by Degree of Reading Powers (DRP) to read at or above grade level.

The school did not provide the data necessary to measure this goal. In their 2006-2007 annual report, Codman reported that by the spring of 2007, the junior class’s mean DRP score was 68.2. This score is 6.2 points above the reading level necessary to read high school level textbooks. However, DRP scores do not directly correspond to a specific grade level and therefore cannot be used to determine if students are reading at grade level.

Goal # 2: Each senior shall complete (with a satisfactory self-evaluation and supervisor’s evaluation) a Learning Through Internship of at least 30 hours as well as two summers of approved enrichment programming such as internships or courses. LTI’s are apprenticeships focused in an area of students interests and career exploration. Their purpose is to connect academic learning and service by deepening both. (The term LTI comes from The Big Picture Company Initiative).

Measure # 1: 100% of students shall complete Learning Through Internship Reports at a satisfactory level in order to graduate.

The school has met this measure. According to the 2006-2007 annual report, each member of the class of 2007 completed a senior internship. The school did not state if the reports were completed at a satisfactory level or not.

Goal # 3: 75% of students will pass the MCAS on their first try and all students, beginning with the class of 2010, will achieve a proficient or advanced score prior to receiving their high school diplomas.

This goal has been partially met. According to the school’s 2006-2007 annual report and MCAS data from 2007, at least or more than 75% of students have passed the math and ELA MCAS tests on their first try since 2004. In 2007, 94% of students taking the ELA MCAS test passed and 88% of students taking the math MCAS test passed. As scores for the class of 2010 are unavailable until the fall of 2008, the second part of the goal is currently not measurable.

Goal # 4: Each student shall complete the academic year with a satisfactory grade or higher in order to achieve promotion to the next grade and to graduate.

The school has not met this goal. According to data provided in the school’s 2006-2007 annual report, in 2007 only the senior class attained a 100% promotion rate. In the other grades, 87% of 9th grade students who completed the school year were promoted, 74% of the 10th grade students who completed the school year were promoted, and 93% of the 11th grade students were promoted. Codman academy staff members cite the high academic expectations (students must attain a grade of 70% or higher to pass a class), and the high stakes 10th grade passage portfolio requirement as reasons for the promotion rates.

III. Organizational Viability

Does the school have an effective leadership and governance structure for carrying out the mission, vision, and educational philosophy of the school?

How does the board of trustees provide oversight and leadership in key areas of the school, including academic achievement and fiscal planning?

Finding: The board clearly understands that its role is to set policy and provide financial oversight.

Board members reported that they have clearly delineated their role as setting school policies and providing financial oversight. They reported that the executive director and the principal were responsible for day to day management of the school. As further evidence for that division of responsibilities, the board has created a strategic plan, as explained below, and the executive director and principal are responsible for implementing many of the programs that will allow Codman to meet its goals.

Finding: The board uses the strategic plan to determine its goals for each year.

In 2006, Codman Academy drafted a five year strategic plan that the board uses to determine yearly goals. The strategic plan includes four overarching goals, each with a subset of strategies used to meet the goal. The four large goals relate to curriculum, school infrastructure/resources, facilities, and dissemination. The board explained that this plan is subject to revisions, but that they use it as a way to measure progress. Board members reported that they are “on target” in terms of meeting yearly benchmarks.

Finding: The board is in the process of developing a systematic evaluation tool for the school leader.

The board is conducting an extensive evaluation of the executive director this year, but has yet to develop a regular system of evaluation. This year, the board created an evaluation committee that will assess the executive director with a 360 degree review that will include survey data collected from parents and teachers. The executive director will be assessed according to a set of goals established last year. The executive director was not evaluated last year because the board

was developing the assessment instrument. Board members reported that this year they are still experimenting with the evaluation process.

How does the school leadership review effectiveness of the academic program and guide its improvement?

Finding: Because the school does not have an accountability plan, the school administration assesses progress towards goals in an informal manner.

At the time of the site visit, Codman did not have an approved Accountability Plan. Board members and administrators reported that even without an Accountability Plan, the leadership team was aware of the school's strengths and areas of need. The board of trustees stated that they felt well informed about the academic program through discussion of test scores, academic departmental reports, and monthly updates at board meetings by the executive director. Administrators reported that they look at many measures to determine the success of the academic program. Additionally, administrators stated that the small size of the school allowed them to constantly identify areas of need and devise solutions. Site visitors observed that the leadership team is very involved with the day to day operation of the school. The principal and the executive director know the academic and socio-emotional condition of individual students at the school. According to the administrative team, Codman has created a culture in which staff members are encouraged to speak up and offer constructive feedback if they see a problem. Furthermore, the administration reported that at the end of each year, the entire faculty reviews the year and assesses aspects of Codman's program.

Is the school safe and are the physical facilities adequate for the program of the school?

Finding: Students feel safe at school and feel that school tries to ensure the safety of students out of school.

Students reported feeling safe at school. They stated that there is trust between students and the school is like a family. Students also reported that the neighborhood surrounding the school is not safe and the school takes measures to ensure their safety outside of school. For example, students stated that teachers will make sure students do not walk home alone.

Finding: The need for new facility is a school wide priority that requires much of the board's and the executive director's time and energy.

The current school facilities are not adequate for Codman. Board members as well as the administration identified the need for a new facility as one of the school's priorities that requires a great deal of time and energy. Because of Codman Academy's partnership with the Codman Square Health Center the two entities are working together to develop plans for building a new facility. A facility committee is comprised of members from Codman Academy Charter Public School's board of trustees, Codman Square Health Center's board of trustees, and Codman Academy Foundation's board of trustees. Board members reported that the Codman Academy Foundation and the Codman Square Health Center board members will build and own this facility which will continue to serve as a health center and school. Codman Academy board members reported that the three boards had clearly defined lines of responsibility and communicated often about the building project.

Is the school operating in a manner consistent with legal and regulatory requirements?

Finding: The special education and English language learner programs operate in a manner consistent with legal and regulatory requirements.

Codman underwent a Coordinated Program Mid-cycle Review (MCR) in December 2006, which included reviews of the school's civil rights, special education and English language learner programs. Codman's MCR Report included additional criteria in special education due to the reauthorization of IDEA and criteria in English learner education based on significant changes governing the education of limited English proficient students adopted in 2002. The Department approved the school's Special Education Corrective Action Plan (CAP) in December 2007. The MCR Report requires Codman to submit additional CAP responses for the English language learner program in the areas of: staff training in sheltered English immersion (SEI); reports and communications translated into the major languages and SEI program policies and procedures. At the time that this report was written, the school's CAP is due to the Department's Program Quality Assurance Unit on March 30, 2008.

Are professional staff members qualified by training and/or experience in the areas to which they are assigned?

Finding: A majority of teachers are relatively new to the school, and new to the teaching profession. Less than half of the faculty meets the definition of highly qualified under the No Child Left Behind Act.

Table V shows the number of years of teaching, and the number of years of teaching at Codman Academy for all the core academic teachers at Codman Academy.

Table V: Years of Teaching Experience for Core Subject Teachers 2007-2008

	1-2 Years	3-5 Years	6-10 Years	11-20 Years	20+ Years
Teachers with this number of years teaching	6	3	2	0	0
Teachers with this number of years teaching at Codman	7	4	0	N/A	N/A

Out of the eleven core academic teachers at Codman Academy, 55% (6) have one to two years of teaching experience and 64% (7) have one to two years of teaching at Codman. Five of the core academic teachers meet the standards for highly qualified, according to the school's 2006-2007 annual report. The school did not provide data for 2007-2008.

Teachers and administrators reported that one of the school's biggest challenges is mentoring new teachers and helping them manage the multiple demands of the job. Teachers also reported that teacher turnover was a school challenge. The administrator reported that faculty members struggle with working at Codman due to the long hours, pressure to bring students to proficiency levels in time for MCAS, high expectations, and the high needs of students.

Are school community members satisfied with the performance of the school?

Finding: Students reported having mixed levels of satisfaction with school; they feel free to offer criticism.

Students were able to articulate both the positive aspects of their school and the parts that they would like to see changed. Students reported that school strengths included: close relationships with teachers, college preparation help, sense of community, opportunities to grow and mature, and the opportunities offered to students within and beyond the classroom. Students were less satisfied with the length of the school day, their uniform, the amount of work required, and inconsistencies in school policy from year to year. Students also reported that the discipline system and classroom management varied from teacher to teacher and they would like more consistency.

Finding: The school has developed strong community partnerships and has received support from community members.

Over the last seven years, Codman Academy has fostered strong community partnerships that help to support the school. The Codman Square Health Center is committed to continue its partnership with the school through the initiative to build a jointly used facility. As further evidence of community support, many community members teach Saturday classes. Saturday class teachers represent many organizations including: the Courageous Sailing Center, Codman Square Health Center, and Dotwell (a health organization) among others.

While all stakeholders reported that the current facility has provided challenges to the school, Codman has been creative with space and made the current configuration work with additional support from the community. Next fall, the school will rent a renovated basement of the nearby Citizen's Bank that will provide two classrooms for the junior and senior classes.

Has the school met the organizational viability goals set out in its Accountability Plan?

Finding: The school has shown that it is making progress on meeting the organizational viability goals as outlined in its annual report.

As noted above, Codman does not have an approved accountability plan. Codman's 2006-2007 Annual Report contained four goals grouped under the heading: "Organizational Goals" that were all organizational viability goals. Based on information reported in the school's 2006-2007 annual report and corroborated through interviews with stakeholders, Codman Academy is making progress toward meeting these goals.

Goal # 1: The board of trustees shall function in an effective manner to carry out the mission of the school and provide oversight of its academic and organizational goals.

Measure # 1: Annual board retreat to evaluate and set new goals.

The school has met this measure. During the focus group interview, board members stated that they hold yearly retreats to discuss and set goals based on the strategic plan. The 2006-2007 annual report also included a list of eight broad goals for the 2007-2008 school year.

Measure # 2: Annual independent evaluation conducted by Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound to determine the school's progress in implementing the five core benchmarks of Expeditionary Learning.

The school has met this measure. Site visitors viewed recent Expeditionary Learning Outward Bound evaluations. According to the school's 2006-07 annual report, the school received favorable reviews during the yearly evaluations.

Goal # 2: The school shall raise necessary funds and manage cash flow to meet expenses.

The school has met the goal. Based on FY08 audited financial statements the school recorded an operational surplus and auditors issued an unqualified opinion.

Goal # 3: Facilities shall be obtained to carry out the school's mission.

The school is working to meet this goal. As stated above, the boards of the Codman Academy Foundation and the Codman Square Health Center are working together to raise the funds and devise plans for a new facility. The Codman Academy Foundation has already raised funds and has purchased land adjacent to the current facility that will become the site of the new facility.

Goal # 4: Attract outstanding faculty and support their professional development.

Measure # 1: Monthly faculty development meetings with Special Education Director.

The school did not specifically report about, nor did site visitors ask about these meetings.

Measure # 2: Use of funds for travel and professional development courses for faculty in 2006-2007.

The school did not directly report on this measure. However, teachers reported that they are supported by the school with time and money to attend professional development conferences.

Measure # 3: Annual Expeditionary Learning contract includes coaching sessions with an EL school designer and self-evaluation by all faculty.

The school has met this measure. Teachers reported that the Expeditionary Learning coach came to the school once a month to work with teachers and is readily available by email or phone at any time.

Conclusion: *Is the school becoming the school it promised to be in its charter?*

Finding: The school is making progress towards becoming the school it promised to be in its charter.

In its seventh year, Codman continues to show a strong commitment to its mission to “prepare students for full participation in the intellectual, economic, and civic life of our society, by ensuring their preparation and access to further education, the skills and vision to undertake a rewarding career, and the motivation and character needed to engage deeply and productively in community life.” All stakeholders are clearly committed to this goal and the school provides programming to support the mission.

Codman has proved that it is making progress to fulfill many of the unique aspects of its charter. The school continues to develop and implement programs that provide the necessary supports to promote student's academic growth as well as their social, emotional, and physical health. School community members have helped to shape an environment in which students feel safe to

express themselves and feel part of a family. The school sets high academic standards for students and has created high stakes benchmarks that students must pass for promotion. Codman Academy's partnership with the Codman Square Health Center remains strong as the two entities plan to build a new facility.

However, Codman also faces some challenges. The executive director and board reported that raising the funds for the new facility will be a tremendous challenge, particularly given today's economic outlook. Additionally, teachers and administrators identified teacher turnover as something that the school would like to address. As Codman Academy grows and matures as an organization, it has begun to identify the need for a more systematic approach towards documenting school wide use of data, measuring the school's progress, and creating a place in which students have the freedom to speak up while focusing on academic tasks.