



OAKLAND UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

Office of the State Administrator

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TO: Vincent Matthews, State Administrator
& Members of the OUSD Board of Education

FROM: Kirsten Vital, Chief of Community Accountability
David Montes de Oca, Coordinator; Office of Charter Schools

DATE: February 19, 2008

RE: Oakland Charter Academy
Charter Renewal Request Application

ACTION REQUESTED:

Approve the Oakland Charter Academy petition for charter renewal **as revised**, because the charter school has met the standards and expectations set forth in the OUSD Charter Renewal Standards, which are based on the standards and criteria set forth in the California Charter Schools Act, Education Code 47605, which governs charter school renewals. The approved charter is amended from the filed petition to incorporate the included revisions, conditions and deadlines below.

SUMMARY:

For the purposes of renewal, Oakland Charter Academy has been evaluated based on the following three guiding questions; *Is the school an academic success? Is the school an effective, viable organization?* and *Has the school been faithful to the terms of its charter?*

School Description and Key Program Elements:

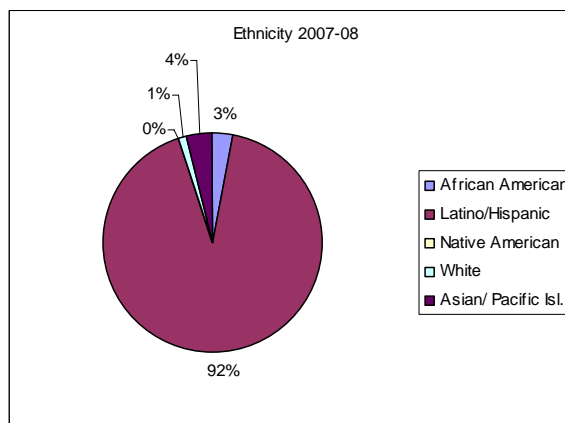
Oakland Charter Academy (OCA) is a small locally-funded charter school, originally authorized by Oakland Unified School District in 1993. OCA is the first charter school authorized by the District. OCA currently operates in District 5, with students living in the OUSD attendance boundaries of Calvin Simmons Middle School (Peralta Creek/ United for Success), Urban Promise Academy, and ASCEND School. OCA is currently in its fourteenth year of operation and undergone two previous charter renewals. OCA currently serves 150 students in grades 6-8. The following table describes their enrollment over the charter term.

YEAR	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
GRADES	6-8	6-8	6-8	6-8	6-8
ENROLL	166	149	139	137	155

* Enrollment based on attendance records submitted to the District and the state.

The school's enrollment demographics* for the 2007-2008 school year are as follows:

ETHNICITY 07-08	
African American	3%
Latino/Hispanic	93%
Native American	0%
White	1%
Asian/Pacific Islander	4%
SOCIO-ECONOMICS 07-08	
Free/Reduced Lunch Eligibility	98%
SPECIAL NEEDS 07-08	
Students identified as ELL	22%
Students identified as SPED	3%



* Current year's demographic data provided by the school through the renewal application process.

The following is a summary of the Key Elements of the Oakland Charter Academy program as outlined in their renewal charter;

A. Mission

Oakland Charter Academy will serve 150 inner-city students in 6th through 8th grade. The focus of OCA is excellent student attendance (98%) that helps to ensure that the academic needs of students interested in attending our school are met. We will provide them with an education to enhance their academic skills in reading, writing, spelling, mathematics, science, social science, business, and humanities so they may compete and be productive members in a capitalistic society. This will be a collaborative effort between school, family, and community.

B. Educational Philosophy

The middle grades are formative years when students are seeking answers to fundamental questions about life and identity. They are deciding on values and standards, which will determine their successes in the future. This is a time for them to explore and ultimately make foundational decisions about themselves. OCA will provide students an opportunity to do so in a structured learning environment and will instill the values of mutual respect and hard work.

OCA will provide a rigorous, standards-based curriculum with a focus on language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. This model has proven to be successful. The school finished the 2006-2007 school year with an API score of 896. In 2007 OCA was nominated for the California Distinguished School Award, and the Title I Academic Achievement Award.

Small class size alone cannot guarantee academic achievement, though research shows that it does often contribute to higher levels of academic success. With fewer students in a classroom, teachers can better meet their needs. At OCA small, self-contained classes have resulted in higher attendance rates (98%), reduced dropout rates (0%), and increased academic performance for our minority students of socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

OCA has proven that continuing an extended-year calendar will provide increased opportunities for targeted intervention to assist low-performing students. Through this process, we will provide an environment that will ensure that students not only continue to meet, but also exceed the language arts, mathematics, science and social studies requirements on California standardized tests.

E. Curriculum and Instructional Design

Oakland Charter Academy's educational program is founded on the belief that high expectations lead to high-achieving students. OCA courses will prepare students to exceed the California Content Standards for the relevant subject at each grade level. OCA believes its academic success will be based in part on the emphasis placed on language arts and math.

Since many college-bound students enrolling in science or engineering programs will be required to take calculus as a prerequisite for their majors, we want to adequately prepare our students to accomplish this goal by requiring all eighth graders at OCA to take Algebra I. This will set them on the right academic track for advanced math in high school.

OCA will be a site-based school for 150 students in sixth through eighth grade. The student per teacher ratio will be 25:1. This will allow students and teachers to develop a productive working relationship in a small school setting.

The students who enroll at OCA will be provided a safe and structured learning environment to enhance their academic skills. The school will provide a structured curriculum aligned with state academic standards. Students with special learning needs will be mainstreamed into the classrooms, while also receiving individual attention as required by law.

State-approved textbooks aligned with state standards provide the content basis for courses of study. OCA believes that investing in exceptional textbooks will provide an outstanding framework for standards-based instruction. The textbooks, in addition to the highly qualified staff, will continue to be the driving force of the OCA curriculum. We will implement a structured daily schedule, which focuses on the core academic subjects (See Appendix D, page 39). These subjects include English, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign language, and the arts. Electives will be offered in addition to the core subjects. At OCA, we also believe that homework is a crucial part of the learning process

for our students. The school will provide after-school tutoring, Saturday classes and assistance with homework. OCA will work closely with Oakland Unified School District, OUSD Charter Schools Office, Oakland Charter School Consortium, and other Bay Area community organizations to provide services for OCA students.

The teaching methodology is lecture, and teacher-directed. Tutorial services are mandatory for all students who score at the basic, below basic, far below basic, or below grade level on the California Standards Test.

BACKGROUND:

Under the California Charter Schools Act, authorizers are required to return to the “standards and criteria” set forth for the review and approval or denial of a charter school petition. The following excerpt is taken from section 47605 of the California Charter Schools Act, which delineates charter petition approval and denial criteria.

A school district governing board shall grant a charter for the operation of a school under this part if it is satisfied that granting the charter is consistent with sound educational practice.

The governing board of the school district shall not deny a petition for the establishment of a charter school unless it makes written factual findings, specific to the particular petition, setting forth specific facts to support one or more of the following findings:

- (1) The charter school presents an **unsound educational program** for the pupils to be enrolled in the charter school.*
- (2) The petitioners are **demonstrably unlikely to successfully implement the program** set forth in the petition.*
- (3) The petition does not contain the number of signatures required by subdivision (a).*
- (4) The petition does not contain an affirmation of each of the conditions described in subdivision (d).*
- (5) The petition does not contain reasonably comprehensive descriptions of all of the [required charter elements.]*

OUSD Charter Renewal Standards

Oakland Unified School District, in an effort to develop a **Balanced Performance-Based Accountability System**, has established the following standards and expectations for charter renewal based on the intent of California Charter School Act and the “standards and criteria” outlined above (Education Code Section 47605 d(1))

The legislature’s intent regarding accountability for charter schools is to:

- “*Improve Pupil Learning*” Education Code 47601(a)
- “*hold the schools ...accountable for meeting measurable pupil outcomes, and provide schools with a method to change from a rule-based to performance-based accountability systems.*” Education Code 47601(f)

Pursuant to CA Education Code section 47605 we ask;

I. Is the school an academic success?

An evaluation of the soundness of the educational program, for the purposes of charter renewal, by reviewing performance outcomes and program implementation.

II. Is the school is an effective, viable organization?

An evaluation of the capacity of the petitioner to successfully implement the program, for the purposes of charter renewal, by reviewing the fiscal accountability and governance of the school.

III. Has the school been faithful to the terms of its charter?

An evaluation of the charter to assess the alignment to the program as approved.

An evaluation of the charter petition submitted for a future charter term is conducted to ensure that:

- A) The petition meets the standards and criteria set forth in Education Code Section 47605.
- B) The petition includes all new laws and regulations relevant to charter schools enacted since the charter was last approved.
- C) Any major amendments to the charter since the last charter term are reviewed, evaluated and incorporated into this staff report.

Prerequisite for Charter Renewal (AB 1137)

The CA Charter Schools Act establishes a prerequisite for charter renewal (AB 1137) that must be met in order for a charter renewal petition to be considered. Based on the required criteria set forth in the law, of which a petitioning charter school seeking renewal **MUST MEET AT LEAST ONE CRITERIA** in order to be considered for renewal, Oakland Charter Academy has **MET CRITERIA 1(a), 1(b), 2(a), 2(b), 3(a), 3(b)** which states:

1. API Growth Target:	API Target, Growth	Criteria Met
a. Did school attain API Growth Target in prior year?	A, +40 (2007)	YES
b. Did school attain API Growth Target in two of last three years?	A, +40 (2007) 3, +112 (2006)	YES
2. API Rank:	RANK	Met Criteria
a. Is the school ranked 4 or higher on API in prior year?	9, (2006)	YES
b. Is the school ranked 4 or higher on API in two of last three year?	9, (2006) 7, (2005)	YES
3. API Similar Schools Rank:	RANK	Met Criteria
a. Is the school ranked 4 or higher on API Similar Schools in prior year?	10, (2006)	YES
b. Is the school ranked 4 or higher on API Similar Schools in two of last three years?	10, (2006) 10, (2005)	YES

Renewal Standard I: Is the school an Academic Success?

- **Outputs** are the Academic Achievement Levels reached by the school’s students.
- **Inputs** are the Educational Program offered by the school.

OUTPUTS: OUSD TIERED ACCOUNTABILITY

Based on the OUSD System of Tiered Accountability, Oakland Charter Academy would be a “*Blue School*”. Because the school is very small two analyses were done to assess the school’s performance and added-value in this system. The first analysis (#1) looked at all of the standard measures within this system including *Matched Cohort* analysis for the previous year, 06-07. The second analysis (#2) looked at a *Matched Cohort* analysis for which there existed two years of data and compared that cohort’s growth from *first year attending OCA* with the subsequent year, increasing the sample size. Each analysis resulted in a Final Tier of “*Blue*”. In both cases the three year growth is reduced to two years due to the 6-8 grade span of the school and a lack of student records for years prior to attending the school.

#1	Starting Tier (Based on PI Status)	Achievement Gap Score	One Year Growth 05-06 to 06-07	Two Year Growth	FINAL TIER
OCA	GREEN PI: NO 2007 AYP: YES	GREEN Low Gap Both Years	GREEN ELA: 53% Math: 58% Sample: 80	GREEN ELA: 63% Math: 69% Sample: 32	BLUE
#2	Starting Tier (Based on PI Status)	Achievement Gap Score	One Year Growth 1st Year to Next	Two Year Growth	FINAL TIER
OCA	GREEN PI: NO 2007 AYP: YES	GREEN Low Gap Both Years	GREEN ELA: 56% Math: 62% Sample: 91	GREEN ELA: 63% Math: 69% Sample: 32	BLUE

OUTPUTS: MEASURABLE PUPIL OUTCOMES

The analysis of the attainment of the Measurable Pupil Outcomes set forth in the Oakland Charter Academy charter is as follows:

Measurable Pupil Outcomes set forth in the Charter	Target and Means of Assessment set forth in the charter	Outcome Performance of school
<p>1. Writing English Proficiency</p>	<p>TARGET: 75% of all graduating students will be able to write English proficiently as demonstrated by a score of 3 or 4 on the [OCA] school-wide English writing rubric after two years of study at OCA.</p>	<p>SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS: Performance on CST ELA: 8th grade 2007: 69% 2006: 51% 2005: 35% <i>Based on the programmatic changes in the school following the first year of this charter term, the previous English writing rubric was not applied. A standards-based program and standards-based assessment approach was used. Therefore analysis of this performance area is based on applicable standardized assessment results.</i></p>
<p>2. Writing Spanish Proficiency</p>	<p>TARGET: 75% of all graduating students who speak Spanish at home will be able to write Spanish proficiently as demonstrated by a score of 3 or 4 on the [OCA] school-wide Spanish writing rubric after two years of study at OCA.</p>	<p>REVISED: <i>Based on programmatic changes in the school following the first year of this charter term, the previously proposed Spanish writing rubric was not applied. A standards-based program taught in English and a standards-based assessment approach has been in place for the past four years.</i></p>
<p>3. Basic Interpersonal Spanish speaking and understanding</p>	<p>TARGET: 50% of students who do not speak Spanish at home will possess Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills in their ability to speak and understand Spanish after two years of study at [OCA]</p>	<p>REVISED: <i>Based on programmatic changes in the school following the first year of this charter term, the previously proposed Spanish language development program was not continued. A standards-based program taught in English and a standards-based assessment approach has been in place for the past four years.</i></p>
<p>4. API Improvement</p>	<p>TARGET: The school will meet or exceed its annual API improvement target</p>	<p>MET: <i>School has met its API targets for the past four years.</i></p>

	(5% of the difference between its yearly API and an API of 800).	<table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>2004 MET</td> <td>2005 MET</td> <td>2006 MET</td> <td>2007 MET</td> </tr> <tr> <td>OCA</td> <td>649 YES</td> <td>744 YES</td> <td>857 YES</td> <td>896 YES</td> </tr> </table>		2004 MET	2005 MET	2006 MET	2007 MET	OCA	649 YES	744 YES	857 YES	896 YES					
	2004 MET	2005 MET	2006 MET	2007 MET													
OCA	649 YES	744 YES	857 YES	896 YES													
5. Increased Proficiency in ELA and Math	<p>TARGET: Students will increase the percentage of students who meet or exceed state performance standards as defined by proficiency rates as follows: OUSD Middle School Targets:</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td></td> <td>03-04</td> <td>04-05</td> <td>05-06</td> <td>06-07</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ELA</td> <td>31%</td> <td>44%</td> <td>57%</td> <td>70%</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Math</td> <td>29%</td> <td>43%</td> <td>56%</td> <td>70%</td> </tr> </table>		03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07	ELA	31%	44%	57%	70%	Math	29%	43%	56%	70%	<p>MET: <i>2007 STAR Test Results:</i> - <i>OCA Achieved a <u>73.2%</u> proficiency rate in ELA.</i> - <i>OCA Achieved a <u>77.4%</u> proficiency rate in Math.</i></p>
	03-04	04-05	05-06	06-07													
ELA	31%	44%	57%	70%													
Math	29%	43%	56%	70%													
6. Student research skills	<p>TARGET: Students will be able to investigate, summarize, analyze, and discuss a research topic or theme.</p>	<p>MET: <i>Based on classroom observations, review of student work, and interviews conducted during Renewal Site Inspection with leadership, staff and students, students demonstrate the skills outlined in the charter for this Measurable Pupil Outcome.</i></p>															
7. Student Citizenship	<p>TARGET: 75% of students will show respect for themselves, other people, other people's property and their learning by scoring at an acceptable or honorable level on all categories of the behavior rubric.</p>	<p>MET: <i>OCA no longer applied the previously proposed behavior rubric following the significant programmatic changes that occurred after the first year of the OCA charter term. Students demonstrate the skills outlined in the charter for this Measurable Pupil Outcome, based on classroom observations, and interviews conducted during Renewal Site Inspection with leadership, staff, parents, and students.</i></p>															
8. Culture and heritage	<p>TARGET: Students will learn to value their own Uniqueness and to view their culture as a positive part of the world and their identity by completing at least one school project that reflects their heritage.</p>	<p>REVISED: <i>Programmatic changes at OCA after the first year of the charter term shifted the school's academic focus towards a CA Standards-Based approach, using state-adopted curriculum. Within this curriculum students explore aspects of heritage and culture.</i></p>															
9. Connecting with others	<p>TARGET: Students will identify ways in</p>	<p>REVISED: <i>Programmatic changes at OCA</i></p>															

	<p>which they can connect to others who are both similar to and different from themselves, build alliances across barriers of race, culture, and experience by participating in collaborative group work structures and community circles on a regular basis.</p>	<p><i>after the first year of the charter term shifted the school's academic focus towards a CA Standards-Based approach, using state-adopted curriculum. In addition, students are afforded opportunities to participate in the John Hopkins CTY Program in a live-in structure during the summer, kayaking at Jack London Aquatic Center, Rugby, Instrumental Music and performances, and Mandarin Language. Evidence observed during Renewal Site Inspection indicates that students are provided opportunities to work collaboratively both in class and through extra-curricular activities. It is clearly evident that race, culture, and experience are not a barrier to learning at OCA.</i></p>
<p>10. Community outreach activity</p>	<p>TARGET: Students will demonstrate leadership and commitment to community service by voting in student council elections and participating in at least one community outreach activity per year as organized by Oakland Charter Academy's student council.</p>	<p>REVISED: <i>Programmatic changes at OCA after the first year of the charter term shifted the school's academic focus towards a CA Standards-Based approach, using state-adopted curriculum. Students focus the majority of their school day on an emphasis in learning the content standards and applying them to classroom based activities, as well as participating in the range of extra-curricular and tutoring opportunities at the school.</i></p>

Oakland Charter Academy has **met, or made substantial progress towards meeting five** of its proposed Measurable Pupil Outcomes based on its original charter. The Measurable Pupil Outcomes set forth in the Oakland Charter Academy original charter petition reflect programmatic elements that were reflective of a school vision and pedagogy that underwent a significant shift after the first year of this second charter term. Based on action from the Oakland Charter Academy governing board, a new school director, Jorge Lopez was hired in 2003. This new director led the change in the school's academic program to become one in which the mission and curriculum were more squarely aligned to CA State Standards, as well as providing an emphasis on support and intervention through afterschool tutoring, Saturday School and mandatory summer school. This led to significant improvement in academic achievement by students and a desire by parents to sustain the programmatic changes implemented at the school. Interviews with parents and Governing Board members during the Renewal Site Inspection confirmed this analysis.

At this time, Oakland Charter Academy has submitted a renewal charter petition that more clearly aligns with these educational program changes for the future charter term. The petition outlines the current multi-subject, self-contained classroom model being implemented at the school. The petition outlines the specific content standards to be addressed in the curriculum, as well as the support students to achieve the Measurable Pupil Outcomes specified in the renewal charter petition.

The Measurable Pupil Outcomes proposed for the next charter term are;

A. Measurable Student Outcomes

OCA will be held accountable for student achievement in the following ways:

- 1. Meeting or exceeding the expectation of attaining scores at the 50th percentile on the total reading, total math and total language batteries of the STAR Tests or any other test used to measure growth against the California Content Standards*
- 2. Exceeding 97% attendance rate during each of the next five years*
- 3. Maintaining an API of 750 or higher.*
- 4. Meeting or exceeding federal NCLB standards.*

OUTPUTS: COMPARISON

For the purposes of comparing charter school performance to traditional school performance, the District analyzed:

- **CST scores over time** (English Language Arts / Mathematics)
- **API scores over time**
- **AYP results over time**
- **CELDT performance over time** (English Language Proficiency)

In comparing the school's performance to the performance of the schools the charter students would have otherwise attended, the following schools have been identified as comparison schools based on a majority of the student population currently attending Oakland Charter Academy

- Calvin Simmons Middle School (Simmons) *grades 6-8*
- Urban Promise Academy (UPA) *grades 6-8*
- ASCEND School (ASCEND) *grades 6-8 (K-8 school)*

ANALYSIS

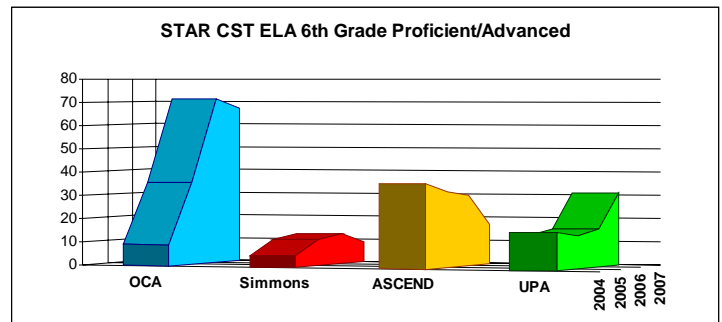
Overall, based on the OUSD Charter Renewal Standards, Oakland Charter Academy (OCA) academic performance is **well above the median** in comparison with the traditional schools their students would have otherwise attended based on its CST ELA and Math performance over time, AYP performance over time, API performance over time, and CELDT Redesignation performance. The school has had significant academic gains from 2004-2007 with a **total API increase of 247 points in three years**. OCA has met AYP each of the past three years.

As the second highest achieving public middle school in Oakland among District and charter schools, OCA has dramatically improved the learning outcomes for its students, the vast majority of which are first generation US-born, or are immigrant students from Mexico and other Central American countries. The school anticipates slight rising and dropping in their CST performance over time as the school continues to pursue sustaining their high academic achievement. This may also occur as a result of the school's continued efforts to reflect on and develop an educational program that pursues learning outcomes not often measured through statewide testing.

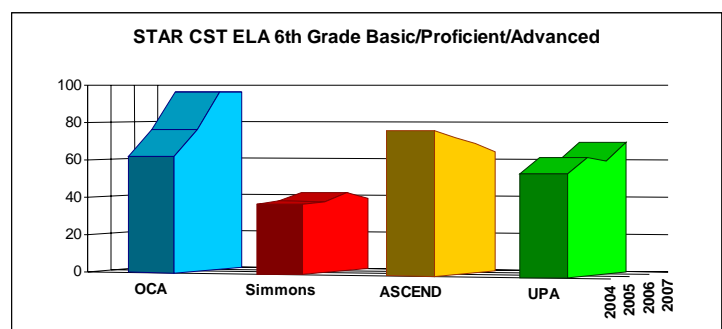
CST Performance Over Time (English Language Arts)

Oakland Charter Academy CST ELA 6th Grade performance across four years.

STAR ELA 6th Grade Proficient/Advanced	OCA	Simmons	ASCEND	UPA
2007	67	9*	17	31
2006	71	13	30	16
2005	35	11	32	14
2004	9	5	36	16

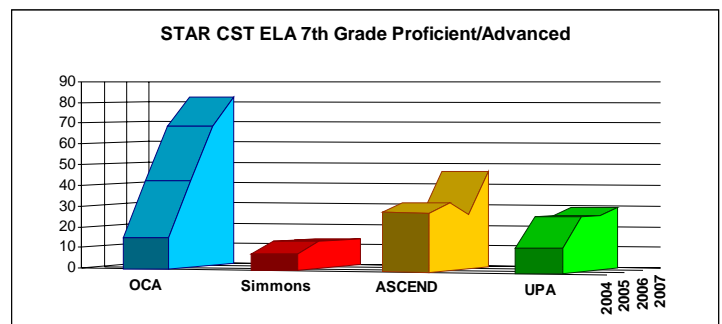


STAR ELA 6th Grade Basic/Proficient/Advanced	OCA	Simmons	ASCEND	UPA
2007	96	38*	64	69
2006	96	42	69	60
2005	76	38	72	62
2004	62	37	76	54

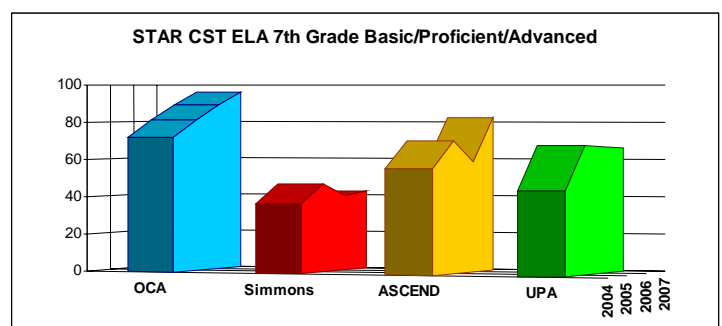


Oakland Charter Academy CST ELA 7th Grade performance across four years.

STAR ELA 7th Grade Proficient/Advanced	OCA	Simmons	ASCEND	UPA
2007	82	13*	46	29
2006	68	13	26	26
2005	42	13	32	26
2004	15	8	28	12



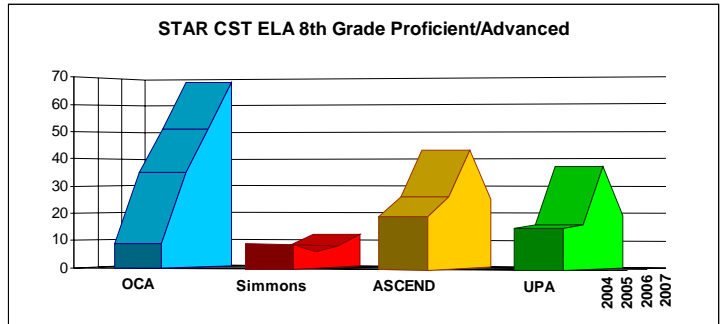
STAR ELA 7th Grade Basic/Proficient/Advanced	OCA	Simmons	ASCEND	UPA
2007	96	42*	82	66
2006	89	40	59	67
2005	81	47	70	68
2004	72	37	56	45



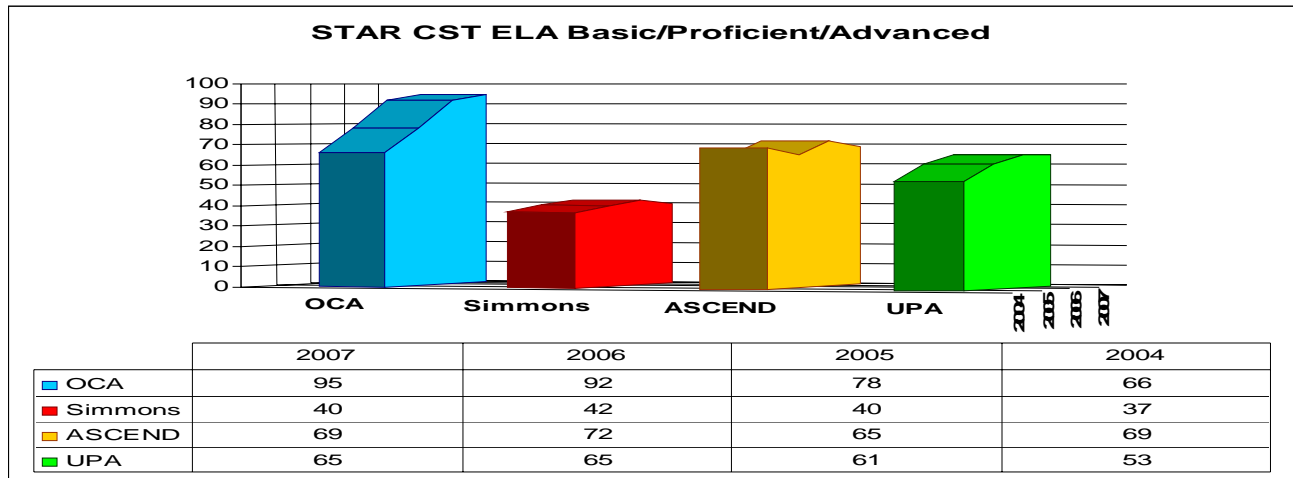
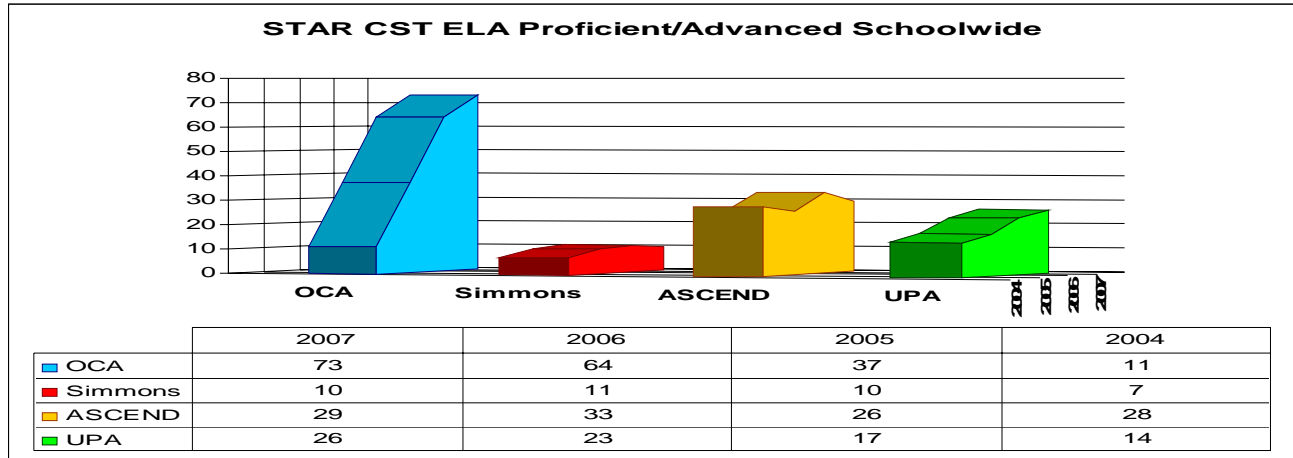
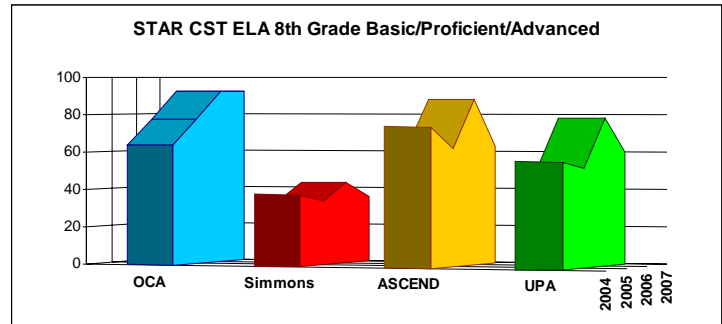
* Score represents the average score of the two new small schools (Peralta Creek & United for Success) as part of the restructuring at Calvin Simmons Middle School in 2007.

Oakland Charter Academy **CST ELA 8th Grade** performance across **four years**.

STAR ELA 8th Grade Proficient/Advanced	OCA	Simmons	ASCEND	UPA
2007	69	12	25	19
2006	51	8	43	37
2005	35	6	26	16
2004	9	9	19	15



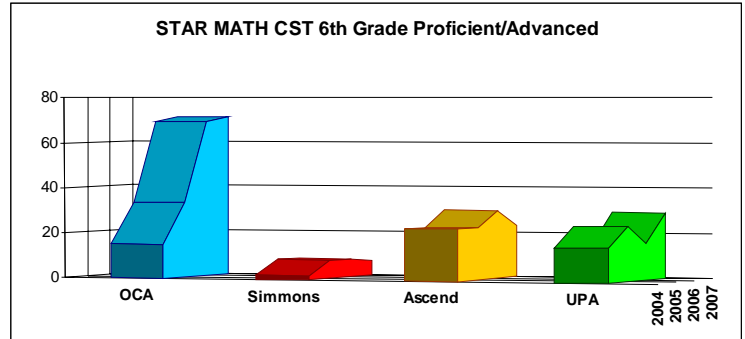
STAR ELA 8th Grade Basic/Proficient/Advanced	OCA	Simmons	ASCEND	UPA
2007	92	35	63	60
2006	92	43	88	78
2005	77	34	62	52
2004	64	38	74	56



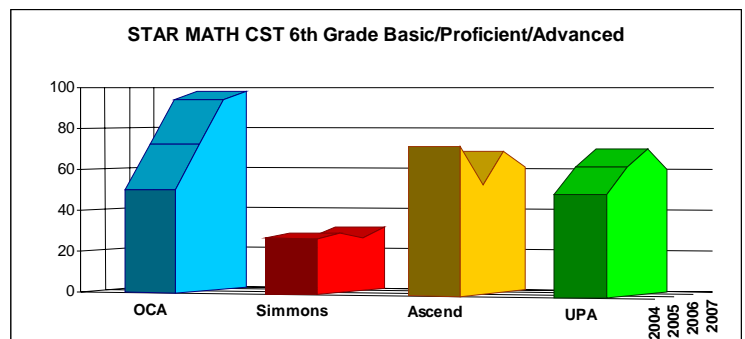
CST Performance Over Time (Mathematics)

Oakland Charter Academy **CST MATH 6th Grade** performance across **four years**.

STAR Math 6th Grade Basic/ Proficient/ Advanced	OCA	Simmons	ASCEND	UPA
2007	71	7*	23	29
2006	69	8	30	16
2005	33	8	23	24
2004	15	2	23	15

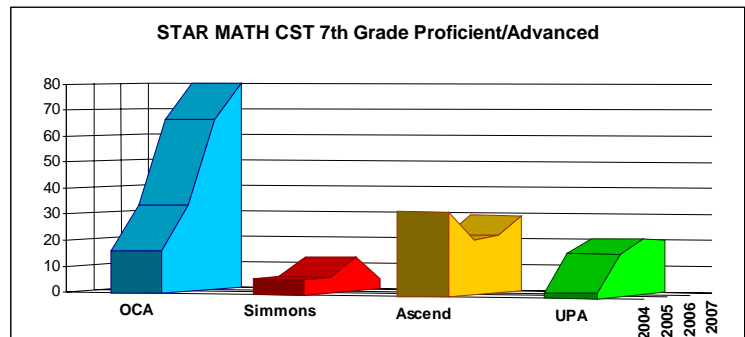


STAR Math 6th Grade Basic/ Proficient/ Advanced	OCA	Simmons	ASCEND	UPA
2007	98	31*	61	60
2006	94	26	69	70
2005	72	29	53	62
2004	50	27	72	49

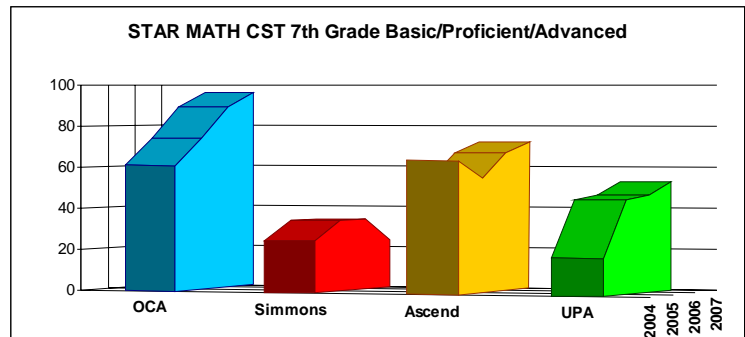


Oakland Charter Academy **CST MATH 7th Grade** performance across **four years**.

STAR Math 7th Grade Proficient/ Advanced	OCA	Simmons	ASCEND	UPA
2007	80	4*	29	20
2006	66	13	22	21
2005	33	6	21	16
2004	16	6	32	2

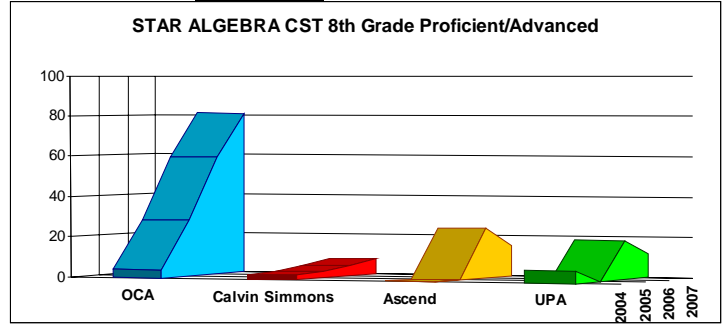


STAR Math 7th Grade Basic/ Proficient/ Advanced	OCA	Simmons	ASCEND	UPA
2007	96	24*	72	53
2006	89	34	67	47
2005	74	34	55	45
2004	61	25	64	18

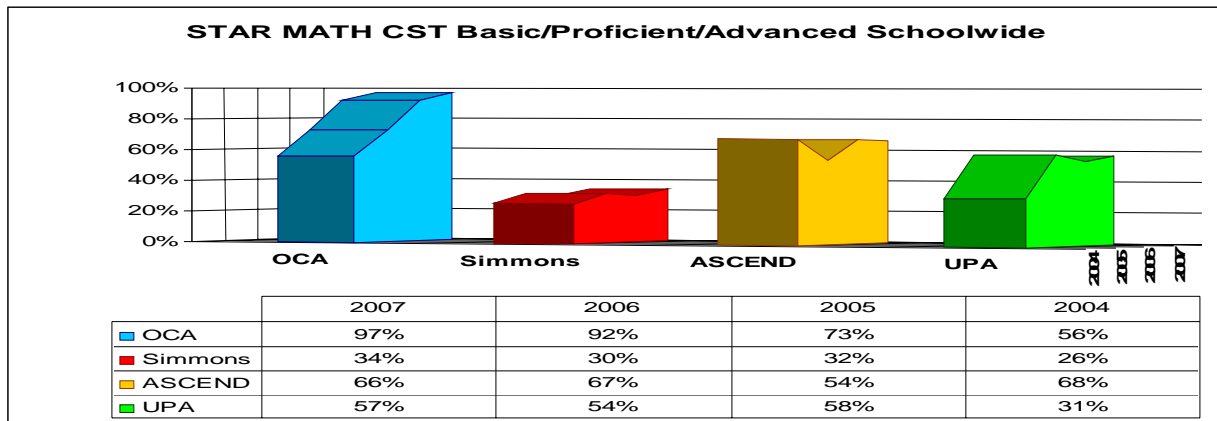
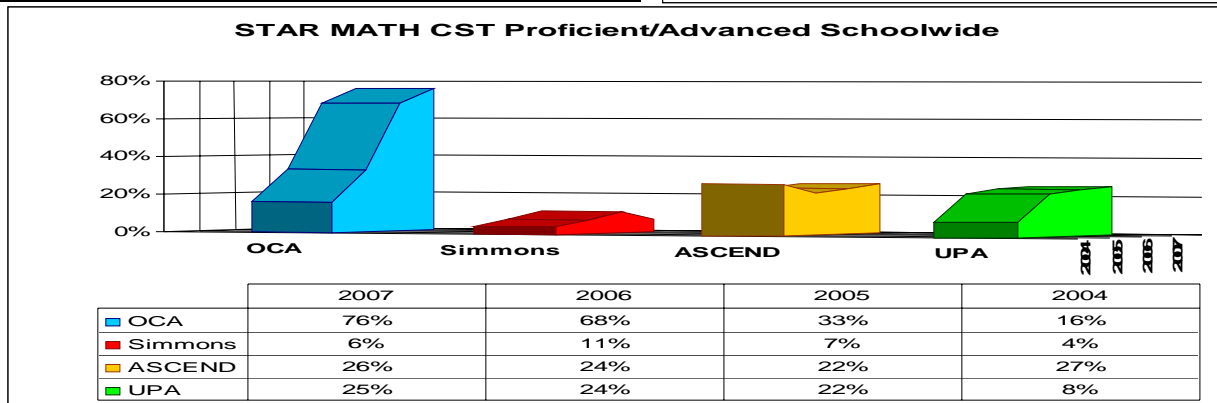
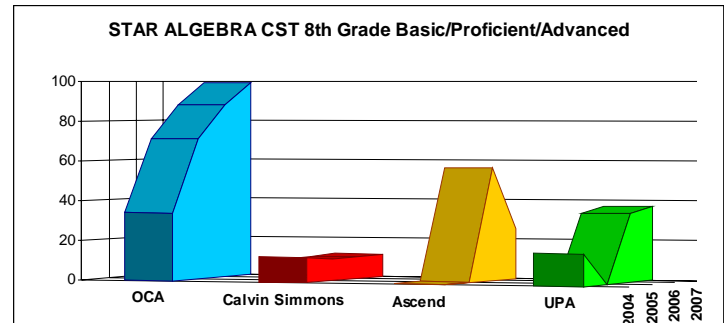


Oakland Charter Academy **CST MATH 8th Grade** performance across **four years**.**

STAR Math 8th Grade Proficient/Advanced	OCA	Simmons	ASCEND	UPA
2007	81	8	15	12
2006	59	5	24	19
2005	28	3	***	***
2004	4	2	***	6



STAR Math 8th Grade Basic/Proficient/Advanced	OCA	Simmons	ASCEND	UPA
2007	99	12	26	37
2006	88	11	56	34
2005	71	11	***	***
2004	34	12	***	16



* Score represents the average score of the two new small schools (Peralta Creek & United for Success) as part of the restructuring at Calvin Simmons Middle School in 2007.

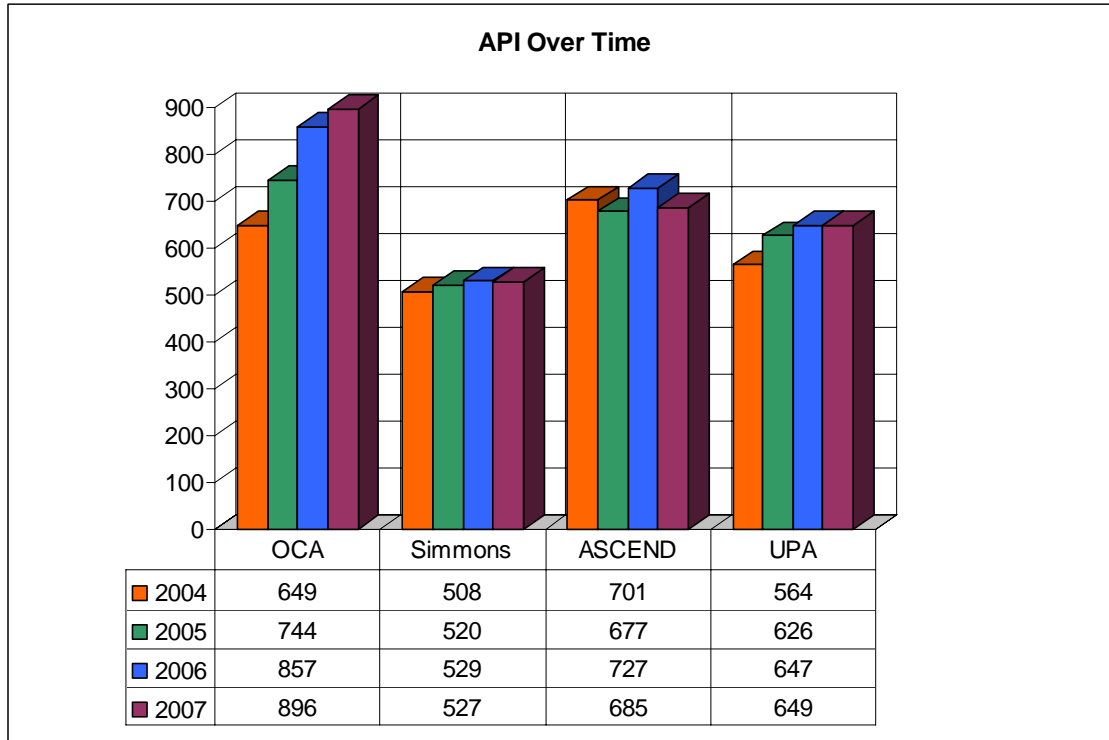
** Algebra math scores for 8th grade students attending comparison schools were adjusted where necessary to account for a *less than 100%* student participation rate in 8th grade, as compared to OCA who tested 100% of its 8th grade students in *Algebra 1*.

*** Less than 10 students took the test, therefore the school did not receive a valid percentage reported.

API Performance Over Time

Oakland Charter Academy has made consistent and significant progress in raising its API score from year to year. The school has increased its API score over the past three years by 247 points. The school has been nominated for consideration as both a Title I Blue Ribbon School as well as a California State Distinguished School Award.

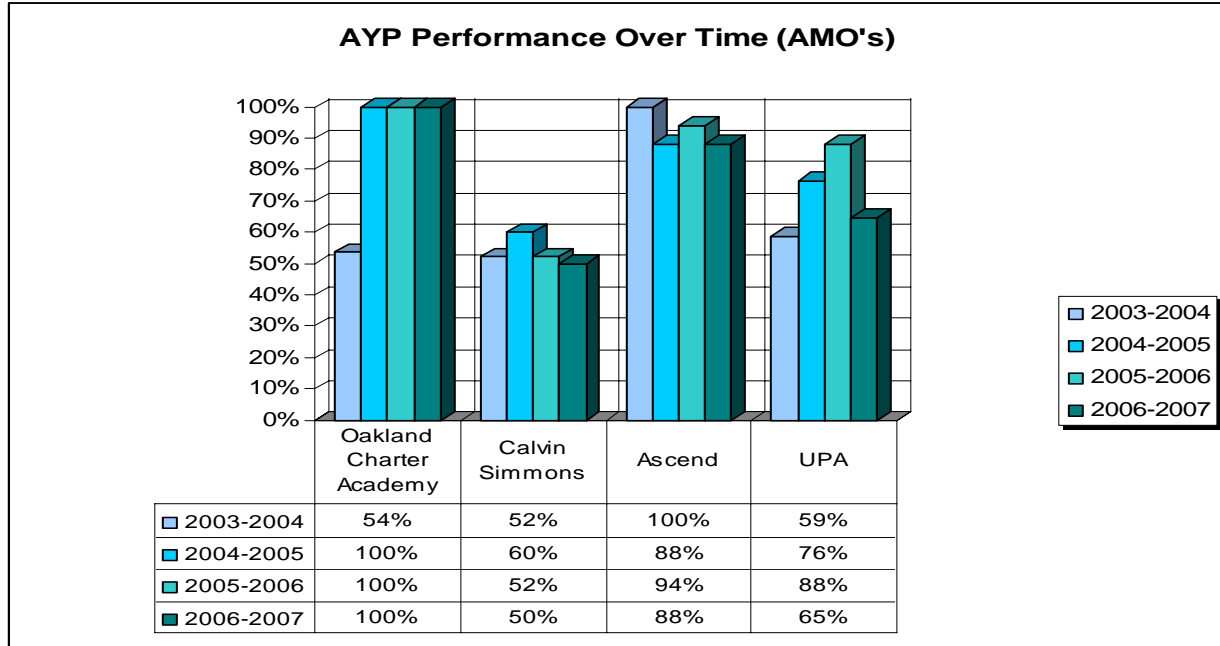
COMPARISON API RESULTS



	2004 / MET	2005 / MET	2006 / MET	2007 / MET
OCA	649 / YES	744 / YES	857 / YES	896 / YES
Simmons	508 / YES	520 / NO	529 / NO	527 / NO
ASCEND	701 / YES	677 / NO	727 / YES	685 / NO
UPA	564 / NO	626 / YES	647 / YES	649 / NO

Oakland Charter Academy student performance over time based on California's Academic Performance Index (API) is **above the median** performance of the traditional schools the students would have otherwise attended.

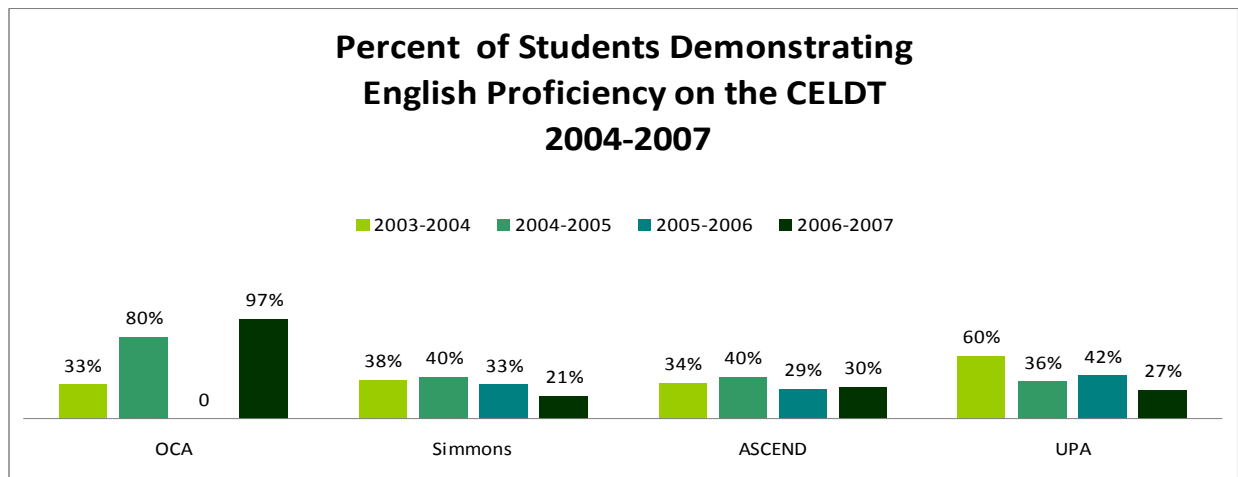
AYP Performance Over Time (AMO's)



Oakland Charter Academy student performance over time based on the Federal Annual Yearly Progress standards (AYP) is **above the median** performance of the traditional schools the students would have otherwise attended, having met 100% of its Academic Measurable Outcomes (AMO's) in the past three years.

MET AYP	OCA	SIMMONS	ASCEND	UPA
2003-2004	NO	NO	YES	NO
2004-2005	YES	NO	NO	NO
2005-2006	YES	NO	NO	NO
2006-2007	YES	NO	NO	NO

CELDT Performance



Comparison of Oakland Charter Academy ELL identified student performance on the CELDT Test demonstrating English Proficiency is **above the median** of the performance of the ELL identified students in the traditional schools the students would have otherwise attended.

INPUTS: CHARTER SCHOOL RENEWAL QUALITY REVIEW

The quality of the school's educational program has been evaluated through a two-day Site Inspection conducted on **January 16 and 17, 2008** by a Third-Party Reviewer; *Cambridge Education*, as well as evaluated through school site inspections conducted concurrently by staff on **January 16 and 17, 2008**. This inspection evaluated the school's educational program performance against three criteria for the purpose of assessing the school's academic success. The tool uses a 5-point Rubric with 4 = Proficiency.

Criteria 1: Improving Student Achievement

A charter school achieving proficiency in this area promotes student learning through a clear vision and high expectations. It achieves clear, measurable program goals and student learning objectives, including meeting its stated performance standards and closing achievement gaps of students.

The following findings and evaluation has been determined for Oakland Charter Academy based on an analysis of Criteria 1 (*Attachment III: Third-party Quality Review Report*):

This area of the school's work is **EXCELLENT**, which is scaled as a (5).

Criteria 2: Strong Leadership

The leaders of a charter school achieving proficiency in this area are stewards of the charter's mission and vision and carry out their duties in a professional, responsible and ethical manner. Charter school leaders use their influence and authority for the primary purpose of achieving student success.

The following findings and evaluation has been determined for Oakland Charter Academy based on Criteria 2 (*Attachment III: Third-party Quality Review Report*):

This area of the school's work is **EXCELLENT**, which is scaled as a (5).

Criteria 3: A Focus on Continuous Improvement

A charter school achieving proficiency in this area engages in a process of continuous self-improvement in order to increase the effectiveness of its educational program. The school regularly assesses and evaluates student learning based on stated goals.

The following findings and evaluation has been determined for Oakland Charter Academy based on Criteria 3 (*Attachment III: Third-party Quality Review Report*):

This area of the school's work is **EXCELLENT**, which is scaled as a (5).

IS THE SCHOOL AN ACADEMIC SUCCESS?

The following summary evaluation comes from the Cambridge Education *Charter School Renewal Quality Review Report* :

Oakland Charter Academy is unequivocally an academic success. Over the past four years, the school has moved out of Program Improvement (PI) status to become a top performing middle school. OCA's 2006 API base score was 856, ranking the school ninth statewide and tenth among similar schools. The school has demonstrated consistent and impressive growth on its API each year for the past four years, with growth points ranging between +40 and +113. OCA's API 2007 growth score is 896, the second highest growth API among middle schools in the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD).

OCA implements a comprehensive and rigorous, standards-based curriculum anchored by state-adopted textbooks. Instruction is primarily teacher-directed, yet there are good opportunities for students to reflect, think and ask critical questions. Very good support structures, which include daily afterschool tutoring, Saturday school and mandatory summer school are in place to prepare and help students become successful in the OCA environment. The school also provides art, physical education and Mandarin (as a foreign language) in addition to the core academic subjects.

OCA's culture is marked by a strong commitment to succeed. The school has a 98% attendance rate which is very high compared to other schools. Students are well-behaved, attentive, self-directed and engage in healthy competitions between classes for high attendance and grades. A close network of caring staff, teachers and administrators create an environment that fosters students' personal and academic successes.

Based on an analysis of Oakland Charter Academy's performance outcomes and an evaluation of its educational program during the past four years, the school is deemed an **Academic Success** for the purposes of renewal. **The school has met or made substantial progress towards meeting** its applicable Measurable Pupil Outcomes identified in its charter. Additionally, **the school has attained achievement rates significantly higher than those achieved by the traditional comparison schools** in all areas outlined in the OUSD Charter Renewal Standards. Finally, the school's Educational Program, over-all has been evaluated to be ***EXCELLENT***.

During the renewal process it became evident that the school and its leadership possess many lessons learned through their efforts to successfully implement a sustainable, meaningful educational program for its students and families. These lessons have the potential to provide rich insight into the means by which the school is achieving its results and engendering the strong, caring culture of success in the school. To this end, staff recommends exploration on the part of the District and the school to develop systematic ways in which the school can serve to inform both District and charter practices in the future.

Renewal Standard II: Is the school an Effective, Viable Organization?

This area is divided into **Responsible Governance** and **Fiscal Accountability**.

The effectiveness and viability of Oakland Charter Academy as an organization has been evaluated through a two-day Site Inspection conducted on **January 16 and 17, 2008** by a Third-Party Reviewer; *Cambridge Education*, as well as through school site inspections conducted concurrently by staff on **January 16 and 17, 2008**. In addition, the performance of the school within these criteria is assessed based on observations, documentation, and other evidence on record with the District over the term of the charter. The tool uses a 5-point Rubric with 4 = Proficiency.

Criteria 4: Responsible Governance

A quality charter school board and administration establish and implement policies that are transparent and focused on student achievement. Charter school board members and administrators have a cogent understanding of and comply with the laws that govern charter schools.

The following findings and evaluation has been determined for Oakland Charter Academy based on Criteria 4 (*Attachment III: Third-party Quality Review Report*):

This area of the school's work is **PROFICIENT**, which is scaled as a (4).

Criteria 5: Fiscal Accountability

A quality charter school fulfils its fiduciary responsibility for public funds and maintains publicly accessible fiscal records. The school conducts an annual financial audit which is made public.

The following findings and evaluation has been determined for Oakland Charter Academy based on Criteria 5 (*Attachment III: Third-party Quality Review Report*):

This area of the school's work is **PROFICIENT**, which is scaled as a (4).

IS THE SCHOOL AN EFFECTIVE, VIABLE ORGANIZATION

The following summary evaluation comes from the Cambridge Education *Charter School Renewal Quality Review Report* and is supported by the staff evaluation:

Oakland Charter Academy is an effective, viable organization. In 2004 the school underwent a dramatic change in leadership and, as a result, a big shift in the learning culture of the school. A more rigorous curriculum and stricter behavioral standards were put in place. In addition, accountability for student achievement by all stakeholders, including parents, teachers, administrators and board members as well as students, was infused into the school. This has effectively increased student attainment at the school. A number of members have transitioned from the OCA board since that time, so that most of the current board members are only in their first, second or third year of service. The school is well organized and operates effectively. Policies relating to fiscal and programmatic operations are transparent and consistently followed through.

Based on an evaluation of Oakland Charter Academy's Fiscal Accountability and Governance following it's the past four years, the school is deemed an **Effective, Viable Organization** for the purposes of renewal.

Renewal Standard III: Has the school been faithful to the terms of its charter?

Through the Charter School Renewal Quality Review (CSRQR) process as well as a review of the school's performance and operations throughout the term of its charter, an evaluation of the extent to which the school has been faithful to the terms of its charter has been assessed along the following:

- Adherence to Proposed Educational Program
- Pursuit of Measurable Pupil Outcomes
- Compliance with Regulatory Elements

The following summary evaluation comes from the Cambridge Education *Charter School Renewal Quality Review Report* and is supported by the staff evaluation:

Oakland Charter Academy has met the terms of its charter in all areas related to student achievement, governance and fiscal accountability. The school is achieving its mission to provide a small, middle school learning environment that meets the social, emotional and academic needs of inner-city Oakland students. This is clearly evidenced by its student achievement data, school documents and information collected through the renewal site visit. Over the past four years, OCA has initiated changes related to academic accountability that were necessary to accomplish this mission. This mean that the program outlined in the recent renewal charter is most consistent with OCA's current practice and operations.

Staff has reviewed the school's records on file with the District and deemed that Oakland Charter Academy has been compliant in its regulatory elements under its charter term.

RECOMMENDATION:

It is the recommendation of staff, based on its thorough analysis of the charter school's performance, to **approve** the charter renewal petition for Oakland Charter Academy because the charter school has sufficiently met the standards and expectations set forth in the OUSD Charter Renewal Standards, as well as the standards and criteria set forth in the California Charter Schools Act, Education Code 47605, which governs charter school renewals.

This approval is for the charter program and operation in its entirety as proposed and revised herein. Any subsequent material revision of the provision of this charter may be made only with the approval of the District as charter authorizer (*Education Code §47607(a)(1)*). Any material revision to any charter component must be proposed and considered according to the standards and criteria in Education Code §47605 (*Education Code §47607(a)(2)*).

This report recommends that the Oakland Unified School District State Administrator approve the charter renewal petition for Oakland Charter Academy for a term of five years, as required by law (Education Code 47605 d(1)). The charter renewal term would begin on July 1, 2008 and expire on June 30, 2013. ***Simultaneously, as an act of this approval, the petitioner and the District do hereby mutually agree to revise the current charter term set to expire on May 28, 2008, to instead expire on June 30, 2008 to ensure there is no gap in charter terms.*** The District will not accept a charter renewal request more than 270 days prior to the expiration of the charter.

The petition contains 4 signatures from teachers meaningfully interested in continuing to teach at Oakland Charter Academy, which meets the statutory filing requirement, and the charter contains all of the required affirmations. Because the charter is a legally binding performance contract, exact language is important. Therefore, this report recommends that the charter's text be amended as indicated in the attachment to this report. With these amendments, the charter contains reasonably comprehensive descriptions of all of the required charter elements.

This report recommends that the State Administrator approve the Oakland Charter Academy petition for charter renewal, under the California Charter Schools Act, and incorporating the text amendments attached to this report. Staff recommends this approval based on factual findings, specific to this particular charter school and renewal petition.

A charter may be revoked by the authority that granted the charter if the authority finds that the charter school committed a material violation of any of the conditions, standards, or procedures set forth in its charter (*Education Code §47607(c)(1)*). The State Administrator's approval of this charter shall incorporate the charter text amendments and associated deadlines as a condition of the charter.

Attachment I: Charter Text Revisions

Attachment II: SUMMARY: OUSD Renewal Protocol: Oakland Charter Academy

Attachment III: Charter School Renewal Quality Review

ATTACHMENT I - CHARTER TEXT REVISIONS: The approved charter is amended from the filed petition to incorporate the revisions below. The charter school must submit to the District’s Office of Charter Schools one hard copy and one electronic copy in *Word* format of a revised charter to include all revisions outlined below no later than 5pm on Monday, March 3, 2008.

Charter Text	Text Reference	Required Revision
Affirmations/Assurances	Page 6	Add: §47605(d)(3): <i>“If a pupil is expelled or leaves the charter school without graduating or completing the school year for any reason, the charter school shall notify the superintendent of the school district of the pupil’s last known address within 30 days, and shall, upon request, provide the school district with a copy of the cumulative record of the pupil, including a transcript of grades or report card, and health information. This paragraph applies only to pupils subject to compulsory full-time education pursuant to Section 48200.”</i>
The teaching methodology is lecture, and teacher-directed. Tutorial services are mandatory for all students who score at the basic or below grade level on the California Standards Test.	Page. 11	As revised: <i>“The teaching methodology is lecture, and teacher-directed. Tutorial services are mandatory for all students who score at the basic, <u>below basic</u>, <u>far below basic</u>, or below grade level on the California Standards Test.”</i>
g) Physical Education and Health: teach the grade level curricular content...	Page 12	As revised: <i>“g) Physical Education and Health: Teach the grade level curricular content...”</i>
OCA students who enroll below grade level in either English or mathematics will be immediately identified by the Student Success Team (SST) as low performing, and a personalized learning plan will be created to enhance their skills in core academic subject.	Page 13	By March 3, 2008 submission of revised charter, indicate the specific instruments and measures to identify a student as <i>“below grade level”</i> .
F. Plan for Academically Low-Achieving Students	Page 13	By March 3, 2008 submission of revised charter, provide a description of the methodology to be employed during after-school tutoring and Saturday School aligned to the anticipated needs of students performing <i>“below grade level”</i> .
F. Plan for English Learners	Page 13	By March 3, 2008 submission of revised charter, provide a description of the specific instructional strategies and other classroom-based methodologies to be employed by the school in order to meet the specific and unique needs of English Language Learners.
If OUSD is unable to provide special education services to OCA students,	Page 14	As revised: <i>“If OUSD is unable to provide special education</i>

OCA will provide special education services through the Oakland Charter School Consortium that provides special education services to American Indian Public Charter School, East Oakland Leadership Academy, and Unity High School if agreed to in a Memorandum of Understanding.		<i>services to OCA students, <u>OUSD will may consider an agreement by which OCA may provide special education services through the Oakland Charter School Consortium that provides special education services to American Indian Public Charter School, East Oakland Leadership Academy, and Unity High School if agreed to in a Memorandum of Understanding.</u></i>
The consortium and OCA will be responsible for any evaluation and service required by the Americans with Disability Act or by section 504.	Page 14	As revised: <i><u>“The Oakland Charter School Consortium and OCA will be responsible for any evaluation and services required by the Americans with Disabilities Act or by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.”</u></i>
OCA will be held accountable for student achievement in the following ways: ... 4. Meeting or exceeding federal NCLB standards.	Page 14	As revised: <i>“OCA will be held accountable for student achievement in <u>ways that include the following ways: ...</u>”</i>
4. Meeting or exceeding federal NCLB standards.	Page 14	As revised: <i>“4. Meeting or exceeding federal NCLB standards based on the annually established Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) criteria or targets; including <u>minimum participation rates in statewide testing, minimum proficiency rates by students in English language arts and mathematics, and Growth API</u> .”</i>
Meeting or exceeding the expectation of attaining scores at the 50th percentile on the total reading, total math and total language batteries of the STAR Tests or any other test used to measure growth against the California Content Standards	Page 14	As revised: <i>“Meeting or exceeding the expectation <u>Each year 50% or more of all OCA students tested of will attaining scores at the 50th percentile achieve Proficient or Advanced levels on the total reading, total mathematics and total language arts batteries of the CA STAR CST Tests or any other test used to measure growth against the California Content Standards</u>”</i>
Maintaining an API of 750 or higher.	Page 14	As revised: <i>“<u>Maintaining an API of 750 or higher, as well as meet annual API growth targets.</u>”</i>
The Governance Board will meet at 6:00 p.m. on the third Friday of every three months...	Page 19	As revised: <i>“<u>The Governance Board will meet at 6:00 p.m. on the third Friday, every three months.</u>”</i>
The Director is responsible for recommending all credentialed and classified employees to the Governance Board for employment	Page 19	As revised: <i>“<u>The Executive Director is responsible for recommending all credentialed and classified employees to the Governance Board for</u></i>

approval.		<i>employment approval.”</i>
The Executive Director will serve in the capacity of Ombudsman if matters cannot be resolved initially at the school site.	Page 20	As revised: <i>“The Executive Director will serve in the capacity of Ombudsman if matters cannot be resolved initially at the school site <u>and an alternate Ombudsperson will be identified in advance if the matter is a complaint involving at the Executive Director.”</u></i>
The President or designee may question the disputants or request additional information.	Page 20	As revised and in all instances in this paragraph where the term “President” is used: <i>“The <u>Governance Board</u> President or designee may question the disputants or request additional information.”</i>
The staff and OCA Governance Board members of the school and the district agree to attempt to resolve all disputes regarding this charter pursuant to the terms of this section.	Page 23	As revised: <i>“The staff and OCA Governance Board members of the school and the district agree to attempt to resolve <u>consider resolving</u> all disputes regarding this charter pursuant to the terms of this section.”</i>
Both shall refrain from public commentary regarding any disputes until the matter has progressed through the dispute resolution process.	Page 23-24	As revised: <i>“Both shall <u>consider refraining</u> from public commentary regarding any disputes until the matter has progressed through the dispute resolution process.”</i>
If this should occur, OUSD should respond in writing to the OCA appointed ombudsman board or President to describe this matter.	Page 24	As revised: <i>“If this should occur, OUSD should respond in writing to the OCA appointed ombudsman <u>or Governance Board</u> President to describe this matter.”</i>
In the event that the school or granting agency have disputes regarding the terms of this charter or any other issue regarding the school and grantor’s relationship, both parties agree to follow the process outlined below.	Page 24	As revised: <i>“In the event that the school or granting agency have disputes regarding the terms of this charter or any other issue regarding the school and grantor’s relationship, both parties agree to follow <u>consider</u> the process outlined below.”</i>
In the event of a dispute between the school and the grantor, the staff and Governance Board members of the school and District agree to first frame the issue in a written format and to refer the issue to the superintendent of the District and Executive Director of the school or their assigned representative. In the event that the grantor believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter, this shall be specifically noted in the written dispute	Page 24	As revised: <i>“In the event of a dispute between the school and the grantor, the staff and Governance Board members of the school and District <u>would</u> agree to first frame the issue in a written format and to refer the issue to the superintendent of the District and Executive Director of the school or their assigned representative. In the event that the grantor believes that the dispute relates to an issue that could lead to revocation of the charter, this shall <u>would</u> be specifically noted in the written dispute statement.”</i>

<p>statement.</p> <p>“The Executive Director and representative shall informally meet and confer in a timely fashion to attempt to resolve the dispute. In the event that this informal meeting fails to resolve the dispute, both parties will identify two representative members from their respective boards who shall jointly meet with the superintendent or designated representative of the District and Executive Director of the school to resolve the dispute. If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the superintendent’s representative and Executive Director shall meet to jointly identify a neutral, third party arbitrator. The format of the arbitration session shall be developed jointly by the superintendent and Executive Director, and shall incorporate informal rules of evidence and procedures unless both parties agree otherwise. The findings or recommendations of the arbitrator shall be non-binding, unless the Governance Board of the school and grantor jointly agrees to bind themselves. Each party will be responsible for its own financial cost that may arise from a dispute”</p>	<p>Page 24</p>	<p>As revised: <i>“The <u>charter</u> Executive Director and <u>District</u> representative shall <u>would</u> informally meet and confer in a timely fashion to attempt to resolve the dispute. In the event that this informal meeting fails to resolve the dispute, both parties will identify <u>may consider identifying</u> two representative members from their respective boards who shall <u>would</u> jointly meet with the superintendent or designated representative of the District and Executive Director of the school to resolve the dispute. If this joint meeting fails to resolve the dispute, the superintendent’s <u>District</u> representative and <u>charter</u> Executive Director shall meet to jointly identify a neutral, third party arbitrator. The format of the arbitration session shall <u>would</u> be developed jointly by the superintendent <u>District representative</u> and Executive Director, and shall <u>would</u> incorporate informal rules of evidence and procedures unless both parties agree otherwise. The findings or recommendations of the arbitrator shall <u>would</u> be non-binding, unless the Governance Board of the school and grantor jointly agrees to bind themselves. Each party will <u>would</u> be responsible for its own financial cost that may arise from a dispute”</i></p>
<p>If the Governing Board of the District believes it has cause to revoke this charter, the OUSD Board agrees to notify the OCA Governance Board in writing, noting the specific reasons for which the charter may be revoked, and grant the Charter School reasonable time to respond to the notice and take appropriate corrective action.</p>	<p>Page 24</p>	<p>As revised: <i>“If the Governing Board of the District believes it has cause to revoke this charter, the OUSD Board <u>may</u> agree to notify the OCA Governance Board in writing, noting the specific reasons for which the charter may be revoked, and grant the Charter School reasonable time to respond to the notice and take appropriate corrective action.”</i> The District will confirm to all applicable laws in the event of a charter revocation.</p>
<p>OUSD agrees to receive and review the annual fiscal and programmatic audit and annual performance report. Within two months of the receipt of this annual review, the charter-granting agency must notify the OCA Governance Board whether it</p>	<p>Page 24</p>	<p>Strike language from the text as this language is too restrictive and does not allow sufficient flexibility for the District. Additionally, this section does not take into consideration existing and developing policies, practices and procedures that govern charter oversight.</p>

considers the school to be making satisfactory progress relative to the goals specified in this charter. This annual notification will include the specific reasons for the charter-granting agency's conclusions.		
Students of OCA will be free to attend the existing OUSD schools rather than OCA.	Page 25	As revised: <i>"Students of OCA will be free to attend the existing OUSD schools rather than OCA, <u>in accordance with the enrollment and transfer policies set forth by the District.</u>"</i>
Oakland students have the same right to apply for admission to OCA. Students who do not reside within OUSD will need Governance Board approval to attend OCA. This does not mean they are not able to attend a public school of OUSD.	Page 25	Strike language from text as preference to OUSD students may be given in a lottery process should the number of applicants exceed the available space in the school, but the school may not discriminate against nor deny the admission of any student residing in CA, if space is available.
Students' disabilities are considered when making decisions about suspension and/or expulsion.	Page 26	As revised: <i>"Students' disabilities are considered when making decisions about suspension and/or expulsion <u>and all applicable state a federal laws pertaining to students with disabilities will be followed.</u>"</i>
Table IV reflects the estimated twelve-month revenue of \$864,152.00 and OCA's total expenditures of \$846,372.96 for 2008-2009, with a cash reserve of \$1,7779.60, for operation.	Page 27	As revised: <i>"Table IV reflects the estimated twelve-month revenue of \$864,152.00 and OCA's total expenditures of \$846,372.96 for 2008-2009, with a cash reserve of <u>\$17,779.60, for operation.</u>"</i>
On or before December 15, the charter school provides an interim financial report that reflects changes. A final non-audited financial report for the full prior year shall be provided.	Page 27	As revised: <i>"<u>On or before September 15 of each year, the charter school will provide an un-audited financial report to the District for the prior year.</u> On or before December 15, the charter school <u>will provides an interim financial report for the current year</u> that reflects changes to the District, county and state. <u>On or before December 15, the charter school will provide to the District an audited financial report for the prior year conducted by a independent, certified auditor from the State Controller's approved list. A final non-audited financial report for the full prior year shall be provided.</u>"</i>
An independent, certified auditor will be contracted by the Executive Director to conduct an annual financial audit that is given to the OCA Board, OUSD, ACOE, and the	Page 29	As revised: <i>"An independent, certified auditor, <u>with educational finance experience that is listed as approved by the State Controller</u> will be contracted by the Executive Director to conduct</i>

California Department of Education.		<i>an annual financial audit that is given to the OCA Board, OUSD, ACOE, and the California Department of Education.</i>
H. Closure Protocol	Page 29	Add: <i>“OCA will comply with all requirements under Title 5 California Code of Regulations Sections 11962 and 11962.1 applicable to charter school closure.”</i>
H. Closure Protocol	Page 29	Charter text must “...identify the funding to pay for the [closure] activities.” Applicable law: Title 5 California Code of Regulations Sections 11962 and 11962.1, By March 3, 2008 submission of revised charter, a reference must be included to identify the funding source of the school’s closure activities.
The term of this charter will begin on June 1, 2008, and expire five years later on May 31, 2013.	Page. 32	As revised: <i>“The term of this charter will begin on June <u>July</u> 1, 2008, and expire five years later on May 31, <u>June 30,</u> 2013.”</i>

ATTACHMENT II: SUMMARY: OUSD Renewal Protocol: Oakland Charter Academy

I. Is the school an Academic Success?

OUSD Tiered Accountability System

BLUE

Has the school met or made substantial progress towards meeting its Measurable Pupil Outcomes?

1	Writing English Proficiency	SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS
2	Writing Spanish Proficiency	REVISED
3	Basic Interpersonal Spanish speaking and understanding	REVISED
4	API Improvement	MET
5	Increased Proficiency in ELA and Math	MET
6	Student research skills	MET
7	Student Citizenship	MET
8	Culture and heritage	REVISED
9	Connecting with others	REVISED
10	Community outreach activity	REVISED

Are their performance rates higher than the performance rates of the traditional schools the students would have otherwise attended?

STAR ELA

Proficient/ Advanced	ABOVE THE MEDIAN
Basic/ Proficient/ Advanced	ABOVE THE MEDIAN

STAR MATH

Proficient/ Advanced	ABOVE THE MEDIAN
Basic/ Proficient/ Advanced	ABOVE THE MEDIAN

STAR ALGEBRA

Proficient/ Advanced	ABOVE THE MEDIAN
Basic/ Proficient/ Advanced	ABOVE THE MEDIAN

API

Total Growth Over Time	ABOVE THE MEDIAN
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AYP

AMO's Averages	ABOVE THE MEDIAN
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CELDT

English Proficiency Averages	ABOVE THE MEDIAN
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To what extent has the school been evaluated within Criteria 1, Criteria 2, and Criteria 3 set forth in the OUSD Charter School Renewal Quality Review (CSRQR)?

1. Improving Student Achievement

EXCELLENT

2. Strong Leadership

EXCELLENT

3. A Focus on Continuous Improvement

EXCELLENT

II. Is the school an Effective, Viable Organization?

This area is divided into Responsible Governance and Fiscal Accountability.

4. Responsible Governance

PROFICIENT

5. Fiscal Accountability

PROFICIENT

ATTACHMENT III: Charter School Renewal Quality Review



Oakland Unified School District

Charter School Renewal Site Visit Report

Oakland Charter Academy

**3001 International Boulevard
Oakland, CA 94601**

Principal: Jorge Lopez

Dates of review: January 16-17, 2008

Lead Reviewer: Ting L. Sun

Cambridge Education (LLC)

Content of the report

Part 1: The School Context

Information about the school

Part 2: Overview

School strengths
School challenges

Part 3: Main findings

Overall evaluation
How well the school meets the renewal site visit criteria

Part 4: School Quality Criteria Summary

Part 1: The School Context

Information about the school

Oakland Charter Academy (OCA) is a small charter middle school that serves 150 students in grades 6-8. OCA describes itself as a “no nonsense,” “back-to-basics” educational program, emphasizing “honor through hard work.” The school is in its fourteenth year of operations and is undergoing its third renewal.

OCA’s current enrollment consists of 93% Latino, 3% African American, and 4% Asian and Pacific Islander and 1% White students. Ninety-eight (98%) percent of the students are known to be eligible for the free and reduced lunch program. Approximately 3% of the students have been identified with special needs and 22% have been identified as English Learners (EL).

The school performs extremely well on state-mandated assessments, demonstrating consistent and significant growth each year. Over the past four years OCA’s Academic Performance Index (API) growth has ranged between +40 and +113 growth points per year. In 2006, the OCA had an API base score of 856, ranking the school 9 statewide and 10 among similar schools. OCA’s API 2007 growth score is 896, the second highest middle school API growth score in the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD).

Part 2: Overview

School Strengths:

- The school consistently out-performs other middle schools both locally and statewide on state standardized tests.
- The school is lead by a dynamic and effective school director who focuses on results and continuous improvement.
- The school's standards-based, direct instruction delivery model is consistently implemented to good effect in all classrooms.
- All stakeholders sustain the school's mission and high expectations which are embedded in daily practice.
- Student support systems, which include daily after-school tutoring, Saturday school and a mandatory three-week summer school, have made a positive impact upon individual student achievement.
- The school's board of director is well-informed and committed to supporting the school in achieving its mission.
- The staff, administration and teachers make Oakland Charter Academy a safe, caring and nurturing place that is very supportive of students' personal and academic success.

School Challenges:

- The school would like to have a gym to accommodate additional sports and recreational activities.

Part 3: Main Findings

Overall Evaluation:

This is an excellent school overall.

Is the School An Academic Success?

Oakland Charter Academy is unequivocally an academic success. Over the past four years, the school has moved out of Program Improvement (PI) status to become a top performing middle school. OCA's 2006 API base score was 856, ranking the school ninth statewide and tenth among similar schools. The school has demonstrated consistent and impressive growth on its API each year for the past four years, with growth points ranging between +40 and +113. OCA's API 2007 growth score is 896, the second highest growth API among middle schools in the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD).

OCA implements a comprehensive and rigorous, standards-based curriculum anchored by state-adopted textbooks. Instruction is primarily teacher-directed, yet there are good opportunities for students to reflect, think and ask critical questions. Very good support structures, which include daily afterschool tutoring, Saturday school and mandatory summer school are in place to prepare and help students become successful in the OCA environment. The school also provides art, physical education and Mandarin (as a foreign language) in addition to the core academic subjects.

OCA's culture is marked by a strong commitment to succeed. The school has a 98% attendance rate which is very high compared to other schools. Students are well-behaved, attentive, self-directed and engage in healthy competitions between classes for high attendance and grades. A close network of caring staff, teachers and administrators create an environment that fosters students' personal and academic successes.

Is the School an Effective, Viable Organization?

Oakland Charter Academy is an effective, viable organization. In 2004 the school underwent a dramatic change in leadership and, as a result, a big shift in the learning culture of the school. A more rigorous curriculum and stricter behavioral standards were put in place. In addition, accountability for student achievement by all stakeholders, including parents, teachers, administrators and board members as well as students, was infused into the school. This has effectively increased student attainment at the school. A number of members have transitioned from the OCA board since that time, so that most of the current board members are only in their first, second or third year of service. The school is well organized and operates effectively. Policies relating to fiscal and programmatic operations are transparent and consistently followed through.

Has the School Remained Faithful to the Terms of Its Charter?

Oakland Charter Academy has met the terms of its charter in all areas related to student achievement, governance and fiscal accountability. The school is achieving its mission to provide a small, middle school learning environment that meets the social, emotional and academic needs of inner-city Oakland students. This is clearly evidenced by its student achievement data, school documents and information collected through the renewal site visit. Over the past four years, OCA has initiated changes related to academic accountability that were necessary to accomplish this mission. This means that the program outlined in the recent renewal charter is most consistent with OCA's current practice and operations.

Criterion 1: Improving Student Achievement

A charter school promotes student learning through a clear vision and high expectations. It achieves clear, measurable program goals and student learning objectives, including meeting its stated performance standards, state and federal performance standards, and closing achievement gaps of students.

This area of the school's work is excellent.

Oakland Charter Academy's motto, "Honor Hard Work," serves as the cornerstone from which the school operates and emphasizes its high expectations for student attainment. This approach, coupled with the creation of a small, academically rigorous learning environment, is yielding strong success as demonstrated through the school's API results. Over the past four years the school has moved out of Program Improvement (PI) status to become a top performing middle school. OCA's 2006 API base score was 856, ranking the school ninth statewide and tenth among similar schools. The school has demonstrated consistent and impressive growth on its API each year for the past four years with growth points ranging between +40 and +113. OCA's API 2007 growth score is 896, the second highest growth API among middle schools in the Oakland Unified School District (OUSD).

Achieving proficiency on state academic standards underpins learning objectives as well as the school's overarching program goals. Interim targets are created and are based upon the percent of standards covered and achieved by students throughout a school year. Progress towards these targets is tracked through results on textbooks exams throughout the year and annual standardized measurements such as the Standardized California and Reporting (STAR) and measures of proficiency under No Child Left Behind (NCLB). The school's complete focus on covering and learning state standards has resulted in very high test scores.

The school's academic program is rigorous and, although the experience of teaching staff varies between one and six years, instruction is consistently good throughout the school. While instruction is whole-class for the most part, there are some good opportunities for students to reflect, think and respond within lessons. Most learning activities are based on textbook exercises but teachers take advantage of opportunities to make connections which provide context and relevance when discussing or introducing a topic. Questioning by teachers ask not just "what" of students, but also "why." Students, in turn, respond well are attentive in their lessons. However, little differentiation of instructional strategies was observed in the classrooms which means that opportunities are missed for students to explore answers from different approaches or for individuals or groups to review missed concepts.

Now that the school has established a strong, skills-based curriculum, it is beginning to explore more varied ways for students to learn. For example, OCA re-designed its English/Language Arts program last year to take a more thematic and literary approach to the subject and have begun to incorporate more student-generated learning activities such as journaling and role-play in this area.

The school has very good structures in place to motivate, challenge and support its students. The school director promotes healthy competitions between classes and among the students to achieve higher attendance rate, grades and test scores. Students interviewed expressed a very strong desire to achieve and felt that the school pushes them to strive for higher goals. At the same time, the school also provides strong support to help them. Teachers are in regular communication with parents through progress reports every three weeks and through parent phone calls. Students and parents interviewed confirmed that it would students do not "fall through the cracks." Consequences for missed homework (detention) or support for areas of academic deficiency (tutoring/Saturday school) are clear and immediate. Rewards for doing well are also given to students who accomplish attendance goals, test scores and grades in the way of fieldtrips and small cash rewards.

To ensure the success of students, OCA provides a range of opportunities for additional support, many of which are mandatory. This includes a mandatory three-week summer school for all students, despite

their GPA or test scores, thereby extending the academic school year. During the school year, tutors are hired specifically to work with students in after-school tutoring where there is a much greater degree of differentiation based upon students' skill levels and needs. Saturday school is held once a month to provide more opportunities for work with students who are lagging behind academically. Students and parents report that the tutoring and Saturday schools have been successful in helping students catch up.

OCA works with the John Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth (CTY), which allows for academically high-achieving students to take college courses throughout the summer and at different times during the school year. Students interviewed spoke of the program enthusiastically as an opportunity to experience college. Because so many students are motivated to achieve, approximately 37% (15% seventh graders and 22% eighth graders) of the students in the school are participating in additional after-school tutoring in the hopes of passing the test that would allow them entry into CTY.

The OCA school culture is structured and disciplined and marked by a strong commitment to succeed. Students come to school, go to class and work. As the classrooms are self-contained, there is no need for transition time between classes, and transitions between activities within the classrooms are smooth and immediate with little "social" time. This provides for more learning time. The facilities are safe and clean and the classrooms are well-resourced. Additionally, within this very structured and disciplined environment, students feel accepted and cared for. Students interviewed feel that the adults on the campus are there to support and "help them get better." Parents interviewed state that though there are strict consequences for not doing homework, their children's primary motivator for completing homework was not wanting to disappoint their teachers or the school administrators.

Criterion 2: Strong Leadership

The leaders of a charter school are stewards of the charter's mission and vision and carry out their duties in a professional, responsible and ethical manner. Charter school leaders use their influence and authority for the primary purpose of achieving student success.

This area of the school's work is excellent.

The school director and site coordinator are experienced educators who effectively ensure that OCA's mission, goals, pedagogical approach and educational model are aligned and clearly communicated to all stakeholders in the school. Over the past three years, the OCA's director has taken a strong "no nonsense" approach to establishing a culture focused on results. Structure, discipline and orderliness are prevalent throughout the school. This year, the director's duties have expanded to include the management of Oakland Charter High School, so a school site coordinator has been established to manage and oversee the daily operations of the OCA. The site coordinator has been received well and has made good impact through working with teachers, parents and students at the school.

School policies and expectations are clearly outlined in parent orientations and in the school's parent/student handbooks and are implemented consistently. Students adhere to the school's uniform policy and strict behavioral and academic expectations are maintained schoolwide and reinforced by the teachers and the school administration. Parents and students interviewed report that they appreciate that the rules are very strict and that there are very high expectations at the school. At the same time, they also feel the staff to be very responsive to, and supportive of, students, especially those who need assistance academically.

The school leadership closely monitors the program and is visible throughout the school. Teacher lesson plans are reviewed weekly, and administrators frequently "drop-in" on classrooms and provide feedback to teachers. Yearly goals for the academic progress of students (i.e. API targets) are posted throughout the school and discussed with students. Students, teachers and parents interviewed all state that they clearly understand what is expected of them by the school. While school leaders are strict in their expectations, they are also reflective and think about ways to improve the school program. For example, based on the desire to develop a more "thinking" curriculum, the director initiated the re-design of the school's English/Language Arts program to take a more thematic and literary approach to

the subject. The result is a curriculum that better prepares students for AP English courses at the high school level.

With small classes and a “looping” system where teachers move through the grade levels with their students, all teachers have a good grasp of student needs. Assessment of student progress throughout the school year is done through regular textbook assessments in all subject areas and close monitoring of how teachers and students are moving through the textbook curriculum. Student performance as a whole, therefore, is monitored through progress and achievement of standards covered in the textbooks. All students not meeting standards, including EL and students with special needs, are provided with differentiated support and tutoring after school.

During the summer, OCA teachers are provided with in-service training on the “OCA way” of high expectations and on classroom management. This means that classroom norms are consistent throughout the school. Professional development based upon specific subject matter is encouraged and whole-school in-service training sessions have been provided in previous years. Teachers report that they have opportunities for informal collaboration and that more structured collaboration time, although desirable, may not be sustainable due to their busy schedules in working with students after school. Most seem to feel that this informal collaboration is currently sufficient, though more structured time could be utilized to support newer teachers and build further cohesion among the staff.

The school’s academic performance is clearly publicized throughout the school, and OCA’s students, teachers and board directors are actively engaged in monitoring the schools annual API growth as a means to challenge and encourage continuous growth. OCA also maintains a School Accountability Report Card (SARC) as required by law.

All OCA policies are clearly communicated and consistently followed. Conflicts of interest policies are in place. The parent/student handbook references opportunities for individuals to address the OCA Board of Trustees, but does not include the school’s internal dispute policies. The school leadership is careful to define the nature of valuable and appropriate parental and community engagement in the school. For instance, rather than fundraising or chaperoning student events, parents are asked to be involved in the school through supporting and working with their children on homework. They are also welcome to attend or observe classes. The school has formed a parent advisory council which meets at various times throughout the year to provide feedback to the school administration on school policies. Community partnerships, though not varied, are solid. In addition to partnering with John Hopkins University Center for Talented Youth (CTY), OCA students participate in rowing with the Jack London Aquatic Center and rugby with the Baracus Youth Rugby Club, which provides enrichment activities in addition to the school’s academic program.

Criterion 3: A Focus on Continuous Improvement

A charter school engages in a process of continuous self-improvement in order to increase the effectiveness of its educational program. The school regularly assesses and evaluates student learning based on stated goals.

This area of the school’s work is proficient.

Oakland Charter Academy uses student test scores and the school’s API to measure its success. Therefore, school wide goals for improvement are primarily focused on raising these scores. Student performance as a whole is monitored by progress through, and achievement of, content standards covered in the textbooks. Tests embedded in the textbook curriculum are regularly used to evaluate student progress. The results of these tests are used for re-teaching, if necessary, and for one-on-one interventions during tutoring and Saturday schools. Beyond this, the school does not use formal systems for collecting, monitoring and analyzing performance trends as whole; however, current methods of assessing students and targeting interventions have seem to have been proven successful based on the school's growth in test scores.

Families are kept well-informed of both individual student and schoolwide academic progress through STAR results, class tests results and progress reports every three weeks. The school’s greatest

concern related to assessing and evaluating students' progress is the significant delay in receiving cumulative records from previous schools they have attended. This hinders the individualized planning and goal-setting process OCA outlines with each student at the beginning of every school year. The more expedient transfer of student cumulative records is an area that the school would like to work more closely with OUSD. The school is also researching other normative assessment programs that may streamline evaluations of students' content skills within the school year to assist in collecting and disaggregating data more quickly and immediately.

Criterion 4: Criterion 4: Responsible Governance

A charter school board and administration establish and implement policies that are transparent and focused on student achievement. Charter school board members and administrators have a cogent understanding of and comply with the laws that govern charter schools.

This area of the school's work is proficient.

Oakland Charter Academy Board of Directors is responsible for monitoring the overall academic and fiscal operations of the school. In 2004 the school underwent a dramatic change in leadership and, as a result, a big shift in the learning culture of the school. A more rigorous curriculum and stricter behavioral standards were put in place; and accountability for student achievement by all stakeholders, including parents, teachers, administrators and board members as well as students, was infused into the school. Since 2004, a number of board members have transitioned from the board, so that most of the current board members of OCA are in their first, second or third year of service. Parent, community representatives serve on the board, and current members are well-qualified with varied experience in business and education and with community organizations in Oakland.

All new board members are provided with a full binder of information on OCA and oriented to his/her duties by the director. The board has a full set of bylaws and adheres to detailed conflicts of interest policies. Meeting agendas and interviews demonstrate that the board is well-informed about the school's academic performance and appropriately oversees the school budget. Though small, various members of the board participate in subcommittees which include personnel, education, finance/development, nominating, discipline and parent and facilities. The parent/student handbook provides information on board meetings and instructions on how to address the board.

The OCA director keeps abreast of current laws and charter school issues by participating in OUSD charter office meetings, the Oakland charter school consortium meetings and in various statewide workshops related to charter schools.

All required reports to the district have been submitted in accordance with timelines established.

Criterion 5: Fiscal Accountability

A charter school fulfills its fiduciary responsibility for public funds and maintains publicly accessible fiscal records. The school conducts an annual financial audit which is made public.

This area of the school's work is excellent.

The OCA director and the board treasurer work closely to develop, oversee and monitor its annual budget through a process that adheres to required timelines. The school follows full set of fiscal policies that provide checks and balances on major expenditures and protect against conflicts of interest.

OCA is a locally-funded charter school and has met all fiscal reporting requirements. The school adheres to the audit requirements in law for charter schools, and audits are performed in accordance with generally accepted standards. Audit reports for the past two fiscal years are comprehensive and show no exceptions or deficiencies. Thus far the school has focused most of its expenditure upon textbooks and instructional materials, the hiring of quality teachers and staff, and in the maintenance of its campus. School facilities are clean, attractive and well-maintained and provide enough space for

classrooms, a small library and a hardtop for its PE program. Short and long-term budget projections are made with considerations for contingencies. Most recently, the school leadership and board have begun to work on a fiscal plan to acquire a gymnasium so that the school can expand its sports program and offer more extracurricular activities. OCA has managed its budget well, prioritizing appropriate instructional materials, staffing, and facilities to support its students while maintaining a solid reserve

School name: Oakland Charter Academy

School Quality Review	5	4	3	2	1
Overall evaluation score	X				

Criterion 1: Improving Student Achievement: A charter school promotes student learning through a clear vision and high expectations. It achieves clear, measurable program goals and student learning objectives, including meeting its stated performance standards, state and federal performance standards, and closing achievement gaps of students.		5	4	3	2	1
Criterion 1 overall score:		X				
1.1	Achieves clear, measurable program goals and student learning objectives, including meeting its stated performance standards, and state and federal standards	X				
1.2	Achieves comparably improved student learning outcomes relative to students in traditional public schools that students would have otherwise attended	X				
1.3	Demonstrates high expectations for student achievement	X				
1.4	Provides a challenging and coherent curriculum for each individual student	X				
1.5	Implements and directs learning experiences (consistent with the school's purpose and charter) that actively engage students		X			
1.6	Allocates appropriate resources in the way of instructional materials, staffing and facilities to promote high levels of student achievement	X				
1.7	Promotes academic risk taking by supporting students in a safe, healthy and nurturing environment characterized by trust, caring and professionalism	X				
1.8	Productively engages parental and community involvement as a part of the school's student support system		X			
1.9	Shares its vision among the school community and demonstrates its mission in daily action and practice	X				
1.10	Involves staff, students, parents and other stakeholders in its accountability for student learning and in the school's program evaluation process		X			

Criterion 2: Strong Leadership: The leaders of a charter school are stewards of the charter's mission and vision and carry out their duties in a professional, responsible and ethical manner. Charter school leaders use their influence and authority for the primary purpose of achieving student success.		5	4	3	2	1
Criterion 2 overall score:		X				
2.1	Effectively communicates and engages stakeholders in the vision mission of the school	X				
2.2	Consistently puts into practice the educational program outlined in its charter.	X				
2.3	Generates and sustains a school culture conducive to staff professional growth		X			
2.4	Actively monitors and evaluates the success of the school's program	X				
2.5	Provides regular, public reports on the school's progress towards achieving its goals to the school community and to the school's authorizer	X				
2.6	Treats all individuals with fairness, dignity and respect	X				
2.7	Has a cogent understanding of the laws that govern charter schools and monitors the trends, issues and potential changes in the environment in which charter schools operate	X				
2.8	Makes management decisions and uses his/her influence and authority for the primary purpose of achieving student success	X				
2.9	Abstains from any decision involving a potential or actual conflict of interests		X			
2.10	Respects diversity and implements practices that are inclusive of all types of learners consistent with the school charter		X			
2.11	Engages community involvement in the school		X			

Criterion 3: A Focus on Continuous Improvement: A charter school engages in a process of continuous self-improvement in order to increase the effectiveness of its educational program. The school regularly assesses and evaluates student learning based on stated goals.		5	4	3	2	1
Criterion 3 overall score:			X			
3.1	Uses information sources, data collection and data analysis strategies for self-examination and improvement.		X			
3.2	Establishes benchmarks and a variety of accountability tools for monitoring student progress and uses the results of these assessments to improve curriculum and instruction		X			
3.3	Establishes both long and short term goals and plans for accomplishing the school's mission as stated in its charter.		X			
3.4	Uses student assessment results to improve curriculum and instruction.		X			
3.5	Uses the results of evaluation and assessment as the basis for the allocation of resources for programmatic improvement.		X			

Criterion 4: Responsible Governance: A charter school board and administration establish and implement policies that are transparent and focused on student achievement. Charter school board members and administrators have a cogent understanding of and comply with the laws that govern charter schools.		5	4	3	2	1
Criterion 4 overall score:			X			
4.1	Ensure that policies are implemented in a fair and consistent manner.		X			
4.2	Monitor the trends, issues and potential changes in the environment in which charter schools operate.		X			
4.3	Seek input from impacted stakeholders.			X		
4.4	Enact policies that respect diversity and implements practices that are inclusive of all types of learners consistent with the school charter.		X			
4.5	Actively engage the school's authorizer in monitoring the school's educational program and its fiscal status.		X			

Criterion 5: Fiscal Accountability: A charter school fulfils its fiduciary responsibility for public funds and maintains publicly accessible fiscal records. The school conducts an annual financial audit which is made public.		5	4	3	2	1
Criterion 5 overall score:		X				
5.1	Creates and monitors immediate and long-range financial plans to effectively implement the school's educational program and ensure financial stability.	X				
5.2	Conducts an annual financial audit which is made public.		X			
5.3	Establishes clear fiscal policies to ensure that public funds are used appropriately and wisely.	X				
5.4	Ensures financial resources are directly related to the school's purpose: student achievement of learning goals.	X				