



# BAEO-GATES SMALL SCHOOLS PROJECT ANNUAL REPORT 2007-2008



## *BAEO-Gates Small Schools Project Report 2007-2008*

### Project History:

In 2003, The Black Alliance for Educational Options (BAEO) submitted a proposal to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation seeking a five-year grant of \$4,000,000 to sponsor the development of 15 small, project-based high schools based on the EdVisions and/or Big Picture Company models that focus on accomplishing the following objectives:

- Creating 15 small high schools in targeted cities over a five year period beginning in 2003;
- Convincing parents, particularly low-income and working class parents, of the efficacy of small high schools using the methods espoused by EdVsions and/or the Big Picture Company;
- Recruiting black educators and community activists who are willing and able to support the creation of these "break the mold" models;
- Developing the capacity of our organization to be a technical assistance resource for least one of these models in the future; and
- Furthering the cause of providing families more effective educational options in their communities.

In 2007, BAEO submitted a modification to the original proposal to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation seeking a non-monetary extension. The proposal sought to create only 8 high schools by 2010 and was in response to the growing concern amongst project members around quality and sustainability.

We currently have three schools open that serve approximately 831 students. Those schools are CEO Leadership Academy (Milwaukee), New Media Technology Charter High School (Phila.) and Boys Latin of Philadelphia. We have five schools in the pipeline two of which are scheduled to open in 2009 and three opening in 2010.

### BAEO-Gates Schools in Brief:

#### New Media in brief:

- New Media Technology Charter High School has 361 students
- New Media Technology CS met 9 out of 9 AYP targets in 2007-08.
- 94% of our juniors scored proficient or advanced on the writing assessment, which puts them at 8 points ABOVE the state average in writing, which is 86%.
- It is worth noting that the writing assignments were also closely tied into project work last year, as students were pushed to gain writing proficiency in order to produce Public Service Announcements and Digital Stories.
- 100% of seniors applied to at least one college
- 97 % college acceptance rate: 59 out of 62 graduating seniors were accepted to college.
- 97% college retention rate (1 student will attend in January)
- Both Math and Reading scores experienced over a 100% increase over the previous year. The previous year scores had been extremely low and the

increase in Math and Reading still does not get New Media to the state average, but they are seeing significant growth.

- Math scores increased by over 500% over their 2007 scores.
- 9<sup>th</sup> grade students at New Media placed 3<sup>rd</sup> in the citywide Business Elite Entrepreneurial competition in Spring of 2008. They were awarded \$1,000.00 for their business plan project (a Project Based Learning (PBL) exercise initiated by a first year Math Instructor, Meghan Kingcade) regarding a screen printing business called "Co-Signers". These students spent the summer with Ms. Kingcade developing plans to use the \$1,000.00 to invest in the business and continue the project in the 2008-2009 school year as sophomores
- Current Enrollment 361 students with 30 on the waiting list

#### CEO Leadership in brief:

- Graduated 33 total seniors
- 94.6% of CEO seniors accepted to college or university
- The attendance rate of the 177 CEO students enrolled at the end of the school year, was 95.5% when you include excused absences.
- 70% re-enrollment rate from 2006-07 school year
- Of the 215 students enrolled in CEO at the beginning of the 2007-08 school year, nearly 75% were still enrolled at the end of school year
- 100% Parent Participation
- *TerraNova Reading* – Of the 84 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> graders who took the reading test in Spring 2008, CEO students in each grade were reading on average or slightly below grade level.
- Of the 13 students who graduated from CEO in June 2007, 11 (84.6%) were enrolled at a post-secondary institution.
- 95% attendance
- Current Enrollment 200 students

Figure B1

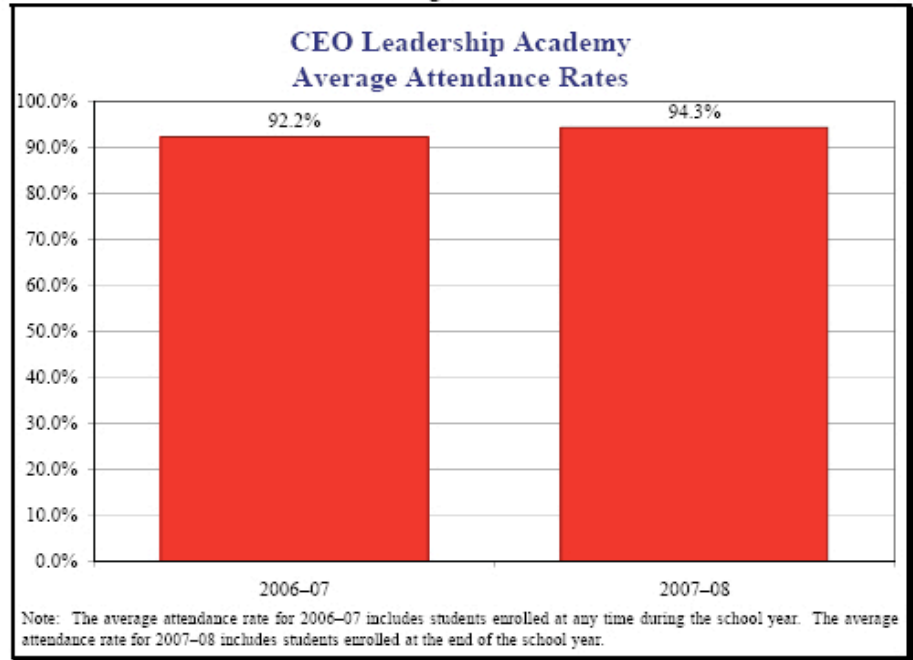
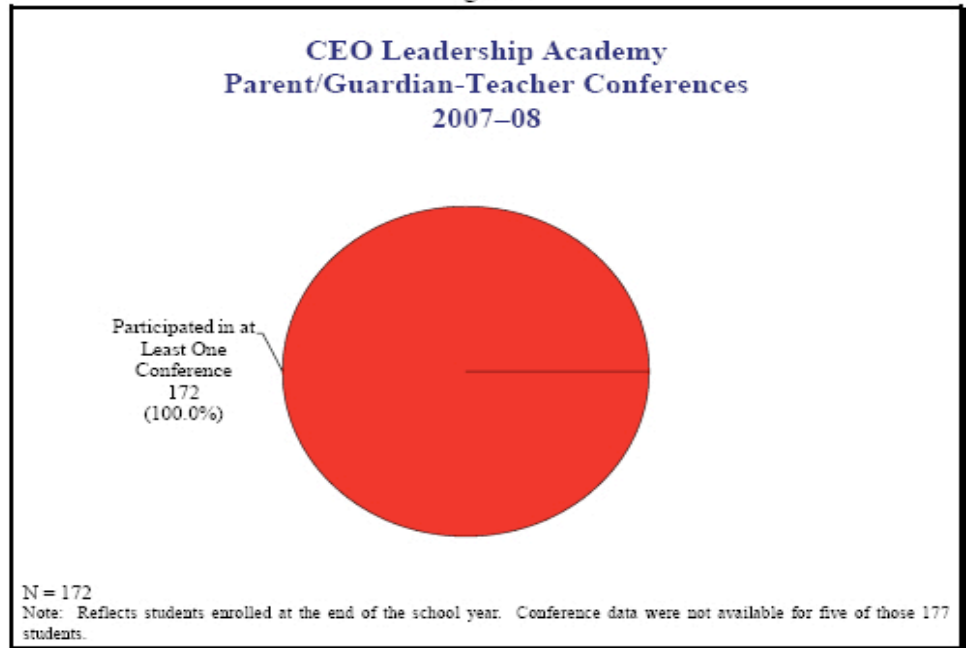
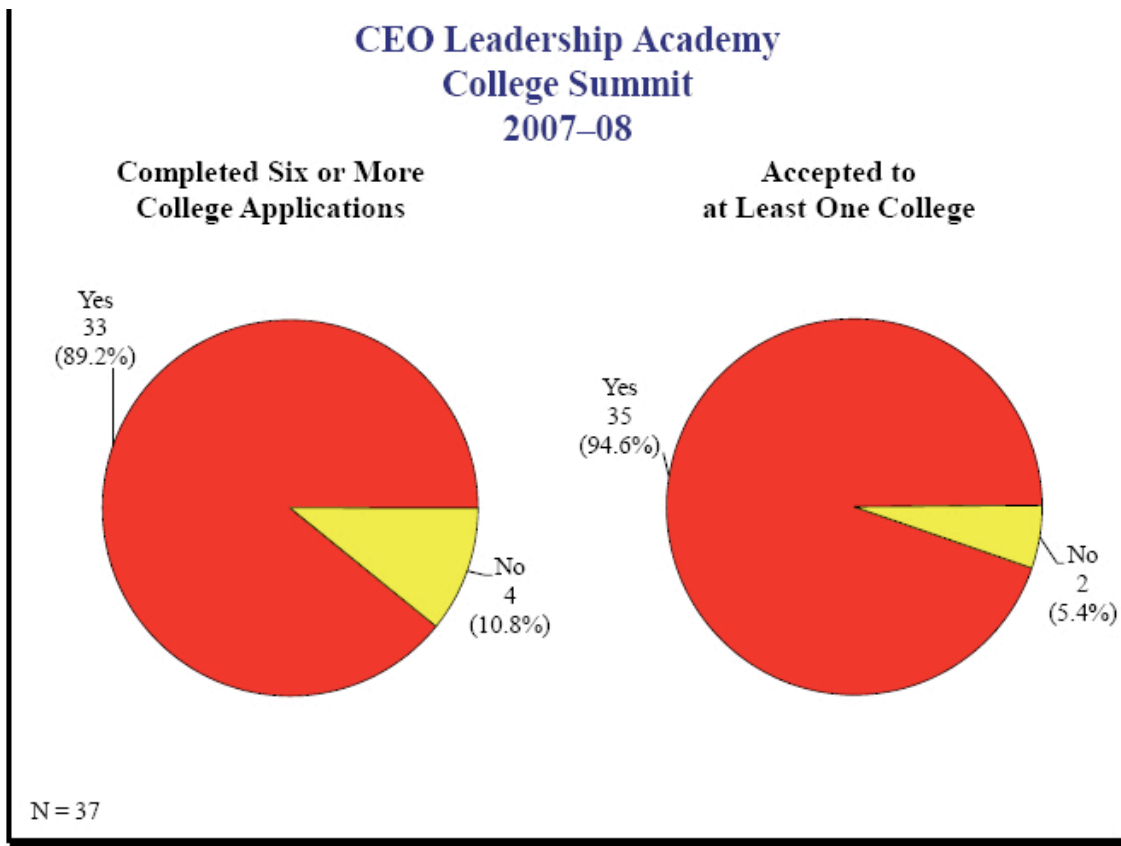


Figure 6



### College Summit

Goal: All twelfth-grade students will enroll/participate in College Summit. Each twelfth grader will have completed applications to at least six colleges by the end of the school year. At least 90.0% of the graduating students will be accepted to at least one college. The dean of students will monitor student progress on this outcome and will track college acceptance for each student. There were 40 twelfth-grade students enrolled at the end of the school year. College Summit data were provided for 37 (92.5%) of those students. All 37 of those twelfth-grade students were enrolled in College Summit. As Figure 2 shows, 33 (89.2%) of those students completed at least six college applications by the end of the school year, and 35 (94.6%) of the students had been accepted to a college or university. This goal reflects the key attributes of common focus, high expectations, personalized environment, respect and responsibility, time to collaborate, and performance based.



#### Boys Latin Philadelphia in Brief:

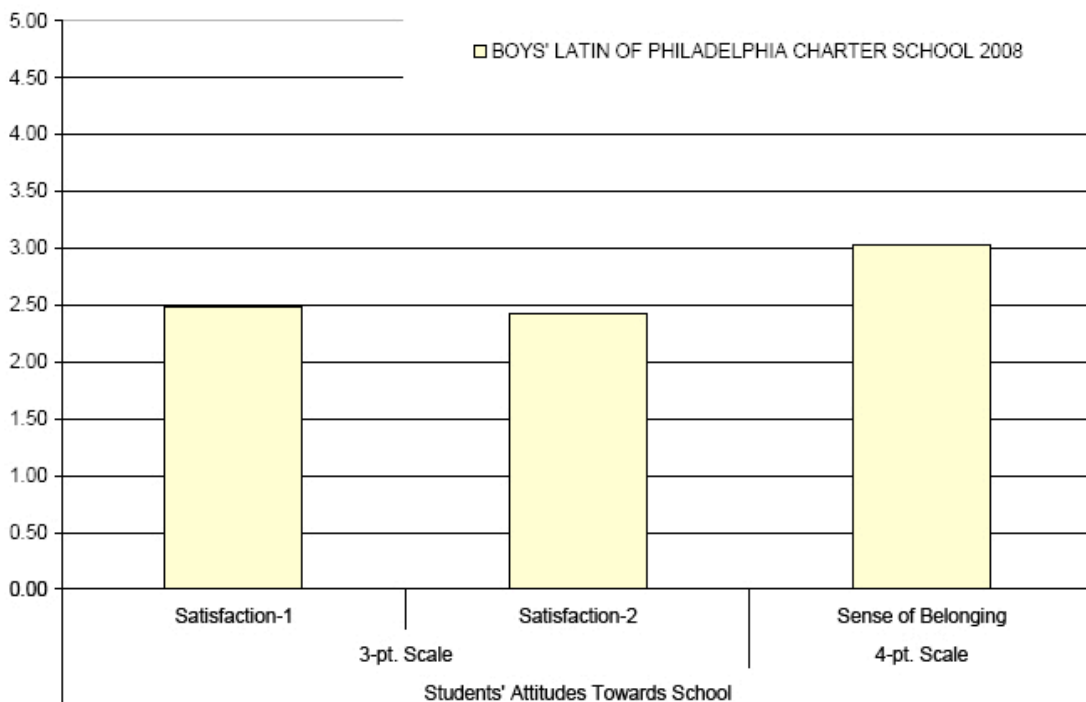
- 2 of Boys Latin students received medals for their performance on the National Latin Exam and 25 just missed receiving medals
- 95% attendance rate for the 2007-08 school year
- Of the 144 students who began at Boys Latin in 2007, 130 finished. Of that 130, 125 returned this year. Of the 5 who did not return: 3 moved out of the city, 1 transferred to another charter school and the other to a public school
- Current enrollment – 270 with 100 young men on the waiting list
- Boys Latin only has 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> graders. They do not take the PSSA until next year

Gates Educational Initiative Survey (GEIS) 1, which is a 57-item survey designed to assess students' attitudes and perceptions about high school and college. The survey contains 10 factors reflecting both school and classroom attributes. The factors include Respect & Responsibility, Active Inquiry, In-Depth Learning, Performance Assessment, School Climate-Orderly, Satisfaction-1, Satisfaction-2, Sense of Belonging, High Expectations, and Personalized. The survey was administered to students in the winter of 2007 and the return rate was 89%.

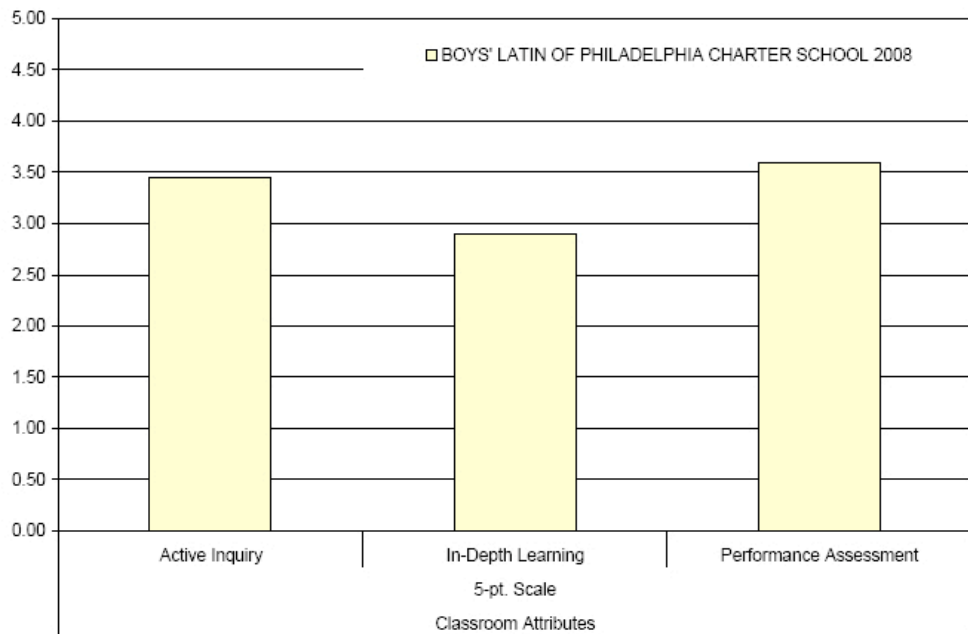
Figures 1 through 3 display mean scores for the 10 factors in the areas of students' attitudes towards school, classroom attributes, and school attributes. Students clearly feel positive about their experiences at BLP and believe their education is personalized (Figure 3). Figure 4 presents students' plans for college attendance, their perceptions of the importance of a college degree, how much they believe their future career depends on going to college, and whether or not they believe their high school has prepared them to succeed in college. These results show that more than 80% of the students either agreed or strongly agreed with statements reflecting these areas.

Figure 5 reports the percentage of students indicating they plan to attend college and the percentage of students who believe their teachers expect them to attend college. Results indicate almost 80% plan to attend a four-year college in the year after high school graduation and a similar portion believe their teachers expect them to attend a four-year college.

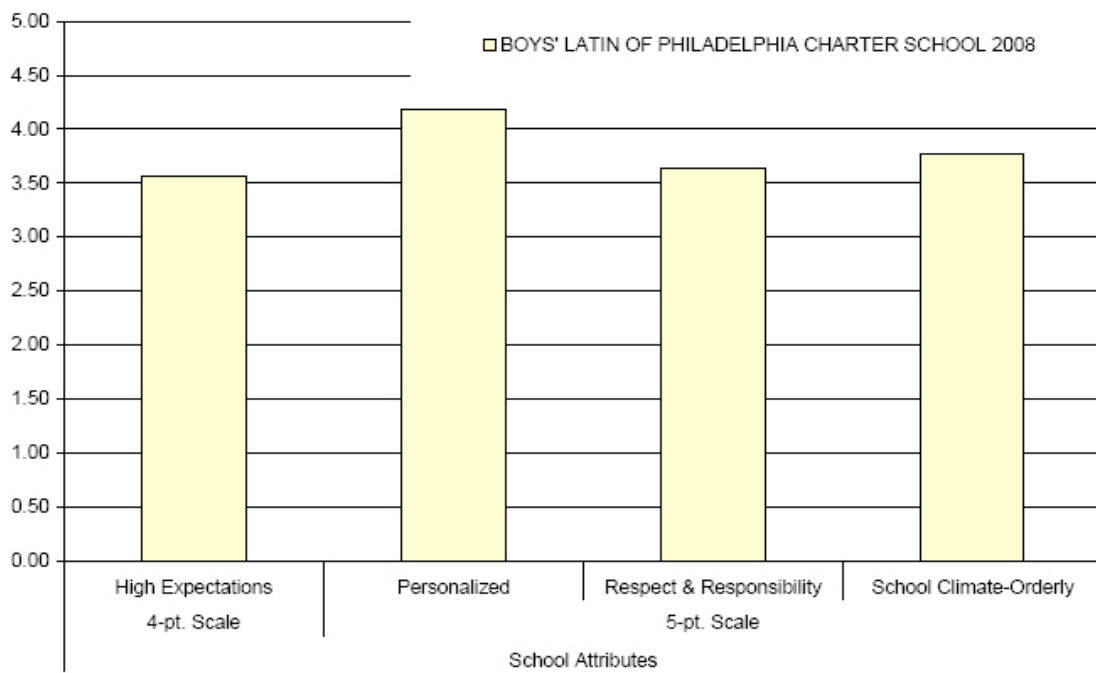
Please see the graphs on following pages.



**Figure 1. Attitudes toward school**

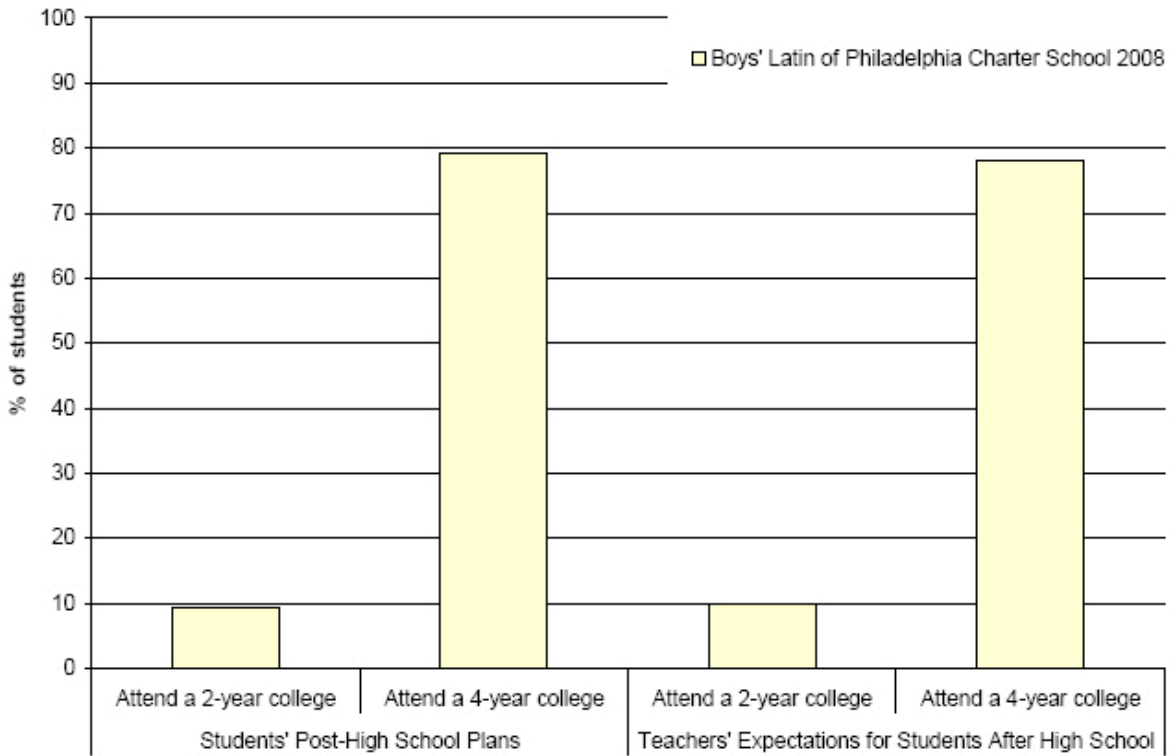


**Figure 2. Classroom Attributes**

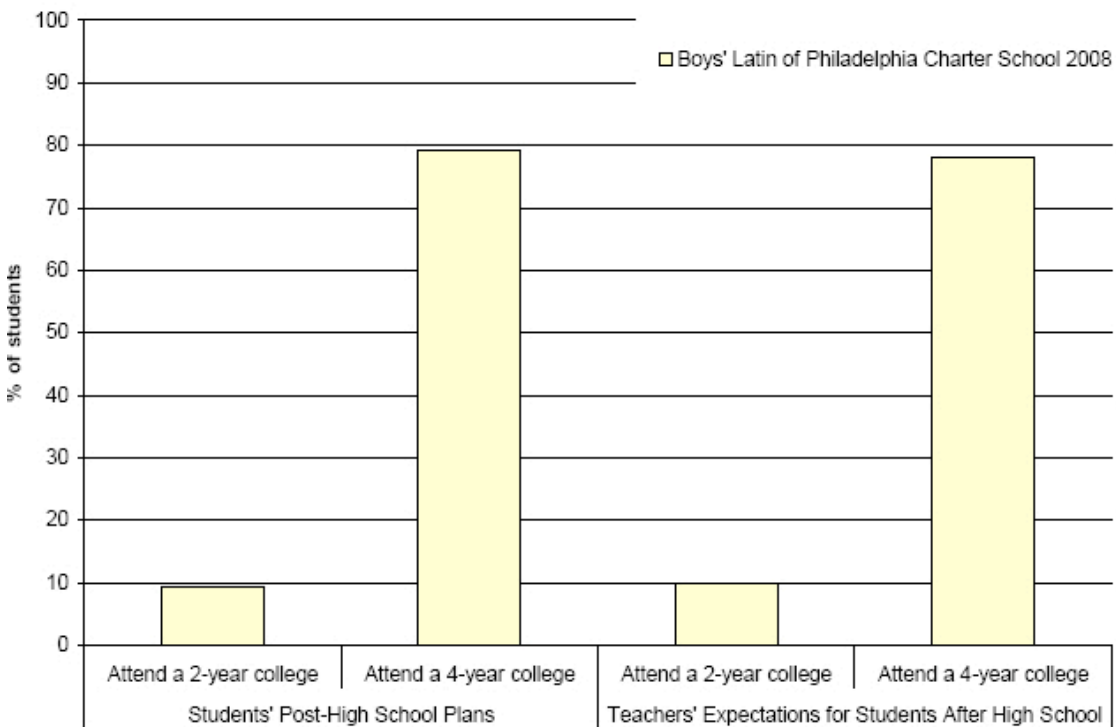


**Figure 3. School Attributes**





**Figure 4. Students' Perceptions about college**



**Figure 5. Students Post-High School Plans and Teacher Expectations**



## **FUTURE FOCUS:**

### **SCHOOL DESIGN TEAMS IN THE PIPELINE**

#### ***Eastern University Early College Academy - Opening fall 2009***

- Received a provisional charter for school opening 2009
- Eastern University will establish a new charter high school to serve students from urban Philadelphia who have been traditionally underrepresented in higher education. The school will not only increase the number of high school students performing at advanced levels, but will also close the “preparation and performance gap” between state graduation standards and university entrance standards.
- If students are performing at grade level by 10th grade, their chances of graduating at grade level are high. However, even performing at the proficient level at 12th grade does not equate to being college-ready. Few states have designed their high school assessments to answer whether passing students are prepared for success in college and work. While Pennsylvania State standards are higher than most, there is still a gap between these standards and those required for postsecondary success.
- Eastern University's early college high school will incorporate the research-based standards reported in “Standards for Success” , designed to help create a better connection between high school and university expectations.

#### ***5. Madison Preparatory School – Baton Rouge - Opening fall 2009***

- A college preparatory school utilizing project based learning with two major areas of emphasis (Liberal arts or math science and technology).

#### ***6. Achieve Exposition Park Charter School – Los Angeles - Opening fall 2010***

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#### ***7. High School for Recording Arts – NYC -Opening fall 2010***

- The High School for Recording Arts New York Charter School will deliver an educational program that engages learners, many of whom have been expelled, dropped out, or are otherwise not enrolled in school, through the exploration and operation of the music business. The HSRA NY CS educational program operates together with a professional music production facility
- A student's time is spent mastering validations (academic and life skills) and state-mandated learning standards through individual/group projects related to core subject areas along with those critical to the music industry. Access to the recording studio and key industry components helps to keep students focused and motivated for academic learning.
- The HSRA NY CS Planning Team first assembled in June 2005. During the three years that the team has worked together much has been accomplished towards obtaining a charter for the High School for Recording Arts New York Charter School.
- Submitted its charter application initially in July 2007
- Withdrew the application in January 2008

- Resubmitted a revised application in June 2008
- Participated in a CSI staff Panel Interview in July 2008
- Received word that CSI would not advance the June 2008 application in late

July 2008

- Withdrew the revised application in August 2008
- Will resubmit a newly revised application in January 2009

#### Curriculum and Assessment Development and Alignment

- An amended HSRA model: NYS Learning Standards-aligned project-based learning
- Pre/Post/Benchmark, predictive, teacher/student developed and state assessments
- Education consultant hired to spearhead amendments to the HSRA model

#### Board Recruitment and Development

- Four individuals from the original planning team are still involved with the development of HSRA NY CS (two will serve as founding board members)
- Seven dedicated individuals comprise the HSRA NY CS founding board representing the charter, legal, marketing, entertainment and business fields
- Four of the seven founding board members participated in NYC CCSE workshops and training

#### Fund Development

The HSRA NY CS Planning Team has raised the following monies to date:

- \$150,000 BAEO-Gates Small Schools Project Planning Grant
- \$50,000 NYC Center for Charter School Excellence Planning Grant
- \$850 in individual contributions

#### Facilities Search

- Entered into an agreement with full service real estate firm, Concrete Stories

#### Status of Charter Application

- HSRA NY CS Planning Team members will withdraw the revised application submitted June 2, 2008 and resubmit during the Winter Cycle in January 2008.

### **8. Business of Entertainment Preparatory School – Philadelphia - Opening fall 2010**

- College preparatory school with a focus on exposing urban youth to careers within the entertainment industry.
- Submitted charter application but all new charter applications were put on hold with the hiring of the new superintendent.

One of BAEO's roles is offering assistance and leadership development to the small schools receiving grant awards. Assistance is provided to planning and implementing teams developing schools that demonstrate relationship, relevance, and rigor through adopting the BAEO Quality Principles and the 7 Key Attributes promoted by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. This assistance comes in the form of:

- Coaching
- Institutes and workshops
- Critical Friends Groups
- School performance monitoring
- Small school network
- Instructional support

*We currently have a cadre of eight coaches and/or technical assistants.*

### **Grant Distribution History**

<u><b>2004</b></u> <u><b>Disbursement</b></u>	<u><b>2005 Disbursement</b></u>	<u><b>2006 Disbursement</b></u>	<u><b>2007</b></u> <u><b>Disbursement</b></u>	<u><b>2008</b></u> <u><b>Disbursement</b></u>	<u><b>Disbursement</b></u>
Planning grant \$25,000 awarded in March 2004	Implementation grant of \$75,000 awarded in August 2004/2005	Support grant of \$60,000 awarded in August 2005/2006			\$160,000
			Planning & implementation grant of \$50,000 awarded in September 2007.		\$50,000
	Planning grant \$25,000 awarded in December 2005	Implementation grant of \$10,000 awarded in June 2006			\$35,000
		Planning grant of \$15,000 awarded in November 2006			\$15,000
			Eastern has not received any money. However, in 2007 Big Picture was paid \$93,000 for the implementation of their model.		\$93,000
		Planning grant of \$35,000 awarded in October 2006			\$35,000

*(more detailed bios can be provided if necessary)*

1. Camilla Greene
2. Tony Simmons
3. Nmuta Jones
4. Debbie Bambino
5. Wendy Brannen
6. Will Killens
7. Leslie Talbot and
8. Hilda Rosario

## ***Student Experiences and the Gates 3 R's: Relationships***

### **What We Know**

We know that students and staff are nurtured and strong ties are being formed when:

- School staffs demonstrate “zero tolerance” for name calling, ribbing, harmful pranks, etc.
- The school student/staff ratio is no more than 20/1
- The school day includes time for staff to work together and plan
- The school day provides non-instructional time for students and staff to learn from one another (i.e. advisor/advisee sessions, retreats, extra-curricular activities, field trips, etc.)
- School staff bring personal experiences into the classroom as appropriate
- Coping and life strategies are included in the school day, week or year (i.e. faith-based initiatives, life skills training, retreats, counseling/advising, etc.)
- Key stakeholders (i.e. students, staff, parents, board, local business, local CBOs, etc.) have opportunities to get together

### **What We Found:**

#### **Strengths:**

- Most, if not all students believe that each school provides a safe environment for them or their child.
- All three schools “feels like family.” Students help each other, don’t make fun of each other and have a good rapport with school staff. Hugs abound throughout the day (at CEO especially), there are lots of smiles, “how ya doin’” and encouraging words exchanged among students and between staff and students.
- All of the schools are structured such that students are able to establish relationships with adults (i.e. small teacher/student ratios, non-academic advisor/advisee sessions, faith-based teachings)
- CEO students appear to know each other very well, are respectful towards each other
- All three schools have student/teacher ratios less than 20/1.
- All three schools have teacher-planning time built into the school day.
- All three schools has an annual retreat each summer.

In a recent evaluation of the BAEO-Gates Small Schools Project, conducted Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, it was found that the project has made progress developing procedures for soliciting new school proposals and for selecting and supporting those programs. The BAEO-Gates team has also met its other main objective of developing a cadre of technical assistants and has embedded the BAEO Quality principles into the support of the schools. After spending the necessary time figuring out our model, we believe that we are headed in the right direction with AFOG, which we believe is evidenced by the ongoing success of New Media Technology Charter, CEO Leadership and Boys Latin Philadelphia. With the necessary project support from the organization, we believe that BAEO will have a successful network of small schools as a part of its movement.

