

2006-2007 No Child Left Behind - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

U.S. Department of Education

Cover Sheet

Type of School: (Check all that apply) [] Elementary [] Middle [x] High [] K-12 [x] Charter

Name of Principal Dr. Tom Higgins
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name George Walton Comprehensive High School
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1590 Bill Murdock Road
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

Marietta Georgia 30062-5999
City State Zip Code+4 (9 digits total)

County Cobb State School Code Number* 633-0175

Telephone (770)578-3225 Fax (770) 578-3227

Web site/URL www.waltonhigh.org E-mail tom.higgins@cobbk12.org

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

Tom Higgins Date 2-5-07
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent* Mr. Fred Sanderson
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Cobb County School District Tel. (770)426-3300

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

Fred Sanderson Date 2-5-07
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson Mr. Lindsey Tippins or Mrs. Betty A. Gray, Vice-Chair
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2, and certify that to the best of my knowledge it is accurate.

Betty A. Gray, Vice-Chair Date 2-6-07
for the (School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

PART I - ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION

The signatures on the first page of this application certify that each of the statements below concerning the school's eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR) requirements is true and correct.

1. The school has some configuration that includes grades K-12. (Schools on the same campus with one principal, even K-12 schools, must apply as an entire school.)
2. The school has made adequate yearly progress each year for the past two years and has not been identified by the state as "persistently dangerous" within the last two years. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's adequate yearly progress requirement in the 2006-2007 school year.
3. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, it has foreign language as a part of its core curriculum.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2001 and has not received the No Child Left Behind – Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years.
5. The nominated school or district is not refusing OCR access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
6. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
7. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
8. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

All data are the most recent year available.

DISTRICT (Questions 1-2 not applicable to private schools)

1. Number of schools in the district:
- | | |
|-------------|---------------------|
| <u>67</u> | Elementary schools |
| <u>24</u> | Middle schools |
| <u> </u> | Junior high schools |
| <u>15</u> | High schools |
| <u>7</u> | Other |
| <u>113</u> | TOTAL |

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: \$6648
 Average State Per Pupil Expenditure: \$6818

SCHOOL (To be completed by all schools)

3. Category that best describes the area where the school is located:

- Urban or large central city
 Suburban school with characteristics typical of an urban area
 Suburban
 Small city or town in a rural area
 Rural

4. 6 Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school.

_____ If fewer than three years, how long was the previous principal at this school?

5. Number of students as of October 1 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent in applying school only:

Source:			FTE Report				
Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK				7			
K				8			
1				9	348	330	678
2				10	329	314	643
3				11	348	316	664
4				12	314	309	623
5				Other			
6							
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL →							2608

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school:
- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| <u>79</u> | % White |
| <u>4</u> | % Black or African American |
| <u>2</u> | % Hispanic or Latino |
| <u>15</u> | % Asian/Pacific Islander |
| <u>0</u> | % American Indian/Alaskan Native |
| 100% Total | |

Use only the five standard categories in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of the school.

7. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the past year: 4 %

[This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.]

(1)	Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year	39
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year	60
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	99
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1	2608
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	.0381
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	3.81

8. Limited English Proficient students in the school: 1%
35 Total Number Limited English Proficient
 Number of languages represented: 10
 Specify languages: Arabic, Chinese, Indian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Spanish, Thai, Turkish

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 2%
 Total number students who qualify: 61

If this method does not produce an accurate estimate of the percentage of students from low-income families, or the school does not participate in the federally supported lunch program, specify a more accurate estimate, tell why the school chose it, and explain how it arrived at this estimate.

10. Students receiving special education services: 10 % Source: FTE Report
253 Total Number of Students Served

Indicate below the number of Students with Disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional categories.

<u>0</u> Autism	<u>1</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>1</u> Deafness	<u>105</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>116</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>14</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>9</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>5</u> Mental Retardation	<u>2</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	

11. Indicate number of full-time and part-time staff members in each of the categories below:

Number of Staff

	<u>Full-time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Administrator(s)	<u>7</u>	<u>2</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>121</u>	<u>15</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>29</u>	<u>1</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>12</u>	<u>3</u>
Total number	<u>174</u>	<u>21</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers: 20:1
13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. The student dropout rate is defined by the state. The student drop-off rate is the difference between the number of entering students and the number of exiting students from the same cohort. (From the same cohort, subtract the number of exiting students from the number of entering students; divide that number by the number of entering students; multiply by 100 to get the percentage drop-off rate.) Briefly explain in 100 words or fewer any major discrepancy between the dropout rate and the drop-off rate. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates, and only high schools need to supply drop-off rates. Also explain a high teacher turnover rate.

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004	2002-2003	2001-2002
Daily student attendance	97 %	97 %	95 %	95 %	94 %
Daily teacher attendance	96 %	96 %	96 %	96 %	95 %
Teacher turnover rate	9 %	6 %	8 %	6 %	31 %
Student dropout rate (middle/high)	1 %	1 %	2 %	2 %	N/A
Student drop-off rate (high school)	2 %	2 %	2 %	2 %	2 %

14. Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2006 are doing as of September 2007.

Graduating class size	573
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	95 %
Enrolled in a community college	3 %
Enrolled in vocational training	1 %
Found employment	0 %
Military service	0 %
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	0 %
Unknown	1 %
Total	100 %

PART III - SUMMARY

Established in 1975 as a part of Cobb County Public Schools, Walton High School currently serves a student body of over 2600. In 1983 Walton received its first significant recognition when it was named a National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence. Walton's motto is *In Pursuit of Excellence*. We believe that excellence is constantly striving to better meet the needs of all students. Therefore, in 1995 the school successfully pursued a waiver with the state to increase the flexible time available in an effort to individualize services for our students and the community. In 1998, our petition to convert to charter status was approved by the district and the state. Charter status is only achieved if a school can demonstrate a commitment to a high level of accountability and parent/community involvement through increased flexibility. The charter was successfully renewed in 2002.

As a result of this drive toward excellence, Walton has continued to receive recognition from the state and from national publications such as *US News and World Report* and *Newsweek*. Our mission is to "educate students who are well prepared to meet the challenges of their post-secondary goals." Currently over 50 % of Walton seniors participate in our Advanced Placement (AP) program. Last year almost 800 students in grades 9-12 took over 1800 AP exams by participating in 31 AP courses offered by the school.

Compared to the student body of 2001, last year's students enrolled in AP courses at twice the rate and took 1000 more exams with slightly higher test scores. Students now understand more clearly the connection between participation in a rigorous curriculum in high school and success at the college of their choice. Because over 95 % of our seniors enroll in four year colleges immediately after graduation, between 99-100 % of seniors take the SAT. Before the test format changed for the class of 2006, the scores from year to year were comparable. The class of 2005 posted the highest score in the history of the school. This score represented the third time in the last four years that an increase was posted. With over 99 % of the graduating class of 2006 taking the SAT, their combined mean score was approximately 200 points above the national average.

Walton is committed to personalizing the educational environment. Students are enrolled in six courses each semester and follow a seven period bell schedule that allows them a full period for lunch. During the lunch period, students have access to the media center and to their counselors. Advisement, held daily, provides a time when students meet with their advisors who stay with the students for four years through their graduation. One feature of the charter, the Walton Enrichment Block (WEB), provides flexible time for students to seek assistance from their teachers. Students are released 23 times a year for almost two hours before the regular dismissal time. Students and their parents decide how best to use the time. The exception is for ninth graders who are struggling academically. These students are required to stay for extra help.

Nationally recognized band, orchestra, chorus, art, and drama programs provide an opportunity for over 25 % of the student body to develop and express artistic talent. A variety of industry-certified career and technology programs effectively complement the academic offerings. Students have a wide array of choices for athletic participation. Walton offers 23 varsity sports which have won over forty state championships. Over fifty clubs and organizations help teach social responsibility through community service. Students who contribute time to community service are recognized at graduation and also qualify for scholarships provided by the school. Walton students have helped build eleven houses through our Habitat for Humanity club, and last year alone raised over \$30,000 for Relay for Life.

Partly as a result of the charter, Walton has a high level of parent involvement. The governing body for the charter, the Walton Governance Council (WGC), is comprised of 22 voting members and eight advisory members. In the renewal of the charter in 2002, parent participation was greatly expanded. Ten of the 22 voting members represent students, parents, and community. Parent and community involvement is also enhanced through a very active PTSA, a foundation, and booster clubs for academics, athletics, and fine arts.

PART IV – INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

As part of the statewide testing program, 11th grade students are administered the Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHSGT) each spring. They are tested in four subject areas – English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science. Each section, or subject area, must be passed to earn a Georgia high school diploma. Scores range from 400-600, with a scale score of 500 designating passing. Students have four opportunities to pass each section of the test before graduation.

Walton's performance on the GHSGT can be viewed at two different web sites which are also listed on the tables (Part VII-Assessment Results). Since the English/Language Arts and the Mathematics sections serve as the state's accountability measure for Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), these results are analyzed. The sources for these results can be found at:

<http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/ayp2006/overview.asp?SchoolID=633-0175-g-8-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0> and
<http://reportcard2006.gaosa.org/k12/reports.aaspX?ID=633:175&TestKey=HS&TestType=qcc>

The analysis of data reveals that Walton 11th graders compare favorably to the performance of the state, district, or similar schools. This fact has been recognized by the Governor's Office of Student Achievement (OSA), which awarded Walton High School the Platinum Award for High Percentage of Students Meeting Standards based on the 2005-2006 State Report Card data. In order to receive the award, schools must have made AYP for three consecutive years and have had a minimum of 35% of students exceeding standards and at least 98% of students meeting and exceeding standards. Six high schools in the state received the award for 2005-2006. Four of those were magnet schools.

In reviewing the GHSGT results, it becomes apparent that students in the regular education program perform very well. Walton was one of three district high schools with 100% of students passing both the English/Language Arts and Mathematics tests. (Refer to district's report at http://www.cobbk12.org/news/2006/20060524_GradTestScores.htm). Walton juniors in the regular education program have achieved a 100% pass rate for four straight years for both tests. The benchmarks for Pass Plus scores are above a scale score of 537 in English/Language Arts and greater than 534 for Mathematics. Of the regular education program students taking the test, 93% achieved this distinction for English/Language Arts and for Mathematics.

Tables in Part VII have disaggregated data by subgroups. Consistent AYP subgroups each year have been White, Asian, and most often Students with Disabilities. Economically Disadvantaged, Hispanic, and Black have not been included in the state AYP analysis due to numbers below the minimum required for a subgroup classification. However, even with the small numbers, the AYP reports provide useful data for analyzing the performance of different subgroups.

On the 2006 Mathematics test, 19 students out of the 609 students tested did not meet standards. Of these, 13 were Students with Disabilities. Examination of the AYP data from performances on the English/Language test reveals that eight students out of 609 did not meet standards, and five were Students with Disabilities. The students who did not meet standards (and are not Students with Disabilities) are represented across various other subgroups. In terms of meeting state standards, the performance of subgroups with enough data to analyze as an entity (namely White, Students with Disabilities, and Asian) has been consistently strong. In the case of latter two subgroups, there has been an improvement in their performance as measured by the GHSGT. The performance of students in subgroups with limited numbers is analyzed individually in order to provide reliable and valid information. This information is then used to guide intervention efforts.

2. Using Assessment Results

Walton High School utilizes a vast array of assessment data to monitor and improve both student and school performance. Student performance from the GHSGT is the first to be analyzed due to the impact these results have on graduation; however, it is rare when Walton students from any subgroup do not pass all the tests. Test data from English/Language Arts, Mathematics, Social Studies, and Science are reviewed for two purposes. First, students failing to pass the test are identified, and an intervention plan to improve performance is developed by the counselor, the graduation coach, and the special education teacher (if the student has disabilities). Second, subject area performance is analyzed to identify weaknesses in curriculum implementation. School leadership, including the department chairs, studies the data to identify which strands are the lowest. The department chair and the Associate Principal for Curriculum develop a plan focusing on the areas of the curriculum that need improved instruction.

Due to our high performance on the GHSGT, there is a definite ceiling effect. Therefore, the data for school improvement are not as useful as that gleaned from analyses of other data. Student performance from the PSAT provides great information to both students and teachers. Each fall the PSAT is administered to all sophomores, about 60% of freshmen, and 80% of juniors. The results are reviewed with students in English and Math classes in the winter so students see what skills and concepts need further study. The department chairs and senior leadership study PSAT results annually to evaluate curriculum implementation. Analysis of these results and performance on the state End of Course Tests, Advanced Placement exams, and the SAT also provide information that leads to establishing goals for the School Improvement Plan.

3. Communicating Assessment Results

An important requirement of our charter is the sharing of results. At the district level, school data are posted on the Cobb County web site and then archived. At the school level, student and school performance data are communicated in monthly meetings with both the Walton Governance Council (WGC), PTSA executive board and the Walton Facilities Foundation executive committee. Assessment results are also communicated regularly in the PTSA and Foundation newsletters. Within the last month, the principal has had the opportunity to speak about Walton's accomplishments to the East Cobb Business Association and the East Cobb Rotary Club. Parents are able to access up-to-date academic performance of their son/daughter via the school web site. Walton has provided this opportunity since 1996.

At the student level, individual reports are disseminated to students. Individual student results on the Georgia High School Graduation Test (GHSGT), the End of Course Tests (EOCT), and the PSAT are distributed during school and discussed. Furthermore, test data are continually updated on the school's profile which is an essential part of the school's improvement plan. The Walton improvement plan is posted on the district web page. This profile provides critical data for analysis whenever improvement initiatives are developed, for example the writing of the first charter in 1998, the renewal in 2002, and the current renewal efforts. The charter steering committee (comprised of parents, students, faculty, and community members) reviews performance data to guide improvement efforts.

An example of how student performance data are used is the change made for the 2006-2007 school year requiring freshmen who are struggling academically to attend the Walton Enrichment Block (WEB). Since 1995, parents have determined whether their child was required to stay for WEB. Last spring, a committee of parents, students, and faculty reviewed freshman achievement data and decided to propose to the WGC that freshmen with one or more grades of a 73 or less would stay for WEB until performance was acceptable. This proposal was passed, and based on first semester data, the performance of these students has improved.

4. Sharing Success

Walton High School has shared best practices at the national, regional, state, and district level. Administrators and teacher leaders have presented at the national level on topics such as Walton's conversion charter, our climate of high expectations, and parental and community involvement in school improvement planning and daily operations. Walton was one of two schools selected for visitation when the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) met in Atlanta. Teachers are regular attendees at College Board's National Forum and the Advanced Placement National Conference. Based on contacts made at these conferences, we have visited high schools in states such as New Mexico, Texas, and Ohio to benchmark and share best practices.

At the state level, Walton has presented several times about the conversion charter program and the Advanced Placement program. Recently, Walton used a dissemination grant from the state to work with a high school and middle school from another metropolitan Atlanta district. The focus of the collaboration was on providing technical assistance to increase the participation in Advanced Placement at the other high school. Also, two administrators serve as adjunct faculty members at a regional university in the educational administration department. Teaching these classes to graduate students provides many opportunities to discuss best practices at Walton.

Locally, Walton teachers have served as teachers of district staff development courses on gifted education and on research-based instructional strategies. Sharing also takes place monthly at district meetings and the culmination of sharing best practices is the leadership conference at the end of the school year. This year Walton teachers will present our collaboration model which relies heavily on peer coaching.

PART V – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The state of Georgia has two diploma pathways. The College Preparatory Diploma requires four units in English and Mathematics, three units in Science and Social Studies, two units in Foreign Language, one unit in Health and Physical Education, and five units in elective areas. To qualify for a College Preparatory Diploma with Distinction students take two additional units from core courses and must graduate with a certain grade point or numeric average in core courses. A Technical/Career Diploma is also offered as well as one with distinction. Students must earn four units (three in an area of concentration) in Technical/Career Education. Approximately 68% of Walton graduates earn the College Prep Program with Distinction. Most of the graduates exceed this requirement by earning more units and accruing a higher grade point average (GPA). Over half of the seniors graduate with Honors, meaning their final GPA is 3.5 (out of a 4.0 scale) or above. In order to meet the educational needs of these high achieving students, Walton now offers 32 Advanced Placement (AP) courses with the addition of AP Chinese this year. Almost 40% of students in grades 9-12 take AP courses and almost 100% of these take the AP exam. Over 62% enroll in pre-AP (i.e., honors courses) to prepare for AP courses and for the college of their choice.

Students take an English class every semester during their four years. Almost every course taught qualifies students for the College Preparatory Diploma and is offered at either a regular college prep level or an advanced level. Last year students took over 240 AP exams in English Language/Composition and English Literature/Composition.

Over 30% of students enter their freshman year having taken the first year of high school math in a middle school for high school credit. Almost 85% of students have earned Algebra I credit by the completion of their sophomore year. A total of 195 AP exams were administered last year to Calculus AB and Calculus BC students, and at least one section of Multi-variable is offered to students who have completed the AP Calculus program.

Walton students usually take science each semester until graduation. Students enter the ninth grade and take a Physical Science course comprised of one semester of physics content and one semester of chemistry content. By graduation, 88% of students complete one Chemistry course, and 57% graduate with a Physics course. The Walton Enrichment Block (WEB) provides extended time for students in AP Biology, AP Chemistry, AP Physics, and AP Environmental Science courses to meet the laboratory requirements.

College preparatory and AP level courses are offered in several areas. Freshmen begin their social studies curriculum by taking a two semester course in geography. Last year 90 freshmen took the AP Human Geography exam with a pass rate of 99%. World History is taken the sophomore year with 97 AP exams administered last year. U.S. History, a junior course, prepared 144 students to take the AP exam. Seniors take a one-semester Government course with almost 300 AP exams taken last year.

The foreign language curriculum offers instruction in Latin, French, Spanish, and Chinese. The majority of freshmen enter having taken one year of a language in middle school. Almost 300 AP foreign language exams were administered last year to juniors and seniors. Language study is extended for French and Spanish students each year as they study for two weeks in France and Spain. Walton also participates in a partnership with a high school in Beijing, where students visit each other annually.

Fine arts programs include Art, Orchestra, Band, and Chorus. Approximately 200 students are enrolled in each music program. AP courses are offered in Music Theory, Art History, and Studio Art. Walton music students have studied and performed in Europe and extensively around the United States.

The Technical/Career Prep program offers Economics and an array of computer application and business courses, as well as technical programs in Sports Medicine, Drafting, Automotives, Computer Programming, Pre-Engineering, Mass Media, and Graphic Arts. Students took 150 AP Economics exams last year.

2. English Curriculum:

The English curriculum is designed to meet the needs of all learners. There are two courses offered to meet the needs of students who enter ninth grade reading below grade level. Rarely does Walton receive any students reading in the lower quartile and who are not served in special education. Special education students' needs are met, in large part, through teamed classes in the regular education English curriculum.

Walton has provided this collaborative effort between regular and special education teachers since the late 1970's. There are three sections of small group special education classes, and all are taught by special education teachers who are also highly qualified in English.

Apart from the two courses that target students reading below grade level and the small group class, the English curriculum is divided into regular college preparatory and advanced. Regular level prepares students to succeed in all but the more selective colleges. Advanced level courses comprise approximately one third of the English course offerings and prepare students for any college or university in the nation. Whether the course is college preparatory or advanced, they are all considered pre-Advanced Placement (AP). Pre-AP strategies are taught in all the courses. Almost 60% of the department is gifted endorsed. Five teachers have received AP training.

Teachers meet in horizontal and vertical teams to ensure that the curriculum is aligned with state standards and infused with pre-AP strategies. Horizontal teams (i.e., teachers of the same course) collaborate and share best practices to guarantee all students receive quality instruction. Vertical teams collaborate so that strands (e.g., literary terms, grammar, writing, literary analysis) are scaffolded in such a way that seniors achieve at the expected levels. AP Language is offered for tenth graders, American Literature for juniors, and AP Literature for seniors.

3. Mathematics Curriculum:

Freshmen enter the mathematics curriculum at three points. Students who are not ready for a rigorous one year college prep course in Algebra are taught the first half of Algebra over an entire year and will take the second part their sophomore year. In order to provide a means of accelerating students who master the curriculum quickly, they are given an opportunity to double up in mathematics second semester of their freshman year by taking a course that prepares them to take Geometry their sophomore year. This sequence provides students the opportunity to take a math course beyond Algebra II their senior year. Students who have progressed at a regular rate through the middle school curriculum take a year long course in Algebra and progress to Geometry their sophomore year. Students who demonstrate the ability to progress rapidly in the Algebra I course are provided the opportunity to double up their sophomore year by taking Geometry and Algebra II. Accelerating students in this manner prepares them to take AP Calculus prior to graduation.

Approximately 30% of students enter Walton having taken either Algebra I or even Geometry in middle school. These students progress through the curriculum so that they graduate having earned units in AP Calculus AB, AP Calculus BC, or even Multi-variable. Last year 128 students took the Calculus AB exam and 67 took the BC exam. Currently there is one section of Multi-variable with 25 students.

Teachers in horizontal teams use common assessments and meet frequently to review curriculum implementation and discuss student progress. Teachers in vertical teams work to ensure that the prerequisites to the next course are being taught so that students are prepared when they advance.

4. Instructional Methodology:

Walton teachers use a wide array of instructional strategies and methods to meet the educational needs of all students. One approach to differentiation is to vary group size. Whole class instruction is used with lecture and discussion. Students work in small cooperative groups to review and practice content. Teachers provide extra assistance in class and outside of class through tutorials. Each semester, teachers provide a schedule of at least two times a week they will be available for tutoring. Departments also post before and after school tutorials available for courses. This schedule is set up to allow students to work with teachers who are not currently teaching the student but are teaching the same course. The Walton Enrichment Block (WEB) provides an early dismissal for students to attend tutorials over twenty times a year. It also provides an opportunity for enrichment and extension of content being studied. Learning extends through the summer with required reading for all levels of English and social studies courses.

Almost 70% of the faculty in the core areas of English, Mathematics, Foreign Language, Science, and Social Studies hold their gifted endorsement. A cornerstone of the course is training in differentiated instruction. It is common to see teachers using strategies such as tiered assignments, or appealing to student choice/interest. One example of an effective change we are seeing in assessment is test corrections. Students are given the opportunity to use the test as a learning experience and take it again, within certain guidelines, to demonstrate mastery of the material being assessed.

Technology has tremendously impacted the range of methods being used. Currently over 85% of teachers use the web to post assignments, provide extra practice, and increase feedback to students and their parents. Teachers are also using video streaming and podcasting to improve presentations and provide opportunities for extra practice. The purchase of smartboards has also improved presentations, practice, and review strategies for students.

5. Professional Development:

Designing and implementing programs to increase teacher effectiveness is a primary emphasis at Walton. Staff new to the school attend a New to Walton Institute before pre-planning activities begin. The Institute's primary goal is to orient new staff to the climate of high expectations held by veteran staff, administration, parents, and students.

When Walton sought to increase the number of students who participated in the Advanced Placement program, it was apparent that additional resources were needed. A waiver was written as part of the charter renewal process in 2002. This waiver allowed the school to keep the money for professional learning earned through the FTE count instead of having the funds go to the district.

The school then used this additional funding source to provide conference travel and training opportunities for more teachers. Walton also offers the gifted endorsement course on site. Advanced content teachers, as well as special education teachers, have learned concepts such as differentiated instruction and backward design to improve learning opportunities for all students. As a result of these training opportunities, almost 70% of teachers in the core academic areas hold their gifted endorsement, and student participation in the Advanced Placement program has doubled in the past five years.

Collaboration among Walton staff has a long history of producing gains in student achievement. To improve the effectiveness of the curriculum teams, a peer coaching training program is in its third year of operation. Teachers work together to develop improvement goals, provide feedback, and demonstrate improvement. This program has been so successful that a waiver in the next charter renewal will change the current model of teacher evaluation. Walton has participated in the College Board vertical teaming program since 1995. Recently, a state grant allowed the expansion of the vertical teaming training program to include staff new to Walton and its feeder schools. Due to the waiver and the state grant, Walton is able to provide training opportunities to those teachers on an annual basis.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Assessment Results:

Subject English/LA Grade 11 Test: Georgia High School Graduation Test

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing month	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*			
% At or Above Meets State Standards	99%	99%	98%
% At Exceeds State Standards	91%	89%	90%
Number of students tested	609	595	598
Percent of total students tested	100%	99%	99%
Number of students alternatively assessed**	2	1	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed**	0%	0%	0%
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. Economically Disadvantaged*			
% At or Above Meets State Standards	100%	Too few students	90%
% At Exceeds State Standards	86%	Too few students	70%
Number of Students Tested	14	Too few students	11
2. Students with Disabilities*			
% At or Above Meets State Standards	92%	91%	87%
% Exceeds State Standards	71%	63%	68%
Number of Students Tested	63	58	78
3. Asian*			
% At or Above Meets State Standards	99%	99%	98%
% Exceeds State Standards	77%	89%	91%
Number of Students Tested	87	76	56
4. Black*			
% At or Above Meets State Standards	88%	95%	100%
% Exceeds State Standards	77%	74%	83%
Number of Students Tested	17	19	20
5. Hispanic*			
% At or Above Meets State Standards	100%	No data reported	Too few students
% Exceeds State Standards	73%	No data reported	Too few students
Number of Students Tested	12	9	Too few students
6. White*			
% At or Above Meets State Standards	99%	99%	98%
% Exceeds State Standards	92%	89%	90%
Number of Students Tested	484	485	509

*Data taken from state AYP report:

<http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/ayp2006/overview.asp?SchoolID=633-0175-g-8-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0>

** Local school data

Assessment Results

Subject: Math

Grade 11

Test: Georgia High School Graduation Test

	2005-2006	2004-2005	2003-2004
Testing month	March	March	March
SCHOOL SCORES*			
% At or Above Meets State Standards	97%	96%	96%
% At Exceeds State Standards	93%	89%	94%
Number of students tested	609	595	598
Percent of total students tested	100%	100%	99%
Number of students alternatively assessed**	2	1	2
Percent of students alternatively assessed**	0%	0%	0%
SUBGROUP SCORES			
1. <u>Economically Disadvantaged*</u>			
% At or Above Meets State Standards	93%	Too few students	80%
% At Exceeds State Standards	64%	Too few students	50%
Number of students tested	14	Too few students	11
2. <u>Students with Disabilities*</u>			
% At or Above Meets State Standards	79%	75%	81%
% At Exceeds State Standards	71%	56%	76%
Number of students tested	62	58	78
3. <u>Asian*</u>			
% At or Above Meets State Standards	99%	99%	98%
% Exceeds State Standards	98%	95%	96%
Number of Students Tested	87	76	56
4. <u>Black*</u>			
% At or Above Meets State Standards	82%	90%	94%
% Exceeds State Standards	59%	63%	94%
Number of Students Tested	18	19	20
5. <u>Hispanic*</u>			
% At or Above Meets State Standards	100%	Too few students	Too few students
% Exceeds State Standards	73%	Too few students	Too few students
Number of Students Tested	12	9	Too few students
6. <u>White*</u>			
% At or Above Meets State Standards	97%	96%	96%
% Exceeds State Standards	94%	90%	94%
Number of Students Tested	483	485	509

*Data taken from state AYP report:

<http://public.doe.k12.ga.us/ayp2006/overview.asp?SchoolID=633-0175-g-8-0-0-0-0-0-0-0-0>

** Local school data