

U.S. Department of Education
2010 - Blue Ribbon Schools Program

Type of School: (Check all that apply) Charter Title I Magnet Choice

Name of Principal: Mr. Fred Crawford

Official School Name: Greenville Technical Charter High School

School Mailing Address:
PO Box 5616, Mail Stop 1201
Greenville , SC 29606-5616

County: Greenville State School Code Number*: 2301607

Telephone: (864) 250-8845 Fax: (864) 250-8846

Web site/URL: http://www.gtchs.org/ E-mail: fcrawford@staff.gtchs.org

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

_____ Date _____
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent*: Dr. Phinnize Fisher

District Name: Greenville County School District Tel: (864) 355-3100

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

_____ Date _____
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board President/Chairperson: Mrs. Megan Hickerson

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

_____ Date _____
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

**Private Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, write N/A in the space.*

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and emailed to Aba Kumi, Blue Ribbon Schools Project Manager (aba.kumi@ed.gov) or mailed by expedited mail or a courier mail service (such as Express Mail, FedEx or UPS) to Aba Kumi, Director, Blue Ribbon Schools Program, Office of Communications and Outreach, U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Room 5E103, Washington, DC 20202-8173

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 one or more of 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.
3. To meet final eligibility, the school must meet the state's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirement in the 2009-2010 school year. AYP must be certified by the state and all appeals resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
4. If the school includes grades 7 or higher, the school must have foreign language as a part of its curriculum and a significant number of students in grades 7 and higher must take the course.
5. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2004.
6. The nominated school has not received the Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 or 2009.
7. 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.
8. 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.
9. 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.
10. 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: (per district designation)	54	Elementary schools (includes K-8)
	18	Middle/Junior high schools
	14	High schools
	7	K-12 schools
	93	TOTAL

2. District Per Pupil Expenditure: 7621

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

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

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total	Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK			0	6			0
K			0	7			0
1			0	8			0
2			0	9	55	46	101
3			0	10	49	50	99
4			0	11	60	45	105
5			0	12	57	56	113
TOTAL STUDENTS IN THE APPLYING SCHOOL							418

6. Racial/ethnic composition of the school: 1 % American Indian or Alaska Native
1 % Asian
17 % Black or African American
4 % Hispanic or Latino
0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
75 % White
2 % Two or more races
100 % **Total**

Only the seven standard categories should be used in reporting the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.

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

This rate is 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.	12
(2)	Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1 until the end of the year.	17
(3)	Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)].	29
(4)	Total number of students in the school as of October 1.	418
(5)	Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4).	0.069
(6)	Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100.	6.938

8. Limited English proficient students in the school: 0 %

Total number limited English proficient 0

Number of languages represented: 0

Specify languages:

9. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 22 %

Total number students who qualify: 91

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 free and reduced-price school meals 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: 9 %

Total Number of Students Served: 37

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>1</u> Autism	<u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment
<u>0</u> Deafness	<u>10</u> Other Health Impaired
<u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness	<u>26</u> Specific Learning Disability
<u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance	<u>0</u> Speech or Language Impairment
<u>0</u> Hearing Impairment	<u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury
<u>0</u> Mental Retardation	<u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness
<u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities	<u>0</u> Developmentally Delayed

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>2</u>	<u>1</u>
Classroom teachers	<u>22</u>	<u>1</u>
Special resource teachers/specialists	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>
Paraprofessionals	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>
Support staff	<u>8</u>	<u>0</u>
Total number	<u>35</u>	<u>2</u>

12. Average school student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the Full Time Equivalent of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 18 :1

13. Show the attendance patterns of teachers and students as a percentage. Only middle and high schools need to supply dropout rates. Briefly explain in the Notes section any attendance rates under 95%, teacher turnover rates over 12%, or student dropout rates over 5%.

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Daily student attendance	97%	96%	96%	96%	97%
Daily teacher attendance	97%	97%	98%	98%	97%
Teacher turnover rate	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Student dropout rate	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%

Please provide all explanations below.

14. For schools ending in grade 12 (high schools).

Show what the students who graduated in Spring 2009 are doing as of the Fall 2009.

Graduating class size	<u>113</u>	
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	<u>58</u>	%
Enrolled in a community college	<u>40</u>	%
Enrolled in vocational training	<u>0</u>	%
Found employment	<u>0</u>	%
Military service	<u>1</u>	%
Other (travel, staying home, etc.)	<u>1</u>	%
Unknown	<u>0</u>	%
Total	<u>100</u>	%

PART III - SUMMARY

Greenville Tech Charter High (GTCHS) is unique in that it is a public charter school located on a college campus. Being a small learning environment with only 400 students enables us to meet our mission to “provide equitable opportunities for all students to acquire an education focused on linkages among rigorous academics, technology and careers to produce graduates who are prepared for success in the global workforce of the 21st century.”

Our school is a place of learning and innovation. We have an outstanding academic program with courses and electives geared to the needs of our students. GTCHS sets high standards and expectations for its students. Using Mastery Learning, our students must achieve 80% mastery in each subject area; however, for those students needing extra help, we have designed ways to help them succeed without lowering our standards. Our Academic Assistance and College Seminar program provides extended time and additional personalized instruction, and our Smart Center provides students with tutoring, homework help and one on one time with certified teachers.

As an Early College, over 50% of our students take tuition free college classes and maintain an average GPA of 3.38. Some receive an Associate’s Degree with their high school diploma. Our students have access to state of the art technology at the high school and have complete access to all programs and facilities at the college. As a result, our students take courses in engineering technology, criminal justice, automotives, hospitality, and a host of other areas. Our students exceed the district, state, and national averages on SAT and ACT. Being designated a “National Tech Prep Demonstration Site” by the US Department of Education allows us to focus on career development.

GTCHS is a model for other public and charter schools. The school has achieved Annual Yearly Progress for six years and a rating of Excellent on our School Report Card for seven years. The school has been recognized by U.S. News and World Report’s America’s Best High Schools, the Center for Education Reform’s National Charter School of the Year, and the US Department of Education’s National Top 15 Charter Schools. It has won the Palmetto Gold Award and Palmetto’s Finest.

While the academic component is an important part of our school, it is only a part of what makes us unique. GTCHS’ vision is “to aspire to create an equitable community of learners in which mutual respect, trust, integrity and the pursuit of ideas are valued and appreciated.” Our students experience a sense of community and belonging. Each student is matched with an adult advisor in our Advisory “Family” program. Each Advisory, a group of 10-12 students, meets weekly for discussion about issues such as grades, goals, values, and school rules. Students also use advisory time to participate in student-led conferences with their parents and their advisors. Personalization continues as each student works with his advisor and parents in creating an Individualized Learning Plan.

Parental involvement is a major part of our success as a learning community. Parents serve on the GTCHS School Board, provide daily communication through an online discussion group, serve lunch each day, and plan extracurricular activities for the students.

Finally, our students are concerned with those outside our walls and participate in service learning programs that aid the greater community. Our students are each required to complete 50 hours of service each year and 200 by the time they graduate. Seniors complete a Senior Project, a year-long project that requires students to work with a mentor to complete an annotated bibliography, a portfolio, a product, and a presentation.

PART IV - INDICATORS OF ACADEMIC SUCCESS

1. Assessment Results:

Information on the SC State Assessment system may be accessed from the following Web site: <http://www.ed.sc.gov/agency/Accountability/Data-Management-and-Analysis/HSAPPortal.html>. Greenville Tech Charter High School students take the SC High School Assessment Program (HSAP) test in the tenth grade. HSAP is used as the high school exit exam and consists of two sections, English/Language Arts and Mathematics. The HSAP exam assesses students' content knowledge of the state standards that all students should have learned by the end of the tenth grade year. Scores range from 1-4 and are noted as below basic, basic, proficient, or advanced, respectively.

GTCHS students' overall English proficient/advanced percentages exceeded the state performance objectives for the past five years. For the past 4 years, 100% of all GTCHS students have been tested. English proficient/advanced subgroups have also exceeded the state performance objectives for the past five years. GTCHS subgroup test scores for Free and Reduced Meals, Black and Hispanic students were all above the state standards.

GTCHS students' overall student math proficient/advanced scores exceeded the state performance objectives for the past five years. Subgroup math proficient/advanced percentages have either met or exceeded the state performance objectives for the past five years.

GTCHS students have consistently exceeded state accountability standards and met NCLB AYP requirements for the past 5 years. The school's graduation rates over the years have met or exceeded 95% for all students. GTCHS' SAT and ACT performance scores are consistently above the national average.

The SC Accountability Model employs an Absolute rating to measure annual academic performance (<http://ed.sc.gov/>). The assessment rating standards range from Excellent (substantially exceeds) to Unsatisfactory (fails to meet). The academic ratings for SC high schools are based on: (1) longitudinal passing rate on the SC competency Exit Examination; (2) passing rate of sophomores on the High School Assessment Program tests (HSAP); (3a) percent of graduating seniors who are eligible for LIFE scholarships in 2005 and 2006; (3b) end-of-course tests in 2006, 2007 and 2008; and (4) the graduation rate. GTCHS has achieved Excellent Absolute accountability ratings for the past 5 years.

In addition to the above indicators of academic success on state level assessments, many GTCHS students also enroll in and successfully perform in college courses while in high school. Although GTCHS does not offer an Advanced Placement program, students are allowed to take college courses at Greenville Technical College for dual credit. Upon graduation from high school, 99% of the 2008-09 seniors enrolled in at least one college course over the 4-year period, and 57% earned 15 or more college credits, the equivalent of one semester of college coursework. This resulted in a 97% course pass rate and an average 3.12 college GPA. Further, 22% of 9th graders, 78% of 10th graders, and 82% of 11th graders also enrolled in college courses as well. Students took courses in a wide range of subject areas with the highest number of enrollments in the Social Sciences, followed by Computers, Math, Languages, and English. Ninety-nine percent of their graduates have been accepted into higher education since the first class graduated in 2002.

Academically, GTCHS is at the top of the state in student performance. The school has won the Palmetto Gold Award every year since 2004, was a Bronze Medal Winner for the past four years in the U.S. News and World Report America's Best High Schools List, and recently received the 2009 Carolina First Palmetto's Finest Award given by the South Carolina Association of School Administrators.

2. Using Assessment Results:

Greenville Tech Charter High School uses multiple types of data on students' academic performance, attitudes, college course enrollment, and focus group interviews to improve learning. In addition to the standard data provided by the school district and state, GTCHS receives data from a range of external organizations and partners. For example, the school receives an Annual Accountability Report on its graduating senior class and various data reports each year from the National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching (NCREST) to assist the school with data collection and interpretation for our early college high school program. This data includes student participation and performance in college coursework as evidence of college readiness. Data analysis work sessions are held regularly between both the college and high school faculties for curriculum alignment and improved pedagogy.

GTCHS also receives reports from American Institute of Research (AIR), the evaluation agency for the Gates Early College Initiative, and from SREB's High Schools That Work assessment program. As student data is increasingly important for external reporting purposes and internal improvement efforts, the use of many types of data sources helps us to tell a story about the achievement of our students, while also providing information to the faculty and staff to engage in data driven decision making processes to improve instruction and provide support for students. For example, the Transition Learning Team (TLT) uses accumulated data from NCREST and other sources to provide an analysis of data over time to inform instruction practice, to align and co-develop curriculum between high school and college, to analyze success trends in student achievement and pass rates, to improve supports and interventions for underperforming or underachieving students, to provide better placement in college courses, to show evidence of improved student transition to college, and to set student performance benchmarks.

3. Communicating Assessment Results:

Each year school report cards are distributed to all stakeholders along with information regarding how to interpret the data. The school administration and guidance counselors provide grade level workshops each semester for students and parents to help them better understand academic performance on state and national measures. The GTCHS Advisor/Advisee program requires Student Led Conference to be held twice each year with parents. These meetings include assessment and data benchmarks as part of each student's portfolio. The advisor or "family leader" assists the student with the development of an Individual Graduation Plan using performance data that is a core component of the student portfolio along with goal setting and developing strategies for academic success. Understanding student performance assessments and use of data for intervention are a part of the orientation or induction process for both new students and parents.

The Annual Accountability Report, School Report Card and National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching (NCREST) are used as part of the GTCHS Board of Directors school performance "dash board" for the interpretation of data for our early college high school program. Also, a monthly data analysis session is held between the college and high school leadership groups for goal setting, strategic planning and the allocation of resources. The school faculty and staff are often invited to be part of community, state and national workshops, discussion forums, and presentations to share school performance results and best practices. Some examples of these include the Greenville Chamber of Commerce Business Forum, South Carolina Business Education Summit, SC State Department of Education Innovation and School Choice Conference, High Schools That Work National Conference, Middle College National Consortium and NCREST Data Conference, Coalition of Essential Schools Fall Forum, Center for Excellence in Leadership and Learning, and CREATE National Evaluation Institute.

4. Sharing Success:

GTCHS will continue to participate in the Palmetto Gold and Silver Awards Showcase project developed by SC Department of Education (SCDOE). This group of schools provide a milieu for educators in which to

network to learn about the best practices in their neighboring schools and to help create learning communities among all the schools across the state. During the past five years, our school has provided information for the SCDOE website and to the Coalition of Essential Schools ChangeLab describing the programs and topics such as:

- building strong and effectual professional learning teams,
- developing positive school climate and culture,
- providing student support for academic achievement,
- developing benchmarks for mastery and senior exhibitions,
- aligning curriculum with state standards for college readiness,
- effectively involving community and parents,
- delivering successful literacy and numeracy plans to enable student success.

GTCHS continues to be designated as a U.S. Department of Education tech prep demonstration site, Coalition of Essential Schools small school mentor, and Middle College National Consortium early college redesign site. Each year GTCHS hosts visitors from around the U.S. interested in best practices, charter schools, or Middle/Early College. GTCHS faculty and staff often participate in state, regional and national workshops, discussion forums, and presentations on school performance and best practices.

GTCHS established the Charter Education Resource Center (CERC) for the improvement of teaching and learning through a Federal subgrant to assist educators, higher education members, community leaders and others by sharing “what works.” CERC provides assistance, materials, and workshops along with e-newsletters and a website toolbox of resources.

GTCHS will host the 2010 Middle College National Consortium Student Leadership Conference this spring in Greenville. Over 275 participants representing 36 middle and early college high schools from 13 states will attend.

PART V - CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION

1. Curriculum:

The school's curriculum and essential learnings provide a strong academic foundation. Because we are a small school, we focus on courses that are essential for graduation. Our school ascribes to the Mastery Learning theory maintaining that learning is a function of time, not ability. Students must achieve mastery at 80%. With this in mind, we provide academic assistance three days a week to re-teach those students not performing at Mastery. Project-based, hands-on curriculum provides challenges for all students. The school utilizes a traditional schedule with six, sixty-minute classes each day. On Fridays, we have longer class blocks to allow for extended time in science labs, the library, computer labs and in-depth work on projects. We also have an extended school day for additional instruction and assessment, as needed. Sophomores, juniors and seniors have the opportunity to take college level classes in a variety of subjects. Our classrooms are learner centered; student needs drive the curriculum and teaching styles. Teachers use projects, cooperative learning, Socratic Seminars, roundtable discussions, and hands-on experiences in all classes. They also use portfolios and exhibitions of mastery to enhance learning and assessment. Finally, technology is an important component of teaching and learning at the school. Teachers use graphing calculators, CBL's, the Internet, computers, digital cameras, Smart Boards, and subject-appropriate software to enhance the learning and to make the learning more authentic.

Essential Learnings students will gain from the curriculum are:

Students will develop critical and independent thinking skills.

Students will read, write, and communicate effectively.

Students will use mathematics, the arts, and computers effectively.

Students will define, analyze, and solve complex problems.

Students will acquire, integrate, and apply essential knowledge from the core academic disciplines: language arts, history, geography, economics, government, mathematics, science, a world language, physical education, and health.

Students will work and study effectively.

Students will develop personal, social, and civic responsibility.

Each subject area also has specific goals and learning standards, taken from those set forth by the State Department of Education.

In January, all students participate in the Arts Intersession program for four days. During this time, students are able to take one or two classes with an "arts" focus instead of their regular academic classes. Students are able to choose from over 20 course offerings such as Art and Music Appreciation, Watercolors, Felt Making, Latin Dance, Film Criticism, and Drama. Many of the classes are taught by visiting artists. The Drama Club has at least one performance each year.

The Foreign Language department is small, offering only the courses of Spanish I, II, and II. Last year, the department participated in the stated mandated Program Assessment of Modern and Classical Languages and

received a rating of ‘good’ by earning nine out of eleven points. All language classes are taught according to the national and state standards. Language courses are performance based and focus on the three modes of communication: interpretive, interpersonal, and presentational. Students exhibit their language proficiency in Spanish through various forms of technology tools in the classroom. Students may also take French, Spanish, German, or Arabic at the college.

2b. (Secondary Schools) English:

(This question is for secondary schools only)

The English Department of GTCHS recognizes that English is the basis for all content areas. Accepting this premise requires specific applications that will insure success for students in high school classes, college courses, and for communication in the 21st century.

Prior to entering the ninth grade, rising freshmen who have struggled in previous English Language Arts (ELA) courses are invited to participate in a transitional course offered by GTCHS. During the last two weeks of summer break, a member of the English department along with a reading learning specialist works with these students to facilitate their transition to the high-school environment and curriculum.

All English students spend time reading and writing various forms of text. They are exposed to novels, short stories, poetry, drama, informational texts, speeches, and text-based technology such as websites, blogs, digital stories, wikis, and electronic portfolios. The ELA curriculum’s objective is both to challenge and to remediate students’ ability to read write, analyze, and research. In-depth study emphasizes universal themes of world literature, while instruction in composition encompasses the development of multi-paragraph essays and college-quality research papers. Grammar is studied as a mechanism to address writing deficiencies.

All of our teachers are closely involved in the development of a school-wide literacy program. The Literacy Team works closely with the SC Department of Education and Middle College National Consortium to provide professional development that supports reading and writing across the curriculum for every student to demonstrate college readiness prior to graduation.

The GTCHS mastery learning paradigm entails identifying students’ difficulties so that individualized instruction can be provided through after-school Academic Assistance, peer-tutoring, and re-testing to demonstrate learning proficiency. These programs are vital in enhancing the ELA program’s commitment to meeting students where they are and helping them reach the highest possible level of success.

3. Additional Curriculum Area:

The mission of Greenville Technical Charter High School is “*to provide equitable opportunities for all students to acquire an education focused on linkages among rigorous academics, technology and careers to produce graduates who are prepared for success in the global workforce of the 21st century*”. Equitable opportunities describes the paramount goal of the mathematics curriculum in insuring success for our students as they enter high school, and, then later, as they take college math classes.

In order to attain this goal for the success of our students as they negotiate the continuum of their mathematics studies into the readily accessible college mathematics course on campus, GTCHS implemented the Mathematics Transition Learning Team (TLT), which is a partnership between the mathematics and science departments of GTCHS, the mathematics department of Brashier Middle College Charter High School, and the mathematics department of Greenville Technical College. Our continuing work includes the following:

Setting specific goals to improve our students’ success in college math classes;

Effectively involving our students in critical thinking;

Collaborating between the high school and the college mathematics instructors;

Providing support for college classes with student seminars;

Meeting monthly with instructors from GTCHS, Brashier Middle College Charter High School, and Greenville Technical College to better align the high school math curriculum with that of the college.

Also, vitally important in our goal of providing *equitable opportunities* to our mathematics students is providing a seamless transition for eighth grade students as they enter into their high school mathematics classes. To accomplish this, Greenville Technical Charter High School has implemented the following:

Summer, mathematics bridge classes for incoming, at risk freshmen;

A collaboration between the GTCHS Mathematics Department and Fuller Normal Advanced Technology Charter School to provide remediation, reinforcement, and enrichment for eighth grade Algebra I students during the regular school year.

Thus, the GTCHS mathematics department aligns our chief goal of providing *equitable opportunities* for our mathematics students.

4. **Instructional Methods:**

High expectations are clearly articulated and coupled with strong systems of support. Students are not grouped based on ability. To ensure that all students meet high standards, the school subscribes to the principle of mastery learning. As a result, all students are expected to reach a set of outcomes even though some will need additional time. The Resource Model helps us meet the needs of our special education students. Because our classrooms are learner centered and the “students are the workers,” teachers use a wide variety of instructional methods to best serve diverse student needs.

In our small school, teachers know the strengths and the needs of individual students and are able to create relevant instruction for all. Extensive use of project-based learning, cooperative learning, exhibitions of mastery, and Socratic Seminars can be found in our classrooms. Portfolios and writing across the curriculum are used in all subject areas as a means of evaluation and student reflection. All sophomores complete a Gateway Exhibition, a portfolio of work from the 9th and 10th grade years to gauge their educational progress. All students complete Individual Learning Plans as a way to evaluate academic strengths and set academic goals. As a requirement for graduation, all seniors complete a Senior Project with journals, a reflective paper, a product, and a formal presentation. Many of our teachers use Essential Questions as a means to focus students on important areas of the curriculum and to extend thinking.

Another important teaching tool is the use and integration of technology. Teachers use appropriate software and tools to enrich the curriculum and to best address student needs. The English department uses the Criterion online service, from ETS, as a writing evaluation tool. Teachers use Common Planning time on Fridays to discuss effective instructional methods and to create integrated units.

5. Professional Development:

Much of the Professional Development is planned and led by teachers. Each Friday, all of the teaching staff participates in the Common Planning program. This one hour, thirty minute time block allows teachers time to plan together, time to examine new ideas, and time to share classroom work. This planning time has a direct impact on student learning and achievement because teachers are able to strategize together on ways to better address student needs. These conversations and data sessions have yielded proven, concrete ideas such as data plots, graphic organizers, bone diagrams and others that teachers have implemented with positive results.

During Common Planning, our Critical Friends Groups meet. Critical Friends Groups (CFG's) are professional learning communities composed of teachers and administrators who engage in reflective conversations and examine each other's work in order to provide feedback and to hold one another accountable. The CFG is truly an "educational support" group driven by data, direct observation, and dedication to the highest academics for students.

The Transition Learning Team (TLT) is a partnership between the math and science faculties of both the high school and college. The TLT's priority aligns with the school's mission to produce graduates who are prepared for success by ensuring the charter high school's students transition successfully from the math and science courses of the high school and into the classes of the college. This vertical articulation is valuable for the college instructors to understand the standards that must be addressed in high school and for the high school instructors to see the level of complexity required at the college level.

6. School Leadership:

The Principal and assistant principals are the instructional leaders at our school and spend a majority of each day monitoring the various instructional programs. This team assists in the professional growth plans of every teacher as well as curriculum alignment and implementation of learning standards.

A great degree of accountability is expected of every faculty member in our school. Faculty members established goals and created our Learner Outcomes and Vision Statement, adopted by our Board of Directors. The School Board of Directors is composed of teachers, staff, parents, and community members. Counselors meet individually with all students during the year to go over four-year high school plans as well as plans for after high school graduation. Teachers are provided specific information about student performance on standardized tests, and each curriculum department develops an action plan for performance improvement. However, such tests do not provide the full measure of student learning and habits of mind.

Our students are expected to demonstrate knowledge and mastery of learning in various ways through exhibitions, portfolios, and the senior project. Students should also be able to discuss their academic goals and progress with their parents and advisors. The administration believes that teachers are the individuals closest to the learning process that can make the significant difference in quality outcomes for students.

The administration works to facilitate or coach teachers while monitoring the effectiveness of the overall program, but a true sense of community and shared purpose is observed throughout the high school and college and among all constituents including administrators, teachers, counselors, parents and students. Only through our team effort can all students achieve at their optimal levels while making our school a unique place to learn. Such collaboration and personalization have created a true sense of belonging for the celebration of learning at our school.

PART VII - ASSESSMENT RESULTS

STATE CRITERION-REFERENCED TESTS

Subject: Mathematics Grade: 10 Test: High School Assessment Program (HSAP)

Edition/Publication Year: 2009 Publisher: South Carolina Department of Education

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	84	85	82	76	83
% Advanced	60	53	52	51	40
Number of students tested	97	106	118	91	96
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	96
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	90	60	73		73
% Advanced	50	40	46		20
Number of students tested	10	10	11	6	15
2. African American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	53	57	53	50	53
% Advanced	24	14	21	20	18
Number of students tested	17	14	19	20	17
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested	5	7			
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes:

Subject: Reading Grade: 10 Test: High School Assessment Program (HSAP)
 Edition/Publication Year: 2009 Publisher: South Carolina Department of Education

	2008-2009	2007-2008	2006-2007	2005-2006	2004-2005
Testing Month	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr	Apr
SCHOOL SCORES					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	91	93	92	97	87
% Advanced	60	59	61	61	64
Number of students tested	97	106	118	92	97
Percent of total students tested	100	100	100	100	97
Number of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
Percent of students alternatively assessed	0	0	0	0	0
SUBGROUP SCORES					
1. Socio-Economic Disadvantaged/Free and Reduced-Price Meal Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	80	80	100		80
% Advanced	30	30	55	0	40
Number of students tested	10	10	11	6	15
2. African American Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced	77	86	79	91	77
% Advanced	36	36	26	29	53
Number of students tested	17	14	19	21	17
3. Hispanic or Latino Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested	4	7			
4. Special Education Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
5. Limited English Proficient Students					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					
6. Largest Other Subgroup					
% Proficient plus % Advanced					
% Advanced					
Number of students tested					

Notes: