

GREAT OAKS CHARTER SCHOOL WILMINGTON
2015-16 DDOE CHARTER SCHOOL ANNUAL REPORT

SUBMITTED BY: KIA CHILDS, HEAD OF SCHOOL
MICHAEL MAXWELL, BOARD CHAIR

GREAT OAKS CHARTER SCHOOL WILMINGTON
1200 N. FRENCH STREET
WILMINGTON, DE 19801

EMAIL: KCHILDS@GREATOAKSCHARTER.ORG

PHONE: 302-660-4790

FAX: 302-660-4480

WWW.GREATOAKSCHARTER.ORG/SCHOOLS/WILMING

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENTS: The mission of the Great Oaks Charter School – Wilmington (GO-WIL) is **to prepare students to succeed in college**. The purpose of the school is to give students the knowledge and values required to graduate from a competitive four-year college by delivering individualized instruction, emphasizing character development and fostering relationships with families. What sets GO-WIL’s approach apart from other college preparatory charter schools is our high-dosage tutoring; the Great Oaks Tutor Corps, a highly selective cadre of recent college graduates, will deliver at least two hours of individualized instruction to every student every day. GO-WIL will serve Wilmington students in Grades 6-12. In our first year, enrolled 240 sixth graders, selected a corps of 40 highly effective tutors.

GO-WIL is supported by the Great Oaks Foundation. The Great Oaks Foundation is a non-profit organization dedicated to the launch and support of the Great Oaks Charter Schools. The academic model of our schools was inspired by the Match School of Boston (Match), which has an extraordinary track record of success using the Tutor Corps model.

GO-WIL’s vision has three components and extends beyond the four walls of our school. First we envision creating a supportive yet rigorous middle/high school program that promotes college readiness. Second, we envision incorporating an intensive teacher preparedness program that creates a pipeline of highly effective educators. Third, we envision partnering with other high-performing schools and community-based organizations to invest in the community of Wilmington, DE.

EDUCATION PLAN: GO-WIL’s educational philosophy is that every child can learn. The most important characteristics of our model include: Unrelenting Focus on College Readiness; Individualized Instruction; Data-Driven Instruction; More Time on Task; Character Development; Relationships; Blended Learning; No Excuses; and Master Teachers.

Approximately 40% of GO-WIL students entered below grade level in 2015-16. Our goal is to get every student on grade level by 8th grade, and college-ready by high school graduation. Through a diversification of instructional roles at GO-WIL, our students can receive more individual attention and our teachers can develop and deliver more rigorous and engaging classroom instruction. The mechanism by which we achieve that diversification is through a combination of excellent classroom teaching and high-dosage tutoring provided by the Tutor Corps.

GO-WIL seeks to create a “warm-strict” learning environment that blends discipline and love. GO-WIL fairly and consistently enforces a Code of Conduct to ensure safety and create a climate where every student can achieve. The individual attention devoted to each student enables them to maximize their own potential and to eventually graduate from GO-WIL with the knowledge, skills and habits of mind to earn a college degree. All teachers, tutors and administrators are aligned in creating a strong school culture by implementing consistent responses to student misbehavior and creating incentives for positive behaviors.

GO-WIL currently serves a diverse population of students including: students with Individualized Education Programs, students with Section 504 plans, English Language Learners, immigrant, migrant, and refugee students, students identified as gifted, students at risk of academic failure or dropping out, and homeless students. At the heart

of GO-WIL's educational philosophy is the belief that all children can learn in an environment of high expectations and supportive relationships. We work excruciatingly hard to ensure that the needs of all children are met. For the subgroups of students above, we have implemented policies that protect the legal rights of the child and we will hold staff accountable for the execution of those policies.

GO-WIL uses an array of high-quality assessment tools, both formative and summative, to determine the success of all students in meeting DE Content Standards and improving student learning. In addition to the required smarter balanced, GO-WIL also administered **Achievement Network** exams four times per year for reading and math to determine that they are mastering State standards and on-track to pass State Exams; **Scholastic Reading Inventory** to assess reading level and track growth; **Course Exams** to determine whether students are mastering course content and on-track to pass classes; monthly **Unit Level Course Quizzes** to ensure that students are mastering content standards delivered in each unit and **Exit Tickets** which are collected at the end of each class period and tutorial to assess whether students mastered the learning objectives for the day. Whenever an assessment indicates that an individual student, cohort or grade is not on track to meet standards, we work collaboratively to identify root causes and create interventions for struggling students including: reorganize ability level tutor groups, guide teachers to re-teach specific material, provide professional development in certain areas, revise the curriculum and/or make staffing changes. Data is constantly monitored to ensure that every student is on-track for academic success.

Reading Growth

- During the 2015-16 School Year, 91% of students demonstrated gains of at least 1 year according to assessment tools Reading A to Z
- On 4 rounds of the Achievement Network's Common Core aligned interim assessments, our students outperformed the network (63 other north east middle schools teaching common core standards) by an average of 5% overall.
- During the 2015-16 School Year, 100% of students increased fluency by at least 15 wpm according to 6-minute fluency solutions.

Math Growth

- On our first round of the Achievement Network's Common Core aligned interim assessments, students outperformed the network by 4% overall.
- Round two of interim assessments demonstrated that student proficiency increased by 5%.

School Culture & Climate

- 50% of our students earned Honor Roll during the 2015-16 School Year.
- 92% of parents participated in Mandatory Report Card Conferences in Quarter 1.

- 96% of surveyed parents have indicated that they are exceedingly pleased with their student's academic program and the support from teachers and administration.
- To Date, there have been 0 occurrences of violent behavior.
- 75% of students actively participated in at least one of 28 offered after school activities weekly.
- 100% of students earned at least 10 community service hours through Great Oaks Wilmington.
- 100% of students earned at least 10 hours of college exploration through Great Oaks Wilmington.

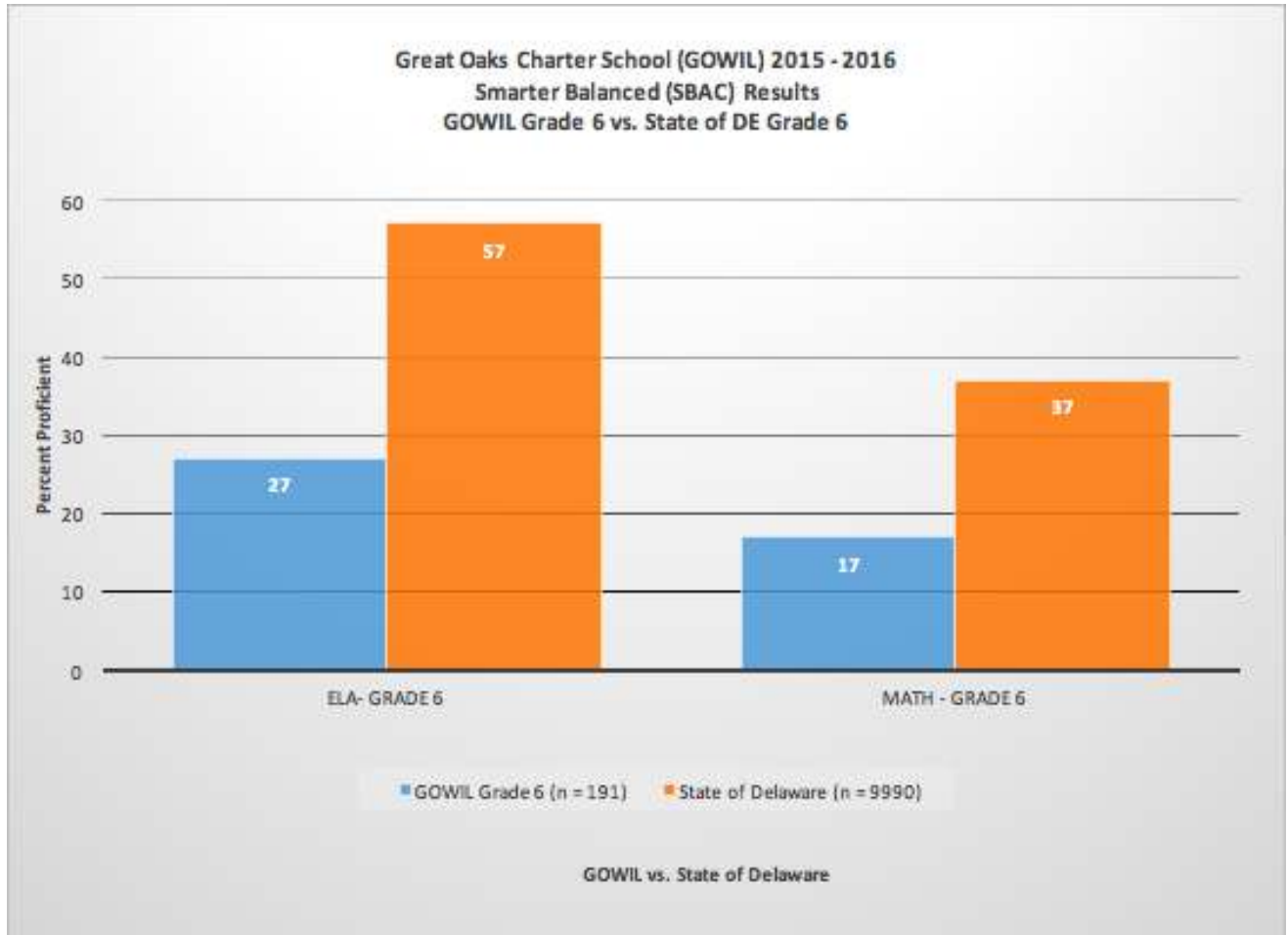
Staff and Student Retention

- To Date, 100% of the teaching staff returned for the 2016-17 school year.
- 100% of surveyed staff members have indicated that they are exceedingly pleased with the professional growth support from administration.
- 90% of students re-enrolled for the 2016-17 school year.
- 100% of eligible siblings of current 6th graders have enrolled for next year. 50% of our tutor corps (which is only a 1-year) commitment applied to remain in Wilmington to pursue opportunities with Great Oaks Wilmington.
- 100% of tutor corps has completed at least 10 hours of community service in the city of Wilmington.
- 33% of Tutors were placed as 2nd year tutors for the 2016-17 school year.
- 90% of 2nd year tutors are earning a teaching certificate through GOWIL's partnership with the Relay Graduate School of Education
- 40% of administrators are earning a school leadership license through GOWIL's partnership with Teach For America's Lead For Delaware.

Academic Performance

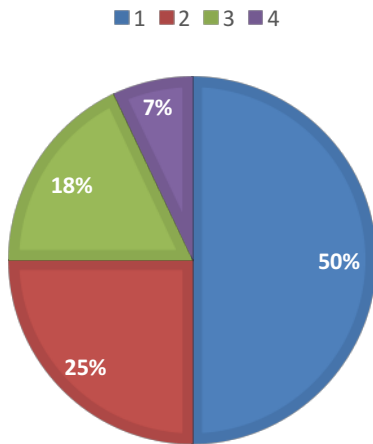
The School has effectively met standard in regards to implementing the essential terms of the charter's education program as defined in the current charter and demonstrated the student achievement outlined below:

Proficiency Data

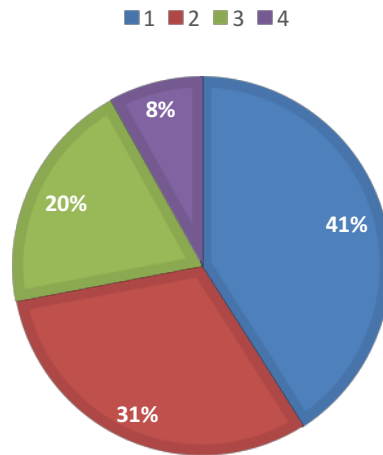


191 of 202 (Meeting the 95% participation rate required by the state) Great Oaks Charter School Wilmington students were tested in both English Language Arts and Math. 27% of students scored “Proficient” in ELA, earning either a 3 or 4; and 17% of students scored “Proficient in Math. Performance against the Christina School District is still to be determined, but there is currently a 30% achievement gap against the state in ELA and a 20% gap in Math.

2014-15 ELA

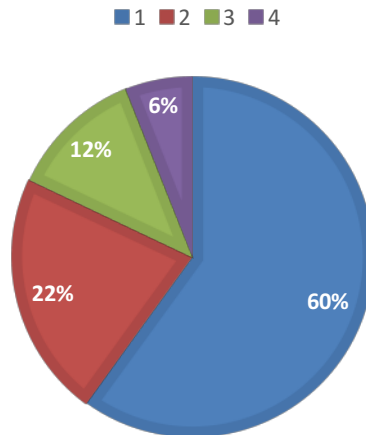


2015-16 ELA

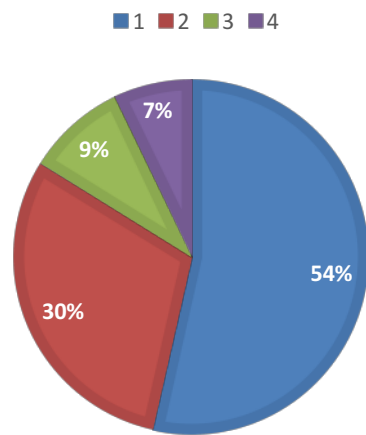


Not evident in the proficiency data, is the fact that 31% of tested students earned a 2 or “At/Near Standard” in ELA. In 2014-15, 50% of tested students scored a 1, and in 2015-16, that number has decreased by 8%. Though those students don’t increase proficiency percentages significantly, we are in a strong position considering that 58% of our students are near, at, or exceed the standards in ELA.

2014-15 MATH

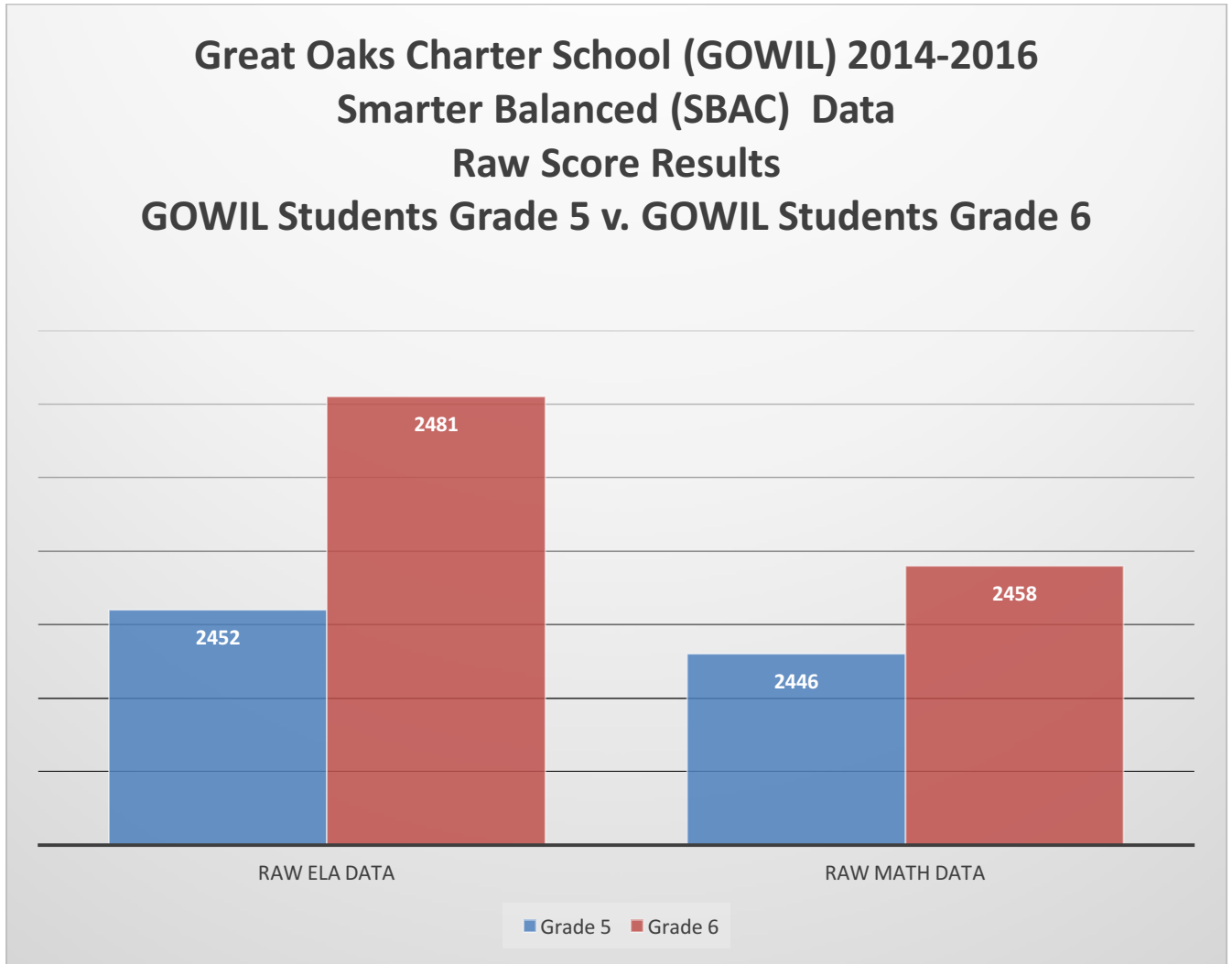


2015-16 MATH



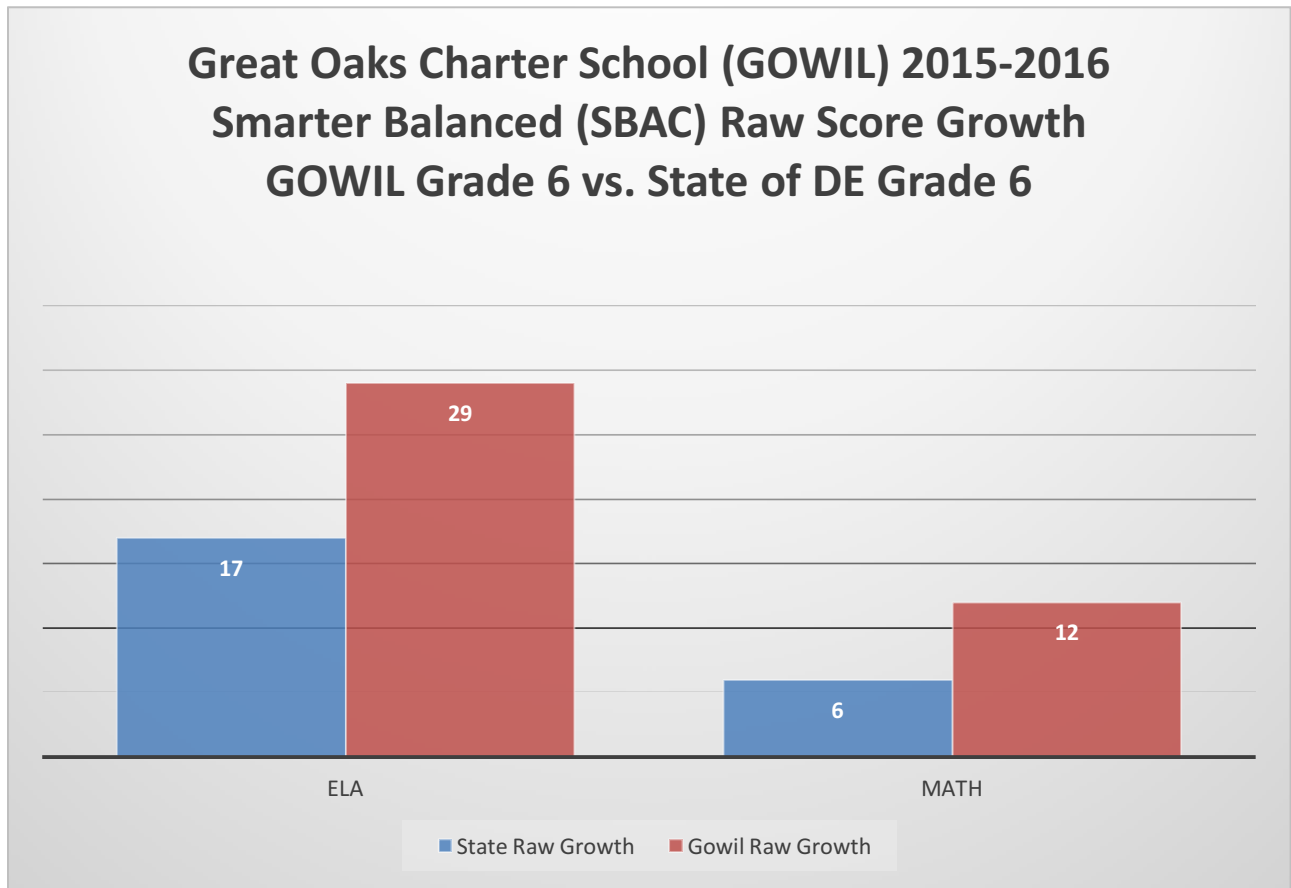
Also not evident in the proficiency data, is the fact that 30% of tested students earned a 2 or “At/Near Standard” in Math. In 2014-15, 60% of tested students scored a 1, and in 2015-16 that number has decreased by 6%. This shows us that 46% of our students are near, at, or exceed the standards in Math.

Raw Score Performance



On each of the content tests, the highest possible score is 2750. We assessed growth by looking at GOWIL student's average raw score in ELA and Math in 2014-15 (5th grade year) vs. their performance in 2015-16 as 6th graders. Our student's average raw ELA score in 5th grade was 2452, and jumped 29 points to 2481 after 7 months of instruction at Great Oaks. Student's average raw Math score in 5th grade was 2446 and jumped to 2458. An analysis of student's performance by raw score indicated that 100% of tested GOWIL students earned a higher raw score in ELA than they did in 5th grade, and 89% of students earned a higher raw score in Math. Please see the next chart for information regarding GOWIL growth compared to average state growth.

Raw Score Growth



Average statewide/district/school growth is assessed by comparing students raw scores longitudinally from year to year. The average growth in raw scores from 5th grade to 6th grade in ELA across the state was 17 points. The average growth in raw scores from 5th grade to 6th grade in ELA at GOWIL was 29 points. The average growth in raw scores from 5th grade to 6th grade in Math across the state was 6 points, versus 12 points at GOWIL.

Charter School ELA Proficiency Growth and Demographics

School	5 th Grade ELA Proficiency	6 th Grade ELA Proficiency	Proficiency Growth	Low Income %	SPED %
Great Oaks	27%	27%	0	73%	19%
DE Charter School	67%	60%	-7	46%	7%
DE Charter School	11%	23%	12	80%	13%
DE Charter School	38%	28%	-10	79%	7%
DE Charter School	28%	13%	-15	51%	9%
DE Charter School	59%	60%	1	8%	7%
DE Charter School	17%	5%	-12	31%	61%
DE Charter School	41%	39%	-3	61%	10%
DE Charter School	60%	63%	3	28%	9%
DE Charter School	73%	71%	-2	6%	7%
DE Charter School	86%	92%	6	8%	6%
DE Charter School	87%	83%	-4	17%	5%
DE Charter School	21%	8%	-13	64%	25%
DE Charter School	N/A	95%	N/A	19%	5%
DE Charter School	N/A	74%	N/A	10%	5%

The above chart measures the overall proficiency and growth in ELA for all DE Charter Students from 5th to 6th grade. Great Oaks ranks 4th of 15 charter schools in overall ELA Proficiency growth, and 11th in overall proficiency. The schools highlighted indicate schools serving populations similar to GOWIL (>50% low income and/or >10% SPED). Of these 7 schools, Great Oaks ranks 2nd in overall ELA proficiency growth, and 3rd in overall proficiency.

District Proficiency Growth

	2014-15 ELA Prof.	Raw Score	2015-16 ELA Prof.	Raw Score	Prof. Growth	Raw Score Growth
School District in which GOWIL Resides	31%	2482	27%	2473	-4%	-9
Great Oaks Charter School	27%	2452	27%	2481	0%	29
	2014-16 Math Prof.	Raw Score	2015-16 Math Prof.	Raw Score	Prof. Growth	Raw Score Growth
School District in which GOWIL Resides	18%	2469	18%	2466	0	-3
Great Oaks Charter School	18%	2446	17%	2458	-1%	12

Reflections

The proficiency scores by achievement level in conjunction with the raw score growth data at GOWIL tell us the following:

- Students are demonstrating growth at a faster pace than the state average rates for growth in both Math and ELA.
- More students are “becoming proficient” or growing from one achievement level to the next than the average across the state.
- Approximately 40% of our students are in need of intense supports and interventions in both Math and ELA.
- Despite a solid start, we need to increase momentum in order to close the gap by 2017-18 in preparation for student’s entrance to high school.

Our Approach to Improvement

The **focus area** for our first inquiry cycle is:

- Increasing intentional use of literacy strategies within math instruction

Our **rationale** for choosing this focus area is:

Students performed below proficiency on math state assessments and benchmark assessments, and there is a 30% achievement gap in ELA performance.

Plus (2015-16)	Delta (prioritize for 2016-17)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritize Data Collection and Analysis within school culture • Allocate collaborative time for Item Analysis and Action planning • Targeted plans driven by student data • Celebrate student growth and success amongst the team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessed and placed students 7 weeks into the school year (lost valuable and critical instructional time) • Consistent Follow Through on action planning (reassessment, mastery of retaught standards, etc. in EVERY content area and tutorial) • Target areas are broad and ambitious • Inconsistent communication with students and families about individual student performance on benchmark assessments (growth and needs).

Action Steps:

1. Assess and place incoming 6th graders between 8/8-/22.
2. Place students earning 1s and 2s in cohorts with additional teacher support, and with returning tutors becoming certified to teach.
3. Masteryconnect benchmark assessments are being crafted to align to Common Core standards, and Content scope and sequences will be aligned to the schedule of assessed standards.
4. Administer NWEA testing 9/23 as an additional measure to assess student growth over the course of the year
5. Allocate remaining Title II funds to a part-time Math instructional coach that will provide real-time coaching and support for Math instructors and teacher assistants.
6. Begin Saturday Academy on 1/7/17 and mandate participation for students based on grades/benchmark test performance. Students falling in the 1 and 2 range will be assigned to classes lead by content leads and experts.
7. Lowest performing 7th grade cohort will be taught by content experts/coaches:
 - a. ELA- Childs (Head of School)
 - b. Social Studies- Jones (Dean of Curriculum and Instruction)
 - c. Math- Instructional Coach
8. Tutors will be assigned a specific content area and skill level (i.e.- below standard Math), allowing them to master small-group instruction in a very targeted area, vs. having to be skilled in both Math and ELA at various levels.

II. Areas of Improvement

Great Oaks Wilmington worked to implement an individualized RTI program for all students, and did so with efficacy for the entire school year. Through the tutorial model, and data-driven interventions provided by highly qualified teachers; however, The school did not meet standard in regards to compliance with legal requirements for students with disabilities and English Learners.

In December 2015, Great Oaks Wilmington self-reported failure to conduct all 60-day meetings within the designated time-frame, which prompted the monitoring and implementation of a correction action plan. Great Oaks Wilmington failed to meet the initial deadline for all corrections, and as of July 1 made significant changes in personnel including the hiring of a Special Education Coordinator, and adding an additional highly qualified special educator to the team. The team totally revamped the process of IEP File Compliance Management to include the following processes:

Plan to Ensure Parent Participation

- Sent Meeting Invitations 6/23 & 6/24 for all upcoming meetings
 - Invitations included the following (as applicable):
 - Permission to Evaluate
 - Procedural Safeguards
 - Parent Survey
- Make and Documented Phone Call Reminders for all meetings at least 1-week prior
- Reminder Phone Calls will take place on an ongoing basis at the following intervals:
 - 1-week prior
 - 1-day prior
 - Morning Of
- Providing Alternative Options for Parent if needed:
 - Home Visit
 - Proceeding with IEP Mtg. and reviewing at an alternative time in person w/documented parent consent.
 - As a final resort, after at least 3 documented attempts, phone participation will be extended as option

Plan to Ensure All Required IEP team members are in attendance at the IEP Meetings

- Scheduled all meetings that require a nurse over 2 consecutive days to ensure that the Nurse is available to participate.
- Created a spreadsheet to organize meetings by date and required/confirmed participants (Please See Attached)
- Sent Google Calendar Invites as reminders for all participants
- Incentivized teacher participation by offering a stipend for each meeting attended

Plan to Monitor Student Special Education Records

- Audit files will be reorganized into hanging folders that are organized by color.
- Files will be kept in a filing cabinet in S. Toronto's office and locked by her.
- Sign in and Sign Out sheet will be established to track all records.
- Internal Audit document was created by S. Toronto and will be used to perform random audit checks to insure compliance. (See Attached Internal Audit Checklist and Incoming Student Audit Checklists)
- K. Childs will perform monthly reviews of audit files using attached checklist to ensure compliance monitoring throughout the school year.

As a result, all 100% of 2015-16 files were approved as compliant prior to the September 30th unit count.

Organizational Performance

GOWIL along with the Great Oaks Foundation strives to be in compliance with all DOE requirements, and will continue this practice. Being ahead of the charter compliance calendar and the new frameworks will further aid GOWIL in working toward being viewed as an excellent organization.

Based on the 2015-16 Organizational Performance Framework, GOWIL has been rated as “Does Not Meet Standard.” We have received a rating of “Meets Standard” in the following areas: Implementation of our Educational Program as it relates to the charter, holding management accountable, reporting requirements, protecting the rights of all students, staff credentialing requirements, school environment, and additional obligations.

Based on information available to the DOE during the 2015-16 school year, the charter school did not materially comply with applicable laws, rules, regulations and provisions of the charter relating to governance by its board. The DOE noted the following material issues:

- Ongoing Charter School Office monitoring of the charter school’s website found that documents relating to governance were not posted as required by code at multiple points during the reporting period. These included Board of Directors meeting minutes, Board of Directors meeting notice, Citizen Budget Oversight Committee meeting notice, agendas and minutes

GOWIL has worked hard over the course of the 2015-16 to ensure that we are well versed on the requirements for the website. We have also worked with the Great Oaks Foundation to identify items where we can have local control over the website in order to avoid any prolonged turnaround time between notification of a potential correction, and GOWIL’s response. To date, since April 2015, GOWIL’s website has met standard in all required areas.

Financial Performance

GOWIL Did not meet standard in regards to Current Ratio and Days Cash. Due to the fact that GO-WIL was in its first year of operations, the school engaged an outside accounting firm to provide assistance in preparing for the year-end financial audit. Unfortunately, the accounting firm provided a substandard work product to our auditors, which led to our deficiency ratings for both the close and capitalization of fixed assets processes. We agree that this performance level is not to be repeated in the future and have taken appropriate steps to assume these responsibilities in house beginning immediately. With regard to the other comments relating to payroll and cash disbursements, we have taken steps to strengthen our control policies and to provide

additional training to staff. As such, we believe will meet the standard in all areas going forward.