

C O N S E R V A T O R Y L A B  
C H A R T E R S C H O O L

**Annual Report 2012**

*“Making Minds Sing”*



*A public school for learning through music*

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### APPENDICES

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### 3. Introductory Description

Founded in 1999, the Conservatory Lab Charter School is a K1 – 6 public charter school located in Brighton, MA. It is the only Boston elementary school that offers a project-based, music-infused, interdisciplinary academic curriculum that promotes opportunities for students to create, perform, and achieve scholastic benchmarks while deepening their appreciation of the role of music in the world. Conservatory Lab is also the first U.S. public school to serve as the site for El Sistema, an innovative, internationally renowned orchestral music program, within the school day.

The school's charter has been renewed until 2014 and was amended in February, 2011 to increase the enrollment cap from 154 to 169 students and to add a sixth grade. As of August 1 2012, there are 172 students enrolled in preschool through grade six. Conservatory Lab Charter School draws students from all over Boston, who enter the school through lottery. There are no auditions, entrance tests, or fees of any kind. Students are representative of the children of Boston.

At Conservatory Lab, music is not only taught during an isolated music block. Our comprehensive Learning Through Music model features a three-pronged approach—Listen, Perform, Connect—to ensure that all students become active and informed listeners of music, as well as skilled musicians who regularly participate in orchestral performances, and complex thinkers who make connections between music and academic learning. Dynamic and flexible, the model is implemented through three distinct but interrelated instructional programs that each occur on a daily basis and promote the power of music to learn and to build community.

1. **Listen—The Listening Project** is a schoolwide music appreciation curriculum that immerses students at each grade level in a music genre—from country to folk to jazz to rhythm and blues to classical. Every classroom actively listens to 30 songs in the cannon of a genre over the course of a year. By graduation, students are versed in the rich diversity of music history across time and cultures.

2. **Perform—El Sistema** is an internationally recognized program that provides students with three hours of daily music instruction, including instrument technique, music literacy, choral, and orchestral ensemble training. Students pursue musical excellence as they perform together as an orchestra, both inside and outside the school. The orchestra acts as a model society that balances individual attention with group achievement.

3. **Connect—Learning Through Music Expeditions** are interdisciplinary, project-based curricular units that connect music and other creative processes to academic content areas. Expeditionary Learning principles provide the framework for these unique discovery operations that feature student-centered learning targets, fieldwork, rigorous research, and high-quality products and performances for audiences beyond the classroom.

#### 4. Letter from the Chair of the Board of Trustees

Dear Friends of Conservatory Lab,

This has been a transformative year for Conservatory Lab Charter School, marked by three major conferences, including a spring *Picturing America* conference sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities, and “Music Moves Minds,” an end-of-the-year conference that showcased our Learning Through Music expeditions. The educators and administrators from across New England who attended these conferences were inspired by our innovative, music-infused curriculum, our poised and articulate students, and the enthusiasm and dedication of our teachers. “Quality work is contagious,” observed one of our teachers as she explained how a culture of high expectations and excellence supports our students in creating extraordinary products and performances and in reaching high levels of academic achievement in the context of comprehensive music instruction.

In the second year of El Sistema, our music instruction and dynamic orchestra ensembles of string, winds, and percussion continue to draw national media attention and accolades throughout the Boston arts community. Under the inspired guidance of El Sistema’s co-director David Malek, the Dudamel orchestra reached an unprecedented level of achievement and professionalism, moving a stunned audience of educators to tears during a stirring performance at our June 1, 2012 “Music Moves Minds” conference. Our sadness at Mr. Malek’s departure at the end of the year is tempered by our enthusiasm for our incoming Dudamel Orchestra Director, Adrian Anantawan, a world-renowned violinist who has performed with violin greats Itzhak Perlman, Pinchas Zuckerman, and Anne-Sophie Mutter. Born without a right hand, Mr. Anantawan is a key proponent of the arts for the disabled, committed to developing adaptive music instruments capable of being played by young persons with disabilities within a chamber music setting.

Dynamic interactions between the three centerpieces of the Learning Through Music model—The Listening Project, El Sistema, and the Learning Through Music expeditions—yielded deeper levels of music integration and the development of exciting new student products and performances. Highlights included a grade four social studies expedition on the Great Migration, during which students studied the blues as a genre and composed their own 12-bar blues songs. The director of the House of Blues Schoolhouse Program was so impressed by the students’ performances she invited them to open for the Blues SchoolHouse band at the House of Blues.

Another illustrative example is the first grade expedition, *Building with the Three Little Pigs*. This interdisciplinary unit features a scientific study of the properties of building materials, as well as a fairytale readers theatre and readers workshop. Drawing on their knowledge of Broadway musicals from the Listening Project, students put on an original musical that showcased their scientific knowledge and gave an enduring fairytale a new twist with an important message for today.

The third grade expedition on Paul Revere also demonstrates how music integration deepens learning. After learning about the role of broadside ballads in the Revolutionary War era, students composed lyrics to an original “Ballad of Paul Revere” and performed it at the Paul Revere House and the Old North Church where they had earlier conducted fieldwork. The class published their ballad in the form of an eighteenth-century chapbook, illustrated with

scratchboard engravings. On viewing the students' performance, Paul Revere House educators remarked, "We hope that teachers will be inspired to try similar projects with their students."

Finally, this year's second-grade music video, "Snakes Are Born This Way," is an infectious example of how the Common Core standards can be taught in a way that deeply engages students in meaningful work and joyful learning. The music video, produced as a culminating project to an extended science expedition that featured field research at Harvard University's renowned Herpetology Department, has reached over 15,000 viewers and is a testament to the power of an academically rigorous, arts-integrated curriculum that is the hallmark of a Conservatory Lab education. Quality work *is* contagious!

Nurtured by a culture of excellence and a highly engaging curriculum, student academic achievement has grown steadily, with dramatic increases in math and science MCAS scores. This year, we added to our academic programming the work of the Achievement Network (ANet), an educational nonprofit that provides effective data-driven strategies to identify and close gaps in student learning. Teachers meet on a regular basis to examine and analyze assessment data and to identify effective interventions and enrichments for individual students. The ANet program has helped keep learning targets in sharp focus and all stakeholders agree that its systematic rigor has strengthened our academic program.

Expeditionary Learning and El Sistema have brought opportunities for social growth as well, as students collaborate on fieldwork and in research projects, learn what it means to put collective needs before individual desires, and how to mentor one another. This coming year, through explicit teaching of targeted social emotional learning skills, we plan to articulate and build upon the unique ways that El Sistema and Expeditionary Learning promote good citizenship and create an environment of mutual support and collegiality.

At the end of the year, we graduated our first sixth grade class. As we look ahead to next year, we are poised to launch a capital campaign to obtain a new facility to accommodate a full middle school with a physical space that embodies and supports Expeditionary Learning and El Sistema teaching and learning activities.

It has been a year of remarkable creativity and productivity, of joyful triumphs and proud moments for Conservatory Lab educators, students, and families. The many triumphs of this year underscore a renaissance of the school's vision. The successes of three major conferences have fueled our commitment to become a resource to other schools and to continue to make enduring contributions as innovators in urban education and arts integration.

Stephanie Perrin  
Chairman, Board of Trustees

## **5. Mission Statement**

The CLCS mission is embodied in our motto: *Making Minds Sing!*

The purpose of the Conservatory Lab Charter School is to provide an opportunity for inner city children to achieve the highest standards of academic achievement in the context of continuous and comprehensive study of music. This public school is not intended to serve a limited population of musically gifted children, but to provide a learning community where all public school children will have a chance to learn academic skills in conjunction with developing musical listening, performance, composition and literacy skills. Accordingly, all Boston public school students may apply to become part of this charter school and will be chosen randomly from the pool of applicants that will undoubtedly reflect the diversity of this city. Based on a growing body of research which suggests that achievement in reading, math and science is enhanced dramatically through association with the continuous study of music, this school will provide a model school community in which music is used to transform even at-risk children into high achieving learners, parents into effective partners in both academic and music learning processes, and teachers into action researchers and collaborators who will work with highly experienced consultants to design a fully accountable “music centric” elementary school curriculum that is adaptable to other public school settings. Within its Learning Through Music (LTM) program, the Conservatory Lab Charter School will use Expeditionary Learning as a framework for the continued development and implementation of the LTM curriculum units.

**Note:** The Conservatory Lab Board of Trustees has composed a new mission statement, which will be submitted to the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education for approval. The statement is included in the Strategic Plan, approved by the Board on June 13, 2012 and attached as Appendix B to this report.

## **6. Performance and Plans Section**

*The goals listed below form the Conservatory Lab Charter School’s accountability plan for 2009-2014.*

The mission of the Conservatory Lab Charter School is to engage any child from anywhere, using the Learning Through Music curriculum model, to ensure every child’s academic, artistic, creative, and social emotional success, as validated by qualitative and quantitative measures.

The Conservatory Lab Charter School will use the following measures as standards of success and measures of accountability for 2009-14.

### **a. Faithfulness to Charter**

#### **ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES**

##### **Objective 1: The CLCS will enable musical achievement for all students.**

**1.1.1 At the end of the year, all students in grades 1-6 will score 80% on the Instrument Technique Proficiency Assessment at the appropriate level for each child.**

Results: This objective was partially met. 81% of all students in grades 1 - 6 achieved proficiency goals (scored the equivalent 80% or above) in the ITP Assessment in the second year of implementation of El Sistema. (The scores reflect, in part, a revision of this internal assessment instrument to refine and heighten proficiency standards.)

**1.1.2 At the end of the year, all students will achieve proficiency as measured by the Music-In-Education National Consortium Music Literacy Skills Test at the appropriate level for each child.**

Results: This objective was partially met. 91% of the 169 students assessed met or exceeded the established grade-level benchmarks for musical literacy. Proficiency percentages by grade level: Pre-K – 95.7%; K – 100%; Grade 1 – 92.3%; Grade 2 – 92%; Grade 3 – 81.8%; Grade 4 – 87%; Grade 5 – 93.3%; Grade 6 – 77.8%. These scores represent a significant improvement over last year, when 86.3 of assessed students met or exceeded grade-level benchmarks.

**1.1.3 All students will perform in front of an audience as a member of an orchestra (or other musical ensembles in K1 and K2) at least 6 times per year.**

Results: This objective was met. All students performed in front of an audience six or more times in assemblies, school concerts, and off-site performances during the 2011-2012 school year.

**Objective 2: The school will complete the creation of its revised LTM curriculum.**

**1.2.1 By the end of the summer 2010, all LTM units will have been written and most will have been edited at least once.**

Results: This objective was met. All LTM units have been written and most have been edited at least once.

**1.2.2 Over a three-year period, twenty-one LTM units will have been written, piloted, edited and published by the spring of 2012. These units will include all project/presentation rubrics to assess student performance.**

Results: This objective was met. Twenty-two LTM units have been written, piloted, edited, and published. Conservatory Lab will continue to update and revise these units during the 2012-2013 school year to ensure the highest possible quality and consistency. All units include project/presentation rubrics to assess student performance.

**1.2.2 All units will have a culminating project/presentation.**

Results: This objective was met. All units have a culminating project/presentation. Many of the culminating presentations in the 2011-2012 school year featured performances conducted offsite for audiences beyond the school, including performances at the House of Blues, the Paul Revere House, the Old North Church, and the Veronica B. Smith Senior Center.

**1.2.3 At the end of every unit there will be an exhibition and parents will be invited to participate.**

Results: This objective was met. Classroom-based exhibitions were held at the end of each unit with parent participation. Many exhibitions yielded close to 100% family turnout.

**Objective 3: The CLCS will assess and evaluate its program for potential dissemination and duplication in other schools.**

**1.3.1 All teachers implementing the LTM Units will keep a running record of content and implementation issues to address before publication of the units.**

Results: This objective was met. All teachers reflected on the implementation of the LTM units through written records, as well as through interviews conducted by the senior editor.

**1.3.2 A National Institute for Learning Through Music will be organized for the Summer of 2012. The overall purpose of this Institute is to provide technical assistance to participants interested in creating/transforming a school by using CLCS' Learning Through Music model. CLCS will create a tool kit of best practices for all participants.**

Results: This objective was met. Our National Institute for Learning Through Music, entitled "Music Moves Minds," was held at the Conservatory Lab on June 1, 2012 and was attended by 75 participants, including teachers and administrators from local and regional schools. The conference received superlative evaluations from participants, a summary of which is provided in Appendix C. Each participant received a flash drive containing the Learning Through Music curriculum units showcased at the Institute, along with sample Listening Project curriculum, playlists, and templates, as well as school protocols and lesson planning templates. The tool kit contained over 1,000 pages of material.

## **COMMON SCHOOL PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

### **Implementation of Mission, Vision and Educational Philosophy**

The school's mission, vision, and educational philosophy are embodied in its comprehensive Learning Through Music model that features three interrelated programs: the Listening Project, El Sistema, and Learning Through Music expeditions. Based on the principles and practices of Expeditionary Learning and aligned with Massachusetts and Common Core standards, the LTM expeditions are extended interdisciplinary, thematic studies that incorporate music into the content areas. Together, these three programs create a music-infused curriculum and school culture.

In the second year implementing El Sistema and the Listening Project, the school has experienced a major breakthrough in accomplishing its mission, which envisions Conservatory



Lab students as educated musical audiences who connect music to all academic areas, and who are confident, poised, and skilled performers of music. This year, El Sistema resident artists assigned to each grade level actively participated in both the Listening Project and the Learning Through Music grade-level expeditions. These sustained, yearlong collaborations between professional musicians, classroom teachers, and students resulted in explosions of creativity, integrating music with the study of social studies, science, and language arts in new and exciting ways. First graders engaged in a yearlong study of Broadway musicals put on one of their own, showcasing students' scientific knowledge of building materials and their properties. Kindergarteners investigating healthy eating and exercise composed and performed an original song about the five food groups, put to a catchy beat by two resident artists. Fifth graders conducting fieldwork at the Boston Harbor Islands studied the genre of nature-inspired music and, guided by an El Sistema cellist, created their own short musical compositions inspired by the sounds of the island. Music became a vehicle for students to synthesize their learning and to joyfully share their knowledge with a larger community. At every grade level, student performances were remarkable for their originality and creativity, their deep content knowledge, and a level of engagement that reflects an infectious joy of learning.

Through strong learning targets, teacher observation rubrics, student self-assessment rubrics, documentation panels, exhibitions, and published student products, evidence of learning can be seen throughout the school. School leaders, teachers, and Expeditionary Learning school designers continue to work cooperatively to strengthen these interdisciplinary thematic units by developing rigorous and developmentally appropriate assessments for and of learning.

2011-2012 was a watershed year for Conservatory Lab, distinguished by three major conferences: an El Sistema conference for Abreu fellows and Longy School of Music students at the beginning of the year; "Art and Music as Tools for Learning," sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities *Picturing America* Initiative in the spring; and the "Music Moves Minds" conference at the end of the year. During each conference, Conservatory Lab teachers and staff showcased and shared the school's innovative, music-infused curriculum, drawing overwhelmingly enthusiastic responses from elementary and middle school educators and administrators from across the region.

Participants at the June 1, 2012 "Music Moves Minds Conference" were inspired by the Learning Through Music expeditions, as well as the Listening Project, Conservatory Lab's innovative curriculum that engages students in a yearlong study of a musical genre—from folk to classical. During daily Listening Project blocks, every classroom is immersed in studying the musical compositions, instruments, structures, and artists that have come to define a musical genre. Over the course of their studies at Conservatory Lab, each student will become an expert in at least eight distinct musical genres. Conference participants were delighted to experience the LTM and Listening Project curriculum firsthand and left eager to integrate them into their classroom practice. (See summary of conference evaluations in Appendix C).

Community partners play a vital role in Conservatory Lab's Learning Through Music program, providing teachers and students with important resources that enhance learning on all levels. The school is fortunate to have continued partnerships with the New England Conservatory, the Museum of Fine Arts, and the Longy School of Music in Cambridge, MA. Both of our end-of-year concerts were held at Longy's Pickman Concert Hall. An El Sistema conference for Longy

students held at Conservatory Lab in September 2011 marked the beginning of our school becoming a lab school for Longy students.

Conservatory Lab is overseen by a Board of Trustees, which meets regularly to establish policy and ensure sound financial management and fundraising success. The Board is organized into several committees: executive; governance; facilities; finance and audit; development; education; and research and replication. In accordance with the school by-laws, the Board oversees the Head of School, who is responsible for daily operations. The Head of School provides frequent communication with the Board. The Board is responsible for the evaluation of the Head of School through an evaluation given by staff, teachers, and parents and annually conducts a comprehensive evaluation of the Head's performance in alignment with goals set yearly.

## **b. Academic Program Success**

### **ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES**

The goal of the Conservatory Lab Charter School is to graduate \*5<sup>th</sup> graders who are proficient or above in reading, writing, math, science, social studies, and music based on external measures. [Note: Conservatory Lab's charter was amended in February 2011 to add a 6<sup>th</sup> grade.]

#### **Objective 1: CLCS will enable academic achievement for all students.**

##### **2.1.1 All fifth graders will present a graduation culminating multidisciplinary project that meets the "acceptable level" of an established performance rubric.**

Results: This objective was partially met. All but one 5<sup>th</sup> grader presented a culminating multidisciplinary project and scored at or above the "Acceptable Level" based on a performance rubric. *One 5<sup>th</sup> grade student was absent during the project presentation days due to chronic illness.*

##### **2.1.2 50% of the fifth graders will exceed the acceptable level of performance using the established rubric for the culminating project.**

Results: This objective was met. 100% of the fifth graders who presented culminating multidisciplinary projects met or exceeded the "Acceptable Level" of performance using the established rubric for the culminating project. 86% exceeded the acceptable level, with 33% at the Exemplary Level and 53% at the Exceeds Target Level. 7% scored at the Acceptable Level.

#### **Objective 2: CLCS students will become proficient in the use of the English Language as demonstrated in one or more of the following measurements.**

##### **2.2.1 The school will make AYP in English Language Arts.**

Results: This objective not met in SY11. In SY10 the ELA CPI was 82.2 (high performing). In SY11, the ELA CPI was 80.7, also high performing, but not sufficiently advanced to make a new AYP. 2012 MCAS test results are pending.

**2.2.2 Using the school’s interim assessments (based on objective Fountas-Pinnell benchmarks), 90% of the students will make at least one year’s growth in reading or ELA in each academic year.**

Results: This objective was met. In Grades 1 - 6, 95.1% of students are EITHER at or above grade level (91.8%) OR are below grade level but made at least a full year of progress.

**Objective 3: CLCS students will become proficient in the use of mathematics as demonstrated in one or more of the following measurements.**

**2.3.1 The school will achieve AYP in mathematics.**

Results: This objective was met in SY11. In SY10 the Math CPI was 73.3. In SY11 the Math CPI was 84.2 (high performing). 2012 MCAS test results are pending.

**2.3.2 Using the school’s interim assessments, 90% of the students will make at least one year’s growth in math in each academic year.**

Results: This objective was not met. 82.9% of students in grades 1-6 are EITHER Proficient OR have made a year’s worth of growth. 69% of the student were Proficient or Above in Math at the end of June 2012.

**Objective 4: CLCS students will become proficient writers.**

**2.4.1 Using the CLCS writing assessments, 80% of students will show mastery of appropriate grade level skills by the end of the year.**

Results: This objective was met. 81.3% of students in grades 1 - 6 earned a level of proficient.

**2.4.2 100% of the students will publish a piece of their writing in a school-wide anthology.**

Results: The objective was met.

**Objective 5: CLCS students will demonstrate mastery of content and skills in history/social sciences and science/technology as outlined in the Massachusetts state curriculum frameworks.**

**2.5.1 Individual student and group exhibitions will be held at the end of each trimester and 50% of the students will exceed the “acceptable level” of an established rubric for performance in CLCS multidisciplinary approach to history/social studies and science/technology.**

Results: This objective was met. In grades K1 - 6, 73% of students scored Proficient (or at the acceptable level of performance) on an established performance rubric. 24% of students school-wide scored at the Advanced level and 3% scored in the Needs Improvement level. No child was At Risk in the content and skills areas in history/social sciences and science/technology.

**2.5.2 Sixty percent of CLCS students will earn a level of proficient or advanced on the Science and Technology MCAS assessment in school year 2009-10 if enrolled at CLCS for at least two years. In each subsequent year the % of students scoring at the proficient or advanced level will increase by 10% until reaching 100% by the school year 2013-14.**

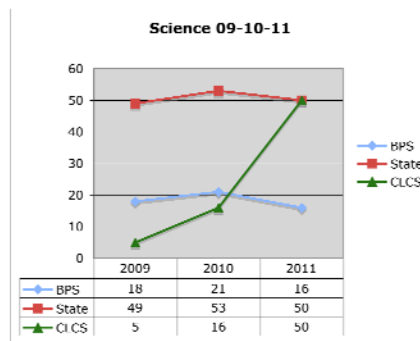
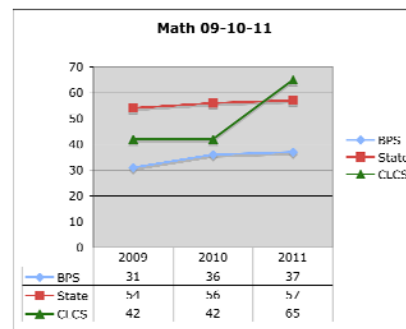
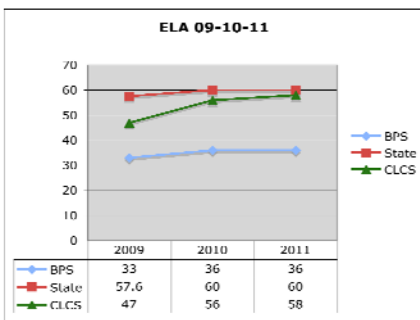
Results: This objective was not met SY11. According to our Accountability Plan, 70% of this cohort of students should be at Proficient or Advanced on the Science and Technology MCAS. SY11 MCAS results on this test show 55% of students reached Proficient. The 2012 MCAS results are pending. As demonstrated in the chart below, Conservatory Lab students' performance on the Science MCAS improved dramatically in SY11, with proficiency levels surpassing those of the sending district (BPS) and equal to the State's.

**COMMON SCHOOL PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

The following charts show the percentage of Conservatory Lab students who show proficiency (score in the proficient or advance category) in each subject on the MCAS as compared to the state and the sending district (Boston Public Schools).

**2011 MCAS Results**

**a. Student Growth Comparisons, 2009 - 2011**

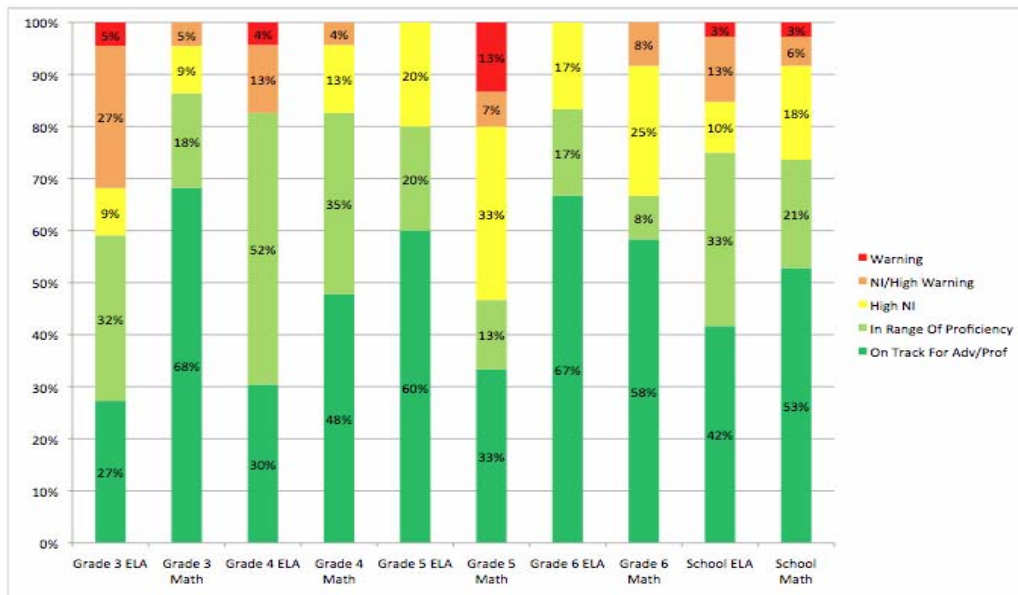


**b. Percent of Students at Each Performance Level, ELA, Mathematics, and Science**

Grade and Subject	Proficient or Higher Advanced		Advanced		Proficient		Needs Improvement		Warning/Failing		Students Included	CPI	SGP	Included in SGP
	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State	School	State				
GRADE 03 - READING	68	61	4	11	64	50	28	30	4	9	25	87.0	N/A	N/A
GRADE 03 - MATH	80	66	36	14	44	52	16	25	4	10	25	90.0	N/A	N/A
GRADE 04 - ELA	45	53	6	10	39	43	44	35	11	12	18	72.2	N/A	17
GRADE 04 - MATH	45	47	6	15	39	32	50	42	6	11	18	79.2	N/A	16
GRADE 05 - ELA	57	67	7	17	50	50	36	24	7	9	14	80.4	N/A	12
GRADE 05 - MATH	64	59	14	25	50	34	21	26	14	15	14	80.4	N/A	12
GRADE 05 - SCIENCE AND TECH/ENG	50	50	0	14	50	36	29	36	21	15	14	73.2	N/A	N/A
ALL GRADES- ELA	58	69	5	17	53	52	35	23	7	8	57	80.7	45.0	29
ALL GRADES- MATH	65	58	21	24	44	34	28	27	7	15	57	84.2	64.0	28

**Other Assessment Measures**

In 2011-2012, Conservatory Lab added to its academic programming the work of the Achievement Network (ANet), an educational nonprofit that provides effective data-driven strategies to identify and close gaps in student learning. Over the course of the school year, students take five interim examinations in both ELA and Math that either match or surpass the rigor of MCAS tests. Below are the ANet assessment measures for the 2011-2012 school year.



## **Curriculum**

Conservatory Lab's curriculum follows state standards in all subjects: reading/English Language Arts, math, science, social sciences, and music. The school's academic curriculum was similar to that of 2010-2011, with additions and changes noted below.

*English Language Arts:* The school continues to successfully use its core literacy curricula, including Readers and Writers Workshop. Readers and Writers Workshops often enhance the Learning Through Music expeditions as students develop literacy skills across the content areas. A schoolwide Writing Traits Map vertically aligns writing instruction across grade levels.

*Mathematics:* The school also continues to use its core math program, however it no longer strictly adheres to the ThinkMath! program, instead relying heavily on ANet's Schedule of Assessed Standards (SAS). Although mathematics stands alone as a sequential study supported by the ANet Schedule of Assessed Standards (SAS), the *Learning Through Music* expeditions incorporate math concepts and lessons where appropriate.

*Learning Through Music Expeditions:* Each grade-level teacher implements three Learning Through Music expeditions a year. These interdisciplinary thematic units on social studies and science topics are documented in comprehensive written curricular units with detailed correlations to Massachusetts standards in social studies, science, ELA, math, music, and art. Correlations charts align the K1 – 6 curriculum vertically and horizontally to ensure that all standards are addressed across the grade levels. The curricular units are being revised to align with the Common Core standards in English Language Arts and Math. Three new Learning Through Music expeditions were developed and implemented this year: Going North: African American Journeys, a fourth grade social studies curriculum; Fact or Fiction: Why We Remember Paul Revere, a third grade social studies expedition; and Ecosystems Under Attack, Invasive Species of the Boston Harbor Islands, a fifth grade science expedition.

*Listening Project:* This curriculum uses active listening protocols to guide a yearlong study of a musical genre at each grade level. This year, the Listening Project curriculum often interacted with and enhanced the Learning Through Music expeditions. A new one-month Listening Project curriculum on nature-inspired music was developed to complement the fifth-grade Boston Harbor Island expedition.

## **Instruction**

Expedition Learning (EL) provides the framework for Conservatory Lab's curricular and instructional practices. Each extended learning expedition follows an inquiry-based project and performance approach that incorporates EL core practices: focused, student-centered learning targets aligned with formative and summative assessments; fieldwork, local expertise, and service learning; producing and presenting high-quality student work for real audiences; and learning in and through the arts. All teachers are expected to prominently post key learning targets for all lessons across the content areas. Learning targets set high expectations and guide instruction and assessment. Students often participate in creating rubrics to assess final products and performances and teachers draw on a growing body of high-quality student products to provide exemplars.

With the introduction of ANet this year, a major push in teacher development was how to convey achievement data to students in a way that helps them take more ownership of their learning. Teachers worked with students to set attainable goals as they progressed through the standards. Each child knew exactly what it would take to reach mastery and worked collaboratively with peers and teachers to reach explicit goals.

Professional development this year focused on integrating diverse strategies for differentiated instruction to address individual learning styles and strengths.

### **Classroom and School Environment**

The classroom and school environment are shaped on a daily basis by the El Sistema and Expeditionary Learning programs. Learning in El Sistema is based on ensemble experience in which group achievement is balanced with individual attention. The orchestra acts as a model society in which an atmosphere of competition between individuals is replaced by shared struggle. Nowhere are the values of collaboration and cooperation more evident than in the school's four orchestras.

Each Learning Through Music expedition also promotes a culture of collaboration, cooperation, and high-quality student work. This year, students at every grade level collaborated to create published products and performances of exceptional quality and craftsmanship. The pride, self-esteem, and engagement students experienced after performing their original compositions at the House of Blues, premiering their wildly popular music video and stunningly accurate snake drawings at Exhibition Night, and seeing their colorful and expressive self-portraits reproduced on attractive postcards, contributed to building an energetic and joyful school culture that values perseverance, cooperation, hard work, and excellence.

Classroom teachers continued to implement *Responsive Classroom*, which is an approach to elementary teaching that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community.

The Conservatory Lab principal collected data on negative student behaviors during the year to track patterns and target ways of helping individual students. She consulted with doctors, hospitals, psychologists, and the Department of Children and Families to gather information about the students' backgrounds to help in this process.

### **Diverse Learners**

Conservatory Lab employs a Special Education Administrator and English Language Learner (ELL) Coordinator who work closely with students and teachers.

*Special Education:* Students needing special accommodations are identified through discussions with parents, testing, and teacher referrals. Conservatory Lab's Student Support Team (SST) reviews individual cases and helps determine each student's needs. The team meets repeatedly during the academic year to revisit cases and decide whether the accommodations provided are working, or whether they need modification.

English Language Learners: ELL screening is conducted through a Home Language Survey and informal student interviews with the ELL Coordinator. After assessing students with the LAS-Oral and either the Pre-LAS, LAS1 or LAS2, the Coordinator consults with the classroom teachers on each case. Together, they set goals and decide on the type of services to provide students designated as Limited English Proficient (LEP). The Coordinator monitors students during the year using the MELA-O and MEPA assessments, and determines whether each student has met the language goals set by teachers and English Language Proficiency Benchmarks and Outcomes (ELPBO). If a student reaches these goals, s/he will be exited and monitored as a Formerly Limited English Proficient student (FLEP).

Tutors for All: For the third year, The Conservatory Lab hosted the *Tutors for All* program, extending it to sixth grade. Children enrolled in the program showed steady improvement on *Tutors for All's* Show What You Know (SWYK) math assessments. The program was able to reach three sixth grade students who scored below grade level on internal interim assessments and state assessments (MCAS), target them for tutoring, and provided them with individual tutors during school for one hour, two days per week. *By program's end, Student A made 18.42% growth, Student B made 92.11% growth, and Student C made 15.79% growth. Tutors for All and Conservatory Lab leaders continued to meet regularly to determine the tutorial program's impact on children's academic improvement and social and emotional wellbeing.*

### **Professional Climate**

Supervision/Evaluation of Teachers: All Conservatory Lab teachers were supervised and provided with significant feedback and guidance throughout the year through frequent, informal and formal observations and meetings. Conservatory Lab implemented a new rubric that drew heavily from the best thinking of both Kim Marshall and the ESE's rubric for teacher supervision and evaluation. The new rubric was created and adopted by the school's Professional Development Committee. Teachers actively participated in determining the rubric and evaluation process and setting the timeline.

Frequent and formal drop-in evaluations with verbal and written feedback were conducted ten to twelve times over the course of the year. Results of teacher evaluations continued to be used to suggest areas for additional professional development and to structure professional development sessions with coaches and administration. During the 2011-2012 school year, the Conservatory Lab Professional Development committee created a system that takes student achievement into account when making final pay determinations, using final teacher evaluations as tools to make non-renewal decisions and place teachers within a level on the pay scale.

Professional Development Activities: All Conservatory Lab teachers participated in a yearlong professional development series on data-driven instruction and enhancing writing performance across the curricula hosted in-house by the school's principal, literacy coach, and Expeditionary Learning school designers. Over the 52+ hours of professional development time, teachers engaged in the creation of a Writing Traits Map which helped to vertically align instruction across grade levels, studied the Common Core Standards in all areas, looked critically at student writing data, learned how to display student data in an effort to connect children to their own growth, and continued to learn how subtle instructional shifts can garner strong student achievement gains in all disciplines through writing.



Over the course of the 2011-2012 school year, teachers continued their Expeditionary Learning (EL) professional development trainings, including ongoing investigations of the EL philosophy, best teaching practices, Learning Through Music, and community building. EL School Designers spent 33 days on-site working directly with teachers and staff to ensure that EL's best practices were well presented at the school's two conferences. In addition, all teachers had the opportunity to participate in off-site EL professional development opportunities, including:

- National Conference (3 teachers), Denver, CO, May 3-5, 2012
- 3-Day Institutes (1 administrator and 11 teachers), Reading K-3, Richmond, Nov. 3-5, 2011; Designing Learning Expeditions, Springfield, Dec. 8-10, 2011; Mathematics, Baltimore, Dec. 8-10, 2011; Instructional Coaching for Leaders, NYC, Jan. 11-13, 2012; Writing K-3, Salt Lake City, Feb. 2-4, 2012; Science 4-12, Denver, March 1-3, 2012.
- 5-Day Institutes (1 teacher), Elementary Institute, Boston, July 16-20, 2012.

Other professional development activities afforded to teachers and resident artists this year were:

- On-site ELL Category 2 training
- Off-site ELL Category 1 training
- On-site mentoring of Resident Artists by classroom teachers

*Structures for Collaboration:* Teachers, coaches, school designers, and administration met tri-weekly to look closely at student data from writing assessments, ANet interims, and data gathered from both in-class assessments of learning and assessments for learning. Working in teams (K1-1 and 2-6), these student-focused conversations took into account performances on tests, responses to enrichment or intervention, and individual data such as ELL or Special Education status.

*Purposeful Learning Environment/Retention Rates:* Through trainings and consistent application of the Staff Handbook, the professional climate at Conservatory Lab remains strong. By fostering a community of purposeful learning, staff members commit to hold themselves and students to high expectations, with the goal of supporting community learning, respect, and professionalism. Conservatory Lab staff commit to modeling positive behaviors at all times, using constructive language to peacefully mediate issues in an honest way. Given the environment of academic integrity and open communication, Conservatory Lab has experienced a small percentage of turnover amongst administrators, teachers, and staff. At the end of the 2012 school year, only two teachers decided to leave: one teacher decided to focus on middle and high school education; another decided to teach in a suburban environment.

### **Assessment and Instructional Decision-making**

To assess student growth in balanced literacy, the Conservatory Lab uses the following assessment tools:

- Fountas and Pinnell Running Records
- FUNdations
- Writing 6+1 Traits
- Interim assessments (K1-6th grades) based on Common Core Standards

- Data collected from student observations
- Achievement Network interim assessments (see below)

To assess student growth in math, the Conservatory Lab uses the following assessment tools:

- Interim assessments (K1 - 6th grades) based on Common Core Standards
- Data collected from student observations
- Achievement Network interim assessments (see below)

*The Achievement Network at Conservatory Lab:* In 2011-2012, Conservatory Lab added the work of Achievement Network (ANet) to gain more precision in its use of interim assessments. ANet enables schools to use data to increase student achievement by combining high-quality, standards-aligned common assessments with educator coaching in how to analyze assessment results, identifying gaps in student learning, and create action plans to address these gaps. As an ANet partner, Conservatory Lab teachers and administrators meet regularly to scrutinize student achievement data, targeting effective, individualized interventions and enrichments so that each child may meet his or her full potential. Conservatory Lab participates in peer school networks that collaborate to improve the use of data.

Over the course of the school year, students take five interim examinations in both ELA and Math that either match or surpass the rigor of MCAS tests. Every six weeks, teachers meet for four hours to examine the data gleaned from these interim examination; data is made public and teachers collaboratively analyze the strengths and weaknesses of individual students. With support from administrators and coaches, teachers then design re-teach action plans that target the most foundational skills within a content area so students can reach mastery in specific areas before advancing in the curriculum. After each re-teach period, teachers and administrators carefully examine the new data. Teachers then meet to evaluate the re-teach cycle.

Data meetings are required and the time to meet is protected. Always in attendance are the principal, special education administrator, literacy coach, all classroom teachers, student teachers, and an ANet coach.

In this first year that Conservatory Lab implemented ANet assessments to inform, guide, and improve instructional planning and practice, Conservatory Lab was able to:

- Assess students' mastery of the state standards and degree of difficulty of the year-end state tests;
- Measure mastery of recently taught skills and concepts as assessments are aligned to the scope and sequence of participating schools; and
- Compare our results to those of other ANet participating schools taking the same set of assessments.

### **Program Evaluation**

In 2011-2012, program evaluation at the Conservatory Lab remained rigorous. Student MCAS scores, along with data received from ANet interim assessments, in-house assessments, and other assessment of learning/assessment for learning tools, impact both the long-term and day-to-day lesson planning that can best reach individual students. Conservatory Lab always endeavors to

make its programs and systems as effective as possible by continually aligning with our Accountability Plan. Under the stable leadership of Head of School Diana Lam, the Conservatory Lab has completed its third year as an Expeditionary Learning school, where children are deeply engaged in unique, interdisciplinary LTM expeditions, producing gorgeous, high-quality products. Additionally, the school has closed its second stellar year with El Sistema. Reviewed as a whole on an annual basis, these programs—along with intensive professional development and critical reviews of student achievement—continue to work in concert to create stable programming to close the opportunity gap and to promote high-level engagement and thinking for all learners. The administrative team and teachers reflect on professional and student goals through weekly professional development conversations with the school principal and continue to evaluate student progress and make corrections as necessary. Administration also works continuously and closely with teachers to give feedback on testing, lesson, and program plans.

### **c. Organizational Viability**

#### **ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN OBJECTIVES AND MEASURES**

**Objective 1: The Conservatory Lab Charter School will establish principles and procedures that will enable the school to operate in a financially viable and publicly transparent manner.**

- 3.1.1 Each year, the school will operate on a balanced budget, meaning actual revenues will equal or exceed actual expenses.**
- 3.1.2 Unrestricted net assets will be equal to or exceed twenty-five percent of the school's operating budget for the upcoming year.**
- 3.1.3 Each year the school will receive a clean audit report with no material weaknesses.**

Results: These objectives were met. The school operated a balanced budget during 2011-2012 school year with the support of the Conservatory Lab Foundation. The Head of School and the Business Manager met monthly with the Board Finance sub-committee to review financial statements and projections. The Foundation's net assets exceed 25% of the school's operating budget and the school also received a clean audit report for the school year 2010-2011.

**Objective 2: The CLCS will successfully recruit students to meet enrollment levels as defined in the charter application and subsequent amendments.**

- 3.2.1 Full-enrollment will be reached annually by the required filing date of the pre-enrollment report. Wait lists after the annual lottery will constitute no less than 75% of the total number of students in the student body.**

Results: This objective was met. The demand for enrollment at Conservatory Lab is very strong. The school was fully enrolled in the 2011-12 school year. As of June 2012, the wait list was at 1200 students. After a thorough updating process, the waitlist as of the date of this report is 808 students.

**Objective 3: The CLCS will establish a strong management structure.**

**3.3.1 The CLCS Board of Trustees will represent the diverse skills and expertise required to meet the mission of the school as defined by the Governance Committee of the Board.**

Results: This objective was met. The Board of Directors is a diverse group of skilled individuals who enrich the school with their expertise in areas including law, financial management, education, early childhood development, technology, management, fundraising, school leadership, and the arts.

**3.3.2 The CLCS Board of Trustees will continue its practice of oversight for all aspects of the school by actively participating in at least one board sub-committee.**

Results: This objective was met. The Board met eight times in 2011-2012 and held one Board retreat. Board sub-committees met regularly to discuss topics in each of their focus areas.

**3.3.3 The CLCS Board of Trustees will rate itself satisfactory or above as a result of participating in a self-assessment session.**

Results: This objective was met. At the April 26, 2012 retreat, the Board of Trustees reflected on the CLCS goals and unanimously self-assessed as above satisfactory. This is reflected in the retreat notes.

**COMMON SCHOOL PERFORMANCE CRITERIA**

**Policy Decisions**

At the June 13, 2012 meeting, the Board of Trustees voted unanimously to submit an expansion amendment requesting additional seats to expand to multiple classes per grade level in pre-K to grade 5 and also include middle school grades 7 and 8.

**Amendments to the Charter**

The request to amend the school charter to extend our grade configuration to grade 6 was approved by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. This year was the first year that Conservatory Lab Charter School included a grade 6 class.

**Complaints**

There were no official complaints in 2011-2012.

**Oversight and Board Planning**

Conservatory Lab's full Board of Trustees met eight times in 2011-2012 and also participated in one Board retreat. The Board also led a process for creating a new Strategic Plan for the school, a copy of which is attached in Appendix B. All stakeholder groups—families, teachers, resident artists, staff, and Trustees—were invited to participate in the process. The Strategic Planning

Task Force also met a number of times with the different school constituencies to gather input for the school's Strategic Plan. They kept in close contact with Head of School Diana Lam, who sent frequent updates via e-mail. The new Strategic Plan was approved by the full Board at its June 2012 meeting.

In addition, Board subcommittees, including the executive, education, development and finance committees, met regularly and gathered detailed information about school activities from teachers and staff. The facilities sub-committee was also very active this school year in identifying potential sites for a new school. In this way, Trustees were able to assess the school's performance on an ongoing basis. In addition, the Board evaluated the Head of School including feedback from the Head of School's direct reports. Responses were gathered and reviewed by a select group of Trustees, who reported on the results to the full Board and gave feedback directly to the Head of School.

The Conservatory Lab Board of Trustees also approved the continuation of a Task Force, led by a Board member, to monitor the implementation of El Sistema. In 2011-2012, the task force met several times, gathered information about the program and worked in coordination with the Education Committee. The focus for the upcoming year is identifying and using strategies to meet the MA Social Emotional Learning standards, an objective that aligns with the school's Strategic Plan.

The Governance sub-committee coordinated the orientation of the four new Board members who started in September 2011. This sub-committee also sent the 2012 survey to all Board members. This survey was based on a set of board governance principles published by BoardSource in "Twelve Principles of Governance that Power Exceptional Boards." These principles address board alignment with Conservatory Lab mission, partnerships with the Head of School, and competencies to guide and oversee the school. Other principles address the culture of inquiry, respect and transparency that ensure we meet regulatory requirements, and strategic needs of the organization.

One hundred percent of respondents agree that the Board has a constructive partnership with our Head of School; they are also in high agreement that the Board shapes, upholds, and makes decisions that align with the school's vision and mission. All agree or strongly agree that the Board operates in an independent and transparent manner, putting the school's needs first, using benchmarks and audits to assess results, and sharing financial, program, and academic audit and benchmark results with all stakeholders. Capitalizing on universal Board agreement that the Board culture supports inquiry, mutual respect, and constructive debate that will enable transparent analysis and shared decision-making about existing and future operations, the Board is poised to go forward to tackle the challenges associated with implementing the new Strategic Plan. As Conservatory Lab moves forward to implement the Strategic Plan, Board members advise that there is a need to recruit additional Board members and allocate additional Board time to meet the requirements outlined in the school's Strategic Plan. The Board needs to be aligned with the ambitious strategic goals outlined in the Plan. In particular, the fundraising implications of the Strategic Plan demand additional development capabilities and capacity on the Board. Board respondents also noted the importance, in implementing the Strategic Plan, of committing resources to well-staffed committees, carefully measured program initiatives, and diverse representation reflecting the communities we plan to serve.

## **Family Engagement**

This spring, all Conservatory Lab families were asked to participate in a school climate survey and data was collected via *K-12 Insight*.

Families presented as overwhelmingly supportive of and supported by the school and shared some of the following data:

- 94% of responding families feel the school is a good place to learn.
- 93% of responding families feel their child's teacher is doing a good job.
- 97% of responding families feel that the school principal knows and cares about their child.
- 87% of responding families feel the principal responds quickly to their concerns.
- 94% of responding families feel their child is safe in the school.
- 87% of responding families feel the school does a good job preventing bullying and discrimination.
- 94% of responding families feel the school places a value on the diversity of families.
- 97% of responding families feel that the school communicates with them in a language they can understand.
- An area where parents rated themselves lowest was in participation in school-based activities such as Parent Advisory Council (PAC) meetings.

Conservatory Lab truly sees parents as educational partners. During Parent-Teacher Conferences, at Open House, expedition exhibitions, and during performances, teachers check in with families to make sure the agreements outlined in the Family Handbook are being upheld. In addition to frequent surveys, our weekly Family Notes newsletter informs families of current events in the life of the school. Conservatory Lab has an open door policy and staff members are always eager to hear suggestions from parents on how to make the school stronger.

Conservatory Lab has an active Parent Advisory Council (PAC) whose mission is threefold: (1) to build communication within the school community; (2) to support parents/guardians in being effective educational partners; and (3) to assist and work as a team with the Conservatory Lab staff. The PAC holds monthly business meetings, hosts community-building events, such as a Silent Auction, the June Jamboree, monthly meetings, raffles, and book fairs for the students and their families. For the past two years, PAC has sponsored a community concert that has drawn over 800 family and friends and raised funds for the school.

## **Safety**

As outlined in the Family Handbook, school safety is a priority at Conservatory Lab. Through a strict attendance policy and Code of Conduct and Anti-Bullying Plan, Conservatory Lab strives to keep students safe in mind and body. Attendance is taken and phone calls are made home to absent students by 11:00 each morning. Visitors must check in, and are only granted access through reception. Otherwise, the school building cannot be accessed from the outside. The Conservatory Lab main office maintains current contact information including home, cell, and

work phone numbers and email addresses of parents/guardians as well as family emergency contacts.

Social, emotional, and health needs are addressed through the school's Social Emotional Learning-based programming: Expeditionary Learning and El Sistema. Additionally, the school's Student Support Team (one administrator, classroom teacher, social worker, special educator, specialists) continues to meet regularly to discuss specific students' needs and ways of addressing them. The social work team (one licensed social worker and two interns) regularly works with individual students, giving them a place to talk about social/emotional issues. This year, the school also made a major push to ban sugary, salty, fatty snacks from the school day. The school has also worked with the school lunch vendor to provide a more nutritional menu, including fresh fruit and vegetables in every lunch.

A majority of the Conservatory Lab teaching staff has received training in *Responsive Classroom*, which is an approach to elementary teaching that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. Moreover, all teachers are trained in the best SEL practices of both Expeditionary Learning and El Sistema and the commonly held beliefs outlined in the school's Code of Conduct continue to guide the work:

The Conservatory Lab uses the best practices of Expeditionary Learning, El Sistema, and Responsive Classroom techniques in the school to teach, model, and practice positive behavior and deeper academic engagement. Our Guiding Principles at work in the classroom assert that:

- A strong social curriculum is as important as a strong academic curriculum.
- How children learn is equally important to what they learn.
- Social interaction promotes the greatest cognitive growth.
- Daily classroom practice of Cooperation, Courage, Responsibility, Perseverance, Quality, and Joy (The Keys to Harmony) leads to deep social and academic engagement.
- Knowing our children is as important as knowing what we teach.
- Knowing our children's families is critical to knowing our children.
- Adult cooperation in the school supports a healthy environment for all children and families.

The school has adopted an Anti-Bullying plan for both students and staff.

### **Employee Qualifications**

CLCS hires the most highly qualified teachers and staff. Employees are required to demonstrate completed degrees, certification, and appropriate teaching licensure (MTEL) to remain in compliance with state and federal standards. Copies of certification are kept on file. Those without are expected to take applicable state and federal standards within one school year.

### **Financial Oversight**

Each year, Conservatory Lab's Head of School and Business Manager, in partnership with the Treasurer of the Board and the Finance Committee of the Board, utilize a zero-based budgeting process to determine the exact financial needs of the school. This group met frequently during the 2011-2012 school year to review and discuss the developing budget. The Board of Trustees approved unanimously the final school budget at the June 13, 2012 board meeting. Financial priorities are set and decisions are made in frequent meetings of the Finance Committee. Financial results are reported monthly and reviewed by the Finance Committee. Any event that could affect the approved fiscal budget must be brought up and approved by the Conservatory Lab Board.

## **7. Recruitment and Retention**

The 2011-2012 Recruitment and Retention Plan Implementation Report and the 2012-2013 Recruitment and Retention Plan appear in Appendix A of this report.

## **8. Dissemination and Sharing of Innovative Practices**

As a mission driven charter school, Conservatory Lab continues to be recognized for its pioneering work in implementing El Sistema, developing multidisciplinary, project-based learning expeditions, and introducing a Listening Project in all grade levels. This year, three major conferences, as well as helping create a BPS Innovation School based on Conservatory Lab's Learning Through Music model, distinguished Conservatory Lab's initiative to disseminate its best practices to public school educators.

The first conference, "Enacting a Teaching Practice Through El Sistema Philosophy," conducted in collaboration with the New England Conservatory, brought 30 Abreu Fellows and Longy School of Music students to Conservatory Lab in September, 2011 to observe El Sistema pedagogy and practice in action. The second, "Art and Music as Tools for Learning," conducted in collaboration with the Museum of Fine Arts, was sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities *Picturing America* Initiative and took place at Wheelock College on March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2012. Attended by sixty-five educators from across New England, this highly successful conference showcased Conservatory Lab's unique approach to art and music integration through two social studies interdisciplinary expeditions, one on the American Revolution and the other on the Great Migration. Finally, "Music Moves Minds," an Institute for Learning Through Music, closed the year on a resoundingly high note. Seventy-five conference participants received a flash drive containing a best practices tool kit featuring the school's Learning Through Music interdisciplinary curriculum units and Listening Project materials. A summary of the conference evaluations is attached as Appendix C to this report.

Conservatory Lab has created a wikki to post the materials distributed at its conferences, as well as interdisciplinary lesson plans submitted by conference participants that draw on the best practices in arts-integrated curriculum development presented by Conservatory Lab educators. In the coming year, the school will continue to use the wikki and other social media to disseminate interdisciplinary curriculum and student products and to dialogue with other educators interested in our music-infused model.



Conservatory Lab also disseminates best practices by publishing high-quality student products created as a culmination to the Learning Through Music expeditions. The products are published and sold at conferences and concerts as an inspiration and exemplar for other educators and their students. Student performances are posted on the Conservatory Lab YouTube Channel, along with other multimedia products, such as a second grade music video, “Snakes Are Born This Way,” which has been viewed by over 14,000 people in less than two months. Commenting on the video in the Huffington Post, a local charter school principal noted “. . . this is one of the best examples I’ve found of a school documenting student and adult learning in a meaningful, accessible manner for a wide audience.” The video, as well as the student book, “What Snake Am I?” and the accompanying curriculum have been widely distributed by Expeditionary Learning and showcased on the Expeditionary Learning website.

Conservatory Lab views its relationship with the Boston Public Schools as critical to fulfilling the spirit of the charter school legislation to disseminate best practices. During this 2011-12 school year, Conservatory Lab ventured into playing a major role in the creation of an Innovation School—the Margarita Muñoz Academy—a dual language (Spanish/English) high school which will implement Expeditionary Learning and El Sistema along with other Conservatory Lab features. Helping create the Margarita Muñoz Academy, along with a commitment to work within the Boston Public Schools, prepares Conservatory Lab to disseminate a set of best practices anchored in Expeditionary Learning and El Sistema. The School is ready to pursue opportunities to replicate, first in Boston, and then elsewhere.

Beyond the greater Boston area, Conservatory Lab has the ability and responsibility to be a resource center for other schools choosing arts-based curricula. As a center of excellence in music-infused curricular programs, the school is open to visitors and trainees. Learning Through Music Expeditions, Listening Project, and El Sistema materials developed by the staff are available for others to use. However, there remains a need for a central organization to provide research, ideas, and information on best practices. Conservatory Lab is exploring establishing a related, but separate entity, with independent funding and staffing to fulfill this aspect of the mission and to manage and direct efforts to further promote the role of arts in education.

The school continues to receive many inquiries about our labor relations and contract negotiations, including the establishment of a professional development committee charged with drafting the rubric to measure quality teaching through the performance evaluation process. More recently, we have been receiving inquiries on what it takes for staff to decertify a union, as our teachers did in April of 2012.

This year, Conservatory Lab continued to attract hundreds of educators to our school to observe firsthand our innovative model in action. Below are selected presentations, performances, papers and other dissemination activities provided to schools, colleges and universities, and other educational organizations about El Sistema, our innovative multidisciplinary, project-based curriculum model, and our groundbreaking union contract.

## **CONSERVATORY LAB CONFERENCES**

- Conference for Longy students and Abreu Fellows, “Enacting a Teaching Practice Through El Sistema Philosophy,” presentations by Rebecca Levi, David Malek, and resident artists. September 30, 2011. Attendance: 30

- “Art and Music as Tools for Learning”, Conservatory Lab conference sponsored by the National Endowment for the Humanities *Picturing America* Initiative and in collaboration with the Museum of Fine Arts. Teachers Rachel Cates and Ivy Delaney, El Sistema co-director Rebecca Levi, and resident artists Chris Schroeder and Levi Comstock presented music and arts integration in two social studies expeditions. Other speakers included MFA and Phillips Collection educators. March 30, 2012. Attendance: 65.
- National Institute on Learning Through Music (“Music Moves Minds”), included workshops and presentations by teachers, resident artists, and administrators on Learning Through Music expeditions, the Listening Project, music-integration, and Conservatory Lab’s model for creating a music-infused school; El Sistema Dudamel Orchestra performance; Howard Gardner, keynote speaker. June 1, 2012. Attendance: 75.

### **SELECTED PRESENTATIONS**

- Gates Foundation, Compact Meeting in Chicago, “A Professional Development Model for ELL,” Diana Lam, December 5, 2012.
- Youth Orchestra Los Angeles (YOLA) Conference, “How to Create an In-School El Sistema Nucleo,” by Rebecca Levi, Los Angeles, CA, January 30-February 1.
- Buckingham Browne and Nichols, “Trends in U.S. Education,” Diana Lam, April 18, 2012.
- Gates Foundation, “ELL Professional Development” webinar, Diana Lam, May 4, 2012.
- Expeditionary Learning National Conference, master class of differentiated instruction and high quality products by Jenna Gampel, Denver, CO, May 2-4, 2012.
- Centro Latino de Chelsea, “Expeditionary Learning and El Sistema,” Diana Lam, May 25, 2012.
- Chelsea Adult Basic Education students, “Expeditionary Learning and El Sistema,” Diana Lam, June 4-9, 2012.
- Gates Foundation, “BPS/Charter Schools Compact: A Joint Accountability Tool?” Diana Lam, June 24, 2011.

### **STUDENT PERFORMANCES**

- El Sistema, Dudamel Orchestra at the Memorial Celebration for Yoel Camayd-Freixas, Hibernian Hall, Roxbury, MA, September 8, 2012.
- Dance/Play Performance, Community Event with Ballet Rox, Strand Theatre, Dorchester, MA, September 25, 2012.
- K-2 Choral Performance, Boston Public Library-Faneuil Branch, Brighton, MA, September 2011.
- K-2 Choral Performance, Veronica B. Smith Senior Center, Brighton, MA, October 6, 2012.
- El Sistema, Dudamel Orchestra in Somerville, MA, November 16, 2012.
- El Sistema, Dudamel Orchestra at the State House, hosted by Rep. Alice Peisch, November 11, 2012.
- Winter Concert I – grades pre-K – 2, Brighton High School, December 9, 2012.
- Winter Concert II – grades 3 – 6, Brighton High School, December 11, 2012.
- El Sistema, Dudamel Orchestra, with Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston, Sanders Theater, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, March 4, 2012.

- House of Blues, Boston, MA, fourth grade performance of original blues songs, March 6, 2012.
- Spring Fling Parent Fundraiser, Strand Theatre, Dorchester, MA, March 12, 2012.
- Board Fundraising Concert, Brimmer and May School, Chestnut Hill, MA, April 12, 2012.
- Paul Revere House and the Old North Church, Boston, MA, third grade performance of original “Ballad of Paul Revere,” April 26, 2012.
- First grade original musical, “The Three Little Pigs, Inc.,” Veronica B. Smith Senior Center, Brighton, MA, May 24, 2012.
- El Sistema, Dudumel Orchestra Performance, “Music Moves Minds” Conference, Conservatory Lab Charter School, June 1, 2012.
- Spring Concert I: grades preK – 2, Longy School of Music, Cambridge, MA June 6, 2012.
- Spring Concert II: grades 3 – 6, Longy School of Music, Cambridge, MA, June 13, 2012
- Choral Performance, grades preK and K, McKinney Playground, Brighton, MA, June 7, 2012.

## **WRITING**

- Center for Artistry and Scholarship in Education (CASE): Concept Paper, 2011.
- Collaboration prospectus for Edison K-8, St. Columbkille and Conservatory Lab, June 2012.

## **COLLABORATIONS**

- Boston Public Schools/Boston Alliance of Charter Schools Compact, member of the Steering Committee and member of Teaching and Learning (ELL and African American Male Student Achievement,) and member of the School Performance Partnerships, June 2011 – ongoing.
- Boston Public Schools, member of the Citywide ELL Task Force, ongoing.
- Isabel Trautwein, Cleveland Symphony Orchestra, El Sistema, ongoing.
- Adele Diamond and Ellen Winner, Developmental Neuroscientist and Developmental Psychologist, University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Canada and Boston College, respectively. Proposed participation in Research Study about El Sistema, 2011.
- Boston Public Schools, Approval of the Margarita Muñiz Academy, an Innovation School, November 15, 2011.
- Anne Reenstierna, Head of School, and two department heads, Brimmer and May School, December 12, 2011.
- Sue Liebowitz and Larry Ludlow, UMASS Donahue Institute – Expeditionary Learning, January 6, 2012.
- Pamela Feo, Outreach and Publications Manager, Boston Philharmonic, January 18, 2012.
- Nina Moe, Executive Director and Meena Malik, General Manager, Pro Arte Chamber Orchestra of Boston, February 2, 2012.
- Myran Parker-Brass, Director of Arts Programs, Boston Public Schools, February 7, 2012.
- Shady Hill School Teaching Apprentices, March 15, 2012.

- Harron Ellenson, Executive Director, Landmarks Orchestra, Joint Venture of Dudamel and Landmark Orchestras, March 16, 2012.
- Barr Foundation: A Collaboration with the Boston Public Schools, “How to Address the Growing Disparity of Educational Opportunity,” April 4, 2012 and June 26, 2012.
- City of Somerville and Mayor Joe Curtatone, “How to Create an El Sistema Nucleo,” by Rebecca Levi, April 4, 2012. As a result of this collaboration, the Somerville City Council voted to begin an El Sistema program in its schools in 2012.
- Cyndie Hayes, Chief Academic Officer, Boston Public Schools, April 18, 2012.
- Alice Vogler, Arts Program Manager, Children’s Museum of Boston, May 1, 2012.
- Susan Rodgers, Executive Director, Artists for Humanity, Boston, MA, May 23, 2012.

### **SCHOOL VISITS AND SHARING OF MATERIALS**

- Alma del Mar Charter School, New Bedford, shared grade 1 “This Land is Our Land,” K-1 “Portrait of an Artist,” and K-2 “The World Around Us” Learning Through Music curriculum units, August 8, 2011.
- Judith Hill Bose, Director of Experiential Education, and Lael Harris, Communications Manager, Longy School of Music, August 25, 2011.
- David Lapin, Executive Director, Community Music Center of Boston, October 5, 2011.
- Karen Zorn, President, Longy School of Music, October 31, 2011.
- John Woodin, former head of Music/Arts, Dubuque Community School District, October 26, 2011.
- Darin Gault, Teacher, Shady Hill School, November 1, 2011.
- Heidi Fessenden, Harvard University and Young Achievers School, November 14, 2011.
- Nancy Coolidge, Jennifer Daley (Bridge Boston) and Mike Larsson (MATCH Charter School), January 10, 2012.
- Mary Jaffee and Marianna Green-Hill, Project STEP, January 20, 2012.
- Reverend Groover, Chairman, Boston Public Schools, January 25, 2012.
- Jesse Solomon, Boston Plan for Excellence, February 9, 2012.
- Lorraine Liantonio, Principal, and teachers, Berkshire Trail Elementary School, February 10, 2012.
- Senator Jack Hart, February 15, 2012.
- Jack Curtis, columnist, COLOR Magazine, March 15, 2012.
- PK Candaux & Sidnie Gallegos Myrick, Co-Directors, Renaissance Arts Academy, Los Angeles, CA April 9-10, 2012.
- New Visions in New York City, “Collective Bargaining Contract,” April 23, 2012.
- Senator Sal DiDominico, May 12, 2012.
- Simon Ho, Principal, Quincy Elementary School, and teachers, Boston, May 31, 2012.
- Thuly Germain, Director, Lynch Leadership Academy at Boston College, June 13, 2012.
- Harron Ellenson, Executive Director of Landmarks Orchestra, Michael Gandolfi, Composer at New England Conservatory, David Ascanio and Karina Ochoa, Plan for music for joint performance, May 4, 2012.

## 9. Financial Reports

### a. CLCS Fiscal Year 2012 Statement of Revenues, Expenses and Changes in Net Assets (Income Statement)

	<u>Jul '11 – Jun 12</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
4000-01 · Tuition	2,230,666.00
4100-03 · Grants – Federal (thru DESE)	170,115.00
4100-5a · Grants – Private – Designated	55,952.48
4200-06 · Nutrition Funding – State	1,268.59
4200-07 · Nutrition Funding – Federal	92,125.53
4200-08 · Nutrition Funding – Fees	6,593.68
4300-09 · Other Program / Student	159.00
440-13b · Contributions in kind – other	717.00
4400-14 · Contributions – Component Unit	108,500.00
4700-16 · Interest / Investment Income	126.08
4900-19 · Miscellaneous Income	9,417.51
Total Income	<u>2,675,640.87</u>
Expense	
01 · Teaching Staff	553,606.05
02 · LTM Staff	71,792.68
03 · Support Staff	196,903.82
04 · Development Staff	100,826.07
05 · Administrative Staff	415,963.95
06 · Health Insurance	71,676.94
07 · Other Fringe Benefits	54,451.85
08 · Payroll Taxes	72,171.72
09 · Professional Development	61,863.87
10 · EI Sistema	300,385.95
11 · LTM	42,051.66
12 · Support Consultants	81,375.00
13 · Classroom Supplies Text & Tech	73,268.47
14 · Development	50,968.30
15 · Administrative Expenses	125,239.75
16 · Food for Nutrition	72,077.19
17 · Facilities	294,297.13
Total Expense	<u>2,638,920.40</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>36,720.47</u>
Net Income	<u><u>36,720.47</u></u>

**b. CLCS Fiscal Year 2012 Statement of Net Assets (Balance Sheet)**

	<u>Jun 30, 12</u>
<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
Checking/Savings	
1000-01 · Cash and Cash Equivalents	726,088.17
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<u>726,088.17</u>
Accounts Receivable	
1100-02 · Accounts Receivable	78,757.65
<b>Total Accounts Receivable</b>	<u>78,757.65</u>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	804,845.82
<b>Fixed Assets</b>	
1600-15 · Furniture and Equipment	220,573.82
1690-16 · Less Accumulated Depreciation	<u>(209,965.25)</u>
<b>Total Fixed Assets</b>	<u>10,608.57</u>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<u><u>815,454.39</u></u>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
Accounts Payable	
2000-24 · Accounts Payable	26,348.61
<b>Total Accounts Payable</b>	<u>26,348.61</u>
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>	
2100-25 · Accrued Expenses/Accrued Payroll	109,668.73
2200-26 · Current Deferred Revenue	2,251.67
2300-27 · Due to related parties	<u>131,656.29</u>
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	<u>243,576.69</u>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<u>269,925.30</u>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	269,925.30
<b>Equity</b>	
3000 · Opening Bal Equity	486,207.08
3900 · Retained Earnings	22,601.54
Net Income	<u>36,720.47</u>
<b>Total Equity</b>	<u>545,529.09</u>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<u><u>815,454.39</u></u>

Note: The school's unrestricted net assets are approximately 20% of its budgeted operating expenses for the year ending June 30, 2012. However, when the unrestricted net assets of its component unit, the Conservatory Lab Charter School Foundation, Inc., are factored in, the ratio of unrestricted net assets to the school's budgeted operating expenses exceeds 25%.

**c. CLCS Fiscal Year 2013 Approved School Budget**

Enrollment		<b>169</b>
Revenue		
	Tuition	2,230,800
	Nutrition Funding	94,221
	Grants – Federal	140,000
Total Revenue		<u>2,465,022</u>
Expenses		
	Teaching Staff	568,000
	LTM Staff	84,660
	El Sistema Staff	292,605
	Support Staff	177,341
	Development Staff	140,060
	Admin Staff	347,480
	Total Staff	<u>1,610,146</u>
	Health Insurance	123,540
	Other Fringe Benefits	100,179
	Payroll Taxes	85,748
	Professional Development	50,000
		<u>359,468</u>
	Total Staff Expenses	<u>1,969,614</u>
	LTM	95,000
	El Sistema	40,000
	Support Consultants	55,000
	Summer School	10,000
	Classroom Supplies, Textbooks, Technology	60,000
	Development	25,000
	Administrative Expenses	88,000
	Food for Nutrition	94,221
	Facilities	319,000
	Total Expenses	<u>786,221</u>
Total Staff and Expenses		<u>2,755,835</u>
<b>Net Income</b>		<b><u>*(290,685)</u></b>

\*Note: The balance will be provided by the Conservatory Lab Foundation.

#### **d. Capital Plan**

Conservatory Lab needs a new facility, which will reflect and realize our mission, serving not only the immediate school community but the larger community as well. To become a nationally recognized, music-infused school that is truly and deeply connected to a larger community requires a state-of-the-art performance space and recording studio. In addition to music and performance spaces, the school needs spaces to showcase project and portfolio work including “gallery” space. The focal point of the entire school would be the arts center, including large group orchestra instruction rooms, choral rehearsal space, small practice rooms, a dance studio, and a visual art studio. The need for a new facility is rooted in the school’s mission and informed by its commitment to educating the whole child. Conservatory Lab is therefore planning the purchase and construction or renovation of a permanent home, to be ready for the 2014-15 school year.

Conservatory Lab envisions a school facility that through its nearly around-the-clock, yearlong use helps to transform the community in which it is situated. The school’s ambition is to create a facility that is aesthetic, practical and green, a proper home for Conservatory Lab. The design of the facility would seek LEED certification and as such would be the first LEED elementary school in the city, setting an important example for others.

Conservatory Lab has carefully researched the purchase and construction or renovation costs, incorporating generous cost estimates for likely expenses. In consultation with HMFH Architects, Inc., the school is planning on a 70,000-80,000 square foot building, in comparison to the present 16,500 square feet. This allows for roughly 160-180 square feet per student. Continuous planning with financial experts, such as Dwight Berg, leads to the rough cost of \$300-\$350 per square foot (including development and soft costs such as furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E)). Given these generous estimates, building or renovating the new school facility would thus cost \$21-\$28 million. This purchase and build-out will require a capital campaign to support the equity portion financing the project. The Board of Trustees is poised and ready to embark on such a campaign.

Conservatory Lab will be able to afford this purchase and construction or renovation through a combination of subsidized loans, new market tax credits, cash on hand, new fundraising, and debt. Specifically, as a worse case scenario at today's interest rates, the school estimates that with \$3.5 million in cash on hand to start the project, debt service will be \$1.2 million or less per year. A budget projection attached as Appendix D to this report demonstrates this is within the capacity of the school. It shows that Conservatory Lab is certainly financially viable with 440 students on our current Brighton campus. This scenario allows for additional modular classrooms beginning in 2013-14 as we begin enrolling more students. Even using more conservative revenue assumptions, this scenario shows a healthy surplus generated over time from operation.



## 10. Data Section

<b>a. INSTRUCTIONAL TIME</b>	
Total number of instructional days established in the school's charter or subsequent amendments	180
Total number of instructional days for the 2011-12 school year	180
First and last day of the 2010-11 school year	8/29/11 – 6/14/12
Length of school day (please note if schedule varies throughout the week or the year)	8:15 a.m. – 5:15 p.m.

<b>b. STUDENT ENROLLMENT INFORMATION</b>	
Number of students who completed the 2010-11 school year but did not reenroll for the 2011-12 school year (excluding graduates)	16
Total number of students enrolled as of October 1, 2011	171
Total number of students who enrolled during the 2011-12 school year, after October 1, 2011	4
Total number of students who left during the 2011-12 school year, after October 1, 2011	3
Total number of students enrolled as of the June 2012 SIMS submission	172
Number of students who graduated* at the end of the 2011-12 school year	12
Number of students on the waitlist as of June 30, 2012	808

\*The school was granted an expansion through grade six. This figure represents students who graduated from grade six.

<b>Reasons for Departure</b>	<b>Number of Students</b>
Moved out of the district	4
Went to METCO programs	2
Went to other charter schools that offered grades 5 – 12 programs (including 1 student who left during the 2011-12 school year, after October 1, 2011)	5
Went to BPS schools (including the 2 students who left during the 2011-12 school year, after October 1, 2011)	7
Went to private schools	1

**c. STUDENT DEMOGRAPHIC AND SUBGROUP INFORMATION  
(for students enrolled as of the June 2012 SIMS submission)**

Race/Ethnicity	# of students	% of entire student body
African-American	64	37.2
Asian	13	7.5
Hispanic	44	25.5
Native American	0	0
White	44	25.5
Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander	1	0.5
Multi-Race, Non-Hispanic	6	3.5
Special Education	18	10.5
Limited English proficient	35	20.3
Low income	108	63

**d. ADMINISTRATIVE ROSTER FOR THE 2011-12 SCHOOL YEAR**

Title	Brief Job Description	Start date	End date
Diana Lam, Head of School	Responsible for all operational, instructional and development work	8/2008	
Annie Sevelius Principal	Responsible for instructional programs including professional development	9/2004 as principal 8/2011	
Andrés Cruz Director of Operations and Special Programs	Responsible for school operations and implementation of El Sistema	7/2009	
Cecilia Soriano, Director of Development, Communications, and Marketing	Responsible for fundraising, communication and marketing. Also works with the Board of Trustees.	7/2010	
Adam Eccleston Part-time Operations Assistant	Responsible for food services program, student admissions, lottery and waitlist, purchasing, facilities.	8/2010	

**e. TEACHERS AND STAFF ATTRITION FOR THE 2011-2012 SCHOOL YEAR**

	Number as of the last day of the 2011-12 school year	Departures during the 2011-12 school year	Departures at the end of the school year
Teachers	10	0	2*
Other Staff	16	1**	3***

\* One teacher went to teach in a suburban district; one went to teach in a secondary school

\*\* Moved out of state

\*\*\* One moved out of state; another got a full-time job; another is going to graduate school.

QuickTime™ and a  
PowerPC™ are needed to see this picture.

**g. MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES FOR THE 2011-12 SCHOOL YEAR**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position on the Board</b>	<b>Committee affiliation(s)</b>	<b>Area of expertise, and/or additional role at school</b>	<b>- Number of terms served; - Length of term (date of election and expiration)</b>
Stephanie B. Perrin	Chair	Member of all committees	arts education, school leadership	Terms: 5 Length: 3 yrs. Elected: Sept. 1998 Term Ending: June 2013
Gary F. Gut	Vice Chair	Executive, Education, Expansion Task Force	entrepreneurship, fundraising, education	Terms: 4 Length: 3 yrs. Elected: Feb. 2002 Term Ending: June 2014
Katharine M. Pell	Vice Chair	Executive, Development, Finance, Governance	fundraising, school leadership	Terms: 5 Length: 3 yrs. Elected: Sept. 1998 Term Ending: June 2013
Robert Grinberg	Treasurer	Executive, Finance, Expansion Task Force	entrepreneurship, finance	Terms: 4 Length: 3 yrs. Elected: June 2003 Term Ending: June 2015
Anne W. Synder	Clerk	Executive, Education, El Sistema	education, teacher professional development	Terms: 3 Length: 3 yrs. Elected: May 2005 Term Ending: June 2014
Danna Mauch	Trustee	Executive, Development, Governance	research, development, social services/healthcare	Terms: 3 Length: 3 years Elected: June 2005 Term Ending: June 2014
Mark Churchill	Trustee	El Sistema Task Force	arts education, school leadership	Terms: 5 Length: 3 yrs. Elected: Sept. 1998 Term Ending: June 2013
Pamela Seigle	Trustee	Education, El Sistema Task Force, Development	school leadership, social and emotional development	Terms: 2 Length: 3 yrs. Elected: May 2007 Term Ending: June 2013
Anne Reenstierna	Trustee	Education, Development	school leadership, arts education, development	Terms: 1 Length: 3 yrs. Elected: June 2011 Term Ending: June 2014

Michelle Gurel	Parent Trustee	Development	health, community	Terms: 1 Length: 1 yr. * Elected: June 2011 Term Ending: ? =
Xiomara Rodriguez	Parent Trustee	Education	community	Terms: 1 Length: 1 yr. * Elected: June 2011 Term Ending: ?
Tracey Quarles	Trustee	Education	legal	Terms: 1 Length: 3 yrs. Elected: June 2011 Term Ending: June 2014
Clay Rives	Trustee	Development	technology, business	Terms: 1 Length: 3 yrs. Elected: June 2011 Term Ending: June 2014
Brad Richardson	Trustee	Finance	business, strategic planning	Terms: 1 Length: 3 yrs. Elected: June 2011 Term Ending: June 2014
Barbara Glauber	Trustee	Development, El Sistema Task Force	development, strategic planning	Terms: 1 Length: 3 yrs. Elected: June 2011 Term Ending: June 2014

\* Parent Trustee positions are for one year only because the positions are reserved for the Chairperson of the Parent Advisory Committee and an alternate selected by the Executive Committee of the Parent Advisory Council. The terms are renewable if recommended by the Parent Advisory Council.