

# Focus School Evaluation

## 2000-2001

November 2001

**MONITORING AND EVALUATION SERVICES**

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**ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides a preliminary evaluation of three elementary school programs implemented by Alexandria City Public Schools during the 2000-2001 academic year:

Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics  
Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy  
Mount Vernon Community School Dual Language (Spanish/English) Program

The principal generic questions answered in the report are:

- Were the programs implemented as specified?
- Were the programs effective/beneficial?
- What were the effects of the programs on teaching and learning in the core curriculum?
- What were the effects of the programs on student performance on the Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRT) and the Standards of Learning Tests (SOL)?
- What were the additional costs associated with the programs?

Data were obtained from CRT, SOL, PALS-K, and PRE-LAS test results, Information Technology Services, Human Resources, Budget, and Educational Facilities, as well as from on-site observations. The principals and teachers at each school provided additional program information.

Major findings include:

- Both focus schools, Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics and Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy, met their year one implementation goals.
- Neither of the focus schools met the requirements for full accreditation under Virginia's Standards of Accreditation (SOA) during year one; however, both schools had a substantial number of students in the 375-399 SOL score interval where the passing score was 400.
- Mount Vernon's Dual Language program was implemented in two kindergarten classes but the original design had to be substantially altered due to staffing problems.
- There was no statistically significant difference between the mean gain scores on the PRE-LAS (English) test for Mount Vernon Spanish-speaking kindergarten students in the Dual Language program and Mount Vernon Spanish-speaking kindergartners in regular Mount Vernon kindergarten classes.
- The visual and performing arts focus school model at Jefferson-Houston was at least as appropriate for students residing in the Jefferson-Houston neighborhood as a comparable, non-focus school program in a small elementary school.

The report offers eight focus school recommendations, which address the need for continued evaluation, improved cost/benefit attribution, and eventual determination of efficacy, as measured by student achievement.

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **Focus Schools - History and Definition**

A brief history of the development of magnet and other "choice" schools for the purpose of attracting multi-ethnic populations (who would not otherwise attend these schools) indicates that these special schools developed as an outgrowth of post desegregation efforts. According to Cookson and Shroff, 1997, after *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), public schools continued to be supported by segregated neighborhoods. Two decades later, after efforts to convert public education to marketplace accountability, experimentation and innovation created optimism which was, unfortunately, unsupported by results. During the Reagan administration, it was determined that schools competing for students and funding would make themselves competitive through reform and achievement.

Cookson and Shroff (1997) further state that the promotion of choice developed rapidly because of, in part, concern for the quality of education and the hue and cry of parents spending additional education dollars on private schools for their children. Choice is now a widely adopted reform process employed by many urban school systems. In large urban systems, students must often travel long distances - at great cost - to attend schools of their choice. Also, many children will not get accepted at their first or second choice school. In addition, children's opportunities are influenced by the neighborhood in which their parents reside. Choice does not alter these circumstances. Further, there is very little evidence that directly links school choice to increased student achievement and overall school improvement. As Cookson and Shroff, 1997, point out, studies indicate that middle-class students rarely choose working-class schools and middle-class schools tend to accept only the high-performing working class students.

Nevertheless, this national movement toward choice has forced many education stakeholders to reorganize public schools to meet the needs of their constituents. A RAND Corporation study (Hill, Foster & Gendler, 1990) has suggested that focus or theme schools would better serve the needs of most students and would be preferable for most high school students. It has been further suggested that the RAND study has been influential in moving some urban school systems in the direction of more focus schools (Raywid, 1994). Another impetus has been the continued dissatisfaction with the existing poor conditions and performance of many public school systems and the need for reform (Cookson & Shroff, 1997). A concomitant byproduct has been the sanction of choice and the optimal use of funds to jar public school service providers into the realization that better must be forthcoming or funding would be directed elsewhere.

Public school systems have taken up the gauntlet by invoking what are now primarily referred to as focus schools to counteract the growing clamor for voucher systems to support private institutions rather than public systems. While many of these choices were initially offered mainly at the high school level (Raywid, 1997), there is now movement toward more services at earlier levels of the system.

Focus schools were originally defined in the RAND report (Hill, Foster and Gendler, 1990). This umbrella term covered special purpose schools (including Catholic schools). In contrast to zoned public schools, a unique set of characteristics identifies focus schools. Focus schools have clear, uncomplicated missions centered on the experiences the schools intend to provide and on the way they intend to influence performance and behavior.

They, consequently, concentrate on student outcomes with strong social contracts that communicate reciprocity between all relevant parties. Focus schools also have strong organizations with autonomy to initiate action, solve their own problems, manage their external relationships and to sustain themselves over time. While these schools need not be highly innovative, students and staff should consider their schools as unique creations that reflect their effort and meet their needs.

The outcome of these requirements is that state and local departments of education, as well as teachers' unions, must often agree on the development of focus schools. Also, these stakeholders must agree, as necessary, to permit focus schools to manage themselves, by waiving rules and policies that impede site management. When fair testing of a school's performance has been conducted, and results are favorable to the school, stakeholders must accept and support the program.

Focus schools, for their part, must build themselves, from the inside out, around educational and ethical principles - not produced as versions of a fixed model. They must be allowed a period of organizational hiatus, with facilitation from the central office (Hill, Foster and Gendler, 1990). Focus schools should be judged, ultimately, on student benefit, though their ability to grow and sustain themselves is also important.

As Raywid (1994) further explains, a focus school exhibits the following characteristics:

1. The school has an explicit purpose (set of aims, instructional orientation, content or target group). This purpose directs its program and activities.
2. The school is empowered to set its own direction and teachers participate in decision making. This leads to a distinctive school which reflects an identity of its own.
3. All participants have chosen to be there. The school establishes expectations of its members and makes commitments to them.
4. The schedule incorporates meeting time for staff to evaluate the school and to make mutually agreed adjustments. This time is separate from instructional initiatives.

There is, throughout Raywid's report, a definite emphasis on the type of site management allowed focus schools. To prevent focus schools from becoming more like standard schools, the focus school's staff must define the school's essential (and distinct) profile. Parents are empowered by their ability to choose or reject that school for their children.

### **Establishing Focus Schools**

In a report by the Mid-Atlantic Equity Consortium (MAEC, 1999), the following facts were highlighted:

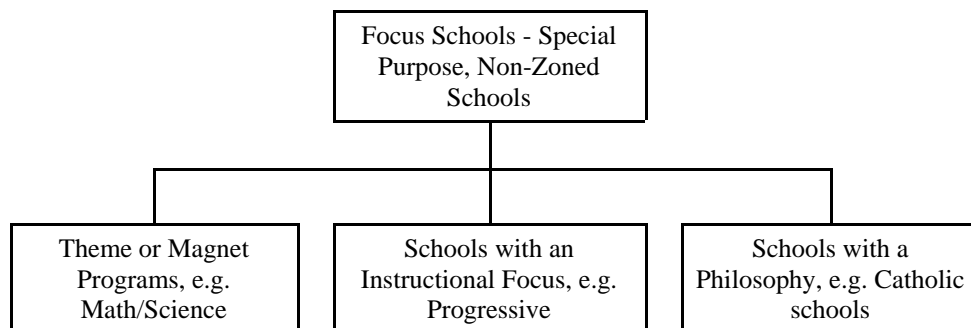
- The number of students enrolled in magnet programs tripled in the 1980's while the number of schools doubled;
- Three quarters of students in magnet programs transferred outside of their neighborhood;
- A Harvard University study of magnet schools in Kansas City, Missouri, showed that they did little for integration;
- The United States Department of Education (USDE) reported that low-income, Limited English Proficient (LEP) and special education students were under-represented in magnet programs; and

- Accountability, quality control and evaluation of magnet schools continue to be of concern. At the start of the 1990's, many schools failed to meet the objectives defined by the government for the magnet school program.

Despite these implications, that magnet schools should continue and expand - as long as districts make sure that the programs reach the neediest students - was a conclusion in a report by the Citizens' Commission on Civil Rights (Reinhard, 1997). The report exhibited some evidence that magnet schools in St. Louis, Cincinnati and Nashville improved educational opportunities for poor and minority students. However, more research was indicated. The Reinhard (1997) study further cited that magnet schools should be made more accessible to poor students by being located in low-income neighborhoods. The study further noted that choices such as magnet schools do not automatically serve the poor because low income parents are often less aware of magnet programs. The Commission's report also pointed out that poor and minority students tend to do better in magnet schools because such schools attract strong principals and dedicated teachers.

While the preceding report addresses the specific entity called a magnet school, the magnet or theme school is only a subset of focus schools (Schwartz, 1999). Schwartz has organized focus schools according to the following three categories, namely:

- magnet or theme schools;
- schools with an instructional focus; and
- schools with a philosophy.



The theme or magnet school is the first model of a focus school. According to Schwartz, 1999, the theme or magnet school generally has one curriculum focus, though the basics are taught in all academic areas. Experience has shown that students particularly interested in the school's curriculum are likely to work harder and show greater improvement. Experts believe that better magnet schools offer many courses on the same theme and allow that theme to infiltrate all areas of schooling.

Another type of focus school derives from the instructional process involved. While magnet schools may seem more special, instructional programs can be effective if the instruction meshes well with a student's learning style (Schwartz, 1999). They also tend to require more from students academically. As Raywid, 1994, points out, pedagogical processes also offer better cohesion across a curriculum than other focus programs.

The third example of focus schools is the philosophy orientation, where a set of values governs school functioning (Schwartz, 1999). The presumed benefit of a philosophy is that parents and students identify with the school and are likely to work harder to make the school process effective.

Regardless of the model adopted, establishing focus schools or converting existing schools offers benefits for effective change. It targets program change while simultaneously engaging staff in organizational change (Raywid, 1994). However, there are barriers along the way. Some of the policy questions that need to be asked (and answered) follow:

- Are focus schools preferable to comprehensive schools?
- Is the focus of sufficient breadth and serious enough to articulate a full school program?
- What is the best population assignment for a school?
- How are equity and individual rights preserved?
- A focus school has little value without the option to affiliate by choice, but how are equity issues to be maintained with the selection process such schools require?
- Finally, how should such schools be held accountable, coordinated or controlled given the underlying autonomy intrinsic to such programs?

Raywid, 1994, further points to some practical issues. Smallness is an emphasis shared by many focus schools. Thus it would be necessary to divide a large school into several school-within-a-school programs. It is also easier to start a new school than to modify an existing unit - giving administrators the opportunity to change existing cultures and to cull out or self-select those combinations of personnel of greatest benefit to the new school. Another issue is the cost of change. New personnel, equipment and supplies as well as high maintenance costs need to be addressed in such a way that continuing programs do not feel slighted.

## **II. FOCUS SCHOOLS - ALEXANDRIA CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS PROGRAM**

While an earlier mathematics/science/computer magnet school, Cora Kelly Magnet, has been operated by Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) since 1983, only two focus schools and a school-based dual-language (English/Spanish) program will be considered in this year-one implementation evaluation.

The two focus schools and the dual-language program are described briefly below:

- The Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics was designed to provide a superior instructional program for all students that is integrated and reinforced through the visual and performing arts;
- The Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy was established to provide a high quality education for students through the delivery of a phonics-based instructional program supported by distinctive educational components; and
- The Dual-Language Program at Mount Vernon Community school was based on the best knowledge and practices of such programs across the country.

Jefferson-Houston and Lyles-Crouch were designated as focus schools to provide a choice of elementary curriculum for students and parents through programmatic distinctiveness and to promote diversity in their new attendance zones. Each focus school was permitted to enroll a specific number of students from outside its attendance zone. Students were chosen by lottery. Students who resided in the attendance zones of each focus school were given the option of attending the focus school in their attendance zone or another nearby elementary school on a space available basis with transportation provided.

An evaluation design framework is outlined in Appendix A. The framework contains generic evaluation targets as follows:

- a) goals,
- b) expected outcomes or activities,
- c) indicators for each outcome/activity,
- d) data sources for the indicators, and
- e) the time-lines or target dates for implementation or outcome.

Both formative and summative evaluation items are contained in the framework with the associated goal.

### **A Preview by Principals**

A preliminary interview was conducted with principals of the three schools. These individual interviews were conducted in early May 2000 to get a sense, from principals, of some basic expectations for their respective programs. The questions asked and the responses given are encapsulated in the chart of Appendix B. These comments will also be taken into account in any recommended modifications to the evaluation framework or process.

### **Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics**

The Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics (referred to hereafter as Jefferson-Houston for brevity) opted for a theme that was consistent with activities already developed within the school's existing program. Beside a rigorous academic program in the four main content areas, all students would have the opportunity to select from an array of artistic activities such as dance, drama, instrumental music and the visual arts. The proximity to the Washington D.C. metropolitan area offers

access to rich arts resources, so students may expand artistic talents and skills.

There is evidence to support the use of Arts and Humanities programs to engage students (Weitz, 1996). The programs are seen to offer opportunities for children to learn new skills, expand their horizons and develop well-being. Such programs provide crucial building blocks for healthy development and can promote concrete job skills. Fiske (1998) indicated that learning through the arts can help to “level the playing field” for youngsters from disadvantaged circumstances. There are high-poverty schools that claim a noteworthy turnaround in student performance. The arts and humanities is also said to increase children’s resilience, despite exposure to risk and adversity (USDE, 1998). In fact, the Milwaukee (WI) Public Schools has been commended as a system with a strong commitment to the arts in education by the President’s Committee on the Arts and Humanities and Arts Education Partnership (Fullbright & Deasy, 1998). The researchers who visited Milwaukee found that principals, teachers and parents in each school had been given enormous latitude to develop the schools they desire as long as they had balanced programs that include the arts. Systems such as Milwaukee believe that the arts help children a) build a value system, b) develop higher-order thinking skills and c) initiate access to the “creative arts industry.”

The program at Jefferson-Houston relies on such information as published in the Fiske (1998) report which indicated that an analysis of the U.S. Department of Education’s database showed that students with high levels of arts participation performed better than ‘arts-poor’ students on most measures. The impact of socioeconomic status was considered and the results showed that the effect of the arts was more significant for low-income than for high-income students. The report also showed that sustained involvement in particular art forms (music and theater) were highly correlated with success in mathematics and reading.

## **Mission**

The Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics will provide a superior instructional program for all students that is integrated and reinforced through the visual and performing arts.

## **Goals**

1. Strengthen the learning process for students, increase achievement, and prepare them to be effective problem solvers and confident learners through the integration of academics with visual and performing arts enrichment.
2. Provide opportunities to integrate the visual and performing arts into the Alexandria City Public Schools curriculum and the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) using the curriculum and SOL as a base to increase student understanding of content and concepts through exploration and use of the arts.
3. Provide instruction in the four core content areas of language arts, mathematics, social studies/history, and science.
4. Provide students with daily instruction in one or more of these areas: music, visual arts, drama, and dance.

5. Provide students with instruction in each of the four arts focus areas.
6. Maintain average class sizes in grades kindergarten through five of 20.
7. Solicit support from cultural and arts related resources in the metropolitan area.
8. Provide workshops for staff that will teach them how to infuse the arts into all disciplines.
9. Provide artists in residence who will offer mini-workshops and opportunities for regular interaction in interrelated art disciplines across the curriculum.
10. Provide performance opportunities and enrichment experiences for students and family through community resources which include:
  - The Friends of the Torpedo Factory
  - Office of the City of Alexandria Archaeologist
  - The Smithsonian Institution
  - The Black History Resource Center of Alexandria
  - The Alexandria Commission for the Arts
  - The Virginia Commission for the Arts
11. Meet or exceed passing scores on the SOL and Criterion-Referenced Tests.
12. Promote high expectations for student achievement.
13. Develop and implement a dedicated summer school for Jefferson-Houston students that will allow teachers to identify skills deficiencies and performance needs, and address them at the school site with priority given to remediation in the core academic areas.
14. Develop and implement a three to four week late summer preparatory program for entering kindergarten students to prepare them for success in kindergarten.
15. Identify, select, and train teachers whose skills sets will support the school's mission in the integration of the visual and performing arts into a sound academic program.
16. Develop and implement a curriculum that is the vehicle for including the art disciplines in the core subject areas to nurture student creativity in an educational setting that seeks to maximize academic achievement and develop and expand talent, skill, and creativity.
17. Expand parent involvement/participation to ensure that parents understand and accept clearly identified roles, are supportive of their children's reaching academic goals and becoming active participants in the complementary arts program.

## **Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy**

Staff of Lyles-Crouch, Alexandria City's first "traditional" program, selected this instructional approach that was consistent with the current ethos of the school. A strong phonics approach will be woven throughout the curriculum, emphasizing reading and writing skills as keys to success. A distinctive component of the program is the requirement that parents and families formally agree to support students toward success. Uniforms will be incorporated along with character education to foster courteous and responsible behavior. The Core Knowledge Sequence (Core Knowledge Foundation, 1999) will form the basis of the curriculum.

The debate over the orientation of traditional ("teacher" centered) versus progressive ("student" centered) instruction continues. In a report on Ohio school systems by Chandler (1999), it was shown that many schools viewed as traditional were often progressive and the converse was also true. Most public schools reported a mix of practices, with approaches to reading and assessment being relatively traditional throughout. Traditional schools emphasize academic standards and follow a curriculum based on familiar academic disciplines. They often also emphasize discipline and structure (including uniforms). According to the report, traditional schools are criticized for rigidity and narrowness, stifling natural creativity to the detriment of some students. Some people, on the other hand, believe that progressive schools account for the misdirection and spineless teaching concepts they feel abound today. The Arlington Traditional school (1999) in northern Virginia indicates that, as every school member has made a choice to be at that school, they can maintain a program that includes regular homework assignment and promotion based on mastery as well as grooming standards.

### **Mission**

To provide a high quality, rigorous, K-5 instructional program that meets or exceeds ACPS Core of Learning and Virginia Standards of Learning requirements in a traditional elementary school environment in which all students are expected to succeed.

### **Goals**

1. To create a safe, caring, and wholesome learning environment for students;
2. To develop student skills for life-long learning;
3. To achieve full accreditation by the Commonwealth of Virginia;
4. To have high expectations for all students to achieve academically; and
5. To ensure that all students learn to read independently through phonics instruction and teacher-guided instruction in self-contained classrooms.

## **Objectives**

1. To provide instruction in basic skills that will enable all students to pass ACPS Criterion-Referenced Tests and Virginia Standards of Learning tests;
2. To develop critical thinking skills in all students;
3. To increase student achievement through increased parental involvement; and
4. To provide a supportive school climate to help all students maximize their intellectual potential.

## **Special Education**

1. To embed goals required in the traditional school model into the individualized educational programs (IEPs) of students at Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy who receive Special Education Services
2. To individualize the goals of Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy students with Developmental Delays (DD)

### **Dual-Language Program at Mount Vernon Community School**

The dual-language program at Mount Vernon will start with two kindergarten classes. This program will give voluntary attendees the advantage of literacy in English as well as Spanish. New grades will be added once the kindergarten program becomes established. Instruction in selected core subjects (language arts and mathematics) will occur in English. Science and social studies will be taught in Spanish only. Students will develop an enriching multi-cultural perspective through exposure to another language and other cultures, which will enhance their appreciation of diversity.

The philosophy of dual-language or two-way immersion education is described in “Tools for Schools” by the Center for Applied Linguistics, 1998. While bilingual education became a means for educating language-minority students, two-way immersion has shown that native English speakers also benefit from early foreign language exposure. The program is deemed to work well when the two language populations are balanced, instruction takes place at least equally in both languages and materials are available school-wide in both languages. Pre-service and in-service staff training is necessary because few teachers possess experience in two-way immersion classrooms. Programs funded by Title VII sources have determined that their students perform as well as or better than students in other programs in the same district. However, a report by Amrein and Peña (2000) suggests that language programs need to be analyzed on a case-by-case basis as their benefits are likely to differ by individual student and success dependent on the context in which the program was developed. Unfortunately in some situations they reviewed, the Spanish teachers were bilingual while the English teachers were not. While the preferred instruction model dictates that the Spanish teacher should only speak Spanish in that class and the English teachers only English, i.e. no translation (ensures equal exposure to each language), asymmetry would result (English speakers relied more on English and Spanish speakers often translate to English) and English acquisition became emphasized.

Griego-Jones (1994) has indicated some concerns that are often overlooked in dual-language programs. The concerns include the student's willingness to learn a new language (Spanish speakers are sometimes surprisingly resistant to speaking Spanish). This may be traced to factors related to the prevailing cultures involved and the views regarding immigrants of the minority language. Consequently, while parents, teachers and the general society may view the program as beneficial, efforts by students to identify with the majority culture may prove a major stumbling block. Thus the Center for Applied Linguistics (1998) emphasizes the need for equal status of the two languages. They also recommend that new programs begin with two classes at the same grade level (including kindergarten) and to involve the entire school and community in the planning.

### **Mission**

The Mount Vernon Community School Dual-Language Program will provide early opportunities for students who are non-English or limited-English speakers, and whose dominant language is Spanish, to acquire reading, speaking, and writing proficiency in English and Spanish and to provide students whose primary language is English the opportunity to develop reading, speaking, and writing skills in Spanish and English.

### **Goals**

1. Master the kindergarten curriculum.
2. Benefit from cross-cultural experiences.
3. Develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiency in English and Spanish.
4. Celebrate diversity.
5. Apply problem-solving strategies and higher order thinking skills in two languages.

## **III. EVALUATION FRAMEWORK**

Evaluative foci over several years will be on a) implementation of program goals including student achievement, b) improvement in the quality of the programs, and c) cost effectiveness. Evaluation of the focus school programs and the dual language program will, therefore, concentrate on implementation issues associated with inaugurating such programs as well as achievement during year one as measured by Standards of Learning (SOL) tests in Grade 3 and Grade 5 and Alexandria City Public Schools Criterion-Referenced Tests (CRT) in Kindergarten (mathematics only), Grade 1, Grade 2, and Grade 4. The kindergarten language arts CRT has been replaced by Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening, Kindergarten (PALS-K), a test of young children's knowledge of important literacy fundamentals that was administered to all ACPS kindergartners in the fall and the spring. Costs associated with the focus programs will be reported but not extensively analyzed during year one.

Continuous evaluation of focus school programs and services will be a significant component in the

overall development and maintenance of these new educational programs. Program evaluation is essential in determining whether a program should be changed, expanded, or deleted. When programs cannot meet major goals or in cases where the original goals are no longer relevant, they should be phased out to prevent curriculum overload. The process of program conception, implementation, evaluation, expansion, modification, and deletion is evolutionary rather than revolutionary. Change in a dynamic system is, therefore, not only inevitable but desirable.

Although some goals of the focus schools and the dual language program are long-range, short-range achievement goals will also be addressed in this study. Focus school staff will be expected to consistently employ informal and formal evaluation data to improve their approaches particularly in the integration of their models into the ACPS curriculum and Virginia's Standards of Learning. The main, generic questions, both short-range and long-range, that will be asked about each of these new programs include the following:

1. Is it being implemented as specified?
2. Is it effective/beneficial?
3. What are the costs associated with the program?
4. What is the effect of the program on teaching and learning in the core curriculum?
5. What is the effect of the program on student performance on SOL tests and CRT?
6. How does the academic performance of a group of Jefferson-Houston neighborhood students compare with that of Jefferson-Houston neighborhood students who attended a non-focus elementary school during 2000-2001?
7. How do students who have completed all of their elementary schooling at one of the focus schools or in Mount Vernon's Dual Language program compare on measures of academic achievement with students who have completed all of their elementary schooling at non-focus ACPS schools?
8. How do students who have completed all of their elementary schooling in Mount Vernon's Dual Language program compare with similar students at Mount Vernon and in other ACPS elementary schools who have received only ESL instruction and the regular core curriculum or who have participated in John Adams Spanish immersion program?

### **Implementation**

To address whether the programs are being implemented as specified, there was an examination of their goals and objectives as well as results. Although during the programs' first year, formative issues took precedence, there were adequate objective test measures to see how well the programs worked in meeting local and State achievement requirements. Of course, the populations of Jefferson-Houston, Lyles-Crouch, and Mount Vernon were quite different in 2000-2001 due to the reorganization of elementary attendance zones.

The principal method used to determine whether the focus programs were being implemented during year one was observation. Specifically, the program evaluator made in-depth on-site visits to Jefferson-Houston and Lyles-Crouch. Mount Vernon's dual-language program was also observed but the evaluation of that program rests more on pre- and post-measures specific to the program. The selection of classes that were observed included veteran Alexandria teachers as well as teachers new to Alexandria.

#### IV. JEFFERSON-HOUSTON PROGRAM EVALUATION

The evaluator chose classrooms at Jefferson-Houston at random and then spent the entire day with these classes to get an understanding of how the programs affected a typical student day. Some examples of these observations of a typical student day at Jefferson-Houston will be given.

Not every component of the arts program at Jefferson-Houston was observed. The evaluator chose to observe in classes that were designed for whole class rather than small groups. The instrumental, orchestra, and choral instruction were not directly observed but the output from these programs (performance) were. Priority in observation was given to those program components at Jefferson-Houston, such as dance and drama, that were not outgrowths of current ACPS programming.

Each of Jefferson-Houston's goals (**bolded**) will be followed by evidence of whether steps to achieve the goal have been implemented and the degree to which they have been successful during year one. Where no observable or measurable outcome of a goal was given, this will be noted.

1. **Strengthen the learning process for students, increase achievement, and prepare them to be effective problem solvers and confident learners through the integration of academics with visual and performing arts enrichment.**

Although there was evidence of the integration of academics with visual and performing arts, other than classroom observation and achievement tests, there was no directly observable measure for learner confidence and problem-solving effectiveness.

2. **Provide opportunities to integrate the visual and performing arts into the Alexandria City Public Schools curriculum and the Virginia Standards of Learning (SOL) using the curriculum and SOL as a base to increase student understanding of content and concepts through exploration and use of the arts.**

In the classrooms, the arts were integrated with the curriculum the students were studying to meet ACPS and SOL requirements. For example, students learned songs that were related to stories they had read in language arts or historical events and characters they were studying in social studies. Science concepts and facts were illustrated with visual arts classroom aides such as an octopus that displayed its biological facts along colorful tentacles. In writing students were required not only to write a story from prompts provided by the teacher but also to illustrate the story and "publish" it as a book that was added to the classroom library for other students to read. Although not unique to Jefferson-Houston, this activity clearly showed integration of the visual arts with the language arts curriculum.

One very powerful tool for teaching students to speak confidently and clearly before a group was the personal interview technique in which a student came to the front of the room, was seated and then interviewed by classmates. The student was required to respond in complete sentences and loudly enough for anyone in the class to hear. Responses were then recorded on the board.

Students appeared comfortable with this approach and responded with the ease and clarity that indicated a good deal of confidence that they could express themselves orally. This technique, which resembled a television program, put students in the spotlight and gave them a chance to perform with ease before their classmates, teacher, and the evaluator. Students exhibited good diction and showed enthusiasm for this updated language arts activity. This classroom activity reflected the skills students have gained in the drama class where they learned stage presence and voice projection.

**3. Provide instruction in the four core content areas of language arts, mathematics, social studies/history, and science.**

Instruction in the four core content areas of language arts, mathematics, social studies/history, and science at Jefferson-Houston was very much focused on SOLs and teachers and students were aware of which SOL was being addressed in daily instruction. While it was not possible to observe instruction in all subjects and grade levels at Jefferson-Houston, using the instructional day as the unit of observation provided the opportunity to see complete lessons presented within the student's schedule. The example that follows is a detailed observation of a mathematics concept for grade two students at Jefferson-Houston that will serve as an illustration of how the core curriculum is being presented to students.

The teacher introduced the concept of probability to students by asking them to give their concept of probability. Although these second graders did not know this term, they were guided to speculate about probability and concluded that "it has something to do with guessing." Students were then shown a computer program on the classroom monitor that demonstrated the use of a spinner and numbers printed on slices of a circular game board that resembled fractional parts of a pie. After several "trials" with the computer-driven spinner the students concluded that the spinner was more likely to land on a color that represented a larger piece of the pie. The program also showed the results of "trials" on a bar chart. The students were soon able to predict the effects of a particular color being  $\frac{1}{2}$  or  $\frac{3}{4}$  of the pie on the probability of the spinner landing on that color. The teacher then demonstrated the effect on probability of increasing a color from  $\frac{1}{2}$  to  $\frac{3}{4}$  and finally all of the pie. The teacher then divided the pie into two parts and did 10 trials so that students could see the results.

The next part of the lesson on probability demonstrated how probability works. The teacher placed four red cubes and four blue cubes in a bag. Students were then asked to predict how many red and how many blue cubes would probably be drawn from ten trials and to share their predictions with one of their adjacent classmates. The teacher then drew student names from a can without replacement so that each student got an opportunity to draw either a red or blue cube from the bag. A tally was kept of the red and blue cubes as they were drawn (with replacement) from the bag. Students were very enthusiastic about this exercise and surprisingly appeared to be "rooting" for either the red or blue cubes. The result was that students could see that, if the cubes were replaced after each draw, the probability was that half the time a blue cube would be drawn and half the time a red cube would be drawn.

The teacher then placed four blue cubes and ten red cubes into the bag and asked students to

predict whether there was a higher probability that they would draw a blue cube or a red cube. The students agreed that more red cubes would probably be drawn because there were more red than blue cubes in the bag. Again a tally was taken as each student took a turn drawing a cube from the bag. The result was one blue cube and nine red cubes, verifying the students' predictions that more red cubes would be drawn. The teacher again asked the students the meaning of probability. The students answered that it meant making a guess and also testing to see whether the guess was correct.

Immediately following this lesson students were required to complete a practice packet developed from the Silver Burdette mathematics series that was keyed to teaching probability. The paper and pencil exercise used the same concept of number parts of a pie and a spinner to ask students on which part of the pie the spinner was most likely to land. In a visual check of student papers by the evaluator, nearly all students could do this exercise correctly. Those who had difficulty were assisted by the teacher who mostly had to explain to these few students what the exercise required. After this additional explanation the students were able to complete the exercise.

The teacher mentioned to the students that the unit on probability that they had just completed and a previous unit on telling time were in preparation for ACPS Criterion-Referenced Tests which they would soon be required to take.

Students were then divided into pairs to practice telling time or counting money, while the teacher worked with a small group of students who were still having difficulty with telling time. The students had small analog clock manipulatives as well as cards with an analog clock face on one side and the time in digital format on the other. The money manipulatives were cards with pictures of coins on one side and their value in monetary format on the other.

Spring 2001 Criterion-Referenced Test results showed that 80% of the students in the observed second grade class passed the Grade Two Mathematics CRT. The percent passed for the Grade Two Mathematics CRT at Jefferson-Houston ranged from 56.3% to 80% with an average of 68.7%. The percent passed for the division was 75%.

- 4. Provide students with daily instruction in one or more of these areas: music, visual arts, drama, or dance; and**
- 5. Provide students with instruction in each of the four arts focus areas.**

Students at Jefferson-Houston have formal classes in music, art, dance, and drama only four days during the instructional week. On the remaining day students must be scheduled for physical education (PE).

Tables 1 and 2 below show representative daily class schedules for primary and intermediate grades at Jefferson-Houston. Students receive 45 minutes of instruction daily in one of the visual or performing arts, except on days that PE is scheduled. In most Alexandria elementary schools, only art is scheduled for a 45 minute period; all other special subjects are usually scheduled for 30 minute periods. Jefferson-Houston students thus receive more concentrated

instruction in the arts than they would receive in most other elementary schools in Alexandria. Drama and dance are not offered as formal subjects in other ACPS elementary schools.

Table 1: Jefferson-Houston Grade One Sample Schedule

SAMPLE					
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:15 AM	Opening	Opening	Opening	Opening	Opening
9:30 AM	Lang Arts	Lang Arts	Lang Arts	Lang Arts	Lang Arts
11:10 AM	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
11:40 AM	Lang Arts	Lang Arts	Lang Arts	Lang Arts	Lang Arts
11:45 AM	WTR	Lang Arts	WTR	Lang Arts	WTR
12:10 PM	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
12:40 PM	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
1:40 AM	Social Studies	Science	Social Studies	Science	Family Life
2:10 AM	PE	Dance	Art	Drama	Music
2:55 AM	Lang Arts	Lang Arts	Lang Arts	Lang Arts	Lang Arts
3:25 AM	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal

Table 2: Jefferson-Houston Grade Five Sample Schedule

SAMPLE					
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
9:15 AM	Opening	Opening	Opening	Opening	Opening
9:30 AM	Art	Drama	Music	PE	Dance
10:20 AM	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
11:10 AM	Math	Math	Math	Math	Math
12:00 PM	Lang Arts	Lang Arts	Lang Arts	History	History
12:30 PM	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
1:05 AM	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess	Recess
1:25 AM	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing	Writing
2:20 AM	Lang Arts	Lang Arts	Lang Arts	Lang Arts	Lang Arts
3:25 AM	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal	Dismissal

**6. Maintain average class sizes of 20 in grades kindergarten through five.**

As Table 3 below shows, Jefferson-Houston maintained average class sizes of 20 or less in all grades except Grade 5. During observations in Grade 5, it was evident that 24 to 25 students created a crowded classroom. This is due in part to the design of Jefferson-Houston where each pod area has a center area with three pie shaped classrooms on each side. When 24 to 25 student desks and a teacher station were placed in these classrooms, there was very little room for student work spaces.

Table 3: Jefferson-Houston Class Size, June 2001

Grade	K	1	2	3	4	5
	20	17	20	16	16	25
	17	17	21	17	17	24
	19	17	19	17	17	
	17	18	19	17	17	
		16		18		
		18				
Average	18.3	17.3	19.8	16.8	16.8	24.5

**7. Solicit support from cultural and arts related resources in the metropolitan area.**

As it has done for the past several years, Jefferson-Houston continued to solicit and receive support from cultural arts related resources such as The Friends of the Torpedo Factory, Office of the City of Alexandria Archaeologist, and Concerts in the Schools. For example, Concerts in the Schools provided a performance and demonstration by the Flamenco Dance Company of Ana Martinez flamenco dance and Spanish guitar. The troupe used English and Spanish to teach the origin of the flamenco dance and to add such Spanish words as *castañuela*, *mano*, *derecha*, *señoritas*, *muchachos*, and *fiesta*, numbers *uno*, *dos*, *tres*, *cuatro*, and *cinco*, and phrases *muy bien*, *muchas gracias*, and *adiós* to the children's vocabulary.

After demonstrating the flamenco and the use of castanets the dancer selected students from the audience to come to the stage and imitate her flamenco dance movements. The students were very enthusiastic about this opportunity and were able to mimic the flamenco dancer very well. This was partially due to their regular dance classes where the instructor always demonstrates a step and has them follow.

Another example of the use of community resources to enrich instruction can be seen in a project by Jefferson-Houston students in the video production studio who produced an original film for "Panasonic's Kid Witness News." The film was about the history of Alexandria's Freedmen's Cemetery (that functioned from its founding in January, 1864, by the military governor of Alexandria until January, 1869), for which they consulted with an Alexandria City archeologist. An equally interesting student production showed the history of Alexandria's "Berg" including

the origin of its name.

**8. Provide workshops for staff that will teach them how to infuse the arts into all disciplines.**

Workshops that were focused on integrating the arts into the ACPS Core Curriculum in which are embedded the Standards of Learning were provided for teachers prior to the opening of the 2000-2001 school year. Teachers who chose to remain at Jefferson-Houston as a focus school already had some experiences in integrating the arts, especially the visual arts, with the curriculum. Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences was also used as the basis for staff development designed to foster growth through building on student strengths and boosting their creativity by making learning fun and exciting. Gardner rejects the traditional view of human intelligence as a single dimension ("g" factor) and partitions it into 1) linguistic, 2) logical-mathematical, 3) spatial, 4) kinesthetic, 5) musical, 6) interpersonal, and 7) intrapersonal intelligences.

**9. Provide artists in residence who will offer mini-workshops and opportunities for regular interaction in interrelated art disciplines across the curriculum.**

During 2000-2001 there were no artists in residence at Jefferson-Houston.

**10. Provide performance opportunities and enrichment experiences for students and family through community resources to include:**

**The Friends of the Torpedo Factory  
Office of the City of Alexandria Archaeologist  
The Smithsonian Institution  
The Black History Resource Center of Alexandria  
The Alexandria Commission for the Arts  
The Virginia Commission for the Arts**

Jefferson-Houston actively encouraged its students and parents to take advantage of the many cultural events in Alexandria and the Washington metropolitan area. For example, the school arranged for students and teachers to attend a Saturday matinee performance of "The Boy and the Bull" by The Alexandria Ballet at The Athenaeum in Old Town at no cost to students and parents, and provided bus transportation.

**11. Meet or exceed passing scores on the SOL and Criterion-Referenced Tests.**

The preliminary results of spring 2001 CRT and SOL testing at Jefferson-Houston are shown in Tables 4 and 5 below. The number of students tested and reported for the SOL tests in Grade 3 and Grade 5 do not include those students who were transfers nor those who were classified as Limited English Proficient (LEP).

Table 4: Jefferson-Houston CRT Results  
Percent Passed

Kindergarten			
	1999	2000	2001
Math	95%	87%	84%
Lang Arts	94%	91%	73% <sup>1</sup>
Grade 1			
	1999	2000	2001
Math	84%	53%	59%
Lang Arts	69%	60%	60%
Grade 2			
	1999	2000	2001
Math	69%	81%	69%
Lang Arts	77%	84%	63%
Grade 4			
	1999	2000	2001
Math	47%	52%	48%
Lang Arts	33%	42%	20%

<sup>1</sup>PALS-K

Table 5: Jefferson-Houston SOL Results  
Percent Passed

Grade 3			
	1999	2000	2001
English	78%	68%	41%
Mathematics	80%	80%	59%
History	77%	73%	49%
Science	78%	84%	57%
Grade 5			
	1999	2000	2001
English	70%	59%	68%
Writing	83%	77%	81%
Mathematics	53%	53%	52%
History	25%	58%	44%
Science	68%	47%	61%
Computer	75%	79%	68%

At the end of its first year as a visual and performing arts focus school, Jefferson-Houston's Grade 3 did not have 70% of its students scoring at or above the 400 scaled score pass mark required to be fully accredited by the State. However, this statistic does not give a complete picture of how well Jefferson-Houston Grade 3 students acquired the skills required for Grade 3 by Virginia's Standards of Learning. In order to better determine student performance on the Grade 3 SOL tests for 2001, a score frequency distribution table was created. Table 6 shows the number of students scoring in constructed scoring ranges. For example, 14 students in Jefferson-Houston Grade 3 scored between 375 and 399 in English.

Table 6: Grade 3 Spring 2001 SOL Test Results Jefferson-Houston Frequency Distribution

Scaled Score Interval		English		History		Mathematics		Science	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
275	299	1	1.2%	0	0.0%	3	3.6%	3	3.6%
300	324	6	7.2%	3	3.6%	2	2.4%	2	2.4%
325	349	7	8.4%	10	12.0%	8	9.6%	5	6.0%
350	374	21	25.3%	10	12.0%	9	10.8%	6	7.2%
375	399	14	16.9%	18	21.7%	12	14.5%	19	22.9%
400	424	8	9.6%	20	24.1%	8	9.6%	15	18.1%
425	449	9	10.8%	7	8.4%	13	15.7%	7	8.4%
450	474	7	8.4%	7	8.4%	10	12.0%	9	10.8%
475	499	4	4.8%	1	1.2%	5	6.0%	6	7.2%
500	524	3	3.6%	5	6.0%	3	3.6%	4	4.8%
525	549	0	0.0%	1	1.2%	1	1.2%	3	3.6%
550	574	2	2.4%	1	1.2%	3	3.6%	0	0.0%
575	600	1	1.2%	0	0.0%	6	7.2%	4	4.8%
n		83	100.0%	83	100.0%	83	100.0%	83	100.0%

Table 7 below shows what would have happened if students in the 375-399 range had reached 400. In history, mathematics, and science, when the 375-399 interval students are added to the number passed, the 70% passed mark is exceeded. In English, however, another 10 students from the next lower interval would have to reach 400 in order to almost meet the 70% requirement.

Table 7: Grade 3 Spring 2001 SOL Test Results Jefferson-Houston Re-Calculated

Subject	Number	#Passed	%Passed	Add # 375-399 Interval	%Passed
English	83	34	41.0%	14	57.8%
History	83	41	49.4%	18	71.1%
Mathematics	83	49	59.0%	12	73.5%
Science	83	47	56.6%	19	79.5%

The implication of these statistics for Jefferson-Houston's 2001-2002 fourth grade are important for instructional planning, since many of these same students will be taking the Grade 5 SOL tests in 2003, and indeed, must also take the Grade 5 SOL history test in the spring of 2002. The students in the 375-399 range are the key to Jefferson-Houston's Grade 5 accreditation. This should not be interpreted as suggesting that students who scored in lower ranges should not continue to receive attention. The next step is to look at school list reports that show student

strengths and weaknesses in each skill area for each subject. In this way skills enhancement groups can be formed to ensure that skills gaps do not continue into the next grade level.

At Grade 5 Jefferson-Houston students exceeded the 70% requirement in Writing and came within fewer than two percentage points of meeting the requirement in English and Computer Literacy. As in Grade 3, there were a number of Grade 5 students in the 375-399 score range as shown Table 8 and Table 9 below.

Table 8: Grade 5 Jefferson-Houston Spring 2001 SOL Test Results Frequency Distribution

Scaled Score Interval		English		Writing		Mathematics	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
300	324	1	2.3%	0	0.0%	2	4.5%
325	349	1	2.3%	3	6.8%	7	15.9%
350	374	4	9.1%	2	4.5%	4	9.1%
375	399	8	18.2%	4	9.1%	8	18.2%
400	424	14	31.8%	8	18.2%	11	25.0%
425	449	3	6.8%	10	22.7%	2	4.5%
450	474	7	15.9%	6	13.6%	3	6.8%
475	499	2	4.5%	3	6.8%	5	11.4%
500	524	0	0.0%	2	4.5%	1	2.3%
525	549	1	2.3%	4	9.1%	0	0.0%
550	574	2	4.5%	3	6.8%	0	0.0%
575	600	1	2.3%	2	4.5%	1	2.3%
n		44	100.0%	47	106.8%	44	100.0%

Table 9: Grade 5 Jefferson-Houston Spring 2001 SOL Test Results Frequency Distribution (cont.)

Scaled Score Interval		Science		Computer	
		Freq	%	Freq	%
300	324	1	2.3%	0	0.0%
325	349	1	2.3%	0	0.0%
350	374	4	9.1%	6	13.6%
375	399	15	34.1%	8	18.2%
400	424	11	25.0%	7	15.9%
425	449	6	13.6%	11	25.0%
450	474	3	6.8%	3	6.8%
475	499	1	2.3%	3	6.8%
500	524	0	0.0%	1	2.3%
525	549	1	2.3%	3	6.8%
550	574	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
575	600	1	2.3%	2	4.5%
		44	100.0%	44	100.0%

When Grade 5 students in the 375-399 interval were added to the percent passed column, the effect was formidable. In each subject area, except science, fewer than 10 students prevented Jefferson-Houston from meeting the 70% passed requirement.

Table 10: Grade 5 Jefferson-Houston Spring 2001 SOL Test Results Re-Calculated

Subject	Number	#Passed	%Passed	Add # 375-399 Interval	%Passed
Computer	44	30	68.2%	8	86.4%
English	44	30	68.2%	8	86.4%
Writing	47	38	80.9%	4	89.4%
Mathematics	44	23	52.3%	8	70.5%
Science	44	27	61.4%	15	95.5%

Frequency distribution analysis is equally appropriate for George Washington Middle School, since these 5th graders will be taking another SOL test in three years. The skills assessed by the SOL tests are cumulative and therefore essential to further educational progress. It would be to the advantage of George Washington's sixth grade teachers to remediate these students and encourage them to re-take the Grade 5 English and mathematics SOL tests in the spring, since passing scores would count for George Washington's SOL pass rate and failing scores would not be counted against George Washington.

Jefferson-Houston also operated a writing laboratory that was targeted towards Grade 5, since the SOL Writing test is administered at Grade 5. This program was developed by the principal because of concern that the 2000-2001 student population might be weak in writing skills. The program used the literary arts as a means of increasing student interest in writing. For example, the program had its own collection of books that were designed to appeal to youngsters living in the Jefferson-Houston area has its own distinct history. This effort was very successful with Jefferson-Houston 5th graders, since slightly over 80% passed Virginia's SOL Grade 5 Writing test.

### **Jefferson-Houston Model Fit**

One of the community redistricting issues in the creation of Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics was whether the focus model was appropriate for the resident Jefferson-Houston population in the Parker-Gray historical district and Northeast Old Town's Berg. Normally it would be difficult to impossible to answer this question empirically even in a general way. The reorganization of Alexandria City Public Schools elementary attendance boundaries, however, provided an excellent, if not unique, opportunity to compare the performance of resident Jefferson-Houston students with that of students who resided in the Jefferson-Houston neighborhood but were zoned to attend Maury, a small elementary school just outside the neighborhood. Here is a description of how the Jefferson-Houston quasi experimental groups were formed followed by an analysis of variance (ANOVA).

- Step 1 Identified the Jefferson-Houston neighborhood as that area that is north of King Street and east of the railroad and Metro line.
- Step 2 Removed "lottery students" and those students who are zoned for Jefferson-Houston but live west of the railroad and Metro line from the Jefferson-Houston group A.
- Step 3 Identified the noncontiguous Maury attendance zone as Group B, since these students live in the Jefferson-Houston neighborhood, have similar demographics, but attend Maury.
- Step 4 Removed Maury students who did not reside in the Jefferson-Houston neighborhood from Jefferson-Houston Group B.
- Step 5 Performed an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) to determine whether there was a significant difference between the PALS-K, CRT, and SOL Spring 2001 scores for Jefferson-Houston neighborhood students who attended Jefferson-Houston (Group A) and Jefferson-Houston neighborhood students who attended Maury (Group B).

ANOVA is a statistical procedure for comparing the means of independent random samples from two or more populations. In this case Jefferson-Houston neighborhood students who attended Jefferson-Houston during 2000-2001 are being compared to Jefferson-Houston neighborhood students who attended Maury during 2000 - 2001. The mean scores for these two samples were different on some of the PALS-K, CRT, and SOL tests. The null hypothesis was that there was

no difference in the means of these two samples on these measures. ANOVA provides a method to determine whether the observed differences in the means were due to variance between the school attended factor or random variation within the samples. The ANOVA summaries in these tables show a probability or P-value that is considered statistically significant when it is less than or equal to .05. For example, when the P-value equals .05 there are only 5 chances in 100 that the difference between the means of the groups has occurred by chance and was, therefore, a true difference and a "yes" appears in the "Significant" column.

Tables 11-13 show the results of a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) where mean CRT score is the dependent variable and school attended is the factor.

Table 11: ANOVA CRT Results Spring 2001 Grades K-1 Jeff-Houston Neighborhood

Groups	School Attended 2000-2001	Count	Average	Variance	s.d.	P-value	Significant
<i>Kindergarten A PALS-K</i>	Jefferson-Houston	49	79.9	232.0	15.2	0.00124	yes
<i>Kindergarten B PALS-K</i>	Maury	30	66.2	442.2	21.0		
<i>Kindergarten A Math</i>	Jefferson-Houston	47	22.0	9.9	3.1	0.01397	yes
<i>Kindergarten B Math</i>	Maury	28	19.9	15.0	3.9		
<i>Gr 1A Lang Arts</i>	Jefferson-Houston	65	31.9	34.5	5.9	0.18759	no
<i>Gr 1B Lang Arts</i>	Maury	28	33.6	21.8	4.7		
<i>Gr 1A Math</i>	Jefferson-Houston	65	30.7	27.0	5.2	0.01359	yes
<i>Gr 1B Math</i>	Maury	28	33.5	16.2	4.0		

Note: Passing Scores: PALS-K=74, CRT: K Math= 20, Gr 1= 32, Gr 2= 32, Gr 4= 40

Table 12: ANOVA CRT Results Spring 2001 Grades 2, 4 Jeff-Houston Neighborhood

Groups	School Attended 2000-2001	Count	Average	Variance	s.d.	P-value	Significant
<i>Gr 2A Lang Arts</i>	Jefferson-Houston	53	30.8	22.1	4.7	0.38761	no
<i>Gr 2B Lang Arts</i>	Maury	26	31.8	24.6	5.0		
<i>Gr 2A Math</i>	Jefferson-Houston	53	32.3	20.5	4.5	0.80601	no
<i>Gr 2B Math</i>	Maury	27	32.6	15.5	3.9		
<i>Gr 4A Lang Arts</i>	Jefferson-Houston	43	34.5	37.1	6.1	0.07969	no
<i>Gr 4B Lang Arts</i>	Maury	14	31.0	52.9	7.3		
<i>Gr 4A Math</i>	Jefferson-Houston	43	37.4	37.5	6.1	0.00023	yes
<i>Gr 4B Math</i>	Maury	15	29.1	86.5	9.3		

Note: Passing Scores: PALS-K=74, CRT: K Math= 20, Gr 1= 32, Gr 2= 32, Gr 4= 40

Table 13: ANOVA SOL Results Spring 2001 Jefferson-Houston Neighborhood

Groups	School Attended 2000-2001	Count	Average	Variance	s.d.	P-value	Significant
<i>Gr 3 A Eng</i>	Jefferson-Houston	64	382.2	2364.5	48.6	0.34518	no
<i>Gr 3B Eng</i>	Maury	23	371.3	1870.9	43.3		
<i>Gr 3A History</i>	Jefferson-Houston	62	392.1	2260.8	47.5	0.27835	no
<i>Gr 3B History</i>	Maury	24	379.8	2053.4	45.3		
<i>Gr 3A Math</i>	Jefferson-Houston	62	411.3	5622.1	75.0	0.00768	yes
<i>Gr 3B Math</i>	Maury	25	364.2	4459.8	66.8		
<i>Gr 3A Science</i>	Jefferson-Houston	62	403.9	3991.5	63.2	0.00614	yes
<i>Gr 3B Science</i>	Maury	24	363.4	2517.6	50.2		
<i>Gr 5A Hist</i>	Jefferson-Houston	53	390.6	1303.3	36.1	0.06593	no
<i>Gr 5B Hist</i>	Maury	16	370.2	2053.0	45.3		

Note: SOL Passing Score = 400

## Findings

- 1) On the PALS-K test for phonological awareness literacy, Jefferson-Houston neighborhood kindergarten students who attended Jefferson-Houston scored significantly higher than Jefferson-Houston neighborhood kindergartners who attended Maury. The neighborhood kindergarten students who attended Jefferson-Houston also scored significantly higher on the Kindergarten CRT test in mathematics than those who attended Maury.
- 2) On the grade one CRT test for language arts, there was no significant difference between Jefferson-Houston neighborhood first graders who attended Jefferson-Houston and those who attended Maury. Jefferson-Houston neighborhood first grade students who attended Maury scored significantly higher on the grade one CRT for mathematics than those who attended Jefferson-Houston.
- 3) There were no significant differences on the grade two CRTs between Jefferson-Houston neighborhood students who attended Jefferson-Houston and those who attended Maury.
- 4) On the grade four CRT test for language arts there was no significant difference between Jefferson-Houston neighborhood students who attended Jefferson-Houston and those who attended Maury. In mathematics, however, Jefferson-Houston neighborhood students who attended Jefferson-Houston scored significantly higher on the CRT than those who attended Maury.
- 5) The results of the third grade SOL tests for Jefferson-Houston neighborhood students who attended Jefferson-Houston and those who attended Maury showed no significant differences in English or history. On the third grade SOL mathematics and science tests, Jefferson-Houston neighborhood students who attended Jefferson-Houston scored significantly higher than those who attended Maury.
- 6) There was no significant difference on the fifth grade history SOL (administered to fourth graders in Alexandria) between Jefferson-Houston neighborhood students who attended Jefferson-Houston and those who attended Maury.

Note: Grade 5 SOL results in English, mathematics, computer/technology, and science were not available for comparison because of a test scoring alert at Maury, that caused a delay in the results. Therefore, only Grade 5 history SOL results could be used in this comparison.

7) These findings appear to indicate that the Jefferson-Houston model is **at least as appropriate a learning environment** for this population as a small, regular elementary school, such as Maury.

### 12. **Promote high expectations for student achievement.**

Students are reminded daily, through the school's closed circuit television news show that is produced by students and the Network Resource Teacher, to endeavor to do their best. This theme of personal responsibility for behavior, academic achievement, and success was repeated

during each assembly and performance as well as in classrooms and newsletters. There was an observable student attitude of "I can do it." at Jefferson-Houston. Students were expected to pay attention, learn, and demonstrate that they had learned.

- 13. Develop and implement a dedicated summer school for Jefferson-Houston students that will allow teachers to identify skills deficiencies and performance needs, and address them at the school site with priority given to remediation in the core academic areas.**

A dedicated summer school for Jefferson-Houston students is being implemented during 2001 but data on this project are not yet available.

- 14. Develop and implement a three to four week late summer preparatory program for entering kindergarten students to prepare them for success in kindergarten.**

Entering 2000-2001 kindergarten students at Jefferson-Houston were offered a three-hour kindergarten preparation program from July 10th to July 21st; however, only 16 of 87 Jefferson-Houston entering kindergartners were enrolled by their parents in this program. A preliminary evaluation of the kindergarten preparation program at Jefferson-Houston (see *Preliminary Evaluation of the Kindergarten Preparation Summer Program, February 2001*, Monitoring and Evaluation Services, ACPS) showed no difference between the fall PALS-K scores of Jefferson-Houston kindergartners who attended the kindergarten preparation program and those who did not.

- 15. Identify, select, and train teachers whose skills sets will support the school's mission in the integration of the visual and performing arts into a sound academic program.**

Teachers at Jefferson-Houston were interviewed and selected by the principal on the basis of their performance as classroom teachers and specialists and their interest and aptitude for integrating the visual and performing arts into a sound academic program based on the ACPS Core Curriculum and the Standards of Learning. Teachers for new subjects such as drama and dance were selected from ACPS staff and hold NK-12 Virginia teaching certificates. According to ACPS Human Resources records, the drama teacher is not endorsed for drama but has experience teaching theater for two years in a Virginia high school and is experienced and trained in vocal music, piano, and chorus with teaching experience in vocal music. The dance teacher is a qualified physical education and dance teacher who has experience with elementary dance groups.

- 16. Develop and implement a curriculum that is the vehicle for including the art disciplines in the core subject areas to nurture student creativity in an educational setting that seeks to maximize academic achievement and develop and expand talent, skill, and creativity, as well.**

The visual and performing arts curriculum at Jefferson-Houston can best be viewed in terms of how it permeates instruction in the classroom (see discussion and examples in goals/implementation items 1, 2, and 3 above) and the extended curriculum in the arts themselves. Each of the arts at Jefferson-Houston also had internal goals that were based on

Virginia's Standards of Learning for Fine Arts.

## Visual Arts

Students at Jefferson-Houston at all levels received art instruction in 45-minute blocks of time. The resident art teacher also was responsible for the display of student art and the creation of student-designed sets for the performances in dance, chorus, and drama. The student art work was displayed throughout the school facility as well as in classrooms. The art instruction at Jefferson-Houston was correlated with Virginia's Fine Arts Standards of Learning goals that enable students to:

- Select and use art media, subject matter, and symbols for expression and communication;
- Know the elements of art and the principles of design and how they are used in the visual arts;
- Solve visual arts problems with originality, flexibility, fluency, and imagination;
- Understand the relationship of the visual arts to history, culture, and other fields of knowledge;
- Use materials, methods, information, and technology in a safe and ethical manner;
- Perceive, reflect upon, and evaluate the characteristics, purposes, and merits of their work and the work of others;
- Identify, analyze, and apply criteria for making visual aesthetic judgments; and
- Develop an aesthetic awareness and personal philosophy regarding nature, meaning, and value in the visual arts.

Jefferson-Houston's Visual Arts Department has long been involved in art projects with other agencies in the city, state, and region. For example, during the 1998-99 school year, Jefferson-Houston implemented a grant from the Virginia Commission for the Arts that allowed its students to experience art through science. Specialists in the fields of archeology, paleontology, and geology worked with Jefferson-Houston students as they conducted investigations, drew conclusions, made predictions, learned about primary sources, and demonstrated these skills through art projects. In the 1999-2000 school year, Jefferson-Houston presented an evening program about the arts of Africa that was funded by its PTA, the Virginia Commission for the Arts, and *The Washington Post*. Jefferson-Houston had an outstanding visual arts program even before its designation as a focus school for the visual and performing arts.

While it is not possible to capture the visual impact of the arts on the learning environment at Jefferson-Houston in text, a description of two innovative art projects will hopefully describe the depth and quality of this part of the Jefferson-Houston program.

In October, 2000, Jefferson-Houston's Visual Arts Department presented "The Culinary Arts" that featured food and serving utensils as the theme for teaching art principles. Kindergarten students learned about primary and secondary colors using coffee filters and food coloring. First graders reinforced color mixing techniques, counting, texture, and fractions using pizza as the motif. The ceramic pizza slices even had toppings that could be moved from slice to slice to vary the fraction questions. Second grade students learned about color mixing, background,

foreground, and illusion of depth by painting still life fruit baskets in the style of Matisse. The third grade made their own Blue Willow China on paper plates and did a brief anthology about how it found its way to America during colonial times and its local rediscovery in Alexandria archeological digs. Fourth graders worked with coil, slab, and hand-building techniques in clay by making ceramic bread. Fifth graders ventured into abstract art by making trays with drafting tape and hard edge techniques.

The William Johnson project is an example of how Jefferson-Houston students learned to see the visual arts in relation to history and culture through investigations of works of art from different times and different places. William H. Johnson (1901-1970), one of America's most famous African American painters, left the rural south when he was seventeen, and lived in Harlem. There he worked odd jobs until he saved enough money to study art at the National Academy of Design. Johnson also managed to study in Paris for several years. Johnson returned briefly to New York but, faced with the difficulties of being a Black artist during the late 20s, moved to Denmark where he painted for nearly ten years before returning to the United States just prior to the outbreak of World War II. It was as a teacher at the Harlem Community Arts Center that Johnson began his now famous works that draw his imagery from memories of life in the rural south.

Johnson's paintings are characterized by bold primary colors and depict scenes from church going and baptisms to jitter-bug. The students in Jefferson-Houston's fifth grade studied the work and life of Johnson and then had an opportunity to create their own "Johnsonian" images using the same masses of primary colors as he used in depicting the rural south and his Harlem experiences. The end result of this instruction (several examples of which hang in the School Board auditorium at the Mark Winkler Building) was absolutely stunning. Students replicated Johnson's jitter-bug figures and gave them, in some cases, a cross-cultural flavor that is now prevalent in Alexandria's schools. The students had grasped Johnson's use of primary colors, solid masses of paint, and the illusion of motion. Their drawings were later displayed on one of the schools many exhibit spaces. This unit is a good illustration of how a skillful teacher can help students place works of art in the context of the time in which they were created and learn the techniques of the artist at the same time. The Smithsonian's National Museum of American Art is closed temporarily for renovation but its web site provides the students with an opportunity to learn more about this artist, his works, and his life. This unit is a good illustration of how Jefferson-Houston has used the many educational and cultural resources of the Washington metropolitan area. It is important to document this kind of learning, although it may be difficult to quantify it.

## **Dance**

Jefferson-Houston offered dance to all of its students in 2000-2001. Dance was taught in space reallocated from one of the pods and specially fitted with a wooden dance floor. Instruction was given by a full-time dance teacher with years of experience in teaching physical education and dance in Alexandria's public schools. Students were required to wear black and white clothes on dance days. Footwear was restricted to socks while in the dance studio. The space itself was walled with mirrors to enable students to see themselves learning and performing dance routines.

The evaluator observed a second grade class in order to see how dance fits with classroom curriculum. Students first performed a warm-up exercise. Students were then placed in a circle and assigned numbers counted by 3s. Students were then asked to say their number. Selected students were asked to repeat each student's number. One student was selected by number and required to do a favorite dance step three times. The instructor then demonstrated a dance called the Macarena and each movement was counted by 3s. Finally the students did the complete Macarena while moving forward. This lesson well illustrates how basic addition facts in the 3 family can be reinforced through dance, thus "setting the stage" for multiplication. Another useful outcome of the dance instruction was that it required students to listen carefully to instructions and then demonstrate that they had understood them by performing. It also demanded that students be respectful of others who may or may not have been as agile as they. Students showed a great deal of self-confidence and lack of inhibition in performing before their peers and a visitor (the evaluator). Dance appears to be a wonderful medium for student expression.

Students were required to demonstrate steps in groups that resembled line dancing. Each group had to get its members to work together--another useful skill. Each team was given time to practice dancing together in a line and then got a chance to show the class what they could do. Then the entire class did the routine. The Macarena requires quite a bit of coordination and the evaluator was frankly rather pleasantly surprised at how easily the students learned this dance in a single period. The instructor was very capable and always demonstrated each step.

The instructor maintained excellent discipline and classroom control in this very "active" environment. Students who did not follow the rules were immediately excluded from the activity for a short period of time, being asked to sit on the sidelines and watch the others. This appeared to be effective in making sure that students were attentive, respectful, and safe. The evaluator was able to see the culmination of this dance lesson in a June 5, 2001, program called "An Evening of Dance" in which students danced the Macarena in a number called "Y-e-e-a-a-h for the Threes!" The program itself involved over 100 students in grades kindergarten through five. It featured folk dance, ballet, jazz, and hip hop, and was supported by the art, music, and drama departments.

## **Drama**

Drama was taught at Jefferson-Houston by a drama teacher who conducted classes in a modified classroom area with a small stage and a piano. The drama lessons were sometimes correlated with classroom themes and activities but also developed skills independently. Students used familiar material, such as the Pledge of Allegiance, as the medium for learning dramatic skills. In the class observed, the students were divided into teams and were required to recite the Pledge one line at a time with each student taking their cue from the previous student until the entire text had been recited. Students were also instructed in stage directions and stage presence. This exercise was designed to teach students how to participate as actors in plays by not only learning their parts but also by developing the skill of listening carefully to other students so that continuity is maintained in the performance. The students in this class then began working on an adaptation of the Cinderella story in which the characters were expressed in regional stereotypes.

This activity culminated in a dramatic performance for the entire school.

What was evident in the classrooms and on the school's stage was the confidence that the students had in speaking and presenting their ideas in controlled, audible voices. The skills they have learned in drama were important to the classroom setting where students in the classes observed knew both how to speak and listen. Students not only respected other students but followed what they were saying with, what seemed to be, a genuine interest. Students had also been taught the skill of constructive criticism, and student comments to their peers were nearly always positive. Jefferson-Houston students appeared to have empathy for their fellow students, since each of them knew they would have their turn in the "spotlight" and would appreciate reciprocal consideration for their efforts. The line between learning and performing was amazingly blurred at Jefferson-Houston. This was particularly true in dance and drama where most students were experiencing these art forms personally for the first time. They laughed with each other and not at each other. This was not an inconsequential outcome even though it was more qualitative than quantitative.

## **Music**

The vocal music program at Jefferson-Houston during 2000-2001, in addition to offering students vocal music as a class, supported three choruses: Grades 2 and 3 Chorus, Grade 5 Chorus, and an After-School Chorus. Although the Vocal Music Department had its own curriculum, the performances in the Winter Concert, Spring Concert, and Primary Music Concert and Visual Arts Program were integrated with the instrumental music, dance, drama, and art programs. The choruses were well developed with very good presentation skills for elementary age students. Large numbers of students participated in these choruses. For example, 60 kindergarten, first grade, and second grade students were listed as Primary Chorus members in the May 31st performance.

The instrumental music program offered band and orchestra. Violin could be studied by students as young as kindergartners and first graders. Second and third graders could study band. Jefferson-Houston had a variety of bands and ensembles such as the school band, the Gold Star Orchestra, the Silver Star Orchestra, Grade 2 and Grade 3 Orchestra, Cello Choir, Grade 3 Violin Ensemble, Third Grade Trio, First Grade Violin Class, and the Four Amazing Violins. The Suzuki Method was used at Jefferson-Houston. The chorus, band, and orchestra programs at Jefferson-Houston performed a broad selection of music that included folk, traditional, classical, and modern pieces such as "Old McDonald Had a Farm," Beethoven's "Ode to Joy," Mussorgsky's "The Great Gate of Kiev," and Aaron Copeland arrangements.

**17. Expand parent involvement/participation to ensure that parents understand and accept clearly identified roles, are supportive of their children's reaching academic goals and becoming active participants in the complementary arts program.**

Jefferson-Houston's high expectations for students require an increased involvement/participation by parents. One of the most effective means that Jefferson-Houston had for getting more parents into the school was their many evening performances, contests, and exhibits.

Parents responded well to the opportunity to see the work of their children and that of others. There was no quantifiable means of determining whether parental involvement increased at Jefferson-Houston during 2000-2001, since the population of the school had greatly changed from the 1999-2000 school year.

## V. LYLES-CROUCH PROGRAM EVALUATION

Each implementation goal for Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy will be followed by evidence, if available, of implementation towards its achievement.

### 1. **To create a safe, caring, and wholesome learning environment for students:**

Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy has a highly structured learning environment that is not dissimilar to that of a small, private school with access to high quality resources. Students were observed highly engaged in learning in self-contained classrooms with no interruptions in the instructional day. Students were highly disciplined and always under direct supervision and control. Although teachers do not normally dine with students, their dining room is adjacent to the student dining room. Students, therefore, do not have to remain in line waiting for their teacher; their teacher is in the same area.

A key ingredient in the Lyles-Crouch model is uniformity, not only in behavior but in appearance. School uniforms are required. All students must wear navy-blue trousers or skirts with a white shirt or blouse. During the initial implementation year, the principal ordered a supply of uniforms for the children. Students whose parents could not pay for uniforms received funding from a business partner account provided to the school, by an Old Town group or from a clothing bank donated by the parents and community. During year two parents will be required to buy from vendors or other sources for children's clothing.

Since Lyles-Crouch serves the immediate area of Old Town south of King Street and a strip of the city south of Duke Street reaching as far west as Cameron Run, six school buses, including a focus school bus, transport its students daily. Although some students live in nearby South Side, for safety reasons they are transported by bus.

The following examples illustrate how the traditional academy model was manifested in the classrooms of Lyles-Crouch during the 2000-2001 school year.

The whole class was used as the unit of observation at Lyles-Crouch just as it had been at Jefferson-Houston. The classes were chosen at random and the teachers were not informed in advance of the observations.

The Grade 5 class, with which the evaluator spent the day, was reviewing fractions. This was an activity common to most Alexandria classrooms; however, Lyles-Crouch students were required to go beyond just knowing how to solve problems with fractions. The teacher reviewed the

names for the parts of a fraction expression: numerator and denominator, and asked the students to tell what each part did. The students responded that the numerator tells how many pieces out of the total or how many pieces into which the whole has been divided. The definitions for mixed numbers, improper fractions, proper fraction, lowest terms, and greatest common factor were also reviewed. Students then copied the definitions into their notebooks. An exercise called “Pick Your Pizza” was used to demonstrate the use of fractions and make sure that the students understood how to use fractions for a practical purpose. The teacher also used formal arithmetic theory such as  $a+b=c$  since  $c-b=a$  and  $c-a=b$ .  $a/b$  was used to express the concept of a fraction. Students were required to read problems aloud. The teacher then used the pizza-based fraction exercise and let students go to the board to express the fraction(s) used in the problems and illustrate the fractional parts of the pizza. Some students worked the pizza problems at the board, while others worked in their seats. This lesson was very structured, but Lyles-Crouch students appeared to be accustomed to this method of instruction.

This class then proceeded to physical education where they were required to take a running test that was cued to musical prompts. This was followed by chin-ups and instruction in the back hand tennis stroke. The physical education program was also highly structured with an emphasis on skills and fitness. Students were attentive and well-motivated to do their best on the physical fitness tests as well as the tennis instruction.

The class next went to the science laboratory where they reviewed SOL 4.3 on electricity. These concepts were reviewed and discussed: electricity, electric circuit, voltage, ampere, conductor, insulator, semiconductor, static electricity, electron, proton, neutron, and nucleus. The students were shown videos of the effect of static electricity as well as the causes of lightning. The science room displayed the steps in the scientific method of inquiry. Students were attentive. Science at Lyles-Crouch in Grades 3, 4, and 5 was taught by a science specialist in scheduled periods. The science specialist had a background in the integration of mathematics and science. The long-term substitute observed, however, was not a certificated public school teacher, but had majored in chemistry.

During the spelling period at 1:40 p.m., the teacher dictated homographs and homophones. Students were also required to complete a “Blitz list” of words that are often misused, since they sound the same but are spelled differently e.g. capital, capitol, peer, pier. The spelling was checked immediately by the teacher as students completed their papers. Students then did an exercise in prefix and suffix in which they categorized these word components according to parts of speech with which they are normally used.

During reading, students were required to locate a particular new word, find the meaning of the word in the dictionary, and then paraphrase the meaning given. This exercise, while hardly innovative, nonetheless required students to demonstrate that they understood what they were reading.

The instruction at Lyles-Crouch was demonstrably safe, caring, and wholesome in its structured approach to teaching and learning and was tempered to provide help when students needed it. Whole class instruction with direct teaching was prominent at Lyles-Crouch most of the time.

## **2. To develop student skills for life-long learning:**

Instruction in basic skills that will be required for success in school, college, and work place was clearly a priority at Lyles-Crouch. Students at Lyles-Crouch were only “pulled out” for speech, remedial reading, and special education. Instrumental music and chorus were taught from 3:20 p.m., when the regular school day ended, until 4:30 p.m. An after-school activities bus provided transportation for students who participated in these programs. This arrangement enabled whole class, direct instruction with an uninterrupted (no "pull-outs") instructional day. Students were required to keep a language arts notebook in which they wrote definitions such as sentence, statement, question, command, exclamation, plurals (how they are formed, with examples) possessives, compound words, common nouns, proper nouns, pronouns, and adjectives. Students maintained class subject folders where they placed their completed work and marked it on a chart.

Social studies used the *Virginia SOL History and Social Studies Coach*. Pacing guides spread social studies lessons out over the year from September to June. The SOL practice tests that teachers assigned for class work were difficult and required reading for comprehension and the skill of drawing inferences. Map and table skills were also required. Students had SOL review packets to use when they had finished other assigned class work. The *Blast Off* series from Buckle Down Publishing was used for mathematics, reading, and writing. In reading, for example, students were required to read a story and then state or select the main idea.

The routine at Lyles-Crouch appeared to be effective but sometimes students in the third grade were very tired near the end of the morning and no longer able to sit still during the reading. However, they had remained attentive and responsive for a very long time for third graders, indicating that they had the stamina for this kind of traditional instruction.

Lyles-Crouch also continued to implement Character Counts, with its emphases on personal responsibility, citizenship, consideration for others, etc. that was designed to prepare students for student and adult life. Character Counts could be seen in daily messages on the school's television network that were followed up in the classroom and later in group discussions led by the guidance counselor.

## **3. To achieve full accreditation by the Commonwealth of Virginia:**

In order to achieve full accreditation by the Commonwealth of Virginia currently at least 70% of the students must pass the SOL tests in the four core subjects of English, mathematics, history (Grades 5 and 3 only if it helps), and science (Grade 5). The 2001 results of CRTs and SOLs for Lyles-Crouch were examined to determine how Lyles-Crouch is proceeding towards the goal of full accreditation.

As Table 14 below shows, the results of 2001 CRT testing indicate that in Grade 1 mathematics and Grade 4 mathematics and language arts, Lyles-Crouch, during its first year as a focus school, did not reach a percent passed level of 70% that might be predictive of passing similar SOL tests in Grade 3 and Grade 5.

Table 14: CRT Results Lyles-Crouch  
Percent Passed

Kindergarten			
	1999	2000	2001
Math	n/a	n/a	89%
Lang Arts	n/a	n/a	94% <sup>1</sup>
Grade 1			
	1999	2000	2001
Math	n/a	n/a	62%
Lang Arts	n/a	n/a	92%
Grade 2			
	1999	2000	2001
Math	n/a	n/a	90%
Lang Arts	n/a	n/a	77%
Grade 4			
	1999	2000	2001
Math	51%	61%	58%
Lang Arts	31%	48%	42%

<sup>1</sup>PALS-K

Table 15 below shows that more than 70% of Lyles-Crouch students passed the 2001 SOL tests in computer and writing at Grade 5. They were also very close (68.8%) to passing in Grade 5 mathematics and Grade 5 science.

Table 15: SOL Results Lyles-Crouch  
Percent Passed

Grade 3			
	1999	2000	2001
English	73%	41%	58%
Mathematics	64%	47%	75%
History	57%	28%	38%
Science	63%	35%	50%
Grade 5			
	1999	2000	2001
English	66%	60%	61%
Writing	75%	68%	85%
Mathematics	39%	36%	67%
History	39%	52%	51%
Science	55%	48%	67%
Computer	63%	71%	82%

In Grade 3 a substantial percentage of Lyles-Crouch SOL scores fell into the 375-399 interval (see Table 16 below), with a score of 400 required for passing.

Table 16. Grade 3 Lyles-Crouch Spring 2001 SOL Test Results Frequency Distribution

Scaled Score Interval		English		History		Mathematics		Science	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
275	299	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	4.2%	0	0.0%
300	324	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
325	349	3	12.5%	1	4.2%	2	8.3%	2	8.3%
350	374	4	16.7%	3	12.5%	6	25.0%	0	0.0%
375	399	3	12.5%	3	12.5%	2	8.3%	5	20.8%
400	424	3	12.5%	8	33.3%	0	0.0%	5	20.8%
425	449	2	8.3%	4	16.7%	2	8.3%	5	20.8%
450	474	3	12.5%	4	16.7%	5	20.8%	0	0.0%
475	499	6	25.0%	0	0.0%	1	4.2%	4	16.7%
500	524	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	8.3%	2	8.3%
525	549	0	0.0%	1	4.2%	1	4.2%	1	4.2%
550	574	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	2	8.3%	0	0.0%
575	600	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
n		24	100.0%	24	100.0%	24	100.0%	24	100.0%

When students scores in the 375-399 interval are added (as shown in Table 17 below) to those passed in Grade 3 English, mathematics, and science, the percentage of students passing the SOL tests would exceed 70%. In history, however, student scores in lower intervals need to be raised in order to meet a passing percentage of 70%.

Table 17: Grade 3 Lyles-Crouch Spring 2001 SOL Test Results Re-Calculated

Subject	Number	#Passed	%Passed	Add# 375-399 Interval	%Passed
English	24	14	58.3%	3	70.8%
History	24	9	37.5%	3	50.0%
Mathematics	24	18	75.0%	2	83.3%
Science	24	12	50.0%	5	70.8%

The Grade 5 frequency distributions for SOL tests shown in the Table 18 below for English, mathematics, science, and history illustrate again how the scores of a few students could impact the percentage passing the SOL tests. In a grade level with 33 or fewer students, each student represents

approximately least three percentage points.

Table 18: Grade 5 Lyles-Crouch Spring 2001 SOL Test Results Frequency Distribution

Scaled Score Interval		English		Mathematics		Science		History	
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
275	299	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	2.8%
300	324	0	0.0%	1	3.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
325	349	4	12.1%	2	6.1%	1	3.0%	2	5.6%
350	374	3	9.1%	1	3.0%	2	6.1%	8	22.2%
375	399	6	18.2%	7	21.2%	10	30.3%	6	16.7%
400	424	2	6.1%	11	33.3%	7	21.2%	4	11.1%
425	449	4	12.1%	2	6.1%	7	21.2%	3	8.3%
450	474	8	24.2%	3	9.1%	4	12.1%	7	19.4%
475	499	2	6.1%	3	9.1%	2	6.1%	2	5.6%
500	524	1	3.0%	1	3.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
525	549	2	6.1%	1	3.0%	0	0.0%	1	2.8%
550	574	1	3.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	1	2.8%
575	600	0	0.0%	1	3.0%	0	0.0%	1	2.8%
	n	33	100.0%	33	100.0%	33	100.0%	36	100.0%

Table 19: Grade 5 Lyles-Crouch Spring 2001 SOL Tests Re-Calculated

Subject	Number	#Passed	%Passed	Add# 375-399 Interval	%Passed
English	33	20	60.6%	6	78.8%
Mathematics	33	22	66.7%	7	87.9%
Science	33	22	66.7%	10	97.0%
History	36	19	52.8%	6	69.4%

**4. To have high expectations for all students to achieve academically.**

Students were required to keep notebooks for specific subjects such as language arts. They also maintained class subject folders where they placed their completed work and logged it on their charts. They had a homework assignment record book that went home so that parents could always see what had been assigned. Parents at Lyles-Crouch were required to sign a contract in which they agreed to cooperate with the school in ensuring that students maintained proper behavior, worked diligently in school, and completed homework assignments. When necessary, parents were required to sign these homework assignment record books to verify that homework had been completed.

Lyles-Crouch expected students to achieve and required that parents be actively responsible as partners in the education of their children. Much instruction at Lyles-Crouch was direct and involved the whole class, with all students being expected to achieve equally well. Although not stated in its goals, Lyles-Crouch was staffed by design so that classes would average 15 for K-2 and 20 for Grades 3-5.

**5. To ensure that all students learn to read independently through phonics instruction and teacher-guided instruction in self-contained classrooms.**

To get an idea about how this goal was being met, a first grade room was selected for observation, since decoding skills that can be gained from phonics instruction are usually continued at this grade level. This first grade classroom was full of phonics word lists, such as vowel sounds, diphthongs, and word patterns. Reading and mathematics SOLs were posted. The teacher used a center-based approach for teaching reading, indicating that there was some methodological flexibility within the confines of the self-contained classroom. The teacher began by reading a story about a little boy named Joseph whose grandfather re-made his clothes as he grew. As threads and buttons from the clothing fell while being repaired, they were used by a family of mice who lived beneath the floor. Students responded well to this story and followed the text that accompanied the many illustrations in this text. This whole class activity was effective in getting students ready to focus on the center-based learning tasks that would follow.

Each of the centers was first explained to the students who were subsequently assigned to the centers in small groups. The centers were: #1 glossary - students looked up and wrote definitions of words from the story and used word tiles to make sentences, #2 - guided reading conducted by the teacher at a small semi-circular table, #3 sentence completion - students picked words from a list and completed the sentence, and #4 final copy - students completed final copy of their own stories including illustrations as part of the pre-writing, rough draft, and final copy writing process. The culmination of this writing was a hallway display where students pinned their story on a life-sized, full-body drawing of themselves.

At the directed reading center, the teacher began by using letter tiles and required each student in turn to make a word with a certain number of letters (a, c, e, m, r, a), from which they made these words: am, ram, mace, ace, rear, car, and finally camera. This was an example of phonics

instruction that maintains the interest of young students. Students then “whisper read” a little book on tarantulas and a new book on insects. The students were then asked to name some insects they knew. Then they were asked how many body parts insects have (three) in comparison with spiders (two). They also discussed how insects ate pollen and drank nectar. The insect known as the walking stick was discussed and students knew that the walking stick uses camouflage for protection from predators. Students were then reminded of what good readers do: (1) skip words they do not know and then look them up in the glossary, which students described as “like a little dictionary,”(2) use picture clues, and (3) sound out unfamiliar words. Phonics, although very prominent in this classroom was only one of the ways that students were taught how to decode unfamiliar words. This center was teacher-directed, although students were required to read independently.

The next group read a story about a neighborhood where everyone, including animals, wore roller skates. After students read a page in the story, one student read it aloud to the group. Comprehension as well as the ability to distinguish fact from fantasy was determined through this activity. Rhyming words were also identified. Then students were required to write about their favorite part of the story. Students were able to quickly do this demonstrating that writing is being taught along with reading.

At the final copy center, students not only copied their corrected rough draft but also were required to copy a draft of their illustration. A paraprofessional assisted students at the final copy center.

The discipline at Lyles-Crouch was exceptional and used the concept that students are always responsible for their own behavior. This first grade teacher used a behavioral control system that consisted of five paper plates. The five plates had a happy face, a normal face, a sad face, a chair, and a telephone that represented very good behavior, acceptable behavior, unacceptable behavior, temporary isolation from the class activities, and finally a call to parents, respectively. Each student had a clothes pin on which his/her name was printed. The clothes pin was then fastened to one of the plates. With this device each student always had a current account of his/her behavioral standing in the class. This graduated “behavioral barometer” gave students notice of when their behavior was slipping so that they should not suddenly find themselves in difficulty. The class could also observe when one of their members was having a behavior problem. Students could earn dots that could be traded for beads for good behavior and these beads were placed on a necklace that each student got to keep at the end of the year. This entire system was a great way to help youngsters visualize their behavior and see it as a continuous dimension of schooling.

## VI. MOUNT VERNON DUAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM EVALUATION

The Dual Language Program at Mount Vernon Community School was developed to provide early opportunities for students who are non-English or limited-English speakers, and whose dominant language is Spanish, to acquire reading, speaking, and writing proficiency in English and Spanish. Students whose primary language is English had the opportunity to develop reading, speaking, and writing skills in Spanish and English. During 2000-2001, the Dual Language Program was implemented in two Mount Vernon kindergarten classes.

The plan for this program called for two bilingual kindergarten teachers, two bilingual paraprofessionals, and a bilingual parent liaison. Unfortunately, however, one of the two bilingual kindergarten teachers resigned during the first week of school and was replaced by a kindergarten teacher who spoke only English. The design of the program was to teach the SOL kindergarten curriculum with language arts and mathematics being taught in English and social studies and science in Spanish. Because of the resignation of one of the bilingual teachers, the program was modified so that students received instruction in social studies and science in the room of the bilingual teacher in the morning and then changed to the English-speaking teacher's room for instruction in language arts and mathematics in the afternoon. The morning language arts and mathematics class then went to the Spanish-speaking room for instruction in science and mathematics by the bilingual Spanish/English speaking teacher. Although this design change was not planned, it had the advantage, from a language immersion standpoint, of establishing an English-only and a Spanish-only environment complete with texts and supplementary materials including computer software in the appropriate language. The expectation from the program was that participants would be prepared to enter first grade on grade level or above in their academic performance and achievement. The mission of the program was to facilitate sound learning and the acquisition of language skills in both English and Spanish.

Each of the program goals (**bolded**) will be followed by evidence of its accomplishment.

### 1. **Master the kindergarten curriculum**

Three independent measures were available to make a preliminary determination of how well the Mount Vernon Dual Language Program met its goals during year one:

Spring PALS-K test (replaced Kindergarten Language Arts CRT)

Kindergarten CRT Mathematics Test

Fall/Spring PRE-LAS tests in English and Spanish

Of these, the evaluator focused on the PALS-K and the PRE-LAS, since these two tests are more relevant to the goals of the Dual-Language program at Mount Vernon, and mathematics was taught only in English.

Table 20 below shows that 44.4% of Spanish-speaking kindergartners in Mount Vernon's Dual Language program passed the spring PALS-K test, while 42.1% of Mount Vernon Spanish-speaking kindergartners in regular kindergarten classes passed the spring PALS-K test.

Slightly more English-speaking Mount Vernon kindergartners in the Dual Language program (63.2%) passed the spring PALS-K test than English-speaking Mount Vernon kindergartners in regular kindergarten classes (61.5%).

Table 20: Mount Vernon Fall/Spring PALS-K 2000/2001

	English Speaking Regular Classroom		English Speaking Dual Language		Spanish Speaking Regular Classroom		Spanish Speaking Dual Language	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
n	18	13	20	19	42	38	19	18
#Passed	12	8	14	12	14	16	8	8
Passed	66.7%	61.5%	70.0%	63.2%	33.3%	42.1%	15.8%	44.4%
Mean	38.1	74.8	47.5	69.2	22.9	65.7	16.4	67.2

Fall Passing Score = 28, Spring Passing Score = 74

## 2. Benefit from cross-cultural experiences

English-speaking Mount Vernon kindergartners in the Dual Language program made gains in Spanish, while Spanish-speaking kindergartners made gains in English, see Table 23. Cultural goals of the Dual Language program at Mount Vernon could not be better assessed, since it was not possible to determine how much of the Hispanic culture was gained from the Dual Language program and how much was gained from merely being at Mount Vernon, a majority Hispanic school (53.6%). The cultural goals were not discrete and there was no available instrument to measure their degree of attainment.

## 3. Develop listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiency in English and Spanish

During year one of the Dual Language program, only listening and speaking English and Spanish were measured by the PRE-LAS, administered to both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking kindergartners. Both groups made gains in oral language and listening skills. PRE-LAS English and PRE-LAS Spanish are tests designed to measure young children's expressive and receptive abilities in three linguistic components of oral language: morphology, syntax, and semantics. Both the English and Spanish versions of PRE-LAS were administered in the fall and spring to Mount Vernon kindergarten English and Spanish speakers in the Dual Language program; however, only the English PRE-LAS was administered to Mount Vernon kindergartners not in the Dual Language program who were identified by the English As A Second Language (ESL) department. The ESL department did the PRE-LAS testing and provided the fall and spring data.

Table 21 below shows that the average fall/spring PRE-LAS English version gain score for Spanish speakers in Mount Vernon's kindergarten Dual Language program exceeded that of Mount Vernon Spanish speaking kindergartners in regular classrooms. However, Spanish-speaking kindergartners in regular kindergarten programs at George Mason, Charles Barrett, and William Ramsay had similar mean gains.

Table 21: Fall/Spring PRE-LAS English Gain Scores, Kdg

School	Mean Gain	n
John Adams	23.9533	15
Charles Barrett	27.0000	6
Patrick Henry	17.5000	13
Jefferson-Houston	17.7500	4
Cora Kelly	18.8818	22
Douglas MacArthur	19.7500	4
George Mason	28.1071	14
<b>Mount Vernon Regular</b>	<b>21.0914</b>	<b>35</b>
<b>Mount Vernon Dual Language<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>27.8529</b>	<b>17</b>
James K. Polk	24.5833	18
William Ramsay	26.9750	40
Samuel Tucker	19.6706	17
Total	22.8819	188

Source: ESL, Alexandria City Public Schools

<sup>a</sup>Not included in total

To determine whether the difference in the PRE-LAS English mean gain scores for Mount Vernon kindergartners in the Dual Language Program and those in Mount Vernon's regular kindergarten program was significant at the .05 level of confidence (P-value less than or equal to 0.05), an ANOVA test was performed. The results are shown in Table 22.

Table 22: Fall/Spring, 2000/2001. PRE-LAS English Raw Gain Scores, Kindergarten

ANOVA, PRE-LAS English Gain Scores, Fall '00/Spring '01					
Group	Count	Average	s.d.	P-value	Significant
Regular Kindergarten	35	21.09143	21.3269	0.288708	No
Dual Language Kindergarten	17	27.85294	21.3320		

This means that the apparent difference between the PRE-LAS English gains for Spanish-speaking Mount Vernon kindergartners was not significant.

Parallel goals of Mount Vernon's Dual Language program were to increase English-speaking students' knowledge of Spanish and to increase Spanish-speaking students' knowledge of English. For this reason, the PRE-LAS English and the PRE-LAS Spanish were administered to both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking kindergartners in the Dual Language program. The data in Table 23 below indicate that English-speaking kindergarten students in Mount Vernon's Dual language program made substantial gains in oral Spanish, while maintaining oral English skills. Spanish-speaking kindergarten students in Mount Vernon's Dual Language program made substantial gains in oral English and a smaller gain in oral Spanish.

Table 23: PRE-LAS Gains, Spring/Fall, Mount Vernon Dual Language Program

Home Language	PRE-LAS English Version			PRE-LAS Spanish Version		
	Fall	Spring	Gain	Fall	Spring	Gain
English	84.6	84.8	0.2	8.8	31.2	21.1
Spanish	54.2	82.1	27.9	65.1	71.8	6.7

#### 4. Celebrate diversity

Table 24 shows that there was diversity in the Dual Language classes; however, one of the classes contained no students categorized as White.

Table 24: Dual Language Kindergarten Class Demographics

Class A			Class B			Total		
Male	7	36.8%	Male	10	55.6%	Male	17	45.9%
Female	12	63.2%	Female	8	44.4%	Female	20	54.1%
White	5	26.3%	White	0	0.0%	White	5	13.5%
Black	6	31.6%	Black	7	38.9%	Black	13	35.1%
Hispanic	8	42.1%	Hispanic	11	61.1%	Hispanic	19	51.4%
ESL	4	21.1%	ESL	1	5.6%	ESL	5	13.5%
Total	19	100.0%	Total	18	100.0%	Total	37	100.0%

**5. Apply problem-solving strategies and higher order thinking skills in two languages**

Both English-speaking and Spanish-speaking kindergartners in Mount Vernon's Dual Language program were required to study science and social studies in Spanish and reading and mathematics in English. In order to progress speakers of both languages had to function for at least one-half of each instructional day in a language other than their dominant language.

**Classroom Texts, Materials, Software**

Both classrooms were well equipped with texts, materials, equipment, and software that are characteristic of ACPS kindergarten rooms. The Spanish room was full of Spanish language texts and materials for kindergarten students. Both rooms had a bilingual paraprofessional to assist students who spoke little or no English. During observation in the Spanish room, the paraprofessional read a Spanish language Big Book (large book specifically designed for presenting stories to beginning readers). Students also had small versions of the Big Book.

Both Spanish-and English-speaking students performed the kindergarten/grade one school day opening exercise in Spanish:

Hoy es 7 de Mayo del 2001  
 Mañana será 8 de Mayo del 2001  
 Hace calor?

The visual aids and schedule for the day were also written in Spanish.

In the English room, the teacher carefully walked students through a short picture story that emphasized phonics. The classroom also featured a "word wall" that the students could use as a giant dictionary. After the teacher read the story and had the students read the story, the students were then asked to write their own short story and illustrate it. Both Spanish and English speakers were instructed with the ACPS kindergarten curriculum in which the SOL objectives are embedded. Among the students, both English and Spanish were spoken.

## VII. ADDITIONAL STAFFING FOR THE FOCUS SCHOOLS

As indicated in the discussion of the goals/evidence of implementation at Jefferson-Houston and Lyles-Crouch, staffing of regular classroom teachers met, in most cases, the special staffing guidelines established for the focus schools. The tables below show that, both Lyles-Crouch and Jefferson-Houston maintained class sizes that, by design, were mostly below the lower range of the class size guidelines for non-focus elementary schools in Alexandria.

Table 25: Class Size Lyles-Crouch June 2001

	Kdg	Gr1	Gr2	Gr3	Gr4	Gr5
	15	13	10	12	20	17
	16	12	11	12	19	16
			11			
Average	15.5	12.5	10.7	12.0	19.5	16.5

Table 26: Class Size Jefferson-Houston June 2001

	Kdg	Gr1	Gr2	Gr3	Gr4	Gr5
	20	17	20	16	16	25
	17	17	21	17	17	24
	19	17	19	17	17	
	17	18	19	17	17	
		16		18		
		18				
Average	18.3	17.3	19.8	16.8	16.8	24.5

Table 27: Class Size Guidelines  
ACPS

Grade	Maximum
Kdg	23
Gr 1	23
Gr 2-3	23
Gr 4-5	24

To achieve these small class sizes, the school division waived its staffing guidelines for these two schools in order to make it feasible for them to meet the instructional needs of new student populations.

The focus school models also called for some additional staff beyond that needed for small class size. At Lyles-Crouch, a science specialist and a paraprofessional were added. At Jefferson-Houston, three full-time teaching positions were authorized: drama teacher, dance teacher, and literature arts/creative writing

teacher. These modest staffing additions were apparently adequate for the implementation of the visual and performing arts program at Jefferson-Houston and the traditional academy at Lyles-Crouch. At Mount Vernon, only a parent community liaison position was added, since the Dual Language program was offered in two kindergarten classes that would have required in each a teacher and a paraprofessional just as in a regular kindergarten class.

## VIII. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

The cost of making capital improvements to Jefferson-Houston (\$115,555) and Lyles-Crouch (\$127,55) were surprisingly modest. Other improvements were made to these buildings during the summer of 2000, but were not necessarily related to the focus school programs.

## IX. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

**1. Both focus schools, Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics and Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy met their year one implementation goals.** This success was due in large part to the year-long planning that included visits by the principals to similar focus schools in other school districts, innovative adaptation of the facilities, accurate assignment of the students to new attendance zones, a random lottery for the magnet and focus schools, selection of the faculties by the principals, public relations information about the focus schools, some training for teachers, use of consultants, and the support of the administration, School Board, City government, and the Alexandria community. The result was two excellent schools that have enriched Alexandria City Public Schools and the City and provided additional parental choices for elementary schooling.

The 2001-2002 lottery results speak to the continued success of focus schools in Alexandria. Out of 258 valid lottery applications, 112 listed Cora Kelly Magnet as their first choice; 76 listed Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy as their first choice; and 70 listed Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics as their first choice. From these applications 47 were offered placements for 2001-2002 at Cora Kelly Magnet School, 41 at Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy, and 44 at Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics. Of the successful placements, Cora Kelly Magnet included 45 first choices and two second choices. Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy included 36 first choices and five second choices. Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics included 35 first choices, six second choices, and three third choices. ACPS was thus able to demonstrate that it could offer choices in styles of elementary education to parents and also honor the first choice of most parents and students. Table 28 below shows the distribution of 2001-2002 lottery placements by elementary attendance zone.

**Table 28: Magnet/Focus School Lottery, 2001-2002 Alexandria City Public Schools**

Home School	Lyles-Crouch	Cora Kelly	Jefferson-Houston	Total
John Adams	1	6	5	12
Charles Barrett	0	1	0	1
Lyles-Crouch	0	0	2	2
Patrick Henry	5	6	7	18
Jefferson-Houston	9	5	0	14
Cora Kelly	2	0	2	4
Douglas MacArthur	3	1	7	11
George Mason	0	0	2	2
Maury	6	2	5	13
Mount Vernon	6	8	6	20
James K. Polk	2	6	2	10
William Ramsay	2	6	2	10
Samuel Tucker	3	6	4	13
Unassigned	2	0	0	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>132</b>

Source: ACPS Information Technology Services

Results of the 2000-2001 lottery were not available for comparison.

**2. The Dual Language program at Mount Vernon was implemented in two kindergarten classes but the original design had to be altered due to staffing problems.** Since only one bi-lingual (Spanish/English) kindergarten teacher was available, the program was changed from a self-contained program to one with two rooms--one taught in English for language arts and mathematics and the other in Spanish for social studies and science.

**3. Neither of the focus schools met the requirements for full accreditation under Virginia's Standards of Accreditation (SOA) during year one; however, both schools had a substantial number of students in the 375-399 score interval where the passing score was 400.** These students were within 25 points of passing the SOL tests and represent the best prospect for the focus schools to pass the Grade 5 SOL history test that is given to Alexandria students in Grade 4 as well as the rest of the Grade 5 SOLs in the spring of 2003. Students who scored below 376 must receive even more intensive remediation to ensure their acquiring sufficient skills to pass these tests. Both schools are already very focused on SOL based instruction.

**4. There was no statistically significant difference between Spanish-speaking students in the Dual Language program and Spanish-speaking students in regular kindergarten classes at Mount Vernon on the spring 2001 PALS-K test, though Dual Language students had higher Spring scores.**

**5. There was no statistically significant difference between the mean gain scores on the PRE-LAS (English) test for Mount Vernon Spanish-speaking kindergarten students in the Dual Language program and Mount Vernon Spanish-speaking kindergartners in regular classes, though Dual Language students had a higher mean.**

**6. The visual and performing arts focus school model at Jefferson-Houston is at least as appropriate for students residing in the Jefferson-Houston neighborhood as a non-focus school program in a small, regular elementary school.**

## **X. RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Program evaluations of Jefferson-Houston School for Arts and Academics and Lyles-Crouch Traditional Academy should be continued through the 2005-2006 academic year (when school year 2000-2001 kindergartners will reach Grade five) in order to determine the impact of these new programs on student achievement measured by State-mandated and locally developed tests as well as specific skills in the arts.

2. The Dual Language program at Mount Vernon should continue to be evaluated through 2001-2002. Even though it has not demonstrated that it can increase Spanish-speaking students' English proficiency better than regular kindergarten programs at Mount Vernon and in some of the other elementary schools, it is as effective in this aspect as the regular Mount Vernon kindergarten program. Appropriate staffing for implementing the original specifications of the Dual Language program is required to re-examine kindergarten outcomes and continue program evaluation in Grade One.

3. The Dual Language program at Mount Vernon should be included in the magnet, focus school lottery to provide Mount Vernon with a more diverse student population and continue the commitment of Alexandria City Public Schools to student/parental choice in pedagogical models for elementary schooling. The acquisition of fluency in Spanish is, and will continue to be, a valuable skill for English-speaking and Spanish-speaking students.

4. Program evaluation should continue to be an integral part of program design in Alexandria City Public Schools to provide reliable data and observations upon which decisions to expand, modify, or delete educational programs can be made.

5. Cost effectiveness in program evaluation should be developed with the Budget Office to ensure accurate and timely data that meet professional standards. For example, the associated costs of developing the focus schools, such as professional leave and travel expenses for principals and others to visit model focus schools, was not shown in the focus school costs but was nonetheless part of the expense incurred by the school division in developing these schools.

6. Programs should be required to achieve some difference in outcome during year one to qualify for funding beyond the first two years unless they could not be fully implemented due to a change in available personnel and resources. For example, the Dual-Language program at Mount Vernon did not show that Mount Vernon kindergarten students who were Spanish-speaking and enrolled in the Dual-Language

program learned English better than Mount Vernon Spanish-speaking students in Mount Vernon's regular kindergarten classes or ACPS Spanish-speaking kindergartners in other ACPS schools.

However, the program could not be implemented as planned due to a change in the availability of bilingual kindergarten teachers.

7. Although the effects of a K-5 program cannot be fully evaluated until a cohort has completed their elementary education in a particular elementary school with an exceptional pedagogical approach, interim evaluations should continue on an annual basis.

8. Monitoring the effects of an elementary focus school for the visual and performing arts and a non-focus small, self-contained classroom elementary school on the achievement of Jefferson-Houston neighborhood students should be continued. Maury students who reside in the Jefferson-Houston neighborhood should be used as a control group.

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Appendix A

The Evaluation Design Framework

**Alexandria City Public Schools  
Monitoring and Evaluation Services  
Evaluation Design Framework  
Focus Schools/Dual Language Program**

Goal	Expected Outcomes/ Activities	Indicators	Data Source(s)	Time- line/ Target Date
Implement school/program to meet stipulated administrative objectives	Appropriate staffing to meet school/program requirements	1) Available number of staff by content area/job description 2) Instructional staff meet state certification requirements for content area 3) Instructional teacher student ratios (class size) are within ACPS or research-based limits	1) Human resources assignments 2) Budget office 3) Class size computation (M&E or MIS)	By semester
	Equitable student selection or placement process	1) All students in relevant age/academic range system-wide are given an opportunity for selection 2) All parents/students are aware of selection process with sufficient time to be involved 3) Testing and/or selection requirements are applied in an approved manner 4) Placement requirements are applied in an approved manner	1) ACPS/School newsletter or appropriate dissemination medium 2) Public Relations office information 3) Audit report of testing, selection and placement 4) Survey parents - M&E	Annually
	Physical environs suitable for meeting anticipated school/program requirements (including reasonable growth)	1) School/classroom facilities meet approved building/safety standards 2) Number (or %) of instructional areas that meet school/program needs	1) Facilities monitor report 2) School/Program management report	By semester
	Identifiable program characteristics distinct from regular/other focus schools/program	1) All staff can articulate distinguishing program indicators 2) Students and parents, system-wide, are aware of program particulars	1) Survey (M&E)	Annually

Goal	Expected Outcomes/ Activities	Indicators	Data Source(s)	Time-line/ Target Date
	Approved curriculum consistent with school/ program needs and to meet ACPS/VaDOE standards	1) Available curriculum guides for all instructional staff 2) Monitoring in place to maintain levels of pedagogy required 3) Materials (including displays and manipula-tives) available in all instructional settings 4) Materials used appropriately as per school/ program needs	1) Curriculum and Instruction monitoring reports	By semester
	Local school/program evaluation conducted regularly	1) Specific staff meetings for program evaluation planned and conducted 2) Teachers participate in decision making	1) Meeting/School reports	Annually
	Staff training implemented as required	1) All staff meet initial experience/training requirements for position(s) 2) All staff are given opportunities to supplement experience/training as required to meet current and expected school/program needs	1) Personnel report 2) Staff development report 3) School/program management report 4) Staff survey	Annually
Parent/commu nity involvement	Parental involvement meets school/program stipulations	1) Non-staff parents are represented on decision-making teams 2) Parent groups are informed of all relevant activities/decisions affecting students/parents 3) 85% of parents are satisfied with school/program as implemented	1) School/program management reports 2) Survey	Annually

Goal	Expected Outcomes/ Activities	Indicators	Data Source(s)	Time-line/ Target Date
	Community involvement meets school/program stipulations	1) Non-staff community personnel are represented on decision-making teams 2) Community groups are informed of all relevant activities/decisions affecting the community 3) An increase in community partnerships/funding associated with the school/ program	1) School/program management reports 2) Budget/Finance report 3) Survey	Annually
Increase student participation and achievement	Increased student attendance	1) Minimum 94 percent attendance rate for participants 2) Dropout rate below ACPS average 3) Reduced disciplinary actions and out-of-school suspensions 4) Reduced mobility rate 5) Reduced Special Education referral rate	1) School performance reports 2) M&E evaluation report	By semester or annually
	Improved student achievement	1) Student pass rate on SOL TESTS above ACPS or VA average or above accreditation requirement 2) Student pass rate on CRTs and Stanford 9 above ACPS average 3) Student promotion/retention rate better than ACPS average	1) School performance reports 2) M&E evaluation report	Annually
	Increased rate of students advancing to higher grade levels	1) Proportion of students advancing to secondary levels greater than ACPS average (or above XX%) 2) Staff at receiving school(s) satisfied with incoming students	1) Longitudinal cohort study by M&E 2) Survey	Annually, starting with first advancing group
Program is cost effective	School/Program implementation costs within guidelines	1) Budget appropriations for implementation within ACPS/ research-based limits 2) Implementation expenditures within appropriations	1) Budget/Finance office report	By semester

Goal	Expected Outcomes/ Activities	Indicators	Data Source(s)	Time- line/ Target Date
	School/Program operates within budget specifications	1) No new funding allocation requests 2) No funding reallocation requests 3) Zero budget over-runs 4) Effective use of resources	1) Budget/Finance reports 2) Curriculum and instruction reports 3) School management report	By semester or annually
	Above average student performance gains per pupil expenditure	1) Per pupil expenditures below ACPS average	1) Evaluation report by M&E/Finance	By semester or annually