

# Charter Day School



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For Immediate Release

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## State Board Honors Charter Day School for Academic Growth

One of NC's top 25 K-8 schools, statewide.

The State Board of Education has released its annual statistics on the performance of North Carolina's public schools for 2004-2005. Charter Day School, managed by The Roger Bacon Academy, is distinguished as one of the top 25 out of 1,865 schools for attaining the State's highest scores on the high academic growth composite made by its students. The Brunswick County charter school opened in 2000 with 53 students and now has 620 students in grades K through 7.

### Three State Measures of School Success

The State Board of Education uses three different measures to categorize each school's success. These measures are the performance composite, the academic growth, and the adequate yearly progress (AYP).

- The performance composite is the percentage of students in the school whose test scores are at or above Achievement Level III which is considered "at grade level." The performance composite can range from 0% to 100% and every school strives to have 100% of its students at or above grade level.
- The AYP status indicates whether or not the students in the school as a whole and in each identified subgroup met the standards set by the state following federal guidelines with the long-term goal of 100% proficiency by 2013-14. The AYP status is either "yes" the school met all of its standards or "no" the school missed one or more of its standards.
- The academic growth is an indication of the rate at which the students in the school, on average, learned over the past year. The standard set for each student is equivalent to learning a year's worth of material for a year of instruction. There are four levels of recognition for a school: students on average meet less than expected growth, students meet expected growth, students meet high growth, or its students on average scored an annual gain that was among the top 25 schools in the state.

### Charter Day School Scores Among the Top 25, Statewide

For 2004-5, North Carolina's average performance composite for the 1,865 K-8 schools was 80.9% and Charter Day School scored 91.9% of its students at or above grade level. Charter Day also was awarded a "yes" for making AYP, as did 375 of the other schools. With regard to their academic achievement, however, Charter Day's students not only met the highest learning growth standard; but *the school is among the top 25 highest scoring out of all 1,865 K-8 schools in the state.* Charter Day is the only charter school to receive this highest form of recognition and is the only K-8 school, charter or traditional, in Bladen, Brunswick, Columbus, New Hanover, and Pender counties to be so recognized.

"Being among the top 25 in the state in academic growth is a tribute to the Direct Instruction curriculum we use, to the skill and loving devotion of every staff member, and to the hard work put forth by all of the students and their parents or care-givers," said Headmaster Mark Cramer. Originally the designation

was called “Top 25 K-8 Schools of Academic Growth” by the state board but was later changed to “25 Most Improved Schools in Academic Growth” and was finally shortened to “25 Most Improved Schools.” Mr. Cramer said he feels this current designation is a bit misleading because the measure actually reflects the amount of the students’ demonstrated learning gain during a single school year and does not necessarily reflect a change in the status of the school from one year to the next.

### **A National Measure of School Success**

Over ten million children nation-wide take an achievement test called the Stanford Achievement Test, Edition 9 known as the SAT-9. Because the state of North Carolina does not use any annual test that compares students and schools nationwide, Charter Day School gives the SAT-9 in addition to the state end-of-grade tests discussed above.

### **Charter Day School Kindergarteners Among the Top 10%, Nationally**

For 2004-5, the average SAT-9 reading score for all Charter Day kindergarten students placed them within the top 10%, nationally. Reading and math were tested for all students, and the school as a whole scored in the top 29% of all public schools in the United States, according to Headmaster Cramer.

“Since the state test is secret and no one is allowed to see the questions on it, we like to give a test that the teachers and I can examine in detail and evaluate exactly in which areas our students need additional focus,” Mr. Cramer said.

“Our global economy is forcing each of us to be competitive not only within the state but within the entire country and even the world. Therefore Charter Day feels obligated to measure itself on a national basis and to constantly seek improvement in that broader sphere as well as within the state,” said Chairman of the Board Beth Quinn. “We want our students to be among the best in the nation, and the SAT-9 is one yardstick that we can use to measure our progress toward that goal,” Ms. Quinn added.

### **Steady Growth with Traditional Methods**

Opening in 2000 with 53 students and using traditional, research-based methods, the school has grown steadily; and enrolment for the 2005-6 year is now at 620 students in grades K through 7. Approximately a third of the student body qualifies for free or reduced meals, even though the school does not have a cafeteria and students bring their own lunches and snacks.

Mr. Cramer explained that the school’s operation is based on three laws. First, reward good behavior, and you’ll get more of it. Second, teach each bit of knowledge to mastery, and every child will learn. Third, trust the children to behave and learn; if they aren’t, you are probably not following the first two laws correctly. “Adhering to these principles ensures that we can fulfill our mission to the children and parents of North Carolina in spite of the fact that we receive only about 2/3 as much money per student as do the regular public schools,” Cramer said. “We saved the taxpayers about \$1.5 million last year, yet still managed to pay very competitive salaries with good benefits to our staff,” he concluded.

Charter Day School, managed by The Roger Bacon Academy, is a tuition-free public charter school located on 50 wooded acres in Brunswick County just off Highway 74-76, fifteen minutes west of downtown Wilmington. Children from all five coastal counties attend and every North Carolina child is eligible to apply. Interested parents should call Ms. Connie Hall at 655-1214, and guests are welcome to call and schedule a visit.