

# ***URBAN ACADEMY CHARTER SCHOOL***

*2009 Annual Report on Curriculum, Instruction and Student Achievement*



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# ***TABLE OF CONTENTS***

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I. Executive Summary .....	3
II. Mission, Goal, and Accountability Plan.....	5
III. School Program .....	7
IV. Governance.....	11
V. School Staff .....	12
VI. Program Successes and Challenges.....	14
VII. Student Performance .....	16
VIII. Other School Accountability Measures.....	24
IX. School Financial Information .....	32
X. About ACET, Inc. ....	36
XI. Appendix A: Registration with Minnesota Attorney General’s Office.....	37
XII. Appendix B: Enrollment Applications (English, Hmong, Spanish).....	41
XIII. Appendix C: Admissions Policies and Procedures .....	48
XIV. Appendix D: Student Responses to Open-Ended Survey Items.....	51
XV. Appendix E: Parent Responses to Open-Ended Survey Items .....	56
XVI. Appendix F: School Report Card (from Minnesota Department of Education).....	62

# ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

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This report provides the Minnesota Department of Education, Hamline University, families of Urban Academy (UA), and the general public with information describing the progress of UA and its students during the school's sixth year of operation. A summary of the key findings in this annual report are as follows:

❖ **Program Successes, Effective Strategies, and Challenges:**

- Program successes and effective strategies included hiring a full-time Title I math teacher; hiring a full-time ESL teacher; offering number of professional learning opportunities; utilizing the response to intervention model; utilizing various reading interventions; utilizing the Reading Recovery program; holding once a month grade level team meetings; holding weekly professional learning community meetings; utilizing the literacy collaborative; utilizing the Teacher Assisting Team; utilizing the child study team; reconstructing the gymnasium; hiring a full-time librarian/media specialist; and recognition from Minnesota Department of Education for sound fiscal management.
- Program challenges included student proficiency rates on the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments, Series II (MCA-II) being below UA's goal. UA is continuing to implement the elements of the School Improvement Plan to respond to and improve student MCA-II performance.

❖ **Academic Goals:** UA used two instruments to assess student progress towards academic goals including the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) and the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments, Series II (MCA-II).

- UA utilized the MAP assessment for the third year. Students showed improvements in making one year's growth or more over the previous year in Reading (44.8%), Language Use (41.5%), and Mathematics (57.0%). And while the proportion of students making one year's growth or more on the Mathematics assessment was above UA's goal (45%), the proportion of students making one year's growth or more in Reading and Language Use was still below the goal.
- Furthermore, when student performance was compared across categories used in the federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation,<sup>1</sup> less than 50% of students made one year's growth or more for each category in Reading and Language Use.
- UA's goal for spring student MAP percentile rank scores was that 67% of students would score Average or Above Average for each of the three assessments (Reading, Language Use, and Mathematics). In spring 2009, 9.6% of UA students scored Average or Above Average in Reading, 7.4% scored Average or Above Average in Language Use, and 13.7% scored Average or Above Average in Mathematics. In addition, the number of years a student was consecutively enrolled at UA (between 1 and 5) had no apparent influence of percentile rank scores.
- On the spring 2009 MCA-II assessment, UA students had lower proportions of proficiency in reading (16.9%) and mathematics (12.0%) than their peers in the St. Paul Public School District and statewide. In addition, there was no improvement in proficiency rates for both reading and mathematics from the spring 2008 MCA-II to the spring 2009 MCA-II.

❖ **Other School Accountability Measures:** UA assesses student attendance rates, and parent and student satisfaction as indicators of non-academic goals.

- UA met its goal of 95% student attendance in 2008-2009.
- UA's goal was that families and students would express 80% satisfaction with three elements of UA's program: student achievement, parent involvement, and school environment.

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<sup>1</sup> There are 9 categories of students used in the federal NCLB legislation including: All students, Students eligible for free or reduced-price meals, students who have limited English proficiency, students who are eligible to receive special education services, students of African American descent, students of Asian or Pacific Islander descent, students of Hispanic descent, students of Native American descent, students of White or Caucasian (non-Hispanic) descent.

- UA's parent and student surveys went through minor revisions to better capture parent and student perceptions. Revisions included two items on the difficulty level of the reading and math done at school on the student survey and removal of one item from the parent survey.
- Student satisfaction met UA's goal for parent involvement (80.0%), but fell below the goal for student achievement (74.5%) and school environment (68.5%). Both student achievement and parent involvement show increases from the previous school year. Although the domains of student achievement and school environment fell below UA's goal, students were generally positive on the open-ended questions. Students indicated they enjoyed UA's academics and classes, teachers and staff, and playtime and recess. Students would like to see improvement in student behavior, academics and academic skills, food, activities, and faculty.
- Parent satisfaction met UA's goal for parent involvement (85.2%) and school environment (92.8%) but fell below the goal for student achievement (68.9%). In addition, satisfaction for both parent involvement and school environment showed improvements from the previous year. Parents reported they enrolled their children in UA for the positive school climate and environment, location, referrals, quality of staff and school, quality of program and curriculum. Parents reported that UA's strength lies in UA's focus on student needs, academics, and UA's quality and dedicated staff. Parents would like to see an expanded school program and improved transportation and parking. Parents overwhelmingly felt UA was following its mission and identified increasing student potential in academic achievement and support and social and life skills as exemplary ways in which UA was following its mission.

# MISSION, GOAL, AND ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN

UA is a St. Paul charter school that serves urban students in grades K-6. UA focuses on a connected curriculum that recognizes and celebrates diversity. UA is a non-profit trust registered with the Minnesota Attorney General's Office (see also Appendix A).

## Mission Statement:

*"Our mission is to work in partnership with urban parents to provide an opportunity for every child to meet or exceed their individual potential in basic academic and life skills by utilizing research proven methods in a safe, structured and respectful community."*

## Goals and Accountability Plan:

UA has developed two academic and two non-academic goals for the 2008-2009 school year as part of their commitment to accountability. All of the academic and non-academic goals were developed with specific measurement tools and indicators of success (see Table 1 below).

**Table 1: UA's 2008-2009 Accountability Plan**

Academic Goal	Measurements	Indicators of Success
Achieve high levels of student academic performance in reading.	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) <i>Reading, Language Use, Mathematics</i>	<u>Growth</u> : At least 45% of UA students will make one year's fall-to-spring growth on the MAP assessments (Reading, Language Use, and Mathematics).
Achieve high levels of student academic performance in language use.	Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments-II (MCA-II) <i>Reading, Mathematics</i>	<u>Standard</u> : All enrolled students in all NCLB student groups <sup>2</sup> will perform at or above grade-level proficiency in both reading and mathematics as measured by the MCA-II by the year 2014. <sup>3</sup>
Achieve high levels of student academic performance in mathematics.		
Non-Academic Goals	Measurements	Indicators of Success
Maintain high levels of student attendance.	Attendance Rates	<u>Standard</u> : Urban Academy will achieve at least a 95% attendance rate for each school year.
Achieve high levels of family and student satisfaction for student academic achievement, parental involvement, and UA's school environment.	Family and Student Surveys	<u>Standard</u> : At least 80% of Urban Academy parents and students (of those who respond) will be satisfied with the school's program.

UA has established their accountability plan for the 2009-2010 school year and it is shown in Table 2 below.

<sup>2</sup> There are 9 categories of students used in the federal NCLB legislation including: All students, Students eligible for free or reduced-price meals, students who have limited English proficiency, students who are eligible to receive special education services, students of African American descent, students of Asian or Pacific Islander descent, students of Hispanic descent, students of Native American descent, students of White or Caucasian (non-Hispanic) descent.

<sup>3</sup> In order to meet NCLB requirements, 50% or more of all UA students must meet proficiency in reading and mathematics in spring 2009, with an approximate increase of 12.5% of students scoring proficient each year in each student group.

**Table 2: UA's 2009-2010 Accountability Plan**

Academic Goal	Measurements	Indicators of Success
Achieve high levels of student academic performance in reading.	Measures of Academic Progress (MAP) <i>Reading, Language Use, Mathematics</i>	<u>Growth</u> : At least 45% of UA students will make one year's fall-to-spring growth on the MAP assessments (Reading, Language Use, and Mathematics).
Achieve high levels of student academic performance in language use.	Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments-II (MCA-II) <i>Reading, Mathematics</i>	<u>Standard</u> : All enrolled students in all NCLB student groups will perform at or above grade-level proficiency in both reading and mathematics as measured by the MCA-II by the year 2014. <sup>4</sup>
Achieve high levels of student academic performance in mathematics.		
Non-Academic Goals	Measurements	Indicators of Success
Maintain high levels of student attendance.	Attendance Rates	<u>Standard</u> : Urban Academy will achieve at least a 95% attendance rate for each school year.
Achieve high levels of family and student satisfaction for student academic achievement, parental involvement, and UA's school environment.	Family and Student Surveys	<u>Standard</u> : At least 80% of Urban Academy parents and students (of those who respond) will be satisfied with the school's program.

*"Yes, they have worked so hard to be successful in the children's life academically."*

*"Yes, I have seen great changes in my Childs education."*

*"Yes, I have noticed through the years that my children have grown socially and I appreciate everything they do."*

*"Yes, they are teaching our children how to respect everyone for who they are."*

Several Urban Academy Parents' Responses Parent Survey question: "Do you think Urban Academy is following its mission? Why or why not?."



<sup>4</sup> In order to meet NCLB requirements, 50% or more of all UA students must meet proficiency in reading and mathematics in spring 2009, with an approximate increase of 12.5% of students scoring proficient each year in each student group.

# ***SCHOOL PROGRAM***

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## **Sponsor**

Hamline University School of Education  
Barbara Swanson, Interim Dean  
bswanson@gw.hamline.edu  
651-523-2813

UA opened in Fall 2003  
Contract was renewed in 2006 through the spring of 2010

## **Description of Sponsor Accountability Initiatives or Reports**

Hamline University is accountable to ensure that UA is responsible for the finances of the school and student achievement. UA and Hamline work in partnership to ensure that the school achieved its goals both academically and fiscally. As part of this partnership, Hamline University representatives visited UA once in the 2008-2009 school year to conduct focus groups with staff, parents, students, and board members.

UA's contract with Hamline University is scheduled to end in the spring of 2010. In the 2009-2010 school year UA staff will be participating in a self-study as part of the process towards renewing the charter school-authorizer relationship.

## **School Calendar/Hours of Operation**

School was in session September 2, 2008 through June 9, 2009. The school day at UA ran from 7:30 am to 2:30 pm Monday through Friday, and the after school program ran from 2:30 to 5:00 pm.

## **Student/Classroom Teacher Ratio**

UA employed 14 classroom teachers, nine teaching specialists (Curriculum/Literacy Coordinator, ESL Specialist, Family Specialist, Librarian, Physical Education teacher, Social Worker, Technology/Visual Arts Specialist, Title I Reading Specialist, and Title I Math Specialist), two special education teachers, six special education paraprofessionals, eight paraprofessionals, and six administrative/support staff to serve 275 students in grades K-6. The overall student to classroom teacher ratio for 2008-2009 was 19.6:1.

## **Enrollment**

UA actively recruited students from diverse communities and provided enrollment forms in multiple languages (English, Hmong, and Spanish). Copies of UA's enrollment applications can be found in Appendix B. A limited amount of information is gathered on the forms including student's name, gender, grade (to determine if space is available), whether or not the student has a sibling enrolled at UA (applicants with enrolled siblings have higher priority), and parent/guardian contact information.

UA's Policies and Procedures Handbook details admissions procedures (see Appendix C). The Site Director manages enrollment applications, makes decisions about admitting a student, and notifies parents. Per the Policies and Procedures Handbook, the Site Director gives preference to and enrolls siblings of UA students and then new students on a first-come-first-served basis until space is filled. If the number of applicants exceeds the number of openings, admission is based on a lottery system. If parents/guardians contest the Site Director's decision then the School Board reviews the matter and renders a decision.

## **Characteristics of UA Students**

Enrollment at UA has shown a steady increase since the school's opening in 2003. In 2008-2009, the majority of students were students of color (95%) and qualified for free or reduced lunch (97%). Table 3 below shows a number of important demographic characteristics of UA students including gender and ethnicity. It is important to note that, although many of the demographic characteristics of UA students have remained stable over the past five school years, there have been some dramatic shifts in the recent past. For example, the number and proportion of students with Limited English Proficiency nearly doubled from the 05/06 school year (19%) to the 06/07 school year (29%) and has since remained relatively stable. In addition, the number of students with special education status nearly doubled from the 06/07 school year

(9%) to the 07/08 school year (15%) and did not changed substantially in 08/09 (12%). According to UA staff, the increase in the number of students with special education status can be attributed to increased testing and identification of students as well as an increase in the number of new students with special education needs.

**Table 3: Characteristics of UA Students**

Year (Grades)	03-04 (K-3)	04-05 (K-4)	05-06 (K-5)	06-07 (K-6)	07-08 (K-6)	08-09 (K-6)
October 1 Enrollment	62	141	195	210	261	275
Attendance Rate <sup>5</sup>	89.7%	92.3%	93.2%	94.8%	93.8%	95.3%
Male	33 (53%)	72 (51%)	93 (48%)	116 (55%)	139 (53%)	153 (56%)
Female	29 (47%)	69 (49%)	102 (52%)	94 (45%)	122 (47%)	122 (44%)
Race / Ethnicity						
American Indian	1 (2%)	2 (1%)	3 (2%)	3 (1%)	2 (>1%)	2 (>1%)
Asian/Pacific Islander	11 (18%)	29 (21%)	37 (19%)	60 (29%)	66 (25%)	63 (23%)
Black/Non-Hispanic	42 (68%)	104 (74%)	148 (76%)	145 (69%)	181 (69%)	191 (69%)
Caucasian	4 (6%)	2 (1%)	5 (3%)	2 (1%)	4 (2%)	13 (5%)
Hispanic	4 (6%)	4 (3%)	2 (1%)	0 (0%)	8 (3%)	6 (2%)
Students of Color	58 (94%)	139 (99%)	190 (97%)	208 (99%)	257 (98%)	262 (95%)
Free or Reduced Lunch	60 (97%)	127 (90%)	189 (97%)	202 (96%)	257 (98%)	266 (97%)
Limited English Proficient	0 (0%)	16 (11%)	37 (19%)	60 (29%)	76 (29%)	64 (23%)
Special Education Status	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	15 (8%)	18 (9%)	39 (15%)	34 (12%)
Mobility Index <sup>6</sup>	0.78	0.46	0.32	0.21	0.16	N/A <sup>7</sup>

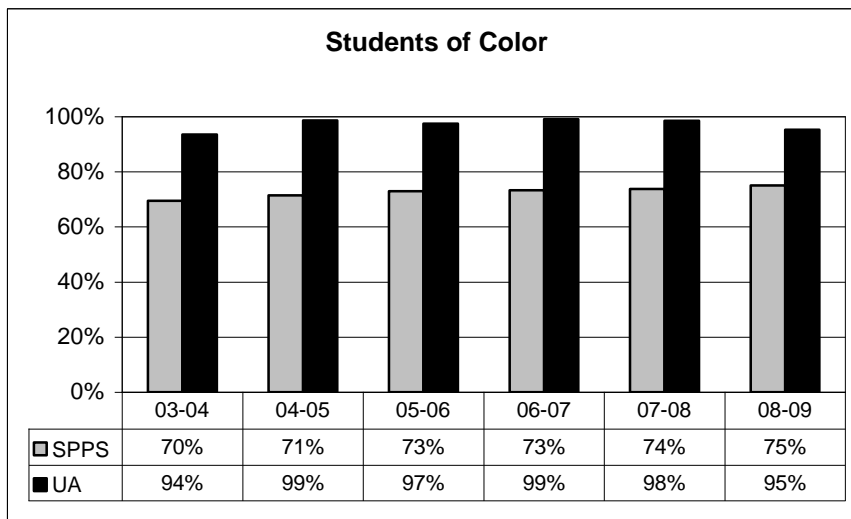
Figures 1 through 4 below show the proportion of students enrolled at UA and enrolled at St. Paul Public Schools (SPPS), the district surrounding UA. As can be seen in the figures, UA has a higher proportion of students of color and a higher proportion of students eligible for free or reduced priced lunch than does SPPS. In contrast, although the number of students with special education status and Limited English Proficiency has increased at UA, a higher proportion of students with special education status and Limited English Proficiency are currently enrolled in SPPS than at UA.

<sup>5</sup> The formula for attendance rate is the Average Daily Attendance (ADA) divided by the Average Daily Membership (ADM). ADA is computed by taking the number of days a student was marked in attendance divided by the number of instructional days reported for that school. ADM is computed by taking the number of days the student was reported as enrolled divided by the number of instructional days reported for that school.

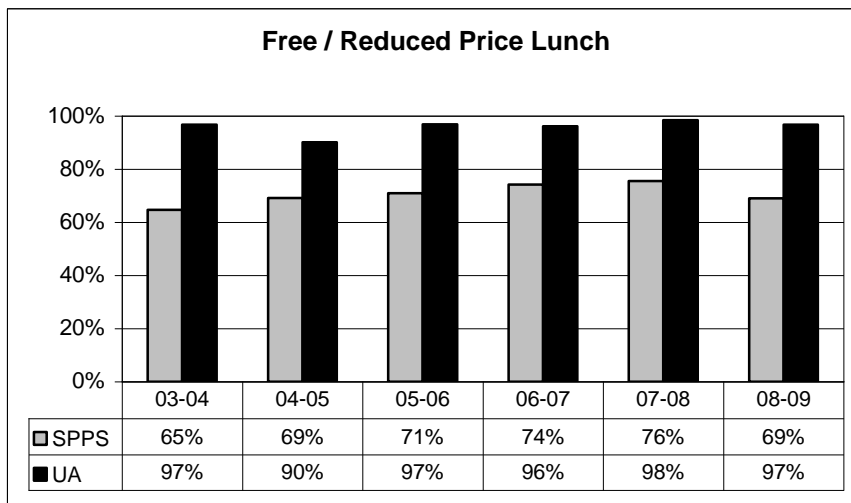
<sup>6</sup>The *Mobility Index* is calculated by adding mid-year enrollments, transfers and withdrawals and then dividing by the district's October 1 enrollment. The *Mobility* represents how much activity annually occurs based on student transfers after the school year begins.

<sup>7</sup> Not available until 1/10 or later.

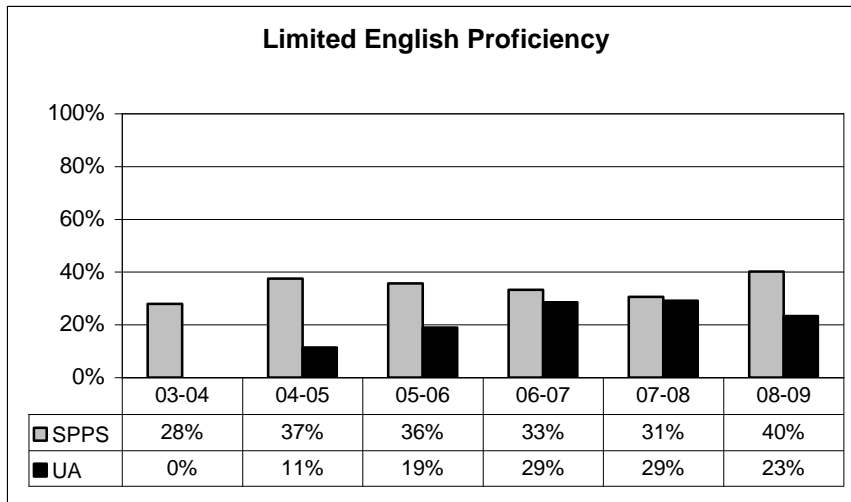
**Figure 1: Proportion of Students of Color Enrolled at SPPS and UA**



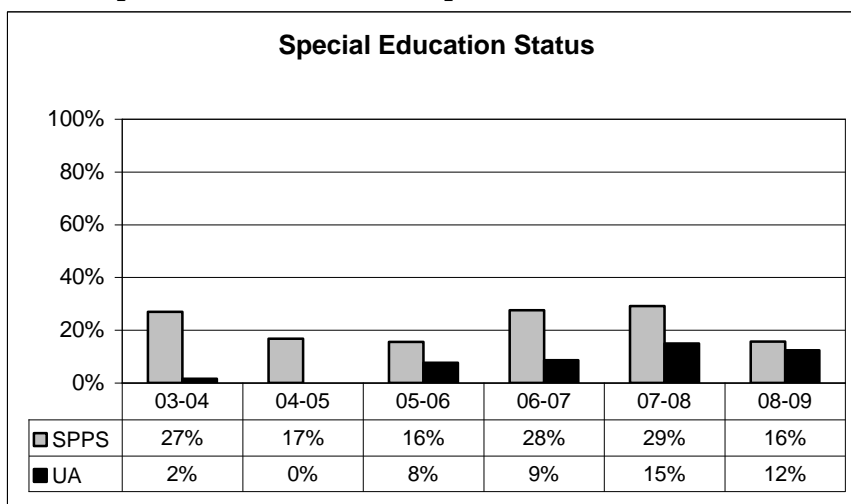
**Figure 2: Proportion of Students Eligible for Free or Reduced Price Lunch at SPPS and UA**



**Figure 3: Proportion of Students with Limited English Proficiency at SPPS and UA**



**Figure 4: Proportion of Students with Special Education Status at SPPS and UA**



# GOVERNANCE

UA's Bylaws specify the size, make-up, and term length of UA's governing School Board. The Bylaws also stipulate notification of regular and special board meetings, officer positions, establishing a quorum, conflict of interest, and voting rights.

The membership of UA's School Board and Advisory Committee are included in Table 4 below. Note that the size of the Board of Directors has changed in accordance with the Bylaws.

**Table 4: UA School Board**

Name	File Folder	Board Position	Contact Information	Group	Attendance Rates	Terms Served
Ralph Elliott		Board Chair	relliott@urbanacademymn.org	UA Staff	83%	06-09
Janelle Geiger	424603	Board Vice Chair	jgeiger@urbanacademymn.org	UA Teacher	100%	06-09
Pamela Young <sup>a</sup>		Board Finance Chair	youngpamelaj@cs.com	Community	75%	08-11 08-11
Jessica Ubl	378012	Board Secretary	jubl@urbanacademymn.org	UA Teacher	83%	06-09
Mariana Castanon	424493	Board Member	mcastanon@urbanacademymn.org	UA Teacher	100%	08-11
Xiong Mua	382664	Board Member	xmua@urbanacademymn.org	UA Teacher	83%	06-09
Sonia St. Charles <sup>b</sup>		Board Member	<a href="mailto:stcharles@davenportgroup.net">stcharles@davenportgroup.net</a>	Community	67%	08-11

<sup>a</sup> Place of employment is Beltz, Kes, Darling & Associates.

<sup>b</sup> Place of employment is Davenport Group.

Table 5 below shows the names, contact information, representation, and employers of UA's Advisory Board.

**Table 5: UA Advisory Board**

Name	Email	Representation	Employment
Dr. Laurie Burns	Laurie.burns@co.ramsey.mn.us	Community	Ramsey County
Jill Goski	jill.goski@courts.state.mn.us	Community	MN Supreme Court
Steve Hildebrandt	steve.hildebrandt@co.ramsey.mn.us	Community	Ramsey County
Latisha Holmes	latholmes@comcast.net	Parent	Comcast
Fong Lor	Fong.lor@ci.stpaul.mn.us	Community	City of Saint Paul
Nancy Smith	Kimamana51@aol.com	Community	American Indian Women's Resource Center
Dr. Charles Speiker	Charles.speiker@state.mn.us	Education	MN Department of Education
Stacy Wells	sdjwells@msn.com	Education	University of St. Thomas



*"I think the one-on-one involvement that they have with the students is the best."*

*"Small classrooms – one on one teaching."*

*"They way they care for every student no matter the background."*

Several Urban Academy Parents' Responses to Parent Survey question: "What do you think is Urban Academy's greatest strength?"

# SCHOOL STAFF

When UA first opened in 2003-2004 the school experienced high turnover rates, especially among teaching staff (see Table 6 below). However in recent years the teaching staff turnover rates have decreased dramatically. In addition, turnover rates have been consistently low among non-teaching staff, like specialists and paraprofessionals, since UA opened. The turnover rate for 2008-2009 year was 14.3% for teaching staff (2 out of 14 teaching staff), 10.0% for non-teaching staff (3 out of 30 staff), and 11.4% overall.

**Table 6: Turnover Rates Among Teaching and Non-Teaching Staff at UA**

	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009
Teaching staff	100.0%	85.7%	27.3%	15.4%	13.3%	14.3%
Non-teaching staff	0.0%	12.5%	0.0%	6.7%	8.3%	10.0%
Total	45.5%	46.7%	14.3%	10.7%	10.3%	11.4%

Table 7 below shows all staff employed at UA for the 2008-2009 year, their position, and whether or not they will be returning for the 2009-2010 year. Note that, of the five staff not returning to UA next year, a total of four staff members have indicated personal reasons or relocations as the cause of their departure.

**Table 7: UA Staff**

Name	File Folder	Position	08-09	Return 09-10?	Conditions for changes
Mongsher Ly	450140	Executive Director	Y	Y	
Ralph Elliott		Site Director	Y	Y	
Christina James		Office Manager	Y	Y	
Lynne (Elliott) Meikle		Assistant to Exec. Director	Y	Y	
Latasha Moore		Food Coordinator	Y	Y	
Mikel Martin, Sr.		Maintenance	Y	Y	
Jessica Ubl	378012	Curriculum/Literacy Coordinator	Y	Y	
Shelley Hickman		Family Specialist	Y	Y	
Emily Ravits		Social Worker	Y	Y	
Lynette Bistodeau	405952	Kindergarten	Y	Y	
Janelle Geiger	424603	Kindergarten	Y	Y	
Sherri Senn	427171	Kindergarten	Y	Y	
Rana Angadji	420881	First Grade	Y	Y	Ms. Angadji will be moving to the ESL position
Mariana Castanon	424493	First Grade	Y	Y	
Rebecca Spitzner	436653	Second grade	Y	Y	
Christine Sowden	385367	Second grade	Y	Y	
Leah Wieseler	420672	Third Grade	Y	Y	
Kirsten Sands	2137406	Third Grade	Y	Y	
Panyia Ly	443662	Fourth Grade	Y	Y	
Kao Nou Lee	412457	Fourth Grade	Y	Y	
Ann Nelson (Syverson)	422965	Fifth Grade	Y	N	Relocation; personal reasons
Kelsie Knudson	435922	Fifth grade	Y	N	Relocation; personal reasons
Stacie Stiel	378180	Sixth grade	Y	Y	
Sara Frustino	457258	Physical Education	Y	Y	
Yuyin Liao	423068	Special Education Teacher	Y	Y	
Kristen Evans	425130	Special Education Teacher	Y	Y	
Xiong Mua	382664	Technology/Visual Arts	Y	Y	
Leslee Wright	366543	Title I Reading teacher	Y	Y	
Tricia Ruf	441594	Title I Math	Y	Y	
Karyl Maier	184218	ESL	Y	N	Contract non-renewal
Jacqueline Chitwood	426547	Librarian	Y	Y	
Adrian Agard		Special Education Paraprofessional	Y	Y	
Constance Block		Special Education Paraprofessional	Y	Y	

Name	File Folder	Position	08-09	Return 09-10?	Conditions for changes
Maria Victoria Brown-Pena		Special Education Paraprofessional	Y	Y	
Ricki Jackson		Special Education Paraprofessional	Y	N	Relocation; personal reasons
Kante Thorpe		Special Education Paraprofessional	Y	Y	
Lia Vang		Special Education Paraprofessional	Y	Y	
Alyssa Isaacs	423953	Paraprofessional/Substitute teacher	Y	Y	Will become 5th grade teacher in 09/10
Kellie Leko		Paraprofessional	Y	Y	
William Morris		Paraprofessional	Y	Y	
Laura Spence	440504	Paraprofessional/Substitute teacher	Y	Y	
Una Vang		Paraprofessional	Y	Y	
Danette Wichmann		Paraprofessional	Y	N	Resignation; personal reasons
Ronsoie Xiong		Paraprofessional	Y	Y	
Chao Yang	392714	Paraprofessional	Y	Y	

In addition, several new individuals will be joining UA's staff to accommodate changes in current staff assignments and expanding enrollment. The new staff members are shown in Table 8.

**Table 8: New UA Staff and Assignments**

Name	File Folder	Position	Notes
David Foster		Paraprofessional	Replacement for Ms. Wichmann
Anne Polasik	444231	First Grade	Replacement for Ms. Angadji as she transitions to the ESL position
Cristin Ford	447308	Fifth Grade	Replacement for Ms. Knudson
Christine Brinkman		Paraprofessional	Replacement
Katherine Kasper		Special Education Paraprofessional	



***“The staff and teachers really care and pay attention to each and every student and they make sure the students needs are met.”***

***“They make you feel that you as a parent are important.”***

***“...enjoying what they do for the kids as well as the parents.”***

Several Urban Academy Parents' Responses to Parent Survey question: "What do you think is Urban Academy's greatest strength?"

# ***PROGRAM SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES***

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In addition to the feedback from students and parents, UA school staff reflected on the successes and challenges encountered by their program this year. The following list represents staff perceptions of successes, challenges, and strategies to address those challenges in the upcoming year.

## **Program Successes**

- ❖ **Teaching Staff.** UA utilized a number of school-wide programs to improve academic achievement for all students.
  - Title I Math Program: UA was able to hire a full-time Title I math teacher to coordinate and collaborative team teaching mathematics with the classroom teachers. Hiring the Title I math teacher allowed the existing Title I teacher to focus her time on the reading program.
  - English as a Second Language Program: UA now uses a full-time ESL teacher to teach ELL language and vocabulary.
  - Training and Development: UA offer a number of professional learning opportunities throughout the school year including classroom management, curriculum development, multiculturalism and diversity, and instructional strategies.
- ❖ **Reading Interventions.** UA utilized a number of interventions designed to target reading areas of student need.
  - The Response to Intervention Model: The Response to Intervention model was widely utilized in the 2008-2009 school year. Response to Intervention models follow the scientific method in the process of discovering best practices for improving student learning.
  - Reading Interventions: UA developed a number of reading interventions in the grade team meetings amongst the teachers, paraprofessionals, specialists, and administration to assist all students at their literacy levels.
  - Reading Recovery: When using Reading Recovery individual students receive a half-hour lesson each school day for 12 to 20 weeks with a specially trained Reading Recovery teacher. As soon as students can meet grade-level expectations and demonstrate that they can continue to work independently in the classroom, their lessons are discontinued, and new students begin individual instruction.
- ❖ **Academic Programs.** UA utilized a number of teams/communities to target specific learning needs of the student population.
  - Grade Level Team Meetings: UA Grade Level teachers held regular, once a month committee meetings to discuss their students reading level progress and strategize about interventions to continue to improve reading student reading ability.
  - Professional Learning Communities: Weekly professional learning communities meetings were held so that teachers, paraprofessionals, specialists, and administrators could come together to discuss the academic challenges they face and strategies in advancing student achievement.
  - Literacy Collaborative: UA utilized the Literacy Collaborative, a comprehensive school reform project designed to improve the reading, writing, and language skills of elementary children. School-based literacy coordinators were trained in research-based methods; provided with ongoing professional development as they continually implement research-based approaches in their own classrooms; and supported as they provide on-site training for the teachers in their schools. The cornerstone of this project was the element of dynamic, long-term professional development. The Literacy Collaborative incorporated all of the elements of effective schools to support improved literacy instruction and student achievement through: (1) Providing a research-based instructional model that is language-based, student-centered, process-oriented, and outcome-based; (2) Creating in-school and in-district leadership through the training and support of school-based literacy leadership teams, administrators, and literacy coordinators; (3)

Establishing long-term site-based development for every member of the school's literacy faculty; and (4) Helping schools monitor the progress of every student through systematized assessment, data collection, and analysis.

- Teacher Assisting Team (TAT): UA utilized a pre-intervention task force that works on building interventions and instructional skills with the teacher and student before a referral is made to the child study team for a possible special education referral.
- Child study team: UA utilized a collaborative of teachers, special education teachers, special education specialists, and administration that worked together with classroom teachers to develop interventions and instructional skills.

❖ **Finances: UA continues to be financially responsible**

- Fiscal Management: For the third year in a row, UA has earned the MDE School Finance Award due to UA's conservative approach to financial planning and development. Urban Academy has been able to continue to maintain a strong fund balance to assist with future growth and planning.

❖ **Building and Resources.** UA has made two important changes to their building and resources:

- Gymnasium: The gymnasium was reconstructed (e.g., raised the ceiling, wall padding) to have a full functioning gymnasium for student physical fitness without limitations.
- Library: UA hired a full-time librarian/media specialist to enhance the library and provide technology services to the students and staff.

**Challenges and Strategies**

- ❖ **Annual Yearly Progress:** UA did not make AYP for the 2007-2008 school year and as a result was identified as a "Needs Improvement" school. UA did submit a School Improvement Plan to MDE in November of 2008 and the plan was approved in January of 2009. The School Improvement Plan allowed UA to take a proactive look at how students are being taught, tested, and at student progress. The plan also mapped out ways in which UA would be molding and changing strategies to how instruction, assessment, and accountability will be conducted in order to reach AYP standards moving forward.

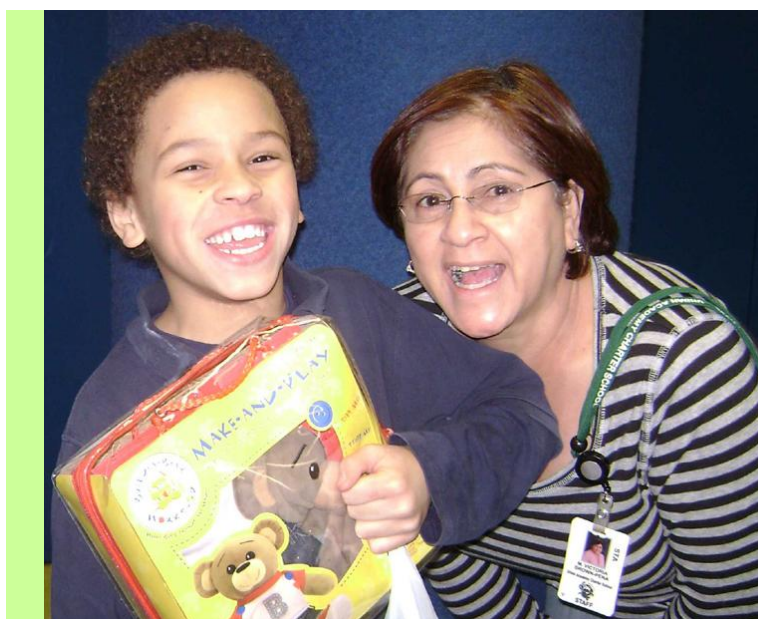
# STUDENT PERFORMANCE

## Summary

UA's academic goals are to show growth and meet standards for student academic progress in (a) reading, (b) language use, and (c) mathematics. UA staff measure academic progress using the Measures of Academic Progress (MAP; reading, language use, and mathematics) and the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment-II (MCA-II; reading and mathematics).

Changes in the academic performance of UA students are noted as follows:

- ❖ This was the third year UA administered the Reading, Language Use, and Mathematics MAP assessments to students.
  - The results of the fall-to-spring MAP growth showed that 44.8% of students made one year's growth or more in Reading, 41.5% made one year's growth or more in Language Use, and 57.0% made one year's growth or more in mathematics. These rates are improvements of the previous school years growth rates (28.2% for Reading, 40.5% for Language Use, and 41.4% for Mathematics).
  - Fall-to-spring MAP growth was compared across a number of NCLB categories including free or reduced price meals, limited English proficiency, special education, and ethnicity. The comparisons showed that less than 50% of students made one year's growth or more for each category in Reading and Language Use. However, more than 50% of UA students in all categories showed one year's growth or more in mathematics.
  - The proportion of students scoring Average or Above Average on the spring MAP assessments (9.6% for Reading, 7.4% for Language Usage, and 13.7% for Mathematics) fell short of the goal (67% for each of the three assessments). There was no apparent movement in student percentile ranks from fall 2008 to spring 2009. The number of years a student was consecutively enrolled at UA (between 1 and 5) had no apparent impact on percentile rank scores.
- ❖ On the MCA-II mandatory statewide assessment of reading and mathematics performance, the proportions of UA students proficient was smaller than the students in SPPS and statewide.
- ❖ UA have identified a number of in-classroom and school-wide strategies to improve academic achievement among UA students.



***"Great place for learning."***

***"Because Urban Academy is good for my children."***

***"Because at Urban Academy they have good teaching values."***

***"I love the staff/great teachers."***

Several Urban Academy Parents' Responses to Parent Survey question: "Why did you enroll your child (children) in Urban Academy?"

## Measures of Academic Performance (MAP)

During the 2008-2009 school year Urban Academy (UA) used Northwest Evaluation Association's (NWEA's) Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), in part, to monitor student progress towards school accountability goals. The MAP is a computer-adaptive assessment that is aligned with state educational objectives and can be used to assess student understanding in reading, language use, and mathematics. UA administered the MAP Survey tests for Reading, Language Use, and Mathematics in fall 2008, winter 2009, and spring 2009 to students in grades 2 through 6. Students in first grade completed the MAP Primary Reading and Primary Mathematics in fall 2008, winter 2009, and spring 2009. Students in kindergarten also completed the MAP Primary Reading and Primary Mathematics in spring 2009.

UA currently has two MAP-related goals: (a) students will, on average, make appropriate fall-to-spring progress on the MAP ("growth") and, (b) the percentage of continuously enrolled UA students performing at or above average will be similar to the norm-referenced group distribution ("standard"). In addition, UA is using students' performance in the 08/09 school year as baseline information for revising the MAP-related goals for their accountability plan. For this reason, results on all MAP assessments are reported using the nine student categories currently used under federal No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation: (a) all students; (b) students who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals (FRM; 96.1% of all UA students); (c) students who have limited English proficiency (LEP; 29.1% of all UA students); (d) students who are eligible to receive special education services (16.2% of all UA students); (e) students of African American descent (64.2% of all UA students); (f) students of Asian or Pacific Islander descent (29.1% of all UA students); (g) students of Hispanic descent (2.2% of all UA students); (h) students of Native American descent (0.6% of all UA students); and (i) students of White or Caucasian descent (3.9% of all UA students). This report is organized in two sections. In the first section, the results of student growth are summarized and in the second section the results of the performance standard are summarized.

### Fall-to-Spring Progress ("Growth")

Student growth was categorized using the same technique currently employed by the Minneapolis Public School district<sup>8</sup>: If fall-to-spring growth was less than 80% of the national norms published by NWEA, performance was categorized as "less than one year's growth." If fall-to-spring growth was between 80% and 120% of the national norms, performance was categorized as "one year's growth," if fall-to-spring growth was more than 120% of the national norms then performance was categorized as "more than one year's growth," and if fall-to-spring growth was less than 80% of the national norms then performance was categorized as "less than one year's growth."

Table 1 below shows the number and proportion of UA students in grades 2 through 6<sup>9</sup> in each of the three fall-to-spring growth categories for the Reading, Language Use and Mathematics Surveys in the current school year (fall 2008 to spring 2009) as well as for the 2006-2007 and 2007-2008 school years. As can be seen in Table 1, for both Reading and Language Use *fewer than half* of the students are making one year's growth or more from fall to spring. In Mathematics, *more than half* of the students are making about one year's growth or more from fall to spring.

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<sup>8</sup> To determine growth, each student's initial MAP score from fall 2008 was identified and compared to national mean growth obtained from NWEA. Students gaining less than 80% of the national mean growth were categorized as showing "less than one year's growth," students who gained between 80% and 120% of the national mean growth were categorized as showing "one year's growth," and students who gained more than 120% of the national mean growth were categorized as showing "more than one year's growth." For example, in grade 2 a fall 2008 Reading-RIT score of 180 has a national mean growth of 12.72 points. A grade 2 student who had a fall 2008 Reading-RIT score of 180 and gained less than 10.176 points (less than 80% of 12.72) by spring would be categorized as showing "less than one year's growth." If the same student gained between 10.176 and 15.264 points, the student would be categorized as showing "one year's growth." And if the same student gained more than 15.624 points, the student would be categorized as showing "more than one year's growth."

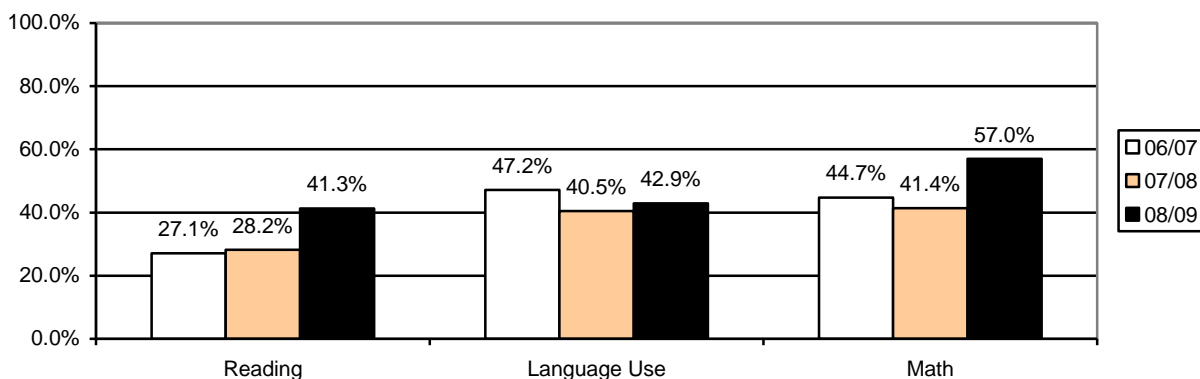
<sup>9</sup> Please note that first grade students were not included in any of the growth data because NWEA has not established norms for the Primary Reading or Primary Mathematics assessments.

**Table 9: Student Growth by School Year and Subject**

Subject	School Year	Less than one year's growth	One year's growth	More than one year's growth
Reading	06/07	67 (72.8%)	10 (10.9%)	15 (16.3%)
	07/08	57 (52.8%)	14 (13.0%)	37 (34.3%)
	08/09	79 (55.2%)	22 (15.4%)	42 (29.4%)
Language Use	06/07	66 (71.7%)	8 (8.7%)	18 (19.6%)
	07/08	63 (59.4%)	18 (17.0%)	25 (23.6%)
	08/09	79 (58.5%)	25 (18.5%)	31 (23.0%)
Math	06/07	54 (58.7%)	27 (29.3%)	11 (12.0%)
	07/08	61 (57.0%)	23 (21.5%)	23 (21.5%)
	08/09	61 (43.0%)	35 (24.6%)	46 (32.4%)

\* Note: fall-to-spring growth cannot be calculated for the first grade students because NWEA does not provide national norms for the Primary Reading or Primary Mathematics assessments.

Chart X below shows the proportion of students making one year's growth or more for the Reading, Language Use, and Mathematics tests for the 06/07, 07/08, and the current academic year. As can be seen in the Chart, there was a 13% increase in proportion of UA students making one year's growth or more in Reading from 07/08 to the current year (07/08 = 28.2%; 08/09 = 41.3%). In addition, there was a 15% increase in the proportion of UA students making one year's growth or more in Mathematics from 07/08 to 08/09. Language Use has remained comparatively stable over time with little change in the proportion of students making one year's growth or more.

**Chart 5: Proportion of Students Making One Year's Growth or More by Subject and School Year**

As described above, UA staff will be using MAP performance in 08/09 as a baseline measure of school performance. Tables X, X, and X below show student's fall-to-spring growth in MAP Reading, Language Use, and Mathematics for the nine categories of students used in NCLB legislation. Table X shows the 08-09 MAP Reading growth and, as can be seen in the table, student performance was similar across the nine student groups. In all cases, *more than half* of UA students made less than one year's growth Reading.

**Table 10: Student Reading Growth by NCLB Groups**

	N	Reading		
		Less than one year's growth	One year's growth	More than one year's growth
All Students	143	79 (55.2%)	22 (15.4%)	42 (29.4%)
Special Populations				
FRM	139	76 (54.7%)	22 (15.8%)	41 (29.5%)
LEP	41	22 (53.7%)	5 (12.2%)	14 (34.1%)
Special Education	27	15 (55.6%)	4 (14.8%)	8 (29.6%)
Ethnicity				

	N	Reading		
		Less than one year's growth	One year's growth	More than one year's growth
African American	94	52 (55.3%)	16 (17.0%)	26 (27.7%)
Asian or Pacific Islander	41	22 (53.7%)	6 (14.6%)	13 (31.7%)
White	7	*	*	*
Hispanic	4	*	*	*
Native American	1	*	*	*

\*Note: There were fewer than 10 students in this group and, in order to protect student identity and privacy, student performance is not reported. Students in this group were included in other analyses (e.g., All Students, FRM).

Table X shows the MAP Language Use growth and, as can be seen below, *more than half* of UA students showed less than one year's fall-to-spring growth in Language Use. It is important to note that, compared to all UA students, a higher proportion of students qualifying for Special Education services and African American students demonstrated less than one year's growth. In other words, among students qualifying for Special Education services or African American students, *fewer students* demonstrated one year's growth or more in Language Use.

**Table 11: Student Language Use Growth by NCLB Groups**

	N	Language Use		
		Less than one year's growth	One year's growth	More than one year's growth
All Students	135	79 (58.5%)	25 (18.5%)	31 (23.0%)
Special Populations				
FRM	131	78 (59.5%)	22 (16.8%)	31 (23.7%)
LEP	39	22 (56.4%)	6 (15.4%)	11 (28.2%)
Special Education	25	<b>17 (68.0%)</b>	4 (16.0%)	4 (16.0%)
Ethnicity				
African American	88	<b>56 (63.6%)</b>	14 (15.9%)	18 (20.5%)
Asian or Pacific Islander	39	21 (53.4%)	8 (20.5%)	10 (25.6%)
White	7	*	*	*
Hispanic	4	*	*	*
Native American	1	*	*	*

\*Note: There were fewer than 10 students in this group and, in order to protect student identity and privacy, student performance is not reported. Students in this group were included in other analyses (e.g., All Students, FRM).

Table X below shows MAP Mathematics growth for the 08/09 school year for the nine NCLB student groups. As can be seen in the table, over half of all students made one year's growth or more in Mathematics. In addition, the proportion of Asian or Pacific Islander students, students classified as Limited English Proficient, and students qualifying for special education services making one year's growth or more was a larger proportion than UA's general student population.

**Table 12: Student Mathematics Growth by NCLB Groups**

	N	Mathematics		
		Less than one year's growth	One year's growth	More than one year's growth
All Students	142	<b>61 (43.0%)</b>	35 (24.6%)	46 (32.4%)
Special Populations				
FRM	128	58 (42.0%)	25 (25.4%)	45 (32.6%)
LEP	42	10 (23.8%)	<b>14 (33.3%)</b>	<b>18 (42.9%)</b>
Special Education	25	9 (36.0%)	<b>8 (68.0%)</b>	<b>8 (32.0%)</b>
Ethnicity				
African American	92	<b>46 (50.0%)</b>	20 (21.7%)	26 (28.3%)
Asian or Pacific Islander	42	12 (28.6%)	<b>13 (31.0%)</b>	<b>17 (40.5%)</b>
White	7	*	*	*
Hispanic	4	*	*	*

**Table 12: Student Mathematics Growth by NCLB Groups**

	N	Mathematics		
		Less than one year's growth	One year's growth	More than one year's growth
Native American	1	*	*	*

\*Note: There were fewer than 10 students in this group and, in order to protect student identity and privacy, student performance is not reported. Students in this group were included in other analyses (e.g., All Students, FRM).

### **Performing At or Above Average (“Standard”)**

In addition, UA has a second MAP goal, that the percentage of continuously enrolled UA students performing at or above average will be similar to a norm-referenced group distribution. Table 5 below shows the proportion of students from a national normed group and grade 1 through grade 6<sup>10</sup> students from UA (by NCLB categories) who scored Below Average (percentile scores of 1 – 33), Average (percentile scores of 34 – 65) and Above Average (percentile scores of 66 – 99) on the Reading portion of the MAP. The results show that about 90% of UA students in all NCLB groups are reading Below Average in both Fall and Spring. Most of the remaining students scored Average (8.5%) with very few students scoring Above Average (1.1%). It is important to note that, as a group, there was no movement in students' percentile rank scores from fall to spring.

**Table 13: Student Percentile Rank in Reading by NCLB Groups**

	Fall			Spring		
	Below Average (1-33)	Average (34-65)	Above Average (66-99)	Below Average (1-33)	Average (34-65)	Above Average (66-99)
<i>National Averages</i>	(33.0%)	(33.0%)	(34.0%)	(33.0%)	(33.0%)	(34.0%)
All Students	160 (90.4%)	15 (8.5%)	2 (1.1%)	160 (90.4%)	15 (8.5%)	2 (1.1%)
Special Populations						
FRM <sup>a</sup>	154 (90.6%)	15 (8.8%)	1 (0.6%)	154 (90.6%)	15 (8.8%)	1 (0.6%)
LEP <sup>b</sup>	47 (94.0%)	3 (6.0%)	0 (0.0%)	47 (94.0%)	3 (6.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Special Education <sup>c</sup>	27 (93.1%)	2 (6.9%)	0 (0.0%)	27 (93.1%)	2 (6.9%)	0 (0.0%)
Ethnicity						
African American	101 (87.8%)	12 (10.4%)	2 (1.7%)	101 (87.8%)	12 (10.4%)	2 (1.7%)
Asian or Pacific Islander	48 (96.0%)	2 (4.0%)	0 (0.0%)	48 (96.0%)	2 (4.0%)	0 (0.0%)
White	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*
Native American	*	*	*	*	*	*

<sup>a</sup>The proportion of students eligible for FRM is 96.1%. <sup>b</sup>The proportion of students with LEP is 29.1%. <sup>c</sup>The proportion of students receiving special education services is 16.2%.

\*Note: There were fewer than 10 students in this group and, in order to protect student identity and privacy, student performance is not reported. Students in this group were included in other analyses (e.g., All Students, FRM).

Table X below shows the proportion of students from a national normed group and students from UA (by NCLB categories) who scored Below Average (percentile scores of 1 – 33), Average (percentile scores of 34 – 65) and Above Average (percentile scores of 66 – 99) on the Language Use portion of the MAP. As can be seen in the table, over 90% of students in all NCLB student groups scored Below Average with nearly all of the rest scoring Average (6.7%). Very few students (0.7%) scored above average in either Fall or Spring. Last, there was no apparent movement in students' percentile ranks scores from fall to spring.

<sup>10</sup> NWEA provides percentile rank scores for both the MAP Survey (grades 2 through 6) and MAP Primary (grade 1) assessments. As a result, students in grades 1 through grade 6 are included in all percentile rank analyses.

**Table 14: Student Percentile Rank in Language Use by NCLB Groups**

	Fall			Spring		
	Below Average (1-33)	Average (34-65)	Above Average (66-99)	Below Average (1-33)	Average (34-65)	Above Average (66-99)
<i>National Averages</i>	(33.0%)	(33.0%)	(34.0%)	(33.0%)	(33.0%)	(34.0%)
All Students	125 (92.6%)	9 (6.7%)	1 (0.7%)	125 (92.6%)	9 (6.7%)	1 (0.7%)
Special Populations						
FRM <sup>a</sup>	122 (93.1%)	8 (6.1%)	1 (0.8%)	122 (93.1%)	8 (6.1%)	1 (0.8%)
LEP <sup>b</sup>	38 (97.4%)	1 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)	38 (97.4%)	1 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Special Education <sup>c</sup>	38 (97.4%)	1 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)	38 (97.4%)	1 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)
Ethnicity						
African American	80 (90.9%)	7 (8.0%)	1 (1.1%)	80 (90.9%)	7 (8.0%)	1 (1.1%)
Asian or Pacific Islander	38 (97.4%)	1 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)	38 (97.4%)	1 (2.6%)	0 (0.0%)
White	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*
Native American	*	*	*	*	*	*

<sup>a</sup>The proportion of students eligible for FRM is 96.1%. <sup>b</sup>The proportion of students with LEP is 29.1%. <sup>c</sup>The proportion of students receiving special education services is 16.2%.

\*Note: There were fewer than 10 students in this group and, in order to protect student identity and privacy, student performance is not reported. Students in this group were included in other analyses (e.g., All Students, FRM).

Table X below shows the proportion of students from a national normed group and students from UA (by NCLB categories) who scored Below Average (percentile scores of 1 – 33), Average (percentile scores of 34 – 65) and Above Average (percentile scores of 66 – 99) on the Language Use portion of the MAP. Over 85% of students scored Below Average in math across the NCLB groups in both Fall and spring. The majority of the remaining students scored Average (12.0%) with a small proportion of students scoring Above Average (1.7%). As with the Reading and Language Use assessments, there was no movement in students' percentile rank scores from fall to spring.

**Table 15: Student Percentile Rank in Math by NCLB Groups**

	Fall			Spring		
	Below Average (1-33)	Average (34-65)	Above Average (66-99)	Below Average (1-33)	Average (34-65)	Above Average (66-99)
<i>National Averages</i>	(33.0%)	(33.0%)	(34.0%)	(33.0%)	(33.0%)	(34.0%)
All Students	151 (86.3%)	21 (12.0%)	3 (1.7%)	151 (86.3%)	21 (12.0%)	3 (1.7%)
Special Populations						
FRM <sup>a</sup>	144 (85.7%)	21 (12.5%)	3 (1.8%)	144 (85.7%)	21 (12.5%)	3 (1.8%)
LEP <sup>b</sup>	43 (86.0%)	6 (12.0%)	1 (2.0%)	43 (86.0%)	6 (12.0%)	1 (2.0%)
Special Education <sup>c</sup>	25 (92.6%)	1 (3.7%)	1 (3.7%)	25 (92.6%)	1 (3.7%)	1 (3.7%)
Ethnicity						
African American	99 (87.6%)	12 (10.6%)	2 (1.8%)	99 (87.6%)	12 (10.6%)	2 (1.8%)
Asian or Pacific Islander	44 (88.0%)	5 (10.0%)	1 (2.0%)	44 (88.0%)	5 (10.0%)	1 (2.0%)
White	*	*	*	*	*	*
Hispanic	*	*	*	*	*	*
Native American	*	*	*	*	*	*

<sup>a</sup>The proportion of students eligible for FRM is 96.1%. <sup>b</sup>The proportion of students with LEP is 29.1%. <sup>c</sup>The proportion of students receiving special education services is 16.2%.

\*Note: There were fewer than 10 students in this group and, in order to protect student identity and privacy, student performance is not reported. Students in this group were included in other analyses (e.g., All Students, FRM).

### **Relationship between Number of Years Enrolled and MAP Scores**

UA staff are interested in the potential cumulative impact multiple years of enrollment may have on student performance. Table X below shows the number and proportion of students scoring in six percentile rank

groupings on the spring Reading assessment by the number of years enrolled at UA. As can be seen in the table, the majority of students (52.8%), regardless of the number of years enrolled, scored in the lowest rank group with percentile scores of 1 to 10. Students enrolled for 3, 4, or 5 years did not perform noticeably better than students enrolled for 1 or 2 years.

**Table 16: Spring MAP Reading Percentile Rank Across Years of Enrollment**

Percentile Ranks	Years Enrolled					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
1-10	12	18	12	12	3	57 (52.8%)
11-20	8	3	1	4	2	18 (16.7%)
21-30	4	5	1	2	2	14 (13.0%)
31-40	1	0	2	2	0	5 (4.6%)
41-50	2	3	0	0	1	6 (5.6%)
51-99	0	3	2	1	2	8 (7.4%)

Table X below shows the number and proportion of UA students scoring in the six percentile rank groupings on the spring Language Use assessment by the number of years enrolled. As with the Reading assessment, nearly half of the students (47.1%) scored in the lowest percentile rank grouping regardless of number of years enrolled. Students attending UA for 3, 4, or 5 years did not perform noticeably better than students enrolled for 1 or 2 years.

**Table 17: Spring MAP Language Use Percentile Rank Across Years of Enrollment**

Percentile Ranks	Years Enrolled					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
1-10	3	8	9	10	2	32 (47.1%)
11-20	1	3	3	4	4	15 (22.1%)
21-30	2	0	2	2	1	7 (10.3%)
31-40	6	1	0	0	1	8 (11.8%)
41-50	1	0	0	1	0	2 (2.9%)
51-99	0	1	1	1	1	4 (5.9%)

Table X below shows the number and proportion of UA students scoring in the six percentile rank groupings on the spring Mathematics assessment by the number of years enrolled. Again, nearly half of the students (43.2%) scored in the lowest percentile rank grouping regardless of number of years enrolled. Students attending UA for 3, 4, or 5 years did not perform noticeably better than students enrolled for 1 or 2 years.

**Table 18: Spring MAP Mathematics Percentile Rank per Years of Enrollment**

Percentile Ranks	Years Enrolled					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
1-10	8	17	16	7	3	51 (43.2%)
11-20	6	10	4	4	5	29 (24.6%)
21-30	4	2	4	4	1	15 (12.7%)
31-40	2	2	3	0	1	8 (6.8%)
41-50	2	0	0	0	1	3 (2.5%)
51-99	3	4	2	3	0	12 (10.1%)

On June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009 UA staff met to discuss the results of the Fall to Spring MAP testing and reflect on the surprises, strengths, challenges, and strategies for future testing. Below is a summary of that reflection:

- ❖ Staff were pleased that ELL and Special Education students were making as much growth on the MAP as their other classmates. Staff were also pleased with the level of math growth and the fact that the proportion of students making one year's growth or more in math and reading has increased significantly compared to prior school years. Teachers were surprised that more growth was not made and felt there was a discrepancy between performance observed in the classroom and MAP results.

- ❖ Staff also identified a number of strategies to enhance student learning and performance on the MAP:
  - Focus more attention on Language Use to improve growth scores.
  - Continue and build upon effective interventions.
  - Identify and implement new strategies for student motivation to perform their best on standardized tests.
  - Identify and implement new strategies to improve student retention of classroom learning.

### **Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment –II (MCA-II)**

The Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments – Series II (MCA-II) is a mandatory statewide assessment of reading and mathematics performance in grades 3-8, reading in grade 10, and mathematics in grade 11. The MCA-II is used to measure students' progress toward mastery of Minnesota's academic standards and was first administered in spring 2006. Performance on the MCA-II is reported in scaled scores and achievement levels (does not meet expectations, partially meets expectations, meets expectations, exceeds expectations). Those students who achieve 'meets expectations' and 'exceeds expectations' are identified as having proficiency with Minnesota's academic standards by the Minnesota Department of Education.

Table 14 below shows the proportion of students with proficiency for the 2006, 2007, 2008, and 2009 administrations of the MCA-II for UA, schools within the St. Paul Public School District (grades 3-6 only), and schools across Minnesota (grades 3-6 only). The proportion of UA students scoring at or above proficiency in 2009 was 16.9% in reading and 12.0% in mathematics. The proportion of UA students scoring proficient on either the reading or mathematics portions of the MCA-II remains below rates observed within St. Paul Public Schools and across Minnesota. The information in Table 14 should be interpreted cautiously, however, because the data represents the performance of multiple groups of students; many of the students enrolled at UA in spring 2009 or spring 2008 may or may not have been enrolled at UA in spring 2007 or 2006.

**Table 19: Proportion of Students Enrolled in UA, St. Paul Public School District, and Across Minnesota Scoring At or Above Proficiency on the MCA-II**

Year	Reading			Mathematics		
	UA	St. Paul	Statewide	UA	St. Paul	Statewide
2009 (Grades 3-6)	16.9%	56.3%	74.4%	12.0%	55.4%	63.6%
2008 (Grades 3-6)	18.2%	55.6%	73.6%	12.2%	55.3%	70.9%
2007 (Grades 3-6)	20.2%	53.7%	72.7%	25.9%	55.2%	69.0%
2006 (Grades 3-5)	21.5%	59.1%	78.4%	16.9%	49.4%	72.7%

The Minnesota Department of Education uses performance on the MCA-II, in part, to determine if a school or district is making Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) under the federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). UA did not make AYP in 2008-2009. In accordance with MDE's policies, UA will file a school improvement plan by the November 3, 2009 deadline.

# ***OTHER SCHOOL ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES***

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## **Summary**

UA measures progress towards 3 non-academic goals: (a) student attendance, and (b) family and student satisfaction, as measured by student and parent survey results.

UA is making progress towards all non-academic goals, but has not met all of their goals at this time.

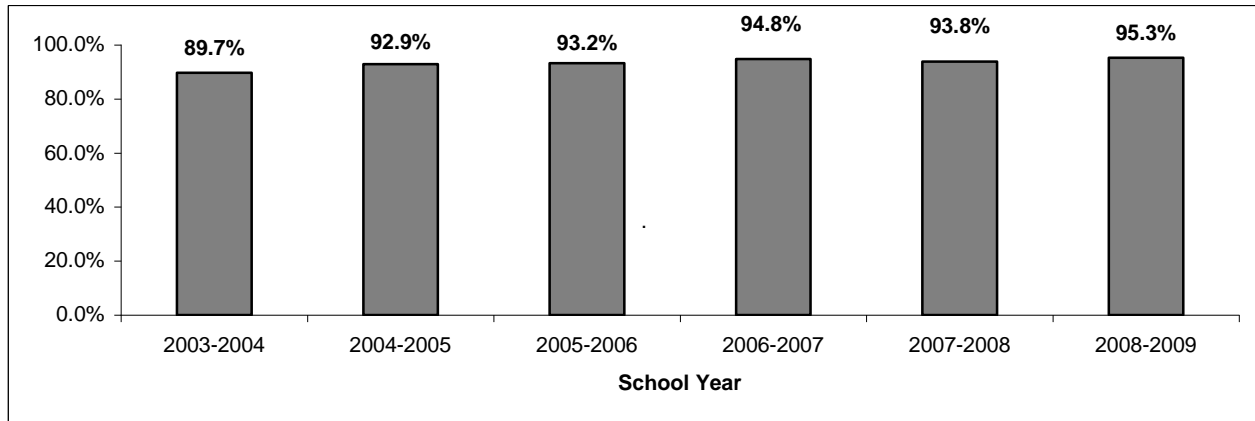
- ❖ Student attendance has increased over last year to 95.3%, meeting UA's goal of 95%.
- ❖ UA's goal was that families and students would express 80% satisfaction with three elements of UA's program: student achievement, parent involvement, and school environment.
  - UA's parent and student surveys went through minor revisions to better capture parent and student perceptions. Revisions included two items on the difficulty level of the reading and math done at school on the student survey and removal of one item from the parent survey.
  - Student satisfaction met UA's goal for parent involvement (80.0%), but fell below the goal for student achievement (74.5%) and school environment (68.5%). Both student achievement and parent involvement show increases from the previous school year. Although the domains of student achievement and school environment fell below UA's goal, students were generally positive on the open-ended questions. Students indicated they enjoyed UA's academics and classes, teachers and staff, and playtime and recess. Students would like to see improvement in student behavior, academics and academic skills, food, activities, and faculty.
  - Parent satisfaction met UA's goal for parent involvement (85.2%) and school environment (92.8%) but fell below the goal for student achievement (68.9%). In addition, satisfaction for both parent involvement and school environment showed improvements from the previous year. Parents reported they enrolled their children in UA for the positive school climate and environment, location, referrals, quality of staff and school, quality of program and curriculum. Parents reported that UA's strength lies in UA's focus on student needs, academics, and UA's quality and dedicated staff. Parents would like to see an expanded school program and improved transportation and parking. Parents overwhelmingly felt UA was following its mission and identified increasing student potential in academic achievement and support and social and life skills as exemplary ways in which UA was following its mission.



## Student Attendance

Figure 7 below summarizes attendance rates from the opening of UA to the 2008-2009 school year. When UA opened, the overall attendance rate was slightly below 90% and has risen to 95% for the 2008-2009 school year. UA's goal is 95% attendance, higher than the state's goal of 90%.

**Figure 6: UA Attendance Rates Over Time**



## Program Satisfaction

In 2006-2007 UA amended their accountability plan to include an indicator of success that at least 80% of UA students and parents who responded to the survey will be satisfied with the school's program in three domain areas: academics, parent involvement, and school environment. Table X (below) shows the proportion of students and parents who reported satisfaction with student achievement, parent involvement, and the environment at UA. As can be seen in the table, UA met the goal of 80% satisfaction among students, but only for the parent involvement domain; student satisfaction with student achievement and school environment has not yet met the 80% satisfaction goal. In addition, UA met the 80% satisfaction goal among parents for two domains (parent involvement, school environment). This is an improvement over last year because students are reporting satisfaction for parent involvement (none of the domains showed student satisfaction last year) and parents are reporting satisfaction for both parent involvement and school environment (last year parents reported satisfaction for school environment).

**Table 20: Average Program Satisfaction Across Domain and Group**

		Student Achievement		Parent Involvement		School Environment	
		Items	Satisfaction	Items	Satisfaction	Items	Satisfaction
Students	2006-2007	12	66.5%	3	73.9%	6	67.3%
	2007-2008	18	70.8%	3	77.4%	4	71.0%
	2008-2009	16	74.5%	3	<b>80.0%</b>	6	68.5%
Parents	2006-2007	11	<b>82.4%</b>	12	73.9%	8	<b>89.7%</b>
	2007-2008	13	68.9%	10	72.2%	9	<b>85.4%</b>
	2008-2009	13	68.9%	9	<b>85.2%</b>	10	<b>92.8%</b>

It is important to note that, at the beginning of the 2007-2008 year, UA staff initiated a revision of both the student and parent surveys. On the student survey, 10 new closed-ended items on student achievement were added (including new items on perceptions of reading, writing and math skills) and, for the first time, students were invited to provide responses to two open-ended items. On the parent survey, five new demographic items were added, two new closed-ended items on student achievement and parent involvement were added, five new closed-ended items on school environment were added, and parents were invited to respond to two additional open-ended items. UA staff feel the new surveys allow them to better understand students' and parents' perceptions of UA.

**Student Survey.** The following is a summary of the survey responses collected from students attending Urban Academy (UA) in spring 2009. A total of 214 surveys (96 from females and 113 from males) were collected from students in grades K (kindergarten) through sixth. The survey consisted of 31 questions including 27 closed-ended questions regarding Reading perceptions (n=7), Writing perceptions (n=4), Math perceptions (n=5), perceived difficulty of reading and math (n=2), and Family and School Climate (n=9). Response options for most of the perception questions were “Yes,” “Somewhat,” or “No,” however students rated the perceived difficulty of reading and math using a “Too Easy,” “About Right,” and “Too Hard” scale. In addition, there were 2 open-ended questions regarding three things the student likes about UA and three things “you wish could be better” at UA, and 2 demographic questions (gender, grade).

The number and proportion of students who answered “yes” to 29 of the closed-ended items is shown in Table X below. As can be seen in the table, students most often responded positively to survey items. This is particularly true for items in the academic and parent involvement domains. However, student responses to survey items in the school environment domain were much more variable. While the majority of students responded positively to items about their teacher, school safety and coming to school, far fewer students responded positively to items about students respecting teachers and other students.

**Table 21: Number and Proportion of Students who Answered “Yes” on UA’s Student Survey**

<b>Student achievement</b>	<b>“Yes”</b>	<b>Proportion</b>
I enjoy reading when I am in a guided reading group	169	79.0%
I enjoy writing when I choose my own topic.	167	78.0%
I think I am a good reader.	165	77.1%
When I do math I need less help than I used to.	161	75.2%
I enjoy writing when I can publish my work.	160	74.8%
I enjoy math when I can see an example.	160	74.8%
I enjoy math when we use objects, charts or counters.	159	74.3%
I enjoy writing when we share our writing.	157	73.4%
I enjoy reading when I work with another student.	154	72.0%
I enjoy reading when we talk about a book	151	70.6%
I usually understand what I am doing in math.	151	70.6%
I think I am a good writer.	150	70.1%
I think I do well in math.	148	69.2%
I usually understand what I am reading.	145	67.8%
I enjoy reading when I work by myself.	138	64.5%
I like to read aloud.	113	52.8%
<b>Parent Involvement</b>	<b>“Yes”</b>	<b>Proportion</b>
My family thinks I am a good reader.	169	79.0%
My family helps me with my school work.	169	79.0%
My family thinks I am good at math.	167	78.0%
<b>School Environment</b>	<b>“Yes”</b>	<b>Proportion</b>
My teachers care about me.	187	87.4%
My school is a safe place.	174	81.3%
I like coming to school.	167	78.0%
Learn even when others misbehave.	120	56.1%
Students respect teachers here.	115	53.7%
Students respect each other here.	95	44.4%

Last, two items on the 2007-2008 survey were revised with new response options. Both items asked students to comment on the difficulty level of the reading and math they are exposed to at UA. However, instead of using an agree/disagree format, students were asked to indicate if the reading and math they do was “too easy,” “about right,” or “too hard.” Results for the two items are summarized in Table X below. Most UA students (57.0%) report that the reading they do is “about right.” But less than half of students (48.1%) report that the math they do is “about right” with an additional third of students reporting that the math they do is “too easy.”

**Table 22: Breakdown of Responses for Topic Ease/Difficulty Questions**

	About Right	Too Easy	Too Hard
The reading I do at school is:	122 (57.0%)	66 (30.8%)	19 (8.9%)
The math I do at school is:	103 (48.1%)	74 (34.6%)	26 (12.1%)

Students were also invited to respond to 2 open-ended questions. The first was “List up to 3 things you like about Urban Academy” and 179 students provided 1 or more items they liked about UA with 126 students (70.0%) providing three responses. Students provided an average of 2.6 items each. (All of students’ responses to this item can be found in Appendix X.) Student responses were grouped by theme and the following 3 themes had the largest number of responses:

1. Academics and classes (39%): Students identified a number of academic activities or classes at UA which they liked including gym/gym class (N=88), math (N=37), and reading/books (N=35).
2. Teachers and staff (12%): Some students indicated they like their teacher or all of their teachers (N=40) while others simply stated “staff” (N=4). In addition, a small number of students were more descriptive. Two students said, “I like how teachers teach,” while another said, “They care about you.”
3. Fun, playtime and recess (8%): Most of the students in this group indicated they like recess (N=12), playing (N=8), and having fun (N=2).

Students were also invited to respond to “List up to 3 things you wish could be better at Urban Academy.” A total of 141 students provided 1 or more responses to this question with 97 students (35.5%) providing three responses and students provided an average of 2.2 responses each. (All of the students’ responses to this item can be found in Appendix X.) Student responses were grouped by theme and the following 5 themes had the largest number of responses:

1. Student behavior (22%): Students responses included a variety of behaviors they thought could be better. Their responses included pulling color cards (N=4), listening (N=3), students respecting each other (N=3), being nicer (N=3), getting into trouble (N=2), and no fighting (N=2).
2. Academics and academics skills (13%): Student responses under this theme included specific subjects such as math (N=7) and reading (N=7) as well as personal goals such as learning more (N=3) and being a good student (N=2).
3. Food (12%): Students offered non-specific responses such as “better food” (N=11), “better breakfast” (N=6), hot breakfast (N=6) and “better lunch” (N=5). A few students advocated for more food or shared specific foods such as pop, cereal, no green beans, and pizza that they wanted to see.
4. Activities (12%): Many student responses were categorized under ‘activities.’ Again, this group included non-specific items like recess (N=9), which is difficult to discern what about recess they would like to be better. Other items were more specific such as more field trips (N=4) and more time for recess (N=3)
5. Facility (11%): Student responses also included suggestions to add additional facilities such as swimming pool (N=8) and playground (N=5) in addition to improvements on existing spaces such as the library (N=5) and the bathroom (N=3).

**Parent Surveys.** A total of 129 surveys were completed by parents. The survey consisted of 42 questions in the following 4 sections: (1) Parent Demographics (n=5); (2) Student Academic Achievement (n=13); (3) Parent Involvement (n=10); (4) School Environment (n=9); and (5) Open-ended (n=4). The first three sections of the survey contained multiple choice questions that parents responded to by checking “Yes,” “No,” or “Somewhat.” For the open-ended items parents were asked to indicate (a) why parent enrolled their student at UA; (b) UA’s greatest strength; (c) what UA should improve upon; and (d) whether or not UA is following its mission. At the end of this summary the survey results are discussed within the context of UA’s indicators of success.

Most of the parents (or guardians) responding to the survey were women (83.50%) with men representing a smaller proportion (16.5%). In addition, many of parents responding to the survey identified themselves as African American / Black (46.8%) and one-quarter (25.2%) of parents identified themselves as Asian / Pacific Islander; the remaining 28.0% of parents identified themselves as White / European American (10.8%), Latino / Hispanic (4.5%), American Indian (2.7%), or Other (9.9%).<sup>11</sup> The majority of parents had either 1 child (54.8%) or 2 children (26.0%) attending UA, although some parents had 3 children (11.5%) or 4 or more children (7.7%) attending UA.<sup>12</sup> Approximately half of the parents (51.0%) indicated they had a working computer at home.<sup>13</sup>

Parents were also asked if they had participated in any of 6 activities held at UA. The majority of parents responding to the survey indicated they had visited UA (63.6%) and visited the classrooms (50.4%). Fewer parents indicated they had attended a school activity or conferences (39.5%), attended a PTA meeting (34.1%). Only a small proportion of parents indicated they volunteered at UA (13.2%) or attended another activity.<sup>14</sup> When the total number of activities parents attended was computed, most parents indicated they attended either 1 activity (24.8%) or 3 activities (23.3%), while fewer parents attended 4 or 5 activities (17.0%) or 2 activities (15.5%). In addition, 19.4% of parents indicated they had attended none of the activities.

**Chart 7: Parent Participation at UA**

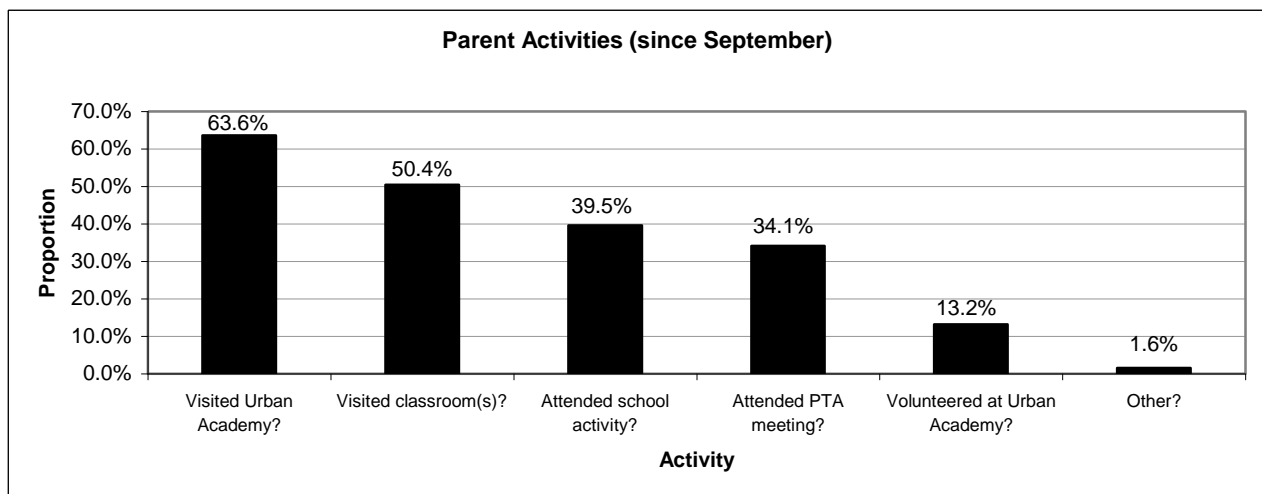


Table X below shows the number and proportion of parents who answered “Yes” to each closed-ended item on the parent’s survey. As can be seen in the table, there the majority of parents responded positively to five of the 13 academic items, six of the nine parent involvement items, and to all of the school environment items. In addition, on all of the items 60% or more of the parents responded “yes.”

**Table 23: Number and Proportion of Parents Who Answered “Yes” on the Parent Survey**

Student achievement	“Yes”	Proportion
My child enjoys learning at UA.	120	93.0%
My child believes she/he can do well.	115	89.1%
My child’s reading has improved.	113	87.6%
My child likes reading.	110	85.3%
My child’s writing has improved.	106	82.2%
My child likes to write.	100	77.5%

<sup>11</sup> An additional 11 parents declined to indicate their race or ethnicity.

<sup>12</sup> An additional 25 parents declined to indicate the number of children currently enrolled at UA.

<sup>13</sup> An additional 25 parents did not indicate if they had a working computer in their home.

<sup>14</sup> Two parents checked “Other.” One indicated they participated at a UA field trip and the other indicated they attended a “conference meeting.”

<b>Student achievement</b>	<b>“Yes”</b>	<b>Proportion</b>
I am satisfied with my child's social progress.	99	76.7%
I am notified if there is academic difficulty.	98	76.0%
My child's math skills have improved.	97	75.2%
My child understands what she/he reads.	96	74.4%
My child likes doing math.	90	69.8%
My child understands what she/he is doing in math.	79	61.2%
My child can express themselves in writing.	78	60.5%
<b>Parent Involvement</b>	<b>“Yes”</b>	<b>%</b>
Important that my child attends school every day.	126	97.7%
I make sure child is on time.	124	96.1%
I encourage homework completion.	121	93.8%
I would like to learn new ways to help child achieve.	113	87.6%
I help with homework.	110	85.3%
UA helps my child learn	106	82.2%
I feel informed about UA.	103	79.8%
I read with child once a week.	89	69.0%
I take child on family field trip once a week.	88	68.2%
<b>School Environment</b>	<b>“Yes”</b>	<b>%</b>
Feel welcome at UA.	127	98.4%
UA has a pleasant environment.	126	97.7%
UA staff show respect for diverse families.	125	96.9%
UA teachers care about my child.	121	93.8%
I would recommend UA to other parents.	121	93.8%
My child is proud to attend UA.	120	93.0%
My child feels safe at UA.	116	89.9%
I am notified for behavior successes.	115	89.1%
Teacher responds to calls, concerns.	113	87.6%
I am notified for behavior problems	112	86.8%

Parents were invited to *share why they enrolled their child (children) at Urban Academy*. Of the 129 parents responding to this survey, 103 parents (79.8%) offered 153 responses to this question and the remaining 26 parents (20.1%) did not respond to this question. The majority of parent responses fell under the following 5 themes: (1) positive school climate and environment (26%), (2) location (18%), (3) referrals (15%), (4) quality staff and school (15%), and (5) quality curriculum (13%). Example quotes from each of the themes are summarized in Table 4 below. As can be seen in the table, responses to this item were very positive. The majority of parents choose to enroll their child (children) in UA because of the positive school climate and the school environment. Parents shared that they toured the school and felt “welcomed” and “at home.” Parents also appreciated the smaller class sizes, and the school’s focus on diversity, respect, and exposure to cultures exhibited by the school. The second largest group of parents indicated that they enrolled their child (children) at UA because of its location; the school was either close to their home or close to their work. Other parents shared that referrals from friends, family members, and recruiters were precursors to their enrollment in UA. A similar number of parents choose to enroll their child (children) in UA because of they felt the school was a good school and had superior teachers. This group described how they and their children liked the school and the teachers. A slightly smaller group shared that they chose UA because of the structure and stability of the program and curriculum.

A sample of parent responses to the five most frequently mentioned themes can be found in Table X below and a full listing of parent responses can be found in Appendix X.

**Table 24: Reasons for Enrolling Child / Children at Urban Academy**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Example Comments</b>
Positive school climate and environment (26%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I enjoyed the staff and they make you feel welcome and at home (N=5)</i></li> <li>• <i>Smaller classrooms – one on one learning (N=5)</i></li> </ul>

Theme	Example Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I like the diversity (N=5)</i></li> </ul>
Location (18%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Close to home (N=10)</i></li> <li>• <i>Close to work (N=7)</i></li> </ul>
Referrals, recommendation and recruiter (15%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>It was recommended by a friend or family member (n=14)</i></li> <li>• <i>Recruiter (N=5)</i></li> </ul>
Quality staff and school (15%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I like the school (N=6)</i></li> <li>• <i>My children like the school (N=6)</i></li> <li>• <i>I love the staff/great teachers (N=4)</i></li> </ul>
Quality program and curriculum (13%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The program is very structured (N=4)</i></li> <li>• <i>Stability (N=2)</i></li> </ul>

Parents also responded to an open-ended question about *UA's greatest strength*. Of the 129 parents responding to the survey, 90 parents (69.8%) offered 98 responses to this item while 39 parents (30%) did not, and an additional 5 parents (3%) offered responses that could not be themed. Parent responses were reviewed and grouped into the following three themes: (1) focus on students and their needs (15%), (2) academics (14%), and (3) quality and dedicated staff (14%). Example quotes from each of the themes are summarized in Table 5 below. Again, responses to this question were very positive. Most parents opined that UA's greatest strength was its focus on students and their needs. This group appreciated the one-on-one attention their child (children) received. They also assessed that staff and teacher passion for their work and the students was an organizational strength. Many parents talked about how it was clear to them that teachers cared about their children. One said, *"The staff and teachers really care and pay attention to each and every student and they make sure the students needs are met."* A second group of parents felt the school's focus on academics was its greatest strength. Parents in this group shared observations of their children's learning as evidence. A similarly sized group identified UA's staff as its greatest strength; describing them as quality and dedicated. One parent offered, *"All of the staff members go beyond what is expected to help the families."*

A sample of parent responses for the three most frequently mentioned 'strength' themes can be found in Table X below and a full listing of parent responses can be found in Appendix X.

**Table 25: Perceptions of Urban Academy's Greatest Strength**

Theme	Example Comments*
Focus on students and their needs (15%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I think that the one-on-one involvement that they have with the students is the best.</i></li> <li>• <i>Teachers really know your child.</i></li> <li>• <i>They passion they have for what they do.</i></li> </ul>
Academics (14%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Reading program (N=7)</i></li> <li>• <i>Education (N=3)</i></li> </ul>
Quality and dedicated staff (14%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I think Urban Academy's greatest strength is how the workers help children be good at learning.</i></li> <li>• <i>The staff and teachers are always there to talk to and help you.</i></li> </ul>

\*Responses with no "N" present indicate that the response was offered by only one individual.

Parents were also given the opportunity to make suggestions for *UA's future and what could be improved upon*. Of the 129 parents responding to the survey, 77 parents provided 85 suggestions (55.2%). Please note that 52 parents (19%) did not respond to this question and 16 parents (12%) indicated the school was already doing a good job and suggested no improvements. The majority of parents' suggestions for improvement were grouped into two categories: (1) expand school and programs (31%), and (2) transportation and parking (13%). The majority of parents who offered suggestions advocated that UA expand the school and programs by creating music, sports, and/or art programs, and offering more field trips to students. The second largest group indicated that UA was already a superior school and did not offer any suggestions. A third group, suggested that UA could improve transportation and parking for students,

parents, and visitors. Their suggestions under this theme included offering transportation for students participating in after school activities and increased communication between the school, parents, and the bus company.

A sample of parent responses for the three most frequently mentioned suggestion themes can be found in Table X below and a full listing of parent responses can be found in Appendix X.

**Table 26: Suggestions for Urban Academy's Improvement**

Theme	Example Comments*
Expand school and program (31%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Offering a music program or classes. (N=7)</i></li> <li>• <i>Offering sport for children to participate in. (N=6)</i></li> <li>• <i>Expansion, there are more kids our there that could benefit from the environment at Urban Academy.</i></li> </ul>
Transportation and parking (13%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Bus system, five out of 10 times not on time. This creates a critical situation for us.</i></li> <li>• <i>The bus situation needs to be looked at the adjusted a little, communication between drivers and everyone else.</i></li> </ul>

\*Responses with no "N" present indicate that the response was offered by only one individual.

On the last open-ended item parents were asked if they felt *UA was following the school's mission* (the mission statement was provided for parent's review). Of the 129 parents responding to the survey, 91 parents (70.5%) provided 97 responses to this item. Forty-five parents (49%) simply responded "Yes," and the remaining 46 parents (50.5%) responded "Yes" with some additional information (none of the parents indicated they felt UA's is not following it's mission). Parent's responses fall into two major themes: increasing students' potential through academic achievement and support, and though the development of social and life skills. Sample quotes from each of these themes can be found the Table 7 below. Overall, parents were in agreement that UA is following its mission. Specifically, parents identified and shared examples of ways in which UA has increased their child's (children's) potential in academics and social/life skills. Academically, parents felt UA was supporting their child to work hard and improve their skills. One parent offered, "*Yes children are learning a lot and have or are getting experiences other schools don't have.*" Socially parents identified improvement in the attitudes and behavior of the children. Some specifically mentioned that they appreciated that their child (children) were learning respect. One said, "*Yes, my child has a better understating about respecting others for who they are.*"

A sample of parent responses for the two most frequently mentioned suggestion themes can be found in Table X below and a full listing of parent responses can be found in Appendix X.

**Table 27: Suggestions for Urban Academy's Improvement**

Theme	Example Comments*
Increasing potential: Academic achievement and support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Yes, I have seen much educational growth since my child has attended Urban Academy.</i></li> <li>• <i>Yes teachers help their students individually and technology classes helps kids to gain the skills they need in the future. Also, classes such as Spanish and Hmong make students understand other cultures.</i></li> <li>• <i>Yes, the teaching methods are unique and have good outcomes.</i></li> </ul>
Increasing potential: Social and life skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Yes, because my son hasn't got suspended not once this year and he is getting the help the he needs.</i></li> <li>• <i>Yes I have seen much social growth since my child has attended Urban Academy.</i></li> <li>• <i>Yes they are teaching how important respect is.</i></li> </ul>

\*Responses with no "N" present indicate that the response was offered by only one individual.

# ***SCHOOL FINANCIAL INFORMATION***

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UA's unaudited school financial information can be found on the following page. UA will submit audited financial statements to their sponsor, Hamline University, and the Minnesota Department of Education on or before December 31, 2009.

## ***ABOUT ACET, INC.***

Established in 1998, ACET is an independent research group specializing in the evaluation of educational and community-based programs. Our group has extensive experience evaluating multi-year, multi-site statewide and national initiatives aimed at improving the lives of youth and families, and in providing positive outreach to various communities. ACET's mission is to "provide services to improve organizational effectiveness and build evaluation capacity."

ACET has served as the principal evaluator for several local, statewide, and federal programs and initiatives funded by organizations such as the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the Minnesota Office of Higher Education, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. We have provided evaluation technical assistance and offered training sessions to over 50 organizations that have a widespread impact on varied groups, including youth and adults recovering from chemical dependency, children at risk for academic failure, and adults receiving health and prevention services. Our company has also provided evaluation assistance to organizations that empower individuals to develop peaceful relationships, eliminate violence, and establish outreach efforts to parents and community members.

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## ***APPENDIX A***

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### ***Registration with Minnesota Attorney General's Office***

## ***APPENDIX B***

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### ***Enrollment Applications in English, Hmong and Spanish***

# ***APPENDIX C***

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## ***Admissions Policies and Procedures***

# APPENDIX D

## Student Responses to Open-Ended Survey Items

*List up to 3 things you like about Urban Academy.*

### Academics and classes (N=182)

#### Gym/gym class (N=88)

Gym (N=46)

I like Physical Ed (N=41)

I like the gym because I have some muscle

#### Math (N=37)

I like math (N=36)

Counting

#### Reading/Books (N=35)

I like reading (N=29)

Books (N=5)

I like reading to my teachers

#### Other Classes (N=15)

Science (N=3)

Classes (N=2)

Hmong (N=2)

Social Studies (N=2)

Grammar

I like all of my subjects

Music

Spanish

Spelling

I like to go to computers

#### Writing (N=7)

I like to write (N=7)

### Teachers and staff (N=57)

I like all of the teachers (N=40)

Staff (N=4)

I like how teachers teach (N=2)

I like when they help me (N=2)

Nice people (N=2)

The principal (N=2)

I like Ms. [Name]

My teachers treat us like we're first graders

Nice School

Nice staff

They care about you

### Fun, playtime, and recess (N=39)

Recess (N=12)

I like to play (N=8)

We have fun (N=2)

Free time

Get recess

Get to go outside

I like play time

I like playing with my friends

I like the activities-centers-play time

I like to go to recess

I like to play and have fun time

I like to play games

Playing outside

Playing with cars

Playing with puzzles

Playing with toys

We can play

We get to play

You can do fun activities

You can listen to music

### Food (N=32)

I like lunch (N=15)

Food (N=10)

I like eating (N=2)

Eating fruit snacks at lunch

Good lunch and breakfast

### Technology (N=24)

I like technology (18)

Computer (N=6)

### Descriptors (N=22)

It is fun (N=11)

It is cool (N=4)

It is safe (N=4)

Its nice (N=2)

Caring

**Friends and other students (N=19)**

I like my friends (N=13)  
 I like the kids in my class (N=4)

Nice kids go here  
 Students

**Learning (N=19)**

Learning (N=15)  
 I am getting really smart in this school (N=2)

My teacher helps me learn my ABC and numbers  
 (N=2)

**Extras (N=13)**

Field trips (N=11)

Assemblies (N=2)

**School and/or Urban Academy (N=12)**

It is a good school (N=3)  
 School (N=3)  
 I like Urban Academy (N=2)  
 I like this school

Fun school  
 Is the best school  
 It is a good place

**Facilities (N=11)**

Centers (N=3)  
 Classroom (N=3)  
 Library (N=3)

I like the building  
 The new gym

**Values and Behavior (N=9)**

Respect (N=4)  
 I like to help (N=2)  
 Behavior

Doing what my teacher says  
 Listening to my teachers

**Misc. (N=9)**

Calendar  
 Color  
 I like to look  
 Teaching  
 The bus

The help  
 Toys  
 Uniform  
 When people take pictures

**School (N=8)**

I like the school (N=8)

**Program Specifics (N=6)**

Brain break (N=3)  
 Choice Time (N=3)  
 I like the way they cook

Snacks  
 When I get candy for doing a good job

**Homework (N=5)**

I like to do homework (N=5)

**Everything (N=2)**

Everything (N=2)

**Sports (N=2)**

Basketball (N=2)

**Nothing (N=1)**

Nothing

**List up to 3 things you wish could be better at Urban Academy.**

**Student behavior (N=67)**

Pulling color cards (N=4)	Less bad behavior
Listen N= (3)	Listen to the teachers
Respect (N=3)	More respect
Students to respect each other N= (3)	Other students should respect others
Be nicer (N=2)	People arguing
Getting in trouble (N=2)	People being mean to me
No fighting (N=2)	People don't listen to the teacher sometimes
Respect the teachers (N=2)	People fighting
Someone hitting me (N=2)	People mess with me during nap time
When people are mean to me (N=2)	People not sharing things
Be nice and listen	People taking stuff from me
Be nice to other people	People won't fight
Be quiet in gym	Quiet
Be respectful	Respect each other
Be responsible	Respect the substitute teacher as your real teacher
Behave	Silence
Behavior	Student behavior
Buses to be quiet	Students being better
Do not call code black	That someone hurts my friend
Don't talk when teacher is talking	To respect teachers, staff and kids
Going to the office	When I say stop and someone doesn't stop
I like to be nice to my friends	When kids aren't nice
I wish people got a long with other people	When people bump into me at gym and I fall
I wish students respect teachers	When people rip stuff
Kids not being bad	When people say mean words
Kids would get along	When someone pushes me

**Academics and academic skills (N=40)**

Math (N=7)	I don't like spelling
Reading (N=7)	I don't like writing
Learn more (N=3)	I like to read to someone
Be a good student (N=2)	Language
The classes (N=2)	Less work
Be good at writing	More homework
Better math homework	No homework
Easier math	Reading to be longer
Harder reading	School work
Have gym every day	Social studies
Have math every day	Teachers help more
Homework	Writing

**Food (N=37)**

Better Food (N=11)	Food in the class
Better breakfast (N=6)	I wish I could eat more food
Hot breakfast (N=6)	I wish there can be more breakfast
Better lunch (N=5)	More cereal
Choice lunches	No green bean
Cold lunch only	Pizza
Drink pop	

**Activities (N=36)**

Recess (N=9)  
 More field trips (N=4)  
 More time for recess (N=3)  
 Choice time (N=2)  
 Brain break  
 Go on more class trips  
 Go to the park every Friday  
 Going to the park  
 Having brain break all the time  
 I don't like recess  
 Longer recess

More activity  
 More time to go outside  
 Park in the winter  
 Play better  
 Play games  
 Play more  
 Play twister  
 Play with the puppets  
 Playing the games  
 Swimming  
 Taking a nap

**Facilities (N=34)**

Swimming pool (N=8)  
 Library (N=5)  
 Playground (N=5)  
 Bathroom (N=3)  
 Bigger classroom/classes (N=3)  
 Bigger gym (N=3)

Bigger school (N=2)  
 Have a park (N=2)  
 More classrooms  
 The school  
 The size

**Policies (N=24)****Uniforms (N=20)**

No more uniforms (N=18)  
 Don't get to wear clothes I want to  
 New uniforms

**Other (n=4)**

Line order  
 Bathroom pass  
 no phone call home  
 No rules

**Gym/PhyED (N=19)**

Longer Phy. Ed (N=6)  
 Phy ed (N=6)  
 Gym (N=3)  
 Gym to be bigger

Phy ed every day  
 The gym to have smaller hoops  
 Doing Flips

**Resources and Equipment (N=15)**

Books (N=4)  
 Better desks (N=3)  
 Better Gym  
 Better heat  
 Cooler toys

Hand dryer  
 Lockers  
 Microwave  
 More toys  
 Video games

**Other students (N=8)**

Students (N=3)  
 The kids (N=2)  
 Good kids

Have good students  
 Kids in class

**Teachers and staff (N=7)**

The teachers (N=4)  
 I like my teacher

Nice people  
 Nice teacher

**Technology (N=5)**

Smart boards (N=2)  
 Technology (N=2)

Computers

**Calendar/schedule (N=4)**

A little more time off school  
 Go home at 4 pm

I wish to come to school all the time  
 Start school at 8 am

**Nothing (N=4)**

**Sports (N=1)**

Basketball

**Misc (N=8)**

Falling

Me

Object to ourself

The lights shining in my eyes

When the teacher says something we have to do it

Word study

Work

Change the room around

# APPENDIX E

## *Parent Responses to Open-Ended Survey Items*

Please note that responses with no “N” present indicate that the response was offered by only one individual.

### ***Why did you enroll your child (children) at Urban Academy?***

#### **School Climate/ Environment (N=33)**

- I enjoyed the staff and they made you feel welcome and at home (N=5)
- Smaller classroom – one-on-one learning (N=5)
- I like the diversity (N=4)
- Respect and exposure to cultures (N=4)
- Family oriented (N=3)
- Friendly, warm, safe and welcoming (N=3)
- I enrolled my child in Urban Academy because of the nice environment (N=3)
- Small environment/school (N=3)
- Uniforms (N=3)

#### **Location (N=23)**

- Close to home (N=10)
- Close to work (N=7)
- Location (N=6)

#### **Referrals/ Recommendation/ Recruiter (N=19)**

- Recommended by a friend or family member (N=14)
- Recruiter (N=5)

#### **Quality staff/ school (N=19)**

- I like the school (N=6)
- My child(ren) like the school (N=6)
- I love the staff/great teachers (N=4)
- I enrolled my children to Urban Academy because I heard that the teacher at this school teach good
- I had met with some of the teachers and like that they are real
- I like the staff and teachers - they are so down to earth

#### **Quality curriculum/ program (N=17)**

- The program is very structured (N=4)
- Stability (N=2)
- A different kind of learning and teaching
- Because at Urban Academy they have good teaching values
- Because it is a good school
- Because of all of what is being offered. With respect to paying attention to the students need
- Because she needed some place for her to advance academically and to learn skills most schools don't promote (languages)
- Because Urban Academy is good for my children
- Great place for learning
- Heard it had a good academic growth for children
- I wanted a school that was going to encourage my children
- To learn some discipline

#### **Alternative to public school/ charter school/ something new (N=12)**

- Try something new (N=4)
- Because charter schools are the best schools (N=2)

- I wanted to see if the school was good for my children (N=2)
- Wanted to try a charter school instead of public school (N=2)
- I was looking for a change for my daughter
- Public schools are too crowded

**Necessity (N=2)**

- Came from out of town/state needed a school (N=2)

**School calendar (N=2)**

- All day kindergarten
- Because of the September 15 deadline for kindergarten

**No Answer (N=26)**

***What do you think is Urban Academy's greatest strength?***

**Meeting needs of students/focus on students (N=15)**

- Encouraging the kids to learn teachers/students and parents/staff
- I think that the one-on-one involvement that they have with the students is the best
- I think Urban Academy's greatest strength is enjoying what they do for the kids as well as the parents
- One-on-one involvement with children
- Staff is caring
- Targeting the areas of the student need to improve the most
- Teachers really know your child
- The passion they have for what they do
- The staff and teachers really care and pay attention to each and every student and they make sure the students needs are met
- The teachers care about your children
- the teachers really know your child
- The teaching and encouraging the children
- The way they care for every student no matter their background
- They really care for the
- Working with the kids

**Academics (N=14)**

- Reading program (N=7)
- Education (N=3)
- The math classes (N=2)
- After school program tutoring
- They have their own curriculum

**Quality and dedicated staff (N=14)**

- Teachers (N=7)
- All of the staff members who go beyond what is expected to help the families
- Caring teachers
- Great teachers that understand
- I think Urban Academy greatest strength is how the workers help children be good at learning
- Quality of teaching
- The staff and teachers are always there to talk to and help you
- The staff is very involved

**Family and community oriented support (N=11)**

- Family (N=4)
- Community togetherness
- Helping families
- Support to families

- The connection the staff and parents have with one another
- They are family based
- Very family oriented
- Willing to help parents

**Communication (N=10)**

- Communication (N=4)
- Calling to update us on our child's progress in school (N=2)
- Interaction with parents
- Respect of parents concerns
- The open door policy, you can talk to anyone at any time
- The teachers' communication with the parents

**Culture and Diversity (N=8)**

- Cultural diversity (N=4)
- Culture awareness
- Culture is an important tool to learning
- Different cultures coming together
- The way they adapt to all cultures

**Environment (N=8)**

- They have a very positive environment/atmosphere (N=3)
- Feels like home
- Friendly
- It is a safe place for children to learn
- The staff has a warming welcome
- They make you feel that you as a parent are important

**Structure and Discipline (N=6)**

- Being able to deal with parents and the students' behavior
- Effective disciplining when kids act up
- Keeping the children structured daily
- Structure
- They know how to effectively discipline students
- Using consequences for behavior

**Class size (N=3)**

- Small class sizes (N=2)
- Small classrooms - one on one teaching

**Overall positive (N=3)**

- I think Urban Academy is great
- Overall it is great
- The whole school

**Miscellaneous (N=5)**

- AmeriCorps program
- Great values
- Location
- They are very helpful
- Understanding

**No Answer (N=39)**

***What do you think Urban Academy should improve upon?***

**Expand School and programs (N=26)**

- Offering music program/classes (N=7)
- Offering sports for children to participate in (N=6)
- Offer arts (N=4)
- More field trips for the students (N=3)
- Expand
- Expand to higher grades
- Expansion, there are more kids out there that could benefit from the environment at Urban Academy
- Maybe expand to older grades
- More school assemblies
- Offer activities

**Parking and Transportation (N=11)**

- Better parking for the children, family and visitors (N=2)
- Communication with the bus company/parents (N=2)
- I think they should have transportation for the after school activities (N=2)
- The busing (N=2)
- Bus system. 5 out 10 times not on time. This creates a critical situation for us
- The bus situation needs to be looked at and adjusted a little, communication between drivers and every one else
- Transportation

**Meals (N=9)**

- Lunch (N=5)
- Hot breakfast (N=2)
- Better food - hot breakfast - variety of choices for lunch
- Breakfast - need hot at least two times a week

**Communication (N=7)**

- Communication (N=2)
- At this time I would like to see advance notices of school closing
- Communicating with the parents more often
- Communication with parents when situations arise
- Parent/Teacher communication
- Responding back with phone calls

**Academic support (N=6)**

- More homework-every night/extra credit (N=3)
- Academic support for the students
- Help kids with reading or math when they have a hard time
- I think Urban Academy should improve about the education so the students will have the knowledge

**Facility (N=5)**

- Playground outside (N=3)
- New building
- The gym

**Diversity and Cultural sensitivity (N=2)**

- Diversity
- Parent/Teacher communication barriers within cultures that hinder effective communication because of biases, misunderstanding and stereotypes.

**Non academics (N=2)**

- Life skills
- Teaching students social skills and building of confidence in themselves

**No uniforms (N=1)**

- No uniforms

**Doing a good job already (N=16)**

- Nothing, they are doing a good job (N=12)
- Everything is ok
- Everything so far is great
- I think Urban Academy is doing a great job and at this point needs no improvement
- They have it all

**No answer (N=52)**

***Do you think Urban Academy is following its mission? Why or why not?*** (UA's mission statement was provided on the survey for parents to review and reflect upon.)

**Increasing potential (N=31)**

**Academic achievement and support (N=17)**

- Academically yes
- Best academic and all teachers pay attention to teach
- I see it in his grade and he loves school now
- The kids seem very enthusiastic with learning and with school in general
- Yes children are learning a lot and have or are getting experience other schools don't have
- Yes my child has improved greatly in her growth of knowledge
- Yes my child's reading skills have grown
- Yes, I do, because my daughter is improved in her academic every semester
- Yes, I have seen great changes in my Childs education
- Yes, I have seen much educational growth since my child has attended Urban Academy
- Yes, I see my child is doing good because he is learning how to read and to spell
- Yes, my child is learning to spell and read on a higher level
- Yes, my daughter has learned more going here then in a standard public school
- Yes, my daughters academics have improved
- Yes, teachers help their students individually and technology class helps kids to gain the skill they need in the future. Also classes such as Spanish & Hmong make students understand other cultures
- Yes, the teaching methods are unique and have good outcomes
- Yes, they have worked so hard to be successful in the children's life academically

**Social/life skills (N=14)**

- Yes because my son hasn't got suspended not once this year and he is getting the help that he needs. Life skill I have yet to see.
- Yes I do my child has grown since the last time me and her teacher met
- Yes my child's social skills have grown
- Yes, because of the visual growth I am seeing in my child
- Yes, I have noticed that through the years my children have grown socially and I appreciate everything that they do
- Yes, I have seen much social growth since my child has attended Urban Academy
- Yes, my child has grown a lot socially
- Yes, my child is growing socially
- Yes, my child started the school year at another school, At his first conference after nearly 2 months all I heard from his teacher was how distracting and disruptive he was. He even graded zero in some skills. Urban Academy changed this report within 2 weeks. My child has developed so well. He has this "I can do" attitude about him and surprises me everyday! I am thankful
- Yes, my child's has a better understanding about respecting others for who they are
- Yes, they are teaching how important respect is
- Yes, they are teaching our children how to respect everyone for who they are

- Yes, they have worked so hard to be successful in the children's life socially

**General positive (N=10)**

- But overall, families are probable happy with this school
- Yes improving
- Yes, I believe Urban Academy is doing great
- Yes, I can feel it every time I visit the school
- Yes, I do think Urban Academy is following its mission
- Yes, my child enjoys going here
- Yes, my child has been here a long time and the growth is proven in the outcome
- Yes, they care very much
- Yes, they work hard to fulfill the mission and guide the children to success
- Yes, Urban Academy is following its mission. Why I feel the mission is being met because my child is improving every step of the way

**Safe, structured, respectful community (N=5)**

- Yes, because I have never felt at danger at all since my daughter has attended Urban Academy and there is always staff available and around
- Yes, family school friendly, safe and welcoming
- yes, it is a structured, respectful school
- Yes, it is a very structured school
- Yes, my child has learned he must support his own community

**Maybe/ Room for improvement (N=3)**

- I think that they are but it is going to take hard work to complete the mission
- Some times but it can get a lot better for the years to come
- Somewhat

**Partnership with parents (N=2)**

- Absolutely, I am a part of my child learning program
- Yes, I am told of my child's progress good or not so good

**Yes (45)**

- Yes (41)
- Sure
- Yes for sure
- Yes, but it's a challenge
- Yes, even more

**No Answer (N=37)**

**Unsure (N=1)**

- I don't know

## ***APPENDIX F***

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### ***Urban Academy's School Report Card From Minnesota Department of Education***