


<p>High School 1001 Commonwealth Avenue Boston, MA 02215 phone: 617.232.0300 fax: 617.232.2838</p>	<p>MATCH Charter Public School</p>  <p>www.matcheschool.org</p>	<p>Middle School 86 Wachusett Street Jamaica Plain, MA 02130 phone: 617.983.0300</p>
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Greetings from the MATCH School,

In this e-blast:

1. Our New Middle School
2. Middle School: Parent View
3. High School
4. High School: New Data on Departing Kids
5. Tutoring Grows in Boston
6. Gala: Nov 7

With best wishes,


Mike Goldstein

and the MATCH School Team

*If you'd like to be removed from this list, just reply with "Remove." No sweat.

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1. NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL

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We just opened our new MATCH Middle School, in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood of Boston. It started with 90 kids in Grade 6.

Ultimately, it will grow to serve kids in Grades 6 to 8. Those students will be automatically admitted to the high school when they hit Grade 9 in 2011. Jamaica Plain Gazette <http://www.jamaicaplainingazette.com/node/2820> has the story.

For most kids, the immediate focus is on try to fix the basic skill deficits -- literally we go back to addition and subtraction. Some students can barely read. We aggressively tackle these issues. Just like our high school, MATCH Middle has a MATCH Corps -- full time tutors who work 60+ hours per week, in exchange for housing and a small stipend -- to make sure that each kid gets 2 hours per day, every day, of personalized tutoring.

Still, there is also an ambitious curriculum of new material: this, for example, is their science curriculum <http://www.zahniser.net/~russell/science08/index.php?title=Calendar> for September.

2. NEW MIDDLE SCHOOL: PARENT PERSPECTIVE


We asked parents: What do you think will be your child's greatest challenge? While the staff focuses mostly on critical academic skill issues, the parents think first about school culture.

*I predict her challenge will be overcoming fear of learning and asking questions when needed.

*Sometimes J**** gets upset when she does not know things. She usually has an attitude. I think she has to learn how to not get an attitude.

*The greatest challenge will be stop talking and stop trying to be everyone's friend.

*My child's greatest challenge will be discipline due to the fact that she is not used to it.

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*I think the greatest challenge for my child will be the concept of community.

*The greatest challenge for my child at this point is wearing his shirt tucked into his pants and wearing his pants around his waist instead of across his butt.

The Middle School staff turn cartwheels to try to make sure that each student gets a lot of 1-on-1 attention, so the student perspective is "Well, yes, the school is strict, but they're really nice, too, and they pay a lot of attention to me."

3. HIGH SCHOOL


On a light note, some of our kids and tutors put together a 1 minute Romeo and Juliet <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N442_61BUhA> on YouTube.

NECN News <<http://www.necn.com/Boston/SciTech/Schools-make-math-and-science-more-engaging/1213317525.html%23>> had a story about teaching math and science, and featured MATCH among other schools.

National Public Radio did a recent story called Beyond No Child <<http://www.onpointradio.org/shows/2008/09/school-reform/>> where MATCH was mentioned by a couple of the panelists.

4. HIGH SCHOOL: NEW DATA

The MCAS are released this week. Until then, we are not allowed to discuss our student performance, but it's okay to say that performance remains strong. We'll update you on our data soon.

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Meanwhile, we do have new data. We are sometimes asked: "Tell me about students who attend MATCH for 2 years or more, but then choose to transfer. What happens to them?"

We did a first-of-its-kind study of these students. Among 30 students who started in 2004, stayed at least 2 years, then transferred somewhere between 2006 and 2008, we researched two questions.

a. How were their MCAS scores relative to the Boston Public School district? Ie, when a student head back to BPS, does the district get a struggler, or does the district get a high-performer, relative to their own students?

b. Did they persist in BPS to graduation? Ie, when a student leaves MATCH, are they likely to graduate?


The answers were gratifying.

a. MCAS

These 30 students arrived as 8th graders in 2004: roughly 29% proficient in English, roughly 20% proficient in math. In this regard, they arrived to MATCH slightly worse than the average student in Boston Public Schools: 42% proficient in English, 24% proficient in math.

Two years later on Grade 10 MCAS, these 30 students made huge gains. Of these 30 kids, 100% passed MCAS. Moreover, 63% were proficient in English (+21%) and 96% were proficient in math (+76%). That compares to BPS averages of 51% and 53%.

If these 30 MATCH departed students comprised their own school, they would be #1 among the open-admission high schools in the Boston Public Schools.

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b. HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION

These 30 completed high school in very high numbers. As best we can determine, 28 of 30 either have graduated or will graduate at some point this year from various schools. Remember, these 30 kids arrived to 9th grade statistically identical to BPS average 9th graders, based on their MCAS.

Q: What about kids who don't even last at MATCH for 2 years?

A: We are trying to get data for them. It is hard because we are not entitled by law to examine their MCAS data. We hope to work with the new superintendent to examine this issue.

Q: What's the bottom line?


A: A MATCH student who is with us at least two years, and then transfers back to the district, outperforms the average student in BPS schools. They seem to be over four times less likely to drop out of school, and return to BPS with much higher skills as measured by MCAS.

Q: What's the plan going forward?

A: We will continue to do everything we can to graduate students from MATCH -- except lower the bar for promotion. We have had productive conversations with Boston's new district leadership and hope to collaborate with them to reduce what our students perceive as an incentive to transfer out of MATCH (that if they haven't done the work to be promoted at MATCH, they can simply transfer elsewhere at any time and get moved ahead to the next grade).

5. HIGH DOSAGE TUTORING SPREADS IN BOSTON AND BEYOND

Some good news.

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*MATCH continues to expand our direct service to other nearby high-poverty schools, via the MATCH Corps and the Mass Service Alliance (our Americorps partner). We will soon send a team to Lee Academy Pilot School in Dorchester, joining our existing relationships with Brighton High School and English High School.

*City on a Hill Charter School has started its own full-time tutoring program.

*Codman Academy Charter School is working with a former MATCH teacher, Mark Destler, to launch its own weekend high-dosage tutoring program, using our "other" model -- leveraging local college students who are paid through the work-study program. (Since they earn \$12 to \$16 per hour, they are much more reliable than volunteer tutors, so program quality goes way up).

*Others charter schools around the nation, from New Orleans to Houston to New Haven, are launching their own high-dosage tutoring programs.

*Why don't traditional schools use this approach? There's some talk nationally of changing the role of the thousands of "paraprofessionals" deployed in high-poverty schools, giving these classroom aides much more specific goals and accountability around driving student performance. We hope to collaborate with the vanguard of such schools.

6. GALA

Help us continue to do our thing! Friday November 7th. Contact liz.fort@matcheschool.org for tickets or to sponsor a table.