

WIL LOU GRAY OPPORTUNITY SCHOOL A PALMETTO GOLD SCHOOL

3300 WEST CAMPUS ROAD
WEST COLUMBIA, SC 29170



Accountability Report

2006-2007

PAT G. SMITH
DIRECTOR

"Why Stop Learning?"

Executive Summary

A PALMETTO GOLD SCHOOL

MISSION AND VALUES:

Founded in 1921 by the late Dr. Wil Lou Gray, the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School has served the citizens of South Carolina for eighty-four years. Adopting the motto, “Why stop learning?” Dr. Gray dedicated her life to providing an education for the undereducated and, although the educational needs continue to change, the Opportunity School has adapted its mission to meet the critical needs of the students it serves. Currently the mission of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School is to serve those citizens of South Carolina between sixteen and eighteen years of age who are most at-risk of:

- Being retained in their grade in school.
- Dropping out of school and not completing their education.
- Not making the transition from public schools to the workforce.
- Being truant from school, or whose home, school or community environment impedes rather than enhances the chance that they will stay in school and become prepared for employment.

The school, in partnership with the South Carolina National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Academy, provides services to these youth in a structured residential, quasi-military environment to prepare and assist them to achieve independence and employability as soon as possible. In seeking to fulfill its mission, realizing the multiple service needs of these youth, the school provides the following types of services:

- | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Compensatory Education | 5. Pre-Vocational Training |
| 2. Pre-Employment Training | 6. Career Guidance and Job Placement |
| 3. Counseling | 7. Healthcare |
| 4. Life Skills | 8. Self-Discipline |

The traditional priority of the Opportunity School has been to provide an alternative high school education supplemented with vocational training in order to prepare students for employment. Our philosophy has focused on assisting those students who, for various reasons, could not benefit from the regular educational system. That philosophy, as applied by Dr. Gray when she founded the school, translated to a mission of meeting the needs of the large population of adult South Carolinians who had not completed high school. Today, that same philosophy guides our work with young people who are not successful in the regular school system.

As our focus has followed the constant change in South Carolina’s educational needs, the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School in collaboration with the South Carolina National Guard, is the only Youth Challenge Academy among twenty-seven states operating outside of a military facility.

2. **MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS FROM PAST YEAR:**

- Initiated HVAC System Renovations.
 - Sustained volume of student admissions.
 - Acquired contractual police assistance from the Town of Springdale Police Department in the absence of campus public safety officers for the fourth consecutive year.
 - “No Report” audits for six consecutive years.
 - Sixth consecutive year agency has achieved 90% or better as an Equal Opportunity Employer
 - Officially presented Top 10 EEO certificate by the Human Affairs Commission.
 - Third consecutive year of partnership with Midlands Technical College to offer COL 103, College Skills, course to academically eligible students to prepare them for post secondary educational opportunities.
 - Maintained inmate work contract with the South Carolina Department of Corrections through the partnership with the S.C. Vocational Rehabilitation Center.
 - Second consecutive year of receiving the Palmetto Gold Award for Excellent rating on the annual School Report Card.
 - Ranked 92nd among all statewide agencies in travel expenditures.
 - Ranked 8th in agency comparison of Energy Conservation Per Square foot.
 - Established Junior Achievement Program as part of Phase II Curriculum.
 - Coordinated GRAY “Get Reading Among Youth” project with Springdale Elementary School.
 - Second consecutive cycle of the partnership with Workforce Investment Act.

3. **KEY STRATEGIC GOALS:**

The overall goal of the Opportunity School is to increase student enrollment and retention over the next five years so that the school is operating at capacity with appropriate staff in place in order to educate and graduate as many children in South Carolina as possible. To assist students in obtaining a GED, in securing permanent jobs, in enlisting in the military, or continuing their education in order to be productive members of society. This equates to an enrollment goal of 200 students, graduating 160 students and, of the 160 students who graduate, 61 to 80 percent graduate with a GED.

Current and future goals include:

- **ENLIGHTENED VISION.** Objective set of measurable standards, essential to the success of the agency comprised of innovation, customer service, leadership, employees, students, budget, continuing education and academics. The agency initiated this model in 2007.
- **STUDENTS.** Provide all resources needed to assure supervision, food service, service learning, medical services, recreational activities and position direction of student population on a 24 hour basis.

- Register 160 students per cycle the first year with a five percent increase per year for the next four years

■ **ACADEMICS.** Provide instructional program with individualized GED clusters for all students by grade level using TABE instrument. Incorporate college skills through College 103 class at Midlands Technical College.

- Maintain sixty percent of students obtaining a GED the first year, with a five percent increase up to eighty percent over the next four years.
- Increase TABE improvement in math and reading – sixty-five percent of students tested show a five-month increase in improvement the first year. Five percent increase up to ninety percent over the next four years.

■ **VOCATIONAL.** Expose all students to computer literacy course, job shadowing, auto technology, life skills and building construction.

■ **SUPPORT SERVICES.** Provide all resources needed to assure supervision, service learning, recreational activities and positive direction of student population. Encourage student participation in at least 40 hours of community service. Establish and set goal and life plans for each students.

- Twenty-eight percent of students to do more than forty hours of community service with a three percent increase per year over the next five years.

4. OPPORTUNITIES/BARRIERS THAT MAY AFFECT SUCCESS:

The efficient use of our budget has been and continues to be a priority. Our budget requests are based on essential need to effectively perform our mission to the young people of South Carolina who need a second chance to become productive citizens. The agency managed to sustain a high level of program performance and operation through sound fiscal management and planning the last seven fiscal years and the current fiscal year without any negative impact or reduction-in-force despite budget reductions of 34.4% since FY 01.

Over the past seven years, we have combined a fiscally conservative nature with a creative use of existing funding to be reasonably successful with the current population of troubled youth. However, we have reached a point, because of deep budget reductions, where our internal fiscal management is struggling to find the necessary budget to maintain a continued high-level of demand for our services. The Opportunity School considers this to be our biggest threat to our mission and our ability to meet the demand for a large population of undereducated, at-risk youth.

At a time when demand is increasing for our services, we have faced that challenge with an assortment of cost containment and reduction strategies to the point we are now limited in strategy development. To pursue this path will force us to limit enrollment in order to lessen the current financial stress.

Because of the high

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demand for our services, long-

range plans are to add new dormitories and expand the classroom facilities to accommodate higher student enrollment. Another option is to go all male which will allow us to operate at full capacity. Typically, the female enrollment is much lower than male enrollment. However, with increased female recruiting efforts it may be possible to reach full capacity of the female dormitory. These ambitious plans may have to be put on hold until the current state budget crisis is resolved.

While the delivery method of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School has been reshaped, our theme of motivating the “at-risk” student into a productive, employable young adult remains unchanged. As our theme and delivery method to address the needs of South Carolina’s dropouts has been reshaped, the cost to serve our current enrollment and the demand to serve more has increased. To reach our target population and desired academic and social environment requires greater funding and effort to be successful.

5. *USE OF ACCOUNTABILITY REPORT:*

The accountability report is used to improve organizational performance by keeping vital statistical information on student enrollment, graduates with or without GED’s, TABE test results, student community service hours, and needs assessments of the students we serve. These statistics facilitate in the analytical evaluation of each student’s strengths and weaknesses. This placement data is essential in determining which area of studies or new vocational training each student should be offered. Other measures such as the School Report Card are valuable tools in assessing the agency’s performance as a whole.

In our efforts to align the agency with the Malcolm Baldrige performance excellence criteria, numerous surveys were originated in order to evaluate the effectiveness of changes during the previous year. One of the surveys is disseminated to students and their families to obtain important data concerning areas of customer service, delivery of goods and services and whether the agency is meeting the needs of the people we serve. An employee survey has been developed that measures job satisfaction and also allows for employee feedback on possible improvements in the work environment. The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School Employee Satisfaction Survey is given to all staff and faculty at the end of the fiscal year.

Organizational Profile

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The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School is the most unique alternative educational institution in the State of South Carolina. It's original purpose was to educate young adults through academics as well as practical arts in everyday living. Dr. Wil Lou Gray rallied the necessary support to acquire a permanent home for the school in 1947. Motivated by the pioneering spirit of it's founder, the Opportunity School still aspires to continually develop the academics in order to accommodate the educational needs of young adults in South Carolina. With the assistance of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity school, these young adults are enabled to become productive citizens of this state and also this nation.

1. MAIN PRODUCTS, SERVICES AND DELIVERY METHODS:

◆ Section 59-51-10. Wil Lou Gray established; location. [SC ST SEC 59-51-10]

The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School is established and must be located in Lexington County on the property formerly occupied by the Army Air Force and known as the Columbia Air Base, which property the State received by quitclaim deed in September 1947 for the joint use of the Opportunity School and the South Carolina Area Trade School.

◆ Section 59-51-20. Services provided by School; duties. [SC ST SEC 59-51-20]

Annotations

The school shall:

- (1) serve as an alternative school cooperating with other agencies and organizations
- (2) provide training for persons interested in continuing their elementary or high school education or in taking refresher courses preparatory to college, with emphasis on personal development, vocational efficiency, and effective citizenship
- (3) disseminate information concerning practices that have proven to be effective in working with its students
- (4) cooperate with the Vocational Rehabilitation Department in providing personal and social adjustment and prevocational and vocational courses for persons with disabilities.

◆ In 2001, the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School partnership with the South Carolina National Guard is responsible for the Youth ChalleNGe Academy program. The program is run in two semesters, referred to as cycles, and is a residential environment. The WLGO campus has five dormitories, three for the male cadets and two for the females. The classroom building contains the library as well as the health care center. The campus also encompasses a cafeteria, auditorium, administration building, gymnasium, maintenance shop, and housing for pertinent staff. Currently, there are sixty-one WLGO employees and thirty-five YCA employees. This is the only location for the Opportunity School.

2. ***KEY CUSTOMERS AND THEIR REQUIREMENTS/EXPECTATIONS:***

◆ **Primary Customer:** The Opportunity school is an educational institution that exists to serve the citizens of South Carolina between 16 to 18 years of age, male or female, who will not be able to complete their high school education or are high school dropouts. These students must be drug free, physically and mentally capable of completing the program and not under indictment or convicted of a felony offense. The students, as well as their family members, are the key customers at Wil Lou Gray.

◆ **Secondary Customers:** The Board of Trustees, taxpayers, Legislators and citizens of South Carolina are also customers of The Opportunity School. The outcome of services we provide to these students will directly and indirectly affect all citizens of this state and nation.

3. ***KEY STAKEHOLDERS:***

◆ **Primary Stakeholder:** Key stakeholders are the employees that work at WLGOS. The employees are directly involved in transforming these challenged students into productive members of society as well as the population at large. The future of our state and nation is tied to the success this program has on the lives of the students served.

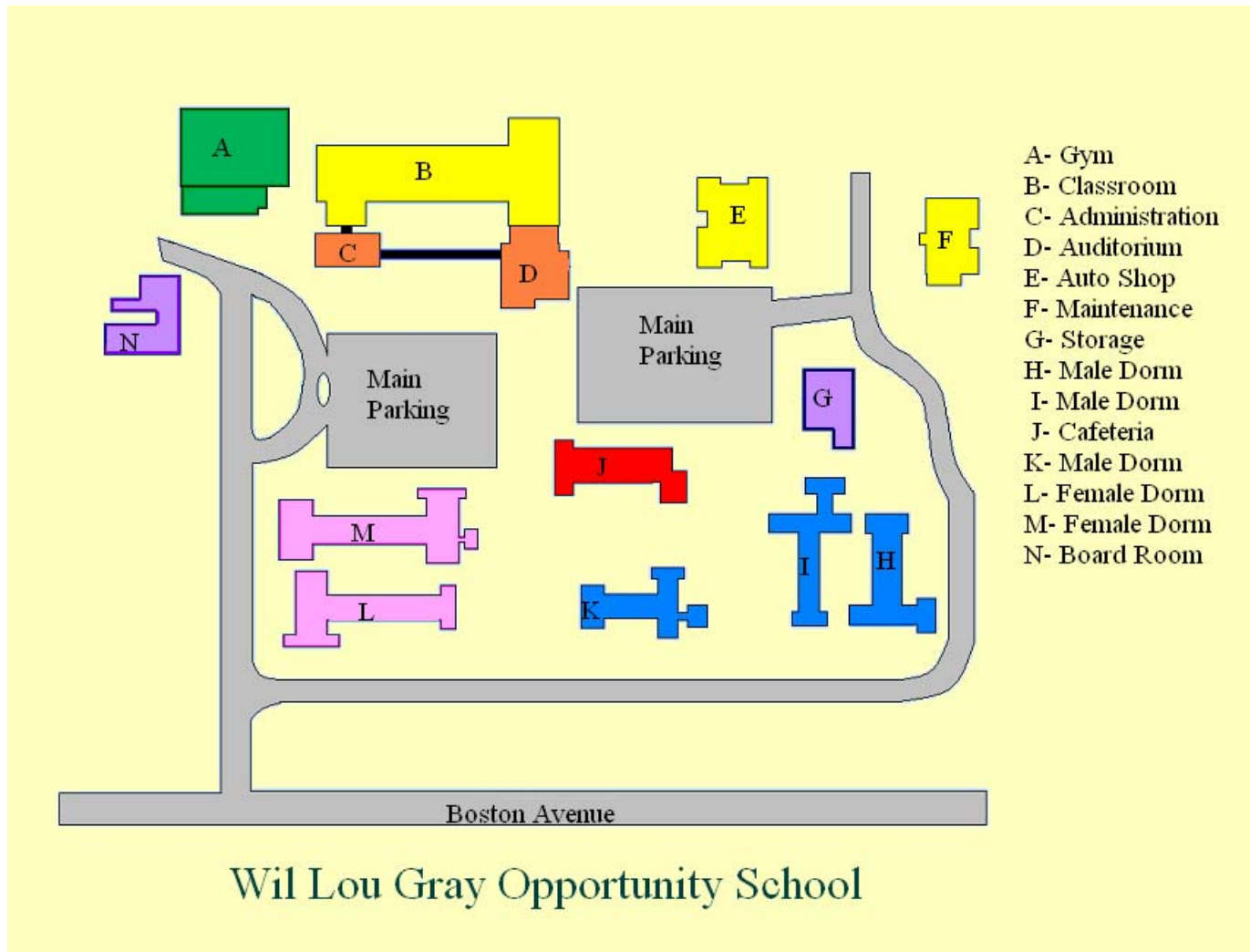
◆ **Secondary Stakeholders:** Every individual involved in the process of this educational institution is a secondary stakeholder; to include but not limited to our Legislators, the Board of Trustees, taxpayers, donors and citizens of South Carolina.

4. ***KEY SUPPLIERS AND PARTNERS:***

◆ The children and families of South Carolina
◆ State, county and local elected officials.

5. OPERATION LOCATIONS:

- ◆ Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School is physically located on 88 acres at 3300 West Campus Road, West Columbia, SC 29170 (see map below).



6. EMPLOYEES AND CATEGORY:

Classified	39
Unclassified	20
Contracted	2

7. REGULATORY ENVIRONMENT:

The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School follows the regulatory requirements of the following South Carolina entities:

- ◆ Department of Health and Environmental Control
- ◆ South Carolina State Auditor's Office
- ◆ Department of Health and Human Services
- ◆ Department of Education
- ◆ OSHA
- ◆ Materials Management Office

8. KEY STRATEGIC CHALLENGES:

The key strategic challenges of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School are:

- ◆ Funding
- ◆ Maintaining support of state-level elected officials
- ◆ Recruitment and retention of students

9. PERFORMANCE IMPROVEMENT SYSTEM (S):

In 2007 the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School implemented “ENLIGHTENED VISION” as the agency’s performance evaluation and improvement system (see page 12). “Enlightened Vision” represents the model the agency employs to define the standards with which WLGOAS aspires to achieve and maintain for success. The eight components are innovation, customer service, leadership, employees, students, budget, continuing education and academics. Through internal and external audits and surveys, the agency is equipped with a substantial amount of pertinent information essential in analyzing the effectiveness of the program. Bi-weekly meetings among department leaders allow positive collaboration, which subsequently fosters creative discussions involving program development and improvements. Through informal discussions and meetings, the staff is permitted to vocalize and/or scrutinize policies, issues, or changes, which are applicable to their departments. This method of collecting information encourages and promotes a more accurate analysis of current issues within departments. The agency also uses a variety of state mandated processes to further examine and report on the status of it’s mission and success.

10. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE:

See page 13.



ENLIGHTENED VISION

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Board of Trustees

Director

FISCAL AFFAIRS

HEALTH CARE

OPERATIONS & PROCUREMENT
SERVICES

MAINTENANCE

FOOD SERVICES

SUPPLY

INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY

RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

ADMISSIONS

HUMAN
SERVICES

PUBLIC SAFETY

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

HUMAN RESOURCES

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES

GUIDANCE

JROTC

PSYCHOLOGIST

ACADEMICS

11. BASE BUDGET EXPENDITURES AND APPROPRIATIONS:

<i>Major Budget Categories</i>	05-06 Actual Expenditures		06-07 Actual Expenditures		07-08 Appropriations Act	
	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds	Total Funds	General Funds
Personal Service	\$2,209,028	\$1,758,900	\$2,490,889	\$1,908,434	\$2,588,917	\$2,133,878
Other Operating	\$1,292,545	\$579,023	\$1,131,260	\$614,599	\$1,294,399	\$876,475
Special Items	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Permanent Improvements	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Case Services	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Distributions to Subdivisions	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Fringe Benefits	\$600,716	\$456,206	\$671,219	\$488,606	\$773,529	\$660,105
Non-recurring		\$	\$776,021	\$776,021	\$587,500	\$587,500
Total	\$4,103,151	\$2,794,129	\$5,069,389	\$3,787,660	\$5,244,345	\$4,257,958

Other Expenditures

Sources of Funds	05-06 Actual Expenditures	05-06 Actual Expenditures
Supplemental Bills	\$10,246.00	\$776,021
Capital Reserve Funds	\$1,985,954	-
Bonds	-	-

12. MAJOR PROGRAM AREAS:

Major Program Areas

Program Number and Title	Major Program Area Purpose (Brief)	FY 05-06 Budget Expenditures	FY 06-07 Budget Expenditures	Key Cross References for Financial Results*
I. Administration	Provides executive leadership, support, policy development, personnel, financial, procurement, and other related administrative services. Includes reception and switchboard duties for the entire campus.	State: 408,957.79 Federal: 0.00 Other: 0.00 Total: 408,957.79 % of Total Budget: 10%	State: 462,700.85 Federal: 0.00 Other: 0.00 Total: 462,700.85 % of Total Budget: 10%	Page 14
II.A Academic	Individualized course of study in academics to prepare students for GED exam. Includes JROTC program & 24/7 medical center. Provides guidance counselors that meet with each student privately to guide them through education and employment goals.	State: 791,619.48 Federal: 0.00 Other: 589,828.15 Total: 1,381,447.63 % of Total Budget: 34%	State: 996,824.54 Federal: 0.00 Other: 642,154.16 Total: 1,638,978.70 % of Total Budget: 35%	Page 14
II.B Vocational	Provides vocational training, life skills and preemployment training. Includes a mandatory basic computer literacy course. Provides students with job shadowing and on-the-job training opportunities.	State: 163,377.55 Federal: 0.00 Other: 79,460.45 Total: 242,838.01 % of Total Budget 6%	State: 165,998.37 Federal: 0.00 Other: 87,467.45 Total: 253,465.83 % of Total Budget 5%	Page 14
III. Student Services & Residential	Admissions, community service work, student transportation, & dorm supervision 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Provides disciplined, structured & positive community for students where goals, achievement & independence are nurtured.	State: 321,070.78 Federal: 0.00 Other: 0.00 Total: 321,070.78 % of Total Budget 8%	State: 370,987.84 Federal: 0.00 Other: 0.00 Total: 370,987.84 % of Total Budget 8%	Page 14
IV. Support Services	Building & grounds maintenance & cafeteria operation for a school that operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Technology staff operate & maintain computer, telephone and keyless entry systems.	State: 1,054,515.70 Federal: 91,973.92 Other: 531,457.78 Total: 1,677,947.40 % of Total of Budget 41%	State: 1,306,471.72 Federal: 92,810.17 Other: 439,318.34 Total: 1,838,600.23 % of Total of Budget 40%	Page 14

Below: List any programs not included above and show the remainder of expenditures by source of funds.

II.C Library Program

	FY 05-06	FY 06-07
Remainder of Expenditures:	State: 54,588.59	State: 54,084.18
	Federal: 0.00	Federal: 0.00
	Other: 16,300.45	Other: 17,550.64
	Total: 70,889.04	Total: 71,634.83
	% of Total Budget 2%	% of Total Budget 2%

* Key Cross-References are a link to the Category 7 - Business Results. These References provide a Chart number that is included in the 7th section of this document.

Malcolm Baldrige Criteria

A PALMETTO GOLD SCHOOL

LEADERSHIP

The continuous evolution of the elements in today's educational environment requires extremely strong leadership skills. The agency director and department managers constantly monitor and analyze daily procedures as they are applied to internal and external factors associated with the progress of the students and welfare of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School. Through extensive informal and formal collaborative efforts, as well as comprehensive evaluations and tests, the leadership qualities of the agency director and managers continuously produce the best indication of success for Wil Lou Gray-productive and responsible citizens of South Carolina.

1.1 How do Senior Leaders set, deploy and ensure two-way communication:

- A. Short and Long Term Direction:*** The WLGOS Board of Trustees provides policy direction but the agency director and managers set, deploy and communicate short and long-term direction through a variety of mechanisms, all based on the model "ENLIGHTENED VISION". The Board of Trustees meets quarterly to review current and future policies and to chart the mission of the agency. The agency director serves as the chief executive officer and implements this mission to managers and staff. On a bi-weekly basis, the agency director meets with all managers to consult, evaluate, and maintain effective communication between each department. Through both formal and informal collaborative efforts, the managers disseminate this information to their respective staff. Of all mechanisms utilized in WLGOS's communication techniques, the most effective is the Director's Open-Door-Policy. This avenue of informal communication renders productive staff and student involvement, which creates an atmosphere of parity throughout the agency.
- B. Performance Expectations:*** The bi-weekly meetings allow all managers to review, assess and discuss performance expectations among all departments. The Employee Performance Management System ensures performance measures are established and attained by all WLGOS staff. Along with these internal measures, WLGOS also implements a mandated performance measurement system, required by the South Carolina Department of Education, to review and measure academic achievements within the education department. Additionally, performance expectations are reinforced on an individual or group basis as needed.
- C. Organizational Values:*** The agency director is highly involved with all aspects concerning organizational values. An asset most influential to daily involvement among all employees is the size of the agency. The director encourages and schedules numerous staff appreciation days throughout the year in order to acknowledge his gratitude for the continuous dedication and achievements of the staff.
- D. Empowerment and Innovation:*** Empowerment and innovation are nurtured through the continuous efforts of the agency director and managers. Encouraging and permitting all levels of staff to participate at bi-weekly meetings creates a productive atmosphere which is beneficial to the both the students and staff at Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School. Other tools, such as Employee Appreciation Days and employee incentives, are used to promote empowerment and innovation as well.

E. *Organization and Employee Learning:* While all departments require certain minimum detailed skills, there are some positions that involve more specific expertise. These departments would include, but are not limited to, employees in Health Care, Education, Food Service, and Maintenance. The agency director encourages and allows all staff to participate in any seminar, training or continuing education, which would enhance or expand their knowledge in their current positions.

F. *Ethical Behavior:* The quality of leadership at WLGOS exemplifies the ethical standards by which all staff are to adhere. Through collaborative efforts between the Director and Managers, as well as Human Resources, the agency establishes, maintains and updates policies as deemed necessary. All ethical standards are communicated through policies, procedures and handbooks.

1.2 How do senior leaders establish and promote a focus on customers and other stakeholders:

Senior leaders establish and promote a focus on customers through successful implementation of the Opportunity School’s mission, which is to serve the undereducated in South Carolina through a structured residential, quasi-military environment that will prepare and assist them to achieve independence and employability as soon as possible.

A component of the program that is completely focused on the customer is the Post-Residential Phase. The Post-Residential Department maintains contact and communication with each student and their mentor for 12 months after graduation. This is key to ensure that each customer (student) reaches his or her full potential after graduation.

The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School hosts many functions that focus on the customers and stakeholders. These activities include, but are not limited to, the Legislative Breakfast Drop-In, Family Day, Field Trips and Employee Appreciation Day.

1.3 How does the organization address the current and potential impact on the public of its products, programs, services, facilities and operations, including associated risks:

In an effort to continuously provide outstanding service to the customers and stakeholders of South Carolina, WLGOS uses “ENLIGHTENED VISION” as the key measurement in assuring the products, programs and facilities and operations of the agency remain effective. These eight components reflect the standards by which the agency aspires to achieve and maintain. Through departmentalized surveys, meetings, brochures, on-site tours, and audits, the agency is equipped with enough information to analyze and project changes necessary to address current

and future public awareness, concerns and issues. Local and state governments also supervise the agency’s progress to ensure adequate public awareness and risks are addressed.

1.4 How do senior leaders maintain fiscal, legal and regulatory accountability?

All fiscal, legal and

regulatory accountability is

maintained by communication efforts between the Board of Trustees, agency director and managers. Any significant initiative or

change must be implemented by the agency director through the direct leadership and guidance of the Board of Trustees. The agency director and managers are responsible for monitoring and maintaining accountability for state and federal regulations through continuous review of operations, ongoing legal consultation, continuous contacts with accountability personnel from regulatory agencies, attention to high standards of operation, implementation of accountability systems through technology utilization and review of internal and external audits. Fiscal accountability is accomplished by adherence to state laws and measured through an annual state audit. Policies, procedures, and state regulations also guide the direction of the agency.

1.5 What key performance measures are regularly reviewed by your senior leaders?

All key performance measures are associated with the mission of WLGOS, which is to educate the undereducated through the motto of “Why Stop Learning?”

The agency director and managers constantly evaluate the components of ENLIGHTENED VISION in order to measure program performance in all eight categories. Through a variety of surveys, tests and compliance reviews the agency is equipped with enough data to analyze and project achievements and performance quality. These eight measurements are calculated twice a year and provide a definitive index of performance results. The agency also adheres to many local and state measures as a guide to regularly evaluate program performance.

- Students: Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Survey Level A Form 7 (pre-test)
Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE) Survey Level A Form 8 (post-test)
(See Graphs 7.2-6 and 7.2-7)
General Education Diploma (GED)
Bi-Annual Student Survey
- Leadership: Annual EPMS (Employee Performance Management System)
Annual Agency Head Performance Evaluation
Employee Satisfaction Survey
- Academics: South Carolina Department of Education--Annual School Report Card
Bi-Annual Student Survey
Bi-Annual Parent Survey
- Employee: Annual Employee Satisfaction Survey
Annual EPMS (Employee Performance Management System)
South Carolina Department of Education
- Budget: South Carolina Appropriations Act
- Flexibility: Bi-Annual Student Survey
Bi-Annual Parent Survey

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Employee Satisfaction Survey

- ▶ Continuing Education: South Carolina Department of Education
Employee Satisfaction Survey
Office of Human Resource Training Program
- ▶ Customer Service: Bi-Annual Parent Survey
Bi-Annual Student Survey
Employee Satisfaction

1.6 How do senior leaders use organizational performance review findings and employee feedback to improve their own leadership effectiveness and the effectiveness of management throughout the organization? How do their personal actions reflect a commitment to the organizational values?

Organizational performance and potential are monitored through ENLIGHTENED VISION measures. The resulting data from ENLIGHTENED VISION is used to guide WLGOS in establishing objectives to improve agency performance or meet organizational needs. Staff meetings are conducted bi-weekly to review procedures, address problems or complaints, and plan future activities. Teacher meetings are held to discuss needs, curriculum and plan student activities. All staff members are encouraged to participate in training that will enhance their job performance and update their skills.

1.7 How do senior leaders promote and personally participate in succession planning and the development of future organizational leaders?

The agency succession plan is discussed and set at quarterly meetings by the WLGOS Board of Trustees. The agency director and managers are then responsible for establishing the capacity of roles for the staff with which they provide leadership. All levels of staff are encouraged to expand their leadership qualities and skills by participating in educational classes or seminars focused on job related issues.

1.8 How do senior leaders create an environment for performance improvement, accomplishment of strategic objectives and innovation?

ENLIGHTENED VISION serves as the measurement tool used to assess performance accomplishments and improvements throughout the agency. The agency director and managers prioritize objectives and communicate guidelines to their immediate staff. These guidelines include, but are not limited to, WLGOS policies, EPMS goals, state and federal audits, Employee Satisfaction Survey, parent and student surveys and other formal and informal communications.

1.9 How does the senior leadership actively support and strengthen the communities in which your organization operate?

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Part of the Opportunity School's mission is to prepare and assist our students in attaining independence and employability once they graduate. The students are provided with a curriculum that will enable them to take and hopefully pass the GED. Those students that

are several years behind in grade level have an opportunity to improve several grade levels.

Several businesses in the area allow our students to job shadow or participate in apprentice work in order to gain skills for employability. Community service projects are coordinated and implemented by the students so they can develop a sense of community and the importance of giving to others. Our students are encouraged to pursue higher education and to set goals they can attain to be successful productive citizens.

The education department established Project GRAY (Get Reading Among Youth) to increase community involvement with the WLGOS students and Springdale Elementary. On a voluntary basis, the female students at WLGOS read to the elementary classes at a local elementary school.

Managers and all staff are encouraged to participate in civic organizations, charitable organizations and other community groups. The Opportunity School holds Red Cross blood drives on campus for staff and students to participate. A minimum of forty hours of community service is required for graduation by all students attending. Not only did all of the students complete the required minimum, but also fifty-two percent completed more than sixty-one hours of community service while another forty-eight percent completed forty-one to sixty hours of community service.

The Wil Lou Gray Award is presented twice each year to a person, business or organization that demonstrates outstanding leadership in the areas of administration, educational programs or service. The Board of Trustees is in the process of adopting criteria guidelines for an additional Wil Lou Gray Award, which will be given to a member of the South Carolina General Assembly for their outstanding legislative support for the school and the at-risk population that we serve.

STRATEGIC PLANNING

Program Number and Title	Supported Agency Strategic Planning Goal/Objective	Related FY 06-07 Key Agency Action Plan/Initiative(s)	Key Cross References for Performance Measures*
Enlightened Vision	Enlightened Vision is an objective set of measurable standards, essential to the success of the agency, comprised of innovation, customer service, leadership, employees, students, budget, continuing education and academics.	Assemblage of measurable results comprised to evaluate agency performance among all customers and stakeholders. Resulting data used to analyze internal and external goals as well as continuous improvement.	All Section 7 Page 12
Students	Provide all resources needed to assure supervision, food service, service learning, medical services, recreational activities & positive direction of student population on a 24 hour basis.	Distribute post-residential survey to all students and family in order to assimilate relative data to actual performance of agency.	7.1-1 ■ 7.1-2 ■ 7.1-7 ■ 7.1-8 7.1-10 ■ 7.1-13 ■ 7.2-1 ■ 7.2-2 7.2-3 ■ 7.2-4
Academics	Provide lucrative instructional program essential to acquire a GED. Increase student TABE results by 24 months progress in Math and Reading through individualized instruction.	60% of students taking GED will successfully complete the test. 75% of graduating cadets will achieve at least 1 yr. progress in reading & math during 5 months of instruction per post-TABE test results	7.1-3 ■ 7.1-4 ■ 7.1-5 ■ 7.1-6 7.1-7 ■ 7.1-8 ■ 7.1-9 ■ 7.1-13
Employees	Maintain positive reinforcements in work environment to promote employee satisfaction and retention. Employ and retain qualified individuals who aspire to contribute 100%.	Establish and maintain employee satisfaction through constant collaborative efforts, surveys and bi-weekly meetings. EEO performance results. Recognition of Employee Appreciation Day and encouragement through agency incentives.	7.3-2 ■ 7.4-1 ■ 7.4-2 ■ 7.4-3 7.4-4 ■ 7.4-5
Support Services	Acquire all applicable resources needed to assure academic, employment, life skills and vocational success of each WLGO student.	Incorporate WIA, Junior Achievement, and College 103 into academic curriculum for qualified students. Establish scholarships for students. 100% of students completed 40 hours or more of community service. Phase II students completed selected job shadowing experiences	7.1-11 ■ 7.1-12 7.1-13 ■ 7.3-1

* Key Cross-References are a link to the Category 7 - Business Results. These References provide a Chart number that is included in the 7th section of this document.

2.1 What is your Strategic Planning process, including KEY participants, KEY process steps, and how does it address:

Each year the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School addresses the past, present and future goals and strategies of the agency. The key objectives integrated into the strategic plan are derived from the core strengths of WLGOS, which include:

- Alternative instructional programs
- Residential Setting
- Support Services
- Structured Environment

Through various efforts of the Board of Trustees, Director and managers, the key objectives are incorporated into student, staff and agency development and training. Quarterly Board of Trustee meetings and bi-weekly staff meetings allow for contribution and continuous updates to measure progress and performance. This approach identifies the most important programmatic and operational activities that represent the strategies necessary to accomplish annual and long-range goals. See the Strategic Planning Chart

2.2 How do you develop and track action plans that address your key strategic objectives and how do you allocate resources to ensure the accomplishment of these plans?

See 2.1.

2.3 How do you communicate and deploy your strategic objectives, actions plans and related performance measures?

Communication of strategic objectives, action plans and performance measures occur at many levels at WLGOS. The quarterly Board of Trustee meetings provide the setting for the initial collaborative efforts to establish agency objectives. Once established, the objectives are then deployed through bi-weekly meeting between the agency director and managers. The most effective communication efforts would consist of informal discussions, printed manuals and surveys and the open-door policy of the agency director.

2.4 How do you measure progress on your action plans?

Quarterly meetings among the Board of Trustees, agency director and managers ensure that the agency action plans are progressing accordingly. The eight components of ENLIGHTENED VISION include key performance measures for tracking progress on action plans. Feedback from students, family and employees, through surveys, seminars and meetings, allows the action plans to be thoroughly analyzed in order to measure progress.

2.5 *How do your strategic objectives address the strategic challenges you identified in your Organizational Profiles?*

The strategic challenges are addressed in the overall action plans, which identify specific actions steps for each goal/objective.

2.6 *How do you evaluate and improve your strategic planning process?*

The strategic planning process is evaluated on a quarterly basis by the Board of Trustees. All suggested improvements are approved by the Board of Trustees before being integrated into the planning process. The agency director provides further information to the managers, who disperse pertinent information to their staff through formal and informal collaborative efforts, policy updates and meetings.

2.7 *Agency Website?*

The targeted date to publicize the agency's strategic plan is January 2008. The website address is www.willougray.org.

CUSTOMER FOCUS

3.1 *How do you determine who your customers are and what their key requirements are?*

The primary customer of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School, and their specific requirements, are defined by the State of South Carolina:

◆ Section 59-51-10. Wil Lou Gray established; location. [SC ST SEC 59-51-10]

The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School is established and must be located in Lexington County on the property formerly occupied by the Army Air Force and known as the Columbia Air Base, which property the State received by quitclaim deed in September 1947 for the joint use of the Opportunity School and the South Carolina Trade School.

◆ Section 59-51-20. Services provided by School; duties. [SC ST SEC 59-51-20]

Annotations

The school shall:

1. Serve as an alternative school cooperating with other agencies and organizations
2. Provide training for persons interested in continuing their elementary or high school education or in taking refresher courses preparatory to college, with emphasis on personal development, vocational efficiency, and effective citizenship
3. Disseminate information concerning practices that have proven to be effective in working with its students
4. Cooperate with the Vocational Rehabilitation Department in providing personal and social adjustment and pre-vocational and vocational courses for persons with disabilities.

Our primary customer focus is the student who attends the Opportunity School and their families. The Opportunity School serves a student population, sixteen to eighteen years of age, which is admitted voluntarily from every county in South Carolina. Their success and satisfaction with the educational and residential experience, while enrolled at the Opportunity School, is our primary focus.

External key customers include:

- * Taxpayers
- * Members of the General Assembly
- * Board of Trustees
- * Citizens of South Carolina

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3.2 How do you keep your listening and learning methods current with changing customer/business needs and expectations?

In 2007, WLGOS implemented ENLIGHTENED VISION as an internal tool to evaluate and improve agency performance. Each measurement contributes to the agency as a whole. Numerous surveys and informal discussions, relative to customer service, assist in the internal evaluations necessary to improve customer needs accordingly.

3.3 How do you use information from customers/stakeholders to keep services or programs relevant and provide for continuous improvement?

Attention to changing customer and stakeholders needs is vital to the success of the agency. The post-residential survey distributed to all students and parents offers WLGOS the opportunity for formal input. The annual Employee Satisfaction Survey and Employee Exit Survey permits each staff member to anonymously express opinions and ideas. Through collaborative efforts between the Board of Trustees and the agency director, all suggested improvements and program changes are approved and implemented. It is the responsibility of the managers to enact improvements and changes specific to their departments.

3.4 How do you measure customer/stakeholder satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and use this information to improve?

To gauge and assess that customer satisfaction and needs, each graduating student is given a graduate exit interview survey that solicits responses on a host of topics ranging from academics, residential life, food service, recreation, and most importantly, our staff. This instrument is used exclusively to design and implement improvement strategies in service delivery.

Additionally, customer input is sought on a daily basis through informal conversations with teachers, staff and the director. Each semester a Parents' Day Weekend is hosted to allow parents the opportunity to meet and interact with teachers, counselors, residential staff and administration. Parents are encouraged to follow their student's class schedule and discuss his/her academic progress as well as visit their dormitory room. Also, parent conferences are arranged for the student who has a need for more individualized attention in order to be successful. Teachers and parents with email capability correspond with each other frequently regarding their student's progress.

3.5 How do you build positive relationship with customers and stakeholders? Indicate any key distinctions between different customer groups.

The agency director frequently visits students in their dormitory rooms in the evening and regularly invites students to his office to gather firsthand opinions about the quality of our program. The open-door policy of the director allows all students, staff and managers the opportunity to contribute ideas and solicit opinions in an informal atmosphere.

The Wil Lou Gray

Opportunity School hosts a

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Legislative Breakfast once a year to provide the members of the General Assembly an opportunity to see firsthand the accomplishments and progress made by the cadets. A select staff is available at the breakfast to answer any questions or concerns that may be brought up by legislative members concerning the Opportunity School. A diverse group of cadets are chosen to represent different counties across South Carolina to afford legislative members the opportunity to meet some of their young constituents and future, productive citizens.

The Opportunity School also encourages and promotes constant interaction with the SC Legislature by inviting and including them in campus events. For example, invitations to the annual Military Ball and graduation ceremony are sent to members of the General Assembly and the WLGOS Board of Trustees.

MEASUREMENT, ANALYSIS AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

4.1 How do you decide which operations, processes and systems to measure for tracking financial and operational performance, including progress relative to strategic objectives and action plans?

WLGOS uses a variety of performance measures to accomplish the mission of the agency. Internal, external and state and federal mandated standards provide specific information needed to assist the agency in establishing which operations, processes and systems to measure the performance in areas of finance and operations.

“ENLIGHTENED VISION” equips the agency with internal objectives directed at evaluating and improving standards with which WLGOS aspires to achieve and maintain for success. This model is comprised of eight components, which include innovation, customer service, leadership, employees, students, budget, continuing education and academics. Through internal and external audits and surveys, the agency establishes which performance measures are essential in tracking the finances and operations of WLGOS.

Processes mandated by state and federal entities include SC Budget and Control Board, Office of Human Resources, Education Accountability Act, Department of Education, Education Oversight Committee, Governmental Accepted Accounting Practices, Occupational Safety and Health Act, South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Equal Employment Opportunities Act and No Child Left Behind Act.

4.2 How do you use data/information analysis to provide effective support for decision making throughout your organization?

Information resulting from performance measurements, directly associated with ENLIGHTENED VISION, is analyzed thoroughly to aid the agency in designating specific strengths and weaknesses needing particular attention. Data collected from surveys and audits assists the Board of Trustees, director and managers in projecting improvements necessary to provide effective support for decision-making processes.

4.3 What are your key measures, how do you review them, and how do you keep them current with organizational needs and direction?

All eight components of ENLIGHTENED VISION reflect the standards by which the agency measures performance in innovation, customer services, leadership, employees, students, budget, continuing education and academics. Detailed information on each measurement allows the Board of Trustees, director and managers to review and adjust organizational needs and direction of WLGOS.

4.4 *How do you select and use key comparative data and information to support operational and strategic decision making and innovation?*

As previously mentioned, all “ENLIGHTENED VISION” components are considered exceptionally vital because they reflect agency performance in the key areas of innovation, customer service, leadership, employees, students, budget, continuing education and academics. Comparative data and information, resulting from feedback associated with surveys, meetings and informal discussions, is used to evaluate present and future measurements associated with the success of operational and strategic decision making processes.

For example, student academic performance is measured by a variety of standardized tests that demonstrate and reflect individual ability. Analysis of this information results in more intensive remediation of the deficient subject areas. Test results are tracked throughout the student’s attendance at the Opportunity School, and progress is determined by pre-test and post-test results.

4.4 *How do you ensure data integrity, timeliness, accuracy, security and availability for decision making?*

By November 2007, the agency will be streamlined with the South Carolina Enterprise Information System (SCEIS). This Statewide system will allow all agencies to be networked in order to increase efficiency in Finance and General Accounting, Payroll and Human Resources, Purchasing and Inventory Processing and Document Management.

4.6 *How do you translate organizational performance review findings into priorities for continuous improvement?*

Performance review findings, identified through measurements of “ENLIGHTENED VISION”, are communicated through meetings, policies and collaborative efforts among the Board of Trustees, agency director, managers and staff. Improvements are prioritized according to organizational importance.

4.7 *How do you collect, transfer, and maintain organizational and employee knowledge (your knowledge assets)? How do you identify and share best practices?*

Organizational and employee knowledge is identified through department specific standard operation procedure manuals. In addition, senior staff members and managers contribute to the transfer of knowledge assets through training activities and supervision skills. Best practices are acknowledged through various audits and procedural evaluations and disseminated through departmental managers.

WORKFORCE FOCUS

5.1 *How do you organize and manage work: to enable employees to develop and utilize their full potential, aligned with the organization's objectives, strategies, and action plans; and to promote cooperation, initiative, empowerment, innovation and your desired organizational culture?*

Employee satisfaction and the employment of skilled employees who possess an enthusiasm for working with at-risk students remains our workforce priority. As employee satisfaction is a key element to productivity and commitment to their work, strong emphasis is placed on employee fulfillment. An informal mentor system trains and acclimates new employees to the Opportunity School and assists them in developing their membership into their team. The employee voice is heard through our executive staff meetings and employee concerns represented by division directors.

5.2 *How do you evaluate and improve your organization's human resource related processes?*

An exit survey is given to all staff members leaving the employment of the Opportunity School. The results from these exit surveys assist WLGOS in establishing improvements in specific areas such as human resources.

5.3 *How do you identify and address key developmental and training needs, including job skills training, performance excellence training, diversity training, management/leadership development, new employee orientation and safety training? How do you evaluate the effectiveness of this education and training and how do you encourage on the job use of the new knowledge and skills?*

All employees are encouraged to participate in process improvement and to explore creative ways to accomplish tasks. Employee incentives are offered within human resource regulations and agency approval. Tuition assistance and flexible work schedules promote employee satisfaction and assist in WLGOS maintaining a quality workforce. As our school motto is "Why Stop Learning?" employees are encouraged to train and retrain themselves in order to be better prepared for future workforce needs. In addition, all division directors completed the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality standards training.

5.4 *How does employee training contribute to the achievement of your action plans?*

Tuition assistance and flexible work schedules, to increase training and help employees meet their personal responsibilities, are invaluable to building and maintaining a quality workforce. As our school motto is "Why Stop Learning?" employees are encouraged to train and retrain themselves

in order to be better prepared for future workforce needs. In addition, all division directors completed the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality standards training. A skilled workplace is essential to all results indicators.

5.5 *How does your employee performance management system, including feedback to and from employees, support high performance and contribute to the achievement of your action plans?*

WLGOS uses the EPMS process as its foundation for planning work priorities, professional development, and evaluation of employees in order to align job functions and goals with the mission and strategic plan of the agency.

5.6 *How do you motivate your employees to develop and utilize their full potential?*

As mentioned above, tuition assistance and flexible work schedules encourage employees to develop and utilize their full potential at the agency. Employee satisfaction is the key factor to building and maintaining a quality workforce. As our school motto is "Why Stop Learning?" employees are encouraged to train and retrain themselves in order to be better prepared for future workforce needs. In addition, all division directors completed the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality standards training.

Recognizing Employee Appreciation Day and providing personal expressions of encouragement increases employee motivation and development. The agency also strives to recognize all employee results with approved incentives.

5.6 *What formal and/or informal assessment methods and measures do you use to determine employee well being, satisfaction and motivation? How do you use other measures such as employee retention and grievances? How do you determine priorities for improvement?*

WLGOS monitors employee well being and satisfaction through a variety of measures. An employee satisfaction survey is conducted annually to determine the overall success of the agency in areas such as training, safety, policies, and changes within the agency. As employees choose to separate from the agency, exit interviews are offered. Resulting information allows the agency to determine areas needing improvements or future developments.

5.8 *How do you maintain a safe, secure, and health work environment? (Including workplace preparedness for emergencies and disasters.)*

The Opportunity School follows the same guidelines as all South Carolina public schools for emergencies and disasters. All faculty, staff and students are required to practice procedures for fire drills, bomb threats and disasters. These procedures are maintained, updated and evaluated annually for accuracy and efficiency.

PROCESS MANAGEMENT

6.1 *How to you determine, and what are your key processes that produce, create or add value for your customers and your organizations? How do you ensure that these processes are used?*

This category describes the key aspects of our organization's process management that is linked to quality service delivery in three areas. These three areas are:

- Student Education, Food Service, Housing
 - Education = Curriculum, Team Teaching/Support
 - Food Service = Nutrition, Variety
 - Housing = Dormitory Life
- Support and Internal Support
- Business, Suppliers

Student Education, Food Service, and Housing – Our main focus this year has been on the quality of education presented and its continued improvement to reflect greater measurable results. As a school for at-risk students, the main focus of curriculum attention has been “back to the basics” with reading and math as the number one priority. While scores in both areas have not risen equally, there has been an increase in reading scores worth noting. On average, math and reading scores have increased by almost two years in five months. We have also had a marked increase in the number of students passing the GED examination.

Team teaching has also been a key element in our efforts to increase the quality of education. Teachers meet on a weekly basis to evaluate the progress of students and to explore ways to invent learning tools to excite student-learning mechanisms. Teacher evaluations of the process indicate a synergistic positive effect. Again, results in this area are reflected in the increased numbers of students passing the GED (See Graph 7.2-1) and noticeably more positive self-esteem. Although we experienced an eighteen percent increase in special education students, our GED graduates has increased by eight percent.

Nutritional balance is the primary focus of our food service sector. Weekly menu planning (three meals a day, seven days a week) according to USDA meal service data is a requirement to insure nutritionally balanced meals. Variety and presentation are also part of the meal planning effort in order to educate our students on the need to select nutritional food choices.

Our agency is a twenty-four hour, seven days a week school. Therefore, the after school environment also contributes to our student's education. Supervised social interaction, community service and cultural opportunities are offered so that students learn respect for self and others and contribute to their involvement in productive avenues within our society. As a measurement for success in this area we look at the community service record of our students over the last three years. Each graduating cadet completed a minimum of forty hours of community service, fifty-nine percent of the cadets completed forty-one to sixty hours of community service with forty-one

percent completing more than sixty hours of community service.

Support and Internal Support – Wil Lou Gray consists of eighty-eight acres of campus with one 174,000 square feet of building space. The care of grounds and buildings is a continuous process. Coupled with this is the servicing of equipment, vehicle maintenance and the work of contracted Springdale Police Officers help to insure a safe campus environment for students, staff, and visitors. Internal support consists of the processes required not only to communicate need, but also to evaluate and respond in the most effective, cost efficient manner. All staff are connected to this system by way of telephone/voicemail, email and/or personal request. The procedures and technology to assist each department in its request or response are in place and functioning.

Business and Suppliers – Finance and Procurement are the two areas of business that tie the need and response of the agency together. Both areas are the internal and external contacts that determine the most efficient cost effective results. The equitable allocation of funds to meet the need of each program priority, coupled with the most reliable vendor resource, determines outcome.

6.2 *How do you incorporate organizational knowledge, new technology, changing customer and mission-related requirements, cost controls, and other efficiency and effectiveness factors such as cycle time into process designs and delivery?*

The incorporation of “ENLIGHTENED VISION” has allowed the agency to monitor key processes every cycle. Problematic areas are easily defined and analyzed. Each of the eight components of “ENLIGHTENED VISION” serves as a guide to better serve the key customers and stakeholders of the agency. Collaborative efforts, surveys, meetings and seminars assist the Board of Trustees, agency director and managers in projecting present and future trends needing closer attention.

WLGOS has a dedicated Information Technology Manager who is instrumental in the continuous improvement processes. Within the past few years, the advances in technology have permitted all staff members to interact through a variety of avenues, which include WLGOS website, MS Outlook email/planners, Internet, HR and procurement documents, and electronic forms.

6.3 *How does your day-to-day operation of these processes ensure meeting key performance requirements?*

Key production requirements are supported in our day-to-day operations through a standardized indicator, “ENLIGHTENED VISION”, that allows data tracking of test scores and performance. Analysis of performance indicators is monitored closely by each academic cluster and measured against ongoing data trends of those standardized indicators. Teachers are allowed strong influences in curriculum design and are encouraged to develop creative strategies for academic performance requirements. Academic performance requirements are linked to teacher EPMS to ensure emphasis and expectation of these performance requirements are a priority.

6.4 *How do you systematically evaluate and improve your key product and service related processes?*

The TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) assists in the measurement of student progress. During the first week of attendance, students are tested in math and reading in order to determine the student's grade level. Once grade level determination has been established, the curriculum is individually tailored to assist the student in successfully passing the GED examination and improving their math and reading skills. The students are then re-tested during the last several weeks of attendance to measure their improvement in these skills

6.2 All staff members are evaluated annually via the EPMS. Surveys are distributed to students and family each cycle in order to measure customer satisfaction and delivery of services.

6.5 *What are your key support processes, and how do you improve and update these processes to achieve better performance?*

Support processes exist at several levels throughout the agency to aid in the delivery of services. First, a strategic plan, developed with the participation of all senior management, serves as a roadmap for basic achievement and improvement. Internal support systems exist to provide the essentials to meet the agency mission. Functional support is delivered through admissions office, residential services, academic, healthcare, support services, fiscal affairs, information technology and human resources. These support functions are interrelated and are updated through participatory decision-making and constant review through discussion by senior management and customer support.

6.6 *How does your organization determine the resources needed to meet the current and projected budget and financial obligations?*

The agency suppliers have been diversified in all departments due to the creativity needed to maintain services with fewer dollars. State term contracts put in place by the Materials Management Office and Chief Information Office are utilized as often as possible. Some items and services that are not on contract are purchased from minority businesses certified by the Governor's Office of Executive Policies and Procedures. The supplies or services used by the agency on a frequent basis have been competed and contracted to insure long-term relationships with competent vendors at reasonable prices.

Due to the dire need for renovations to an antiquated 40-year-old boiler system, which was very costly to maintain and operate, the agency successfully obtained state funding for installation of a new centralized HVAC system. The new system will have a substantial positive effect on energy savings and maintenance repairs.

To save money on campus renovations, the maintenance department performs repetitive painting of the interior and exterior buildings and dormitories on campus. Due to budget cuts, the agency has not been able to rehire full time positions in the maintenance department; therefore, the outsourcing of campus repairs has been substantially beneficial.

Another resourceful way the Opportunity School has adapted to budget reductions is through a work contract with the South Carolina Department of Corrections. This contract allows the agency to employ inmates who are on work release to perform job duties such as grounds maintenance, housekeeping, and custodial services. Through this contract the Opportunity School has experienced significant annual savings and cost avoidance in personnel budgeting.

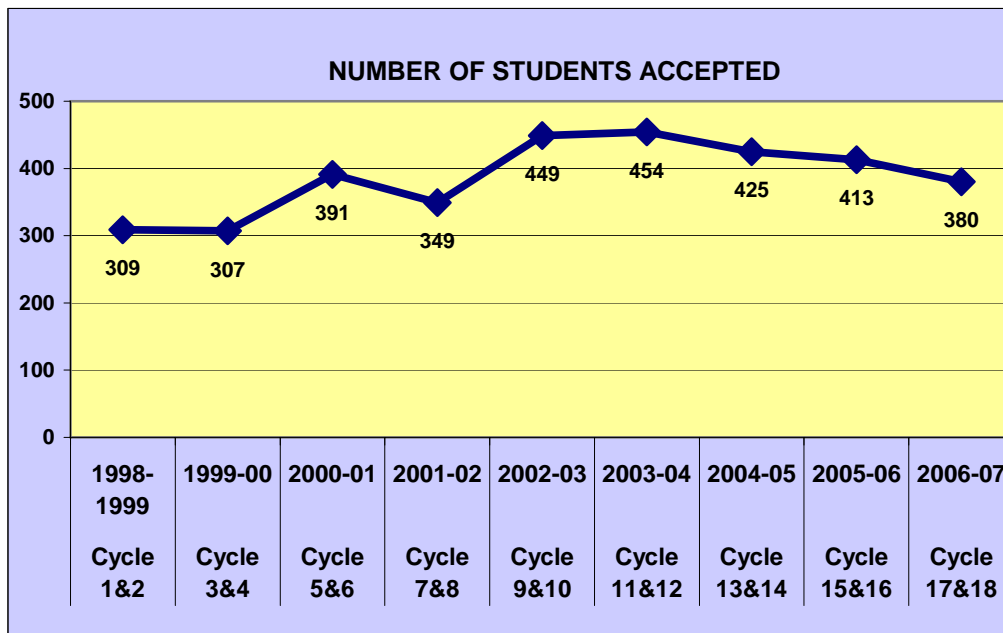
RESULTS

7.1 7.1 What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of mission accomplished and organizational effectiveness.

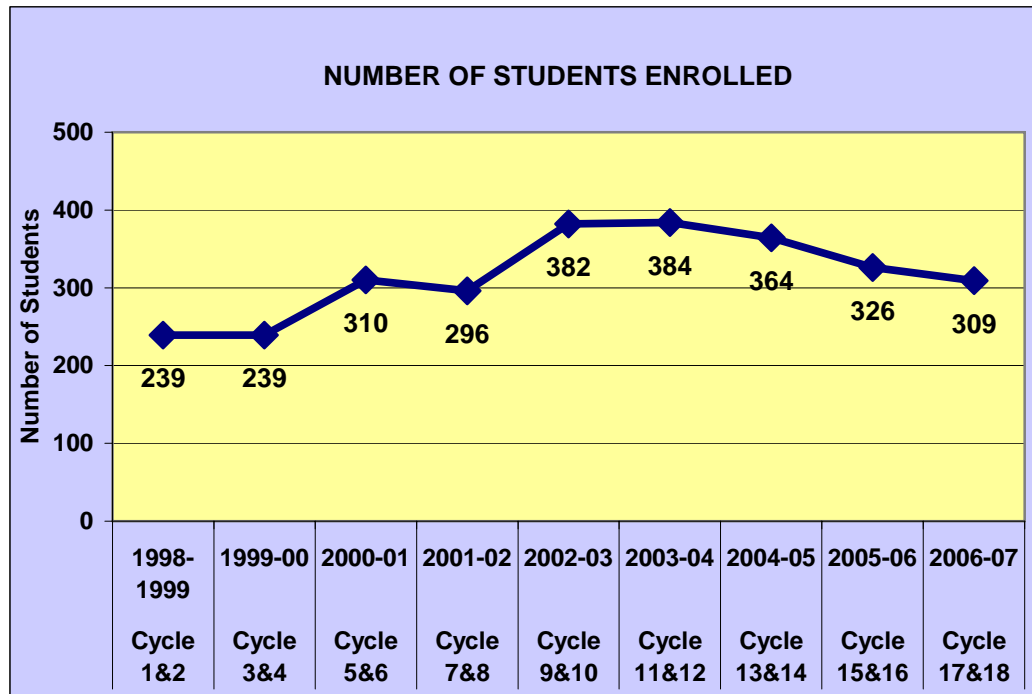
The mission of the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School is to serve the citizens of South Carolina between sixteen and eighteen years of age. As stated in Section I, there are a variety of services that WLGO, in partnership with the South Carolina National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Academy, provides to our students. These services are the basis of mission accomplishment by which WLGO measures results and determines success.

Admissions: Students are accepted into the program every cycle and are given a registration date (Graph 7.1-1). All students are to report on the registration day to be enrolled into the program (Graph 7.1-2).

**Graph 7.1-1
Students Accepted**



Graph 7.1-2 Students Enrolled



Education: Providing the students with remarkable educational services increases academic success. For the second consecutive year, WLGOs was honored a “Palmetto Gold School” award by the Education Oversight Committee, as shown in chart 7.1-3.

Chart 7.1-3 Annual School Report Card

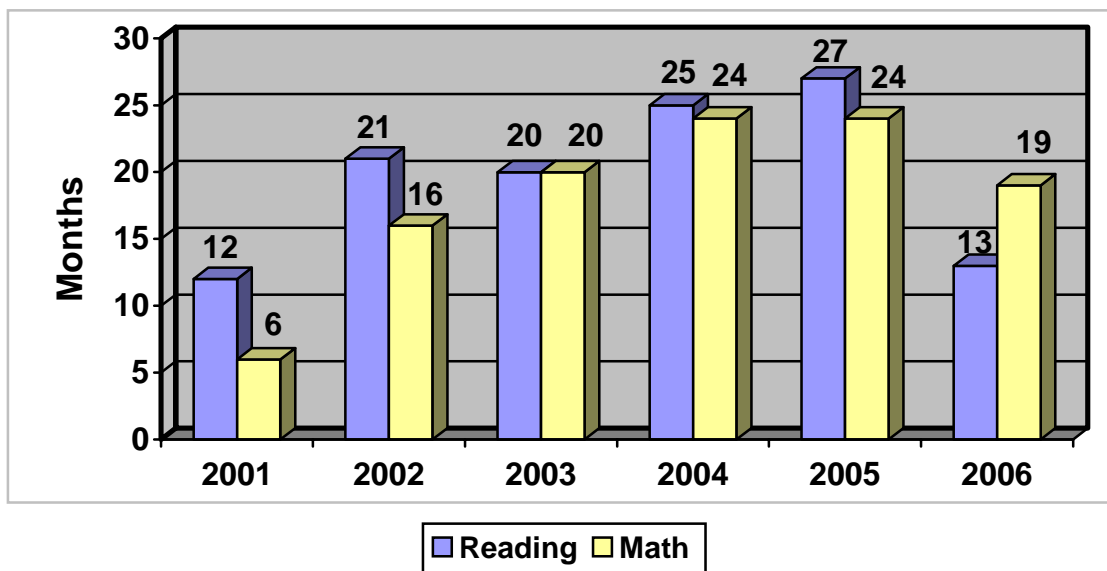
Education Accountability Act State Report Card Data – Palmetto Gold School		
Description	2004-2005	2005-2006
Absolute Rating	Excellent	Excellent

The math and reading TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) is administered to our students during the first week of attendance for that cycle to determine the student’s grade level. Once grade level determination has been established, the curriculum is individually tailored to assist

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each student in successfully passing the GED examination and improving their math and reading skills. The students are then re-tested during the last several weeks of attendance to measure their improvement in these skills. Graph 7.1-4 represents the TABE improvements for WLGO students since 2001.

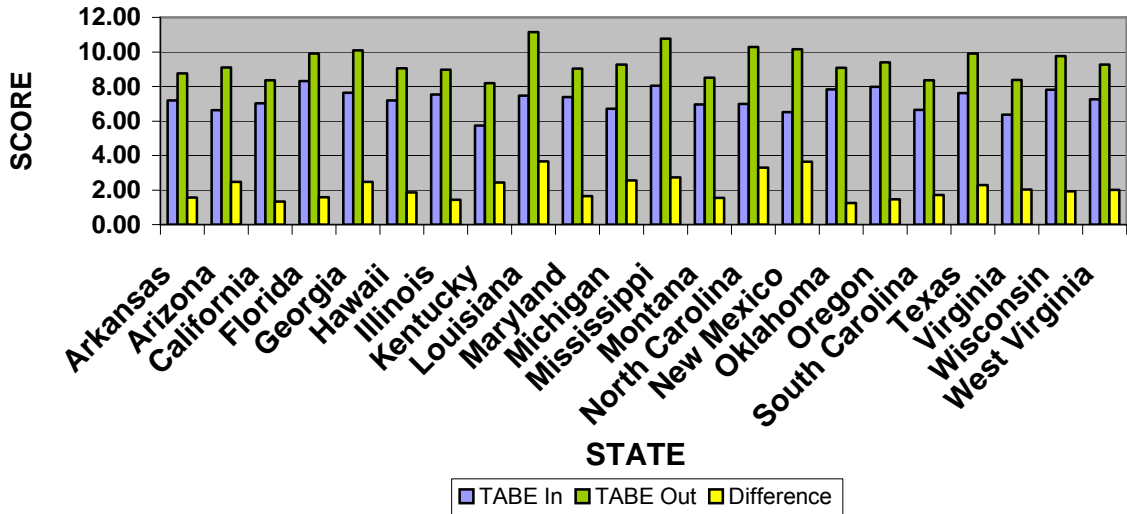
**Chart 7.1-4
WLGO Student TABE Gains**



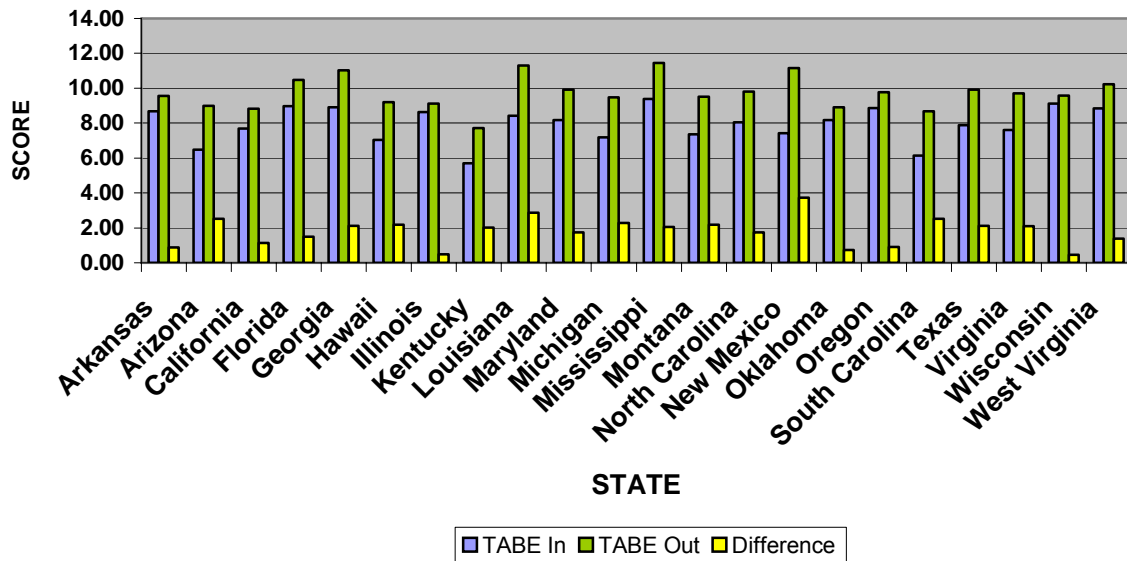
The TABE graphs below (Graphs 7.1-5 and 7.1-6) make a comparison between most of the Youth Challenge Academies throughout the nation concerning the math and reading improvements accomplished by the students in these programs. However, in the absence of a national standard in the type of TABE test administered, when it is administered and how it is administered, the results indicated on these graphs cannot be used as absolute comparisons.

Some of the Youth Challenge Academies use the TABE test score as an admission qualifier thereby only admitting the students that have a high probability of passing the GED into their program. We do not discriminate by test score for admission to our program since the GED is only a part of what we are trying to accomplish.

Graph 7.1-5 Math TABE Results by State

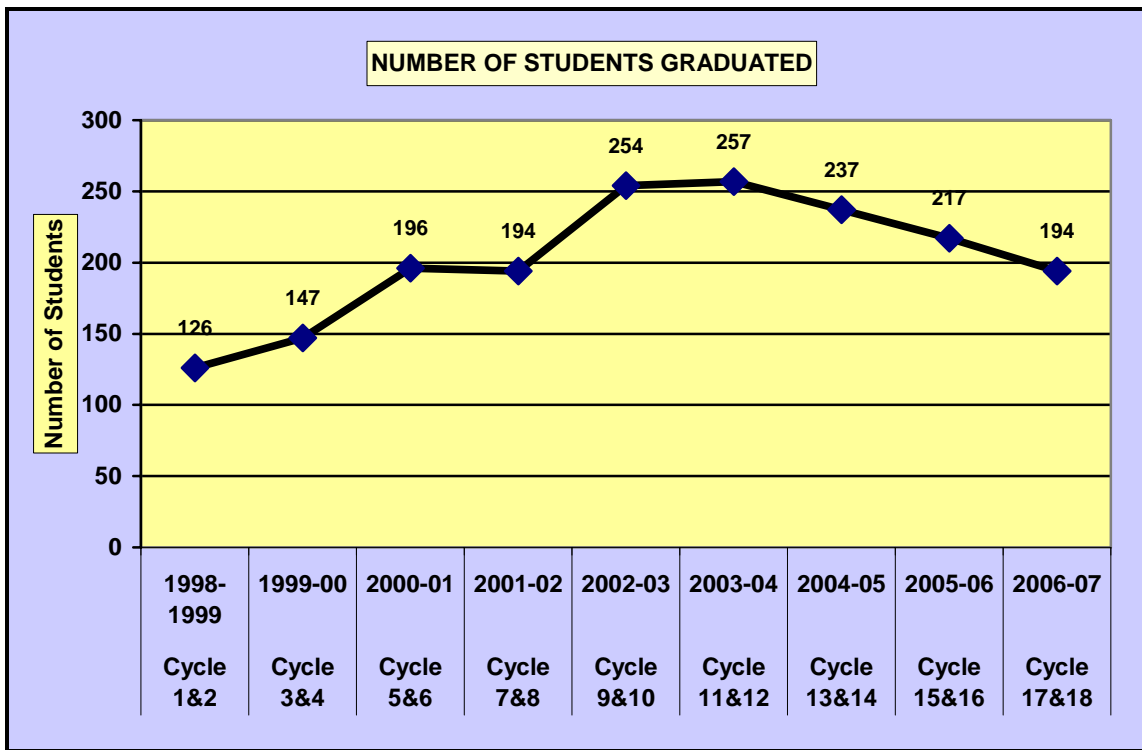


Graph 7.1-6 Reading TABE Results by State

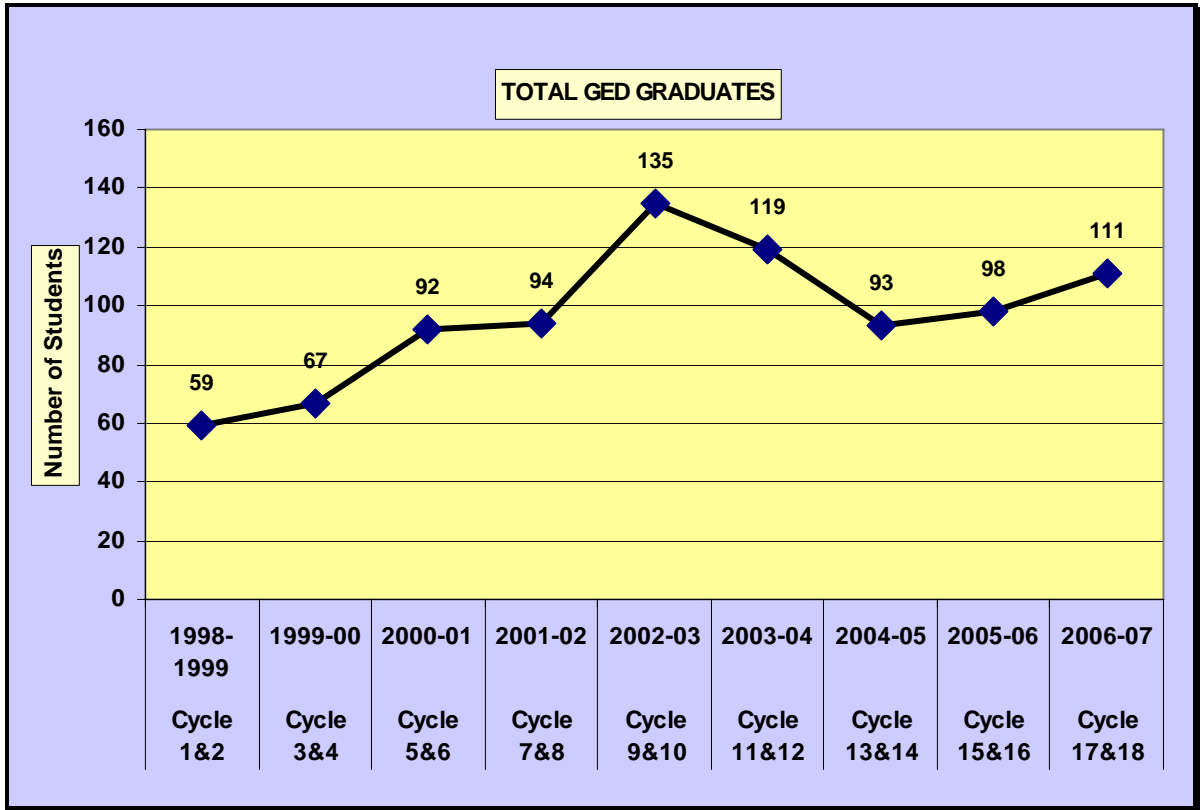


It is our wish that every student pass the GED, however, some of our students are so academically deficient that any improvements we can offer to them is valuable. Students completing the program at our school improve their academic skills as well as improving their attitudes, they become more disciplined, are drug free, physically fit and graduate with a life plan complete with attainable goals. All cadets graduating from the program will earn a Youth Challenge Academy certificate whether or not they successfully pass the GED. Graph 7.1-7 represents the number of students that have graduated from the Youth ChalleNGe Academy at the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity; a total of 1822 students since 1998. Graph 7.1-8 represents the number of students from 1998 until 2007 that have successfully completed the GED test and received GED certification. A total of 868 students have received their GED since 1998. The percentages of each cycle passing the GED are shown in Graph 7.1-9. The admissions profile (Table 7.1-10) compares all cycles since the partnership of WLGOS and the Youth ChalleNGe Academy in 1998.

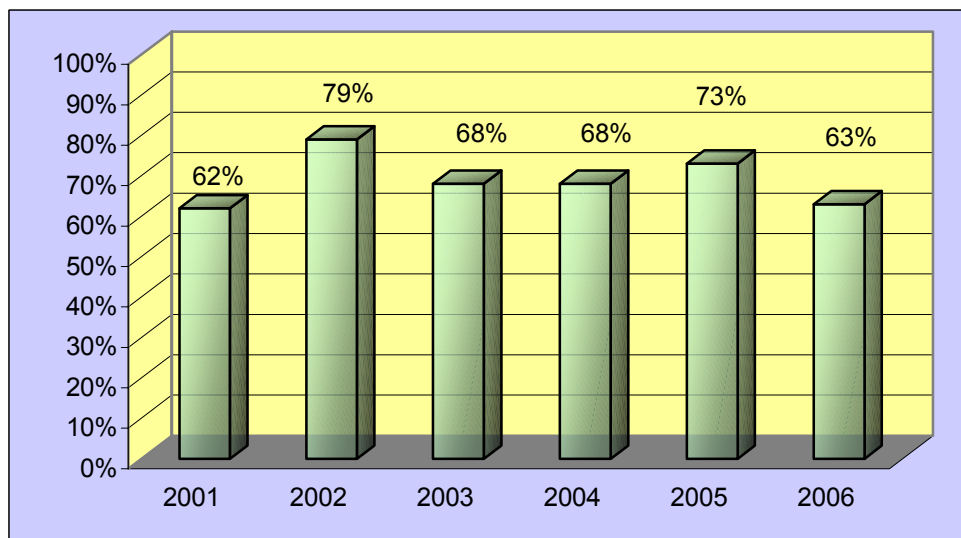
**Chart 7.1-7
Youth ChalleNGe Academy Graduates**



**Chart 7.1-8
GED Graduates**



**Graph 7.1-9
GED Percentages By Year**



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**Table 7.1-10
Admissions Profile**

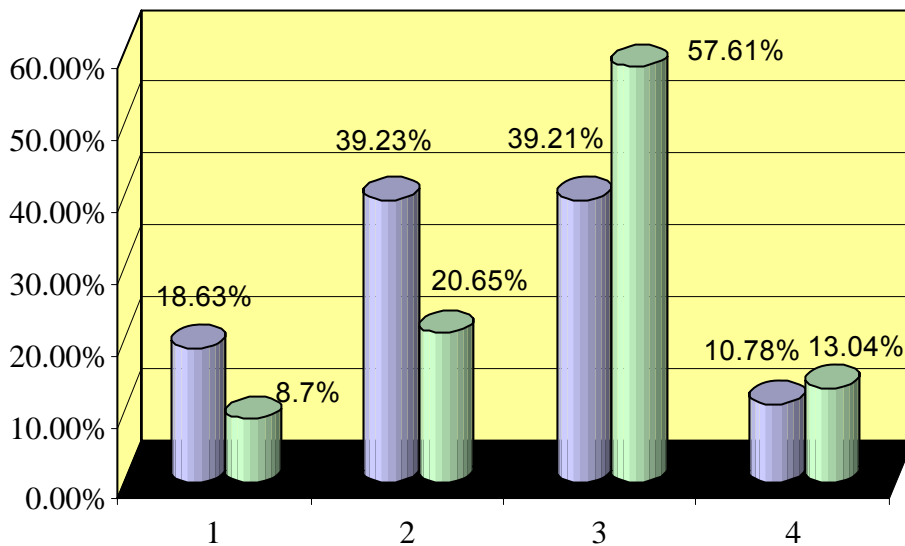
	Accepted	Enrolled on Registration	Enrolled 3 rd Week	Graduated	GED
Class 98-01/Cycle 1	150	126	94	61	
Class 98-02/Cycle 2	159	113	97	65	59
1&2 Total	309	239	191	126	59
Class 99-01/Cycle 3	153	107	93	62	
Class 99-02/Cycle 4	154	132	106	85	67
3&4 Total	307	239	199	147	67
Class 00-01/Cycle 5	233	186	151	110	
Class 00-02/Cycle 6	158	124	101	86	92
5&6 Total	391	310	252	196	92
Class 01-01/Cycle 7	173	148	125	100	
Class 01-02/Cycle 8	176	148	128	94	94
7&8 Total	349	296	253	194	94
Class 02-01/Cycle 9	230	200	173	136	71
Class 02-02/Cycle 10	219	182	162	118	64
9&10 Total	449	382	335	254	135
Class 03-01/Cycle 11	229	191	171	130	58
Class 03-02/Cycle 12	225	193	168	127	61
11&12 Total	454	384	339	257	119
Class 04-01/Cycle 13	226	189	165	132	49
Class 04-02/Cycle 14	199	175	146	105	44
13 & 14 Total	425	364	311	237	93
Class 05-01/Cycle 15	231	184	164	123	50
Class 05-02/Cycle 16	183	142	132	94	48
15 & 16 Total	413	326	296	217	98
Class 06-01/Cycle 17	187	145	141	102	47
Class 06-02/Cycle 18	193	164	141	92	64
17 & 18 Total	380	309	282	194	111
TOTALS	3477	2849	2458	1822	868

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Employment: The Opportunity School began a partnership with the Midlands Workforce Development Board in March 2006 to further enhance the students' employability skills.

The Midlands Workforce Development Board facilitates a youth program through the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) in which all students are provided the opportunity to take the WorkKeys Assessment free of charge. WorkKeys is a job skills assessment system developed by ACT, a national non-profit testing company. It is used across the nation to help individuals, educators and employers identify the skills needed to be successful on the job and to determine where additional training can help develop a higher caliber workforce. The WorkKeys assessments present workplace situations, reading materials, problems and messages for the employee to respond to and/or resolve. Since the partnership began, 355 students have received a Job Ready card through the WorkKeys assessments. The Job Ready card shows employers the kind of job a person is capable of performing and their skill level. The WorkKeys scores help to describe a person's strengths in terms of skills that are relevant to the workplace. Student participation during Cycle's 17 and 18 proved to be very successful. Graph 7.1-11.

Graph 7.1-11 : Cycle 17 and Cycle 18 Work Keys



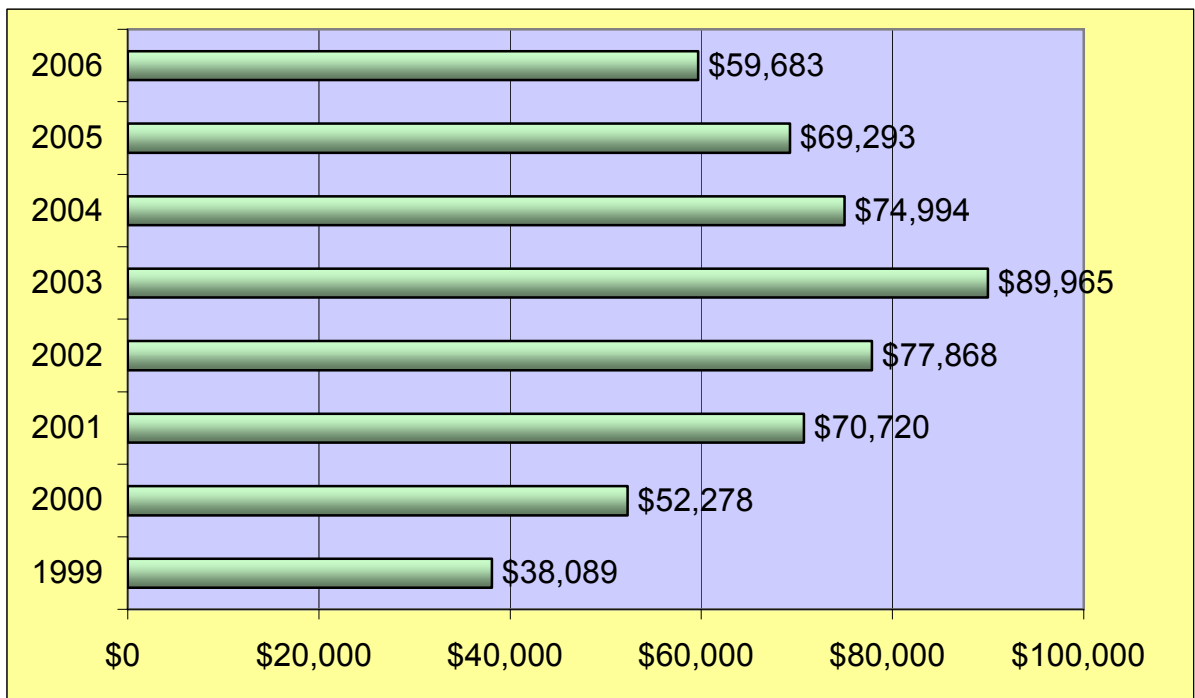
	CYCLE 17	CYCLE 18
1 NO CARD	18.63%	8.7%
2 BRONZE	39.23%	20.65%
3 SILVER	39.21%	57.61%
4 GOLD	10.78%	13.04%

A basic component of our program is for students to complete a minimum of forty hours of community service in order to graduate. During the year, students completed an average of 62 hours each of service learning and volunteerism. Our students participated in blood drives, various parades, Adopt-A-Highway, JROTC Color Guard and drill team meets, choir performances at various churches, and served as ambassadors by helping promote the Opportunity School to interested groups.

Our students completed a total of 11,589 hours of service learning during the last year. If translated into dollars, these hours multiplied by \$5.15, current minimum wage, would equate to \$59,683.35 of investment in our community. Since the program began in 1998, 1822 students have graduated, each of which completed an average of 60-community service hours; totaling 109,320 hours and over \$531,890. See Graph 7.1-12. Participation in these worthwhile organizations by our students provides them with an opportunity to experience the feeling of a job well done. This in turn fosters a sense of pride and accomplishment in what they have done and, hopefully, will translate to a lifetime of productive involvement in their respective communities.

Graph 7.1-12

Community Service Savings

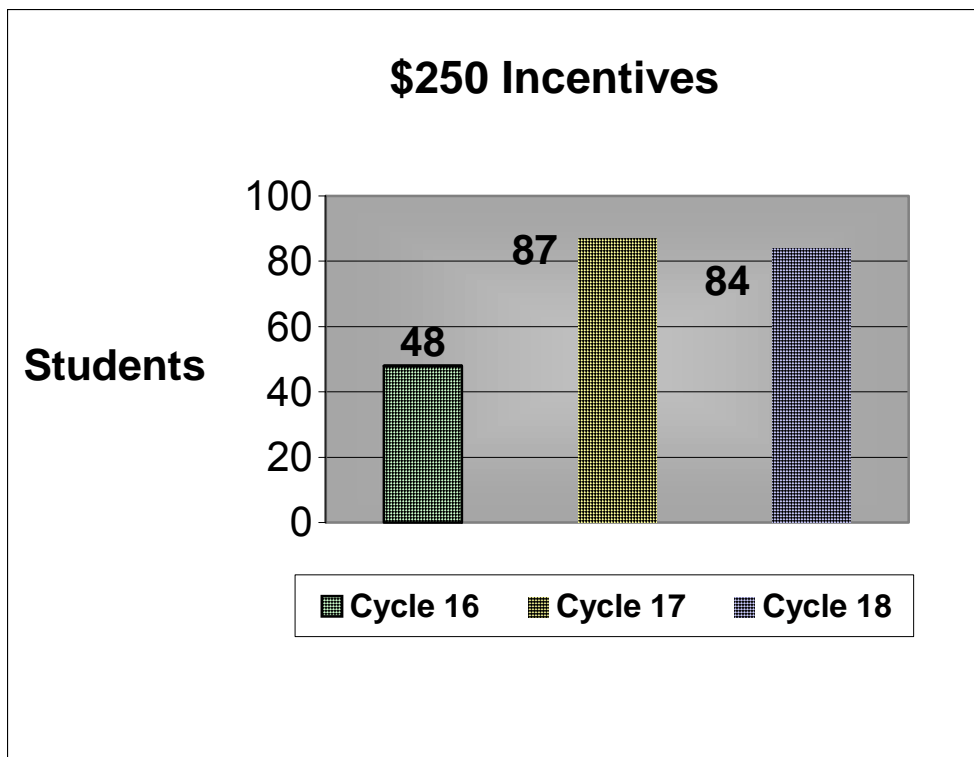


Students who pass the GED enter the Phase II Program and work more intensely with the Midlands Workforce Development Board Youth WIA program through job preparedness workshops, career exploration seminars, community speakers and tours of local community colleges and universities. Phase II assists students in exploring different career and educational avenues and helps them to make the best decision for themselves once they graduate from the Opportunity School.

The Youth WIA program encourages students to perform well academically through cash incentives. Some of the incentives students can earn are: \$150 for passing the GED, \$50 for improvement on the TABE test and \$50 for improvement on the WorkKeys Assessment. During Cycle 18, eighty-four students graduated with a GED, WorkKeys Job Ready card and a \$250 incentive check from the Youth WIA program for achieving their goals while at the Opportunity School. See Graph 7.1-13.

Graph 7.1-13

\$250 Incentives

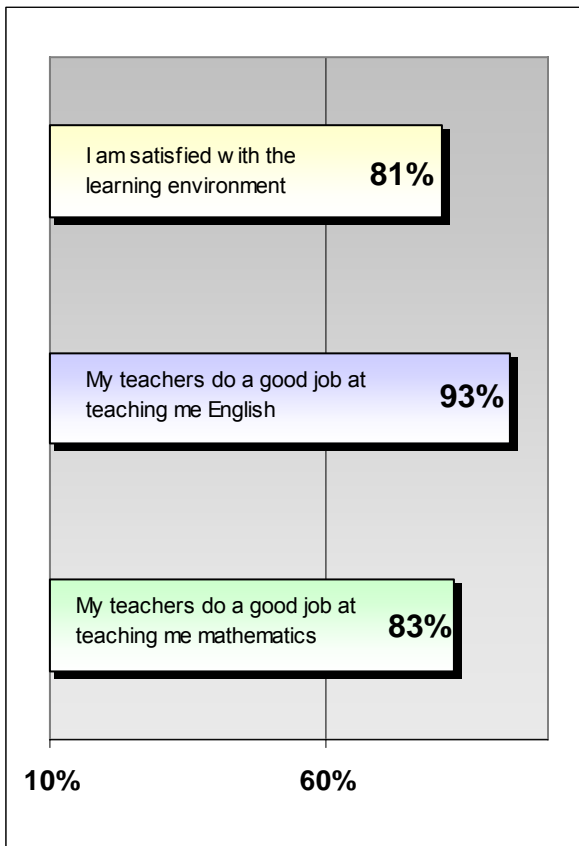


7.2 What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of customer satisfaction?

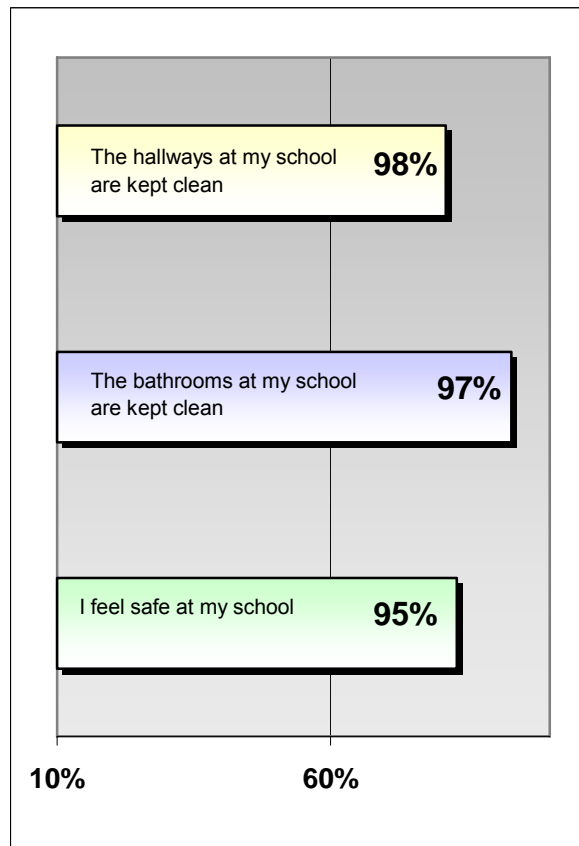
The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School conducts surveys and interviews annually to measure customer satisfaction in key areas as determined by the agency’s mission and Strategic Plan. The results of the surveys are used to analyze trends and measure customer satisfaction with the goal of continuous improvement to all applicable elements of ENLIGHTENED VISION.

The primary role of WLGOS is to serve as many of the state’s undereducated, at-risk students as possible during each school year. As this is our agency priority, satisfaction of our students is of the utmost importance. Upon graduation, an exit survey is given to all students. Graph 7.2-1 reflects student satisfaction with academics and residential satisfaction is reflected in Graph 7.2-2 .

**Graph 7.2-1
Student Satisfaction
Academics**



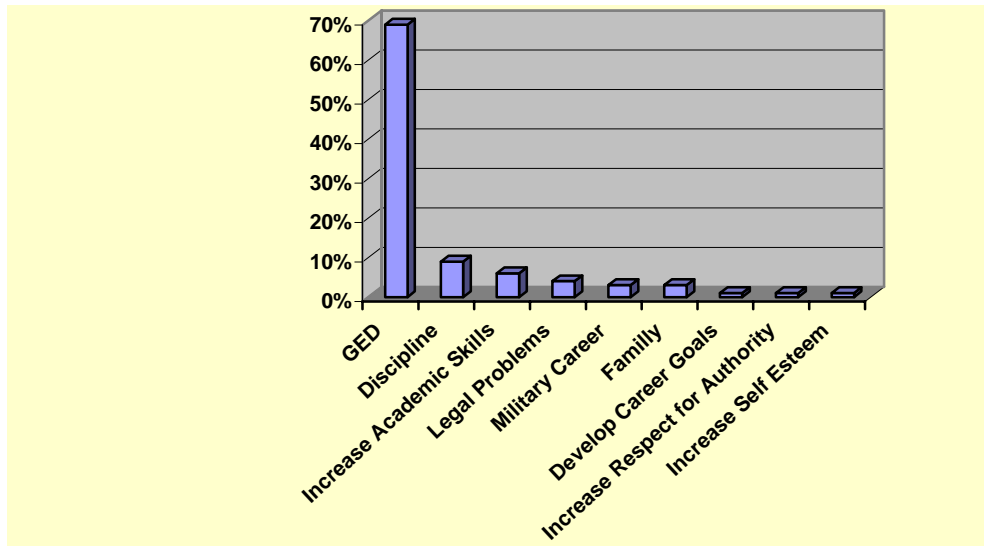
**Graph 7.2-2
Student Satisfaction
Residential**



Below are the results from a survey the students completed as to the reason or reasons why they enrolled into this program. The majority of the students enroll to obtain their GED and increase their academic skills. Graph 7.2-3 reflects the student's high satisfaction in meeting their academic goals while attending the Opportunity School whether or not they obtained their GED.

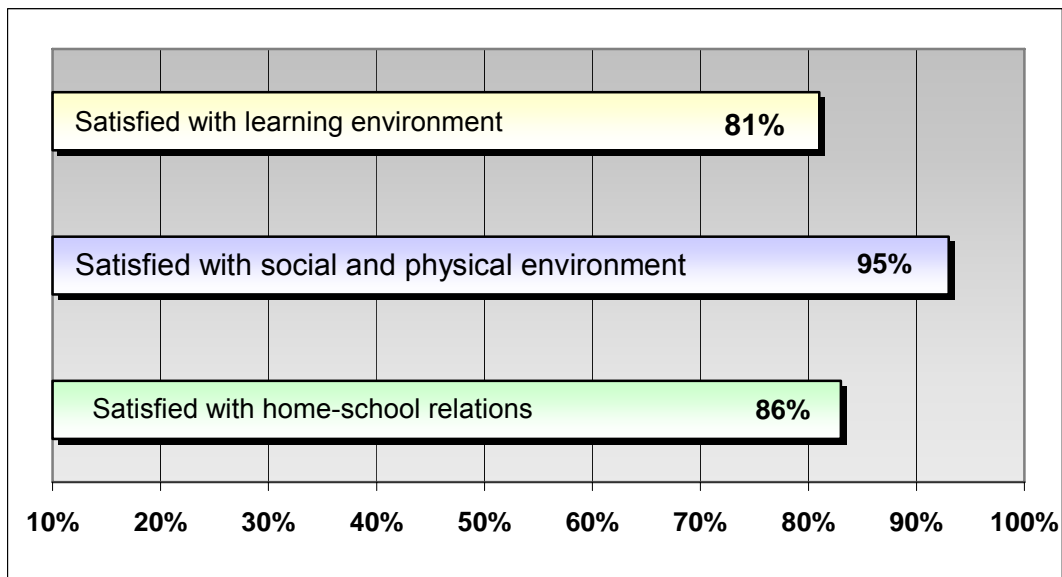
Graph 7.2-3 Enrollment Survey

WHY DID YOU ENROLL IN THIS PROGRAM?



Parents, considered a primary customer as well, are also surveyed to assess their satisfaction with the learning, social and physical environment of WLGOS. See graph 7.2-4

Graph 7.2-4 Parent Satisfaction

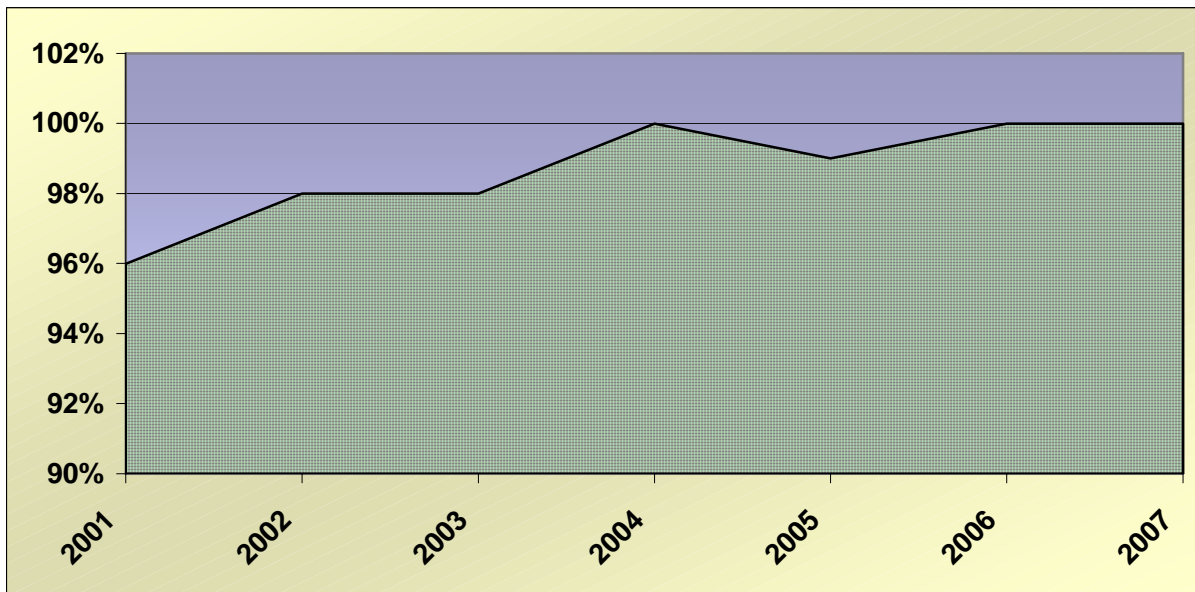


The Board of Trustees, considered a secondary customer, are surveyed every year as part of the Agency Head Performance Evaluation. The questions asked that focus on customer satisfaction include:

- **The agency head keeps the board informed about matters affecting the agency.**
- **The agency head communicates and demonstrates a clear understanding of the goals and mission of the agency.**
- **The agency head promoted efficiency and effectiveness.**
- **The quality of programs administered by the agency head equals or exceeds the needs of the community.**
- **The agency head practices a high degree of ethics in leading his or her agency.**
- **The agency head anticipates problem areas and makes decisions regarding the solutions.**

Since 2001, no result has been less than 96%. See graph 7.2-4.

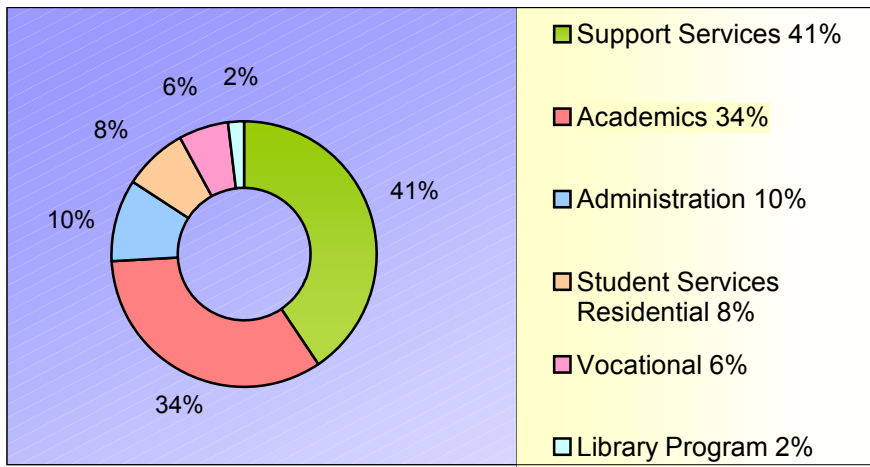
**Graph 7.2-4
Board of Trustee Satisfaction**



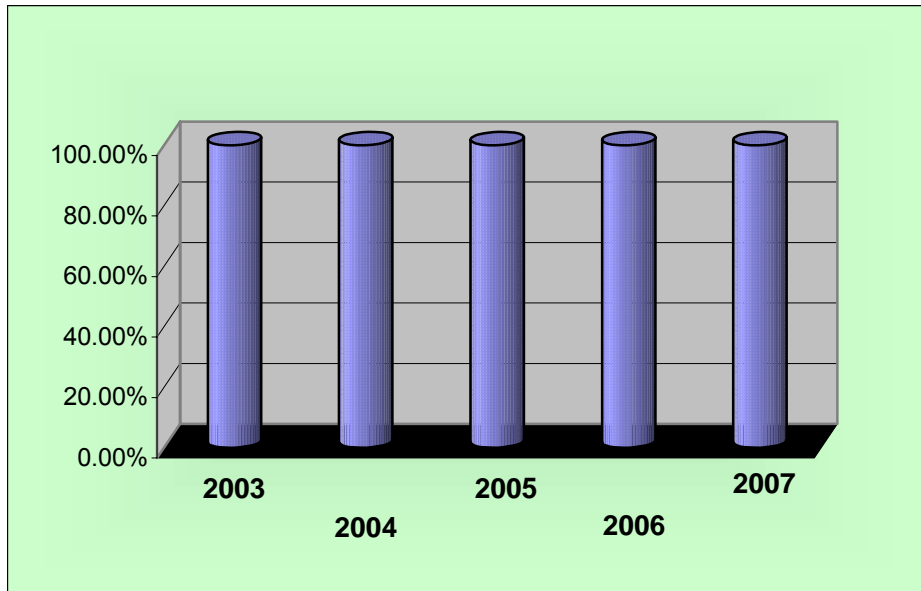
7.3 What are your performance levels for the key measures of financial performance, including measures of cost containment, as appropriate?

For several years the Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School has focused on developing a cost effective and efficient financial management culture that ensures state funds are maximized in order to provide services to students in an ever-changing fiscal environment. Chart 7.3-1 indicates the financial structure of WLGOS essential to acquiring and maintaining agency objectives. This continued process has led to our fifth consecutive fiscal audit of “no findings” (Chart 7.3-2) and a higher procurement certification that signifies our ability to acquire services through compliance and competitive bidding. The Opportunity School ranks second as the top agency reporting the lowest energy cost per square foot. See Chart 7.3-3. This is well below the average energy use per square foot for all state agencies. Limited travel expenditures resulted in the agency being ranked sixty-seven among all statewide agencies. We believe that it is incumbent upon us to seek cost efficiency and containment in order to better utilize our available budget that will, in turn, allow us to continue to meet our mission in the face of economic uncertainty and agency accountability.

**Chart 7.3-1
WLGOS Program Areas**



**Chart 7.3-2
Audits in Compliance**



**Chart 7.3-3
Energy Efficiency**

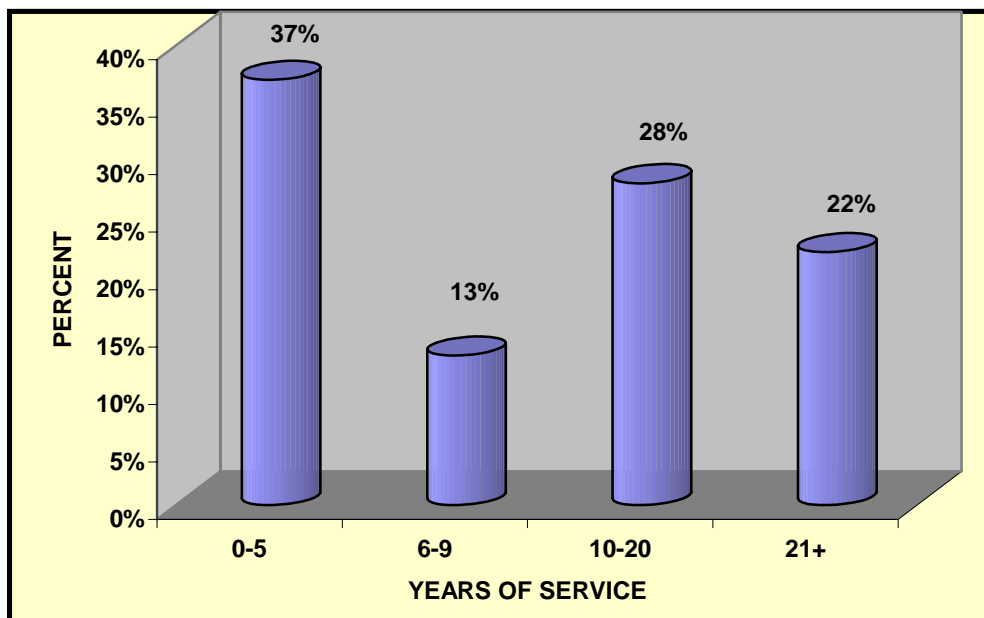
Agency	Square Foot	\$/ Sq. Foot
Military Department	1,219,896	0.83
Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School	176,964	1.03
Education	218,081	1.04
Health and Environmental Control	52,722	1.08
Agriculture	5,000	1.08

A PALMETTO GOLD SCHOOL

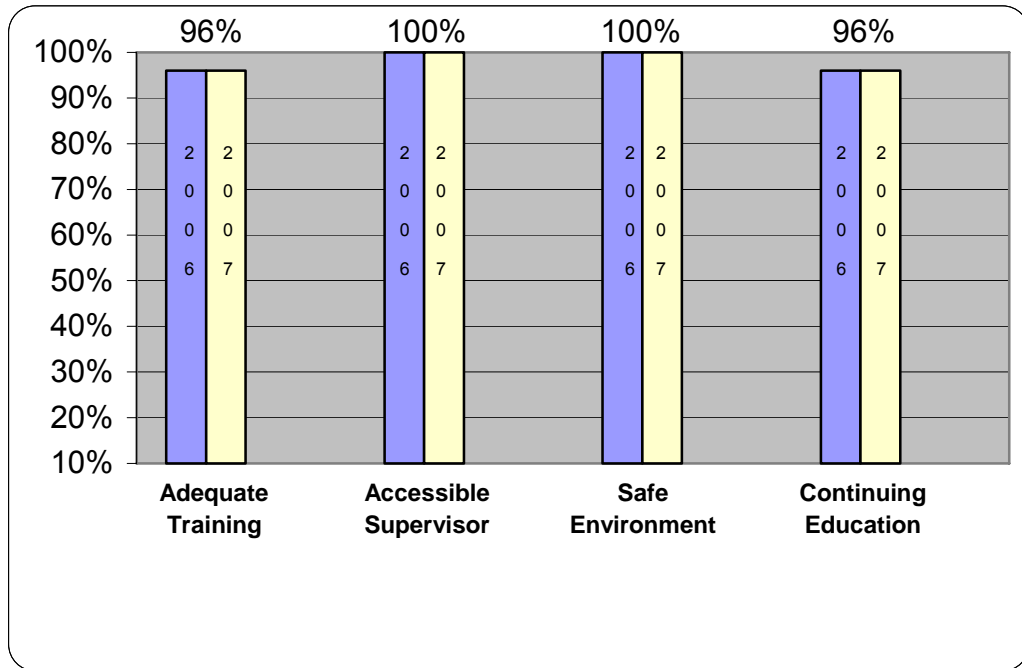
7.47.4 What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of Human Resource Results?

This was the second year the Opportunity School administered Employee Satisfaction Surveys to all employees. The results proved the statistics to be correct with one hundred percent of employees feel their supervisor is accessible when they need him or her. The director maintains an open door policy, as do the senior management, and any problems or concerns that may arise are handled immediately. The Employee Satisfaction Surveys also correlated to the high retention rate of employees. Currently there are sixty one employees at the Opportunity School with sixty-three percent of the workforce having six or more years of service. Twenty-two percent of the workforce has twenty-one or more years of service. See Graph 7.4-1. Most of the employee attrition is found in the residential component of the Opportunity School where salary is cited as the main reason for leaving. The private sector can command higher salaries in this area. Exit interviews are administered to all employees upon leaving the Opportunity School. Salary has been the overwhelming factor as a reason for leaving the employ of the Opportunity School. The results of the Employee Satisfaction Survey are shown in graph 7.4-2.

**Graph 7.4-1
Employee Years of Service**

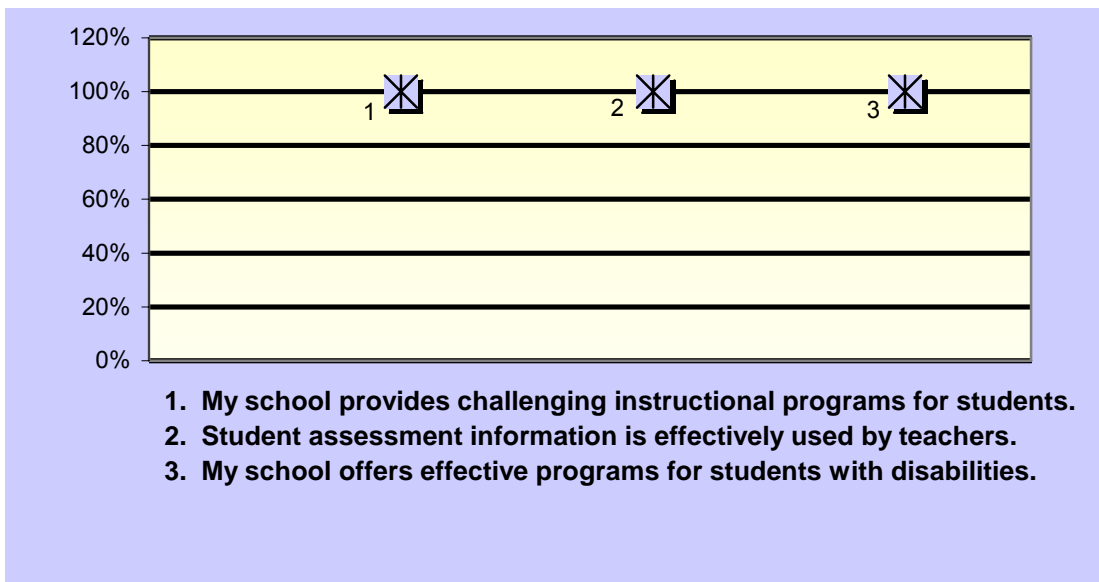


**Graph 7.4-2
Employee Survey**

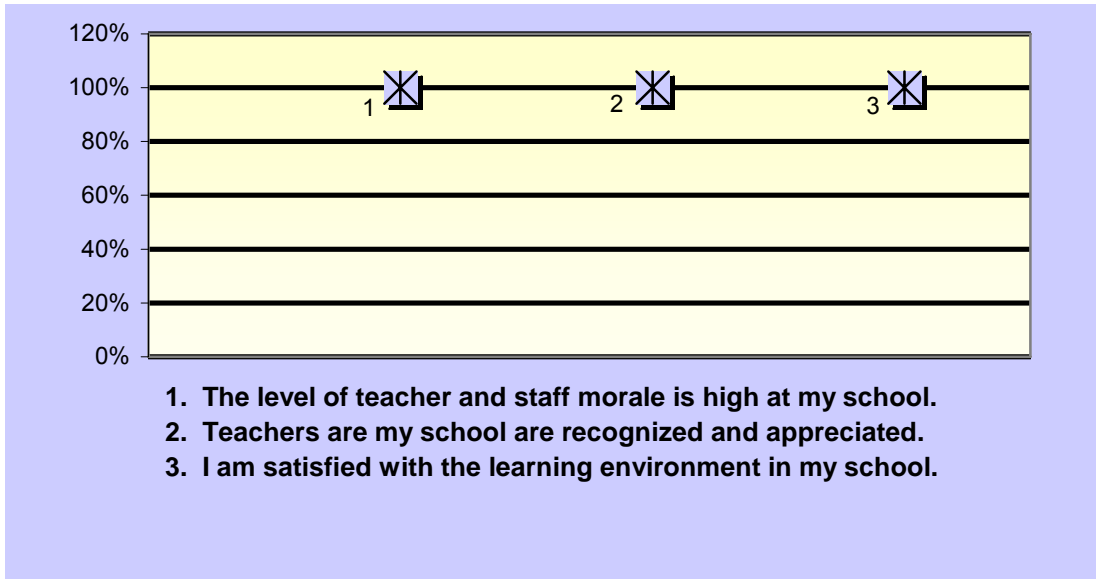


Each year the teachers of WLGOs are asked to respond to a survey from the Department of Education, Education Oversight Committee for the School Report Card. The following graph displays specific questions asked regarding the environment, academics and students at WLGOs. See graphs 7.4-3 and 7.4-4.

**Graph 7.4-3
Teacher Survey on Learning Environment**

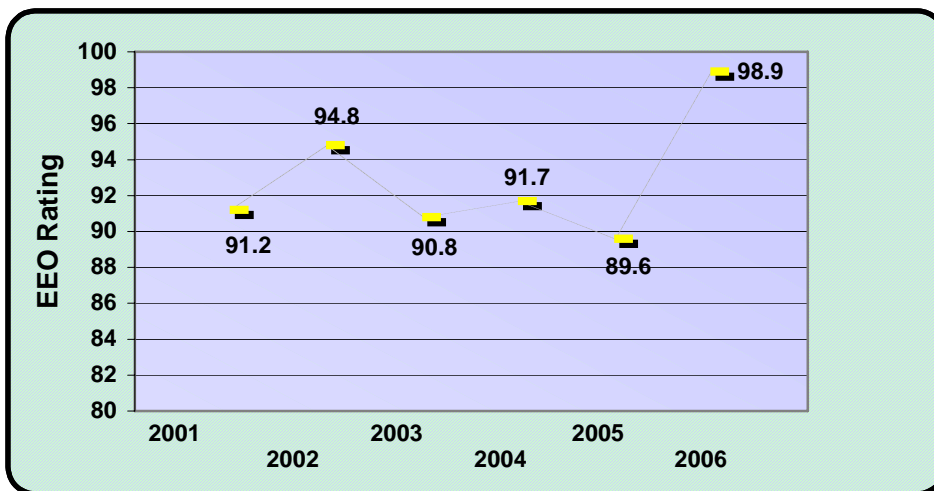


**Graph 7.4-4
Teacher Survey on Morale**



The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School was recognized in 2007 by the Human Affairs Commission for achieving a 98.9% EEO rating among all state agencies. This is the sixth consecutive year that WLGO has achieved 89% or better. See Graph 7.4-5. Based on data gathered by the South Carolina Human Resources Information System, WLGO ranked 19th out of 100 state agencies in employee attrition. The Opportunity School averaged 11.11%, which is substantially below the state mean of 16.12%.

**Graph 7.4-5
WLGO EEO Ratings**



A PALMETTO GOLD SCHOOL

7.4.1 What are your performance levels and trends for the key measures of regulatory/legal compliance and community support?

The Wil Lou Gray Opportunity School, as a residential agency, must meet compliance regulations for a host of requirements. As a preventative measure, all employees are provided an initial employee orientation that includes written materials and a video presentation. Emphasis is placed on education of regulatory matters for each component. Each department is responsible for ensuring that their employees follow established agency protocol and state laws governing our agency. Specific information pertaining to OSHA safety rules, campus safety, student and employee injury/accident reporting, hazardous communication for chemical handling, disaster preparedness, required fire drills, blood borne pathogen procedures and DHEC inspection of the food service operation are constantly updated and disseminated to the appropriate department(s). The agency director and senior management staff provide follow-up for compliance assurance. SLED background checks are requested on all new hires.