



Eighth graders Walter and Diana illustrate that Excel Academy classes inspire 100 percent class participation. This year's eighth grade class received top marks on the 2008 MCAS examinations.

EXCEL STUDENTS TOP MA SCHOOL DISTRICT RATINGS

Excel Academy's current eighth grade students, who took the seventh grade MCAS exams last spring, ranked first in the state after achieving a perfect 100 percent Advanced/Proficient performance on the Spring 2008 English MCAS exam. Excel Academy's students are the first seventh grade class in Massachusetts to earn a perfect Advanced/Proficient rate since 2005. The students in this class achieved similarly remarkable results on the 2008 math MCAS exam, placing second out of 284 school districts with an 85 percent Advanced/Proficient rate.

All Excel Academy students surpassed their local and state peers at every single grade level on the English, math and science MCAS exams. Excel Academy students earned an overall 88 percent Advanced/Proficient rate on the English MCAS exam and 78 percent Advanced/Proficient rate on the math exam.

"Our MCAS results demonstrate that when you couple a rigorous academic program with a structured school environment, all students will achieve at the highest levels. Our students' success reflects the substantial investment that Excel Academy students, families, teachers and staff make in their education," said Ann Waterman Roy, Excel Academy's Executive Director.

The students in Excel Academy's eighth grade class of 2008, the vast majority of whom are now enrolled in college-preparatory high schools, also posted strong scores on the 2008 MCAS exams. Their math scores placed them second in the state, with 88 percent of students achieving Advanced or Proficient. This class also delivered on the English MCAS exam, with 93 percent of students earning an Advanced or Proficient score.

Excel Academy's current seventh graders, who took the sixth grade MCAS exams last spring, were ranked fifth in the state on the English exam and fifth in the state on the math exam. Excel Academy's current sixth graders, who took the fifth grade MCAS exams last spring, surpassed the Advanced/Proficient rates posted by the districts of Boston, Chelsea and the state-wide average.

"We believe that preparation for college begins in middle school, and our program is geared to ensuring that students are prepared to succeed at the next level. Our MCAS results illustrate the rapid progression students make when they are exposed to a challenging curriculum and receive high quality instruction from talented and dedicated teachers year after year," said Komal Bhasin, Excel Academy's Principal.

A NOTE FROM OUR LEADERS

"Success is focusing the full power of all you are on what you have a burning desire to achieve."¹ At Excel Academy, we firmly believe that all students can be successful if they work hard and stay focused on their goal of higher education. Our students' impressive MCAS results demonstrate the validity of our belief.

We are extremely proud of our students' academic success, and we attribute it directly to their dedication, day after day, to learning and growing as scholars and as members of their communities. Their success is also made possible by the high expectations, individualized support, and tireless commitment of their families and teachers.

Our students' burning desire to improve is relentless. After performing extremely well on the 2007 MCAS exams, students challenged themselves to surpass that success in 2008... and they did. This year, as they reflected on their incredible success, students (and members of the Excel Academy team) immediately began thinking about how to do even better next spring. After hearing that his class had ranked first in the state in English and second in the state in math, one current eighth grade student told his class, "That's great, but next year we're going to be first in math, too!"

In many ways, this spirit defines Excel Academy Charter School. Members of our school community strive for excellence at all times, in all areas. We celebrate successes, and are not content to rest on our laurels. We acknowledge our mistakes, and find ways to fix them. There is always room to improve; there are always new challenges to face. It is the constant opportunity to learn and grow that motivates us to pursue our goals. And it is this source of internal motivation that we teach our students to find for themselves, and tap into as they pursue their dreams.

Thank you for your continued support of our students' continuing quest for success.

Ann Waterman Roy
Executive Director

Komal Bhasin
Principal

¹ Wilfred Peterson



Ms. Martin facilitates teamwork and relationship building as she plays hopscotch with fifth grade students.

BUILDING CHARACTER ONE VIRTUE AT A TIME

Academic rigor defines Excel Academy's classes, and building strong student character underpins all of our efforts to prepare students for success in high school, college and beyond. This fall, under the leadership of our Dean of Students, Mr. Christopher Habetler, Excel Academy launched a new Character Education initiative.

Each month, one virtue is the subject of multiple discussions in Community Circle, homeroom and Life Skills classes. September's virtue was Teamwork; one Community Circle lesson introduced students to aspects of Indian culture and then featured discussion about other types of cultures, such as Red Sox or Excel Academy culture. As they learned a Bhangra dance and put on bindis, Excel students reflected on how to integrate elements of different cultures to create a more dynamic, inclusive Excel Academy team.

"I've really enjoyed our discussions on differences and what we have in common," said Adrianna, a sixth grade student. "I've learned lots of interesting facts about my classmates and I've shared things about my heritage and what I like to do, too. We work better as a team when know things about each other."

A GLIMPSE OF THE FUTURE

Every member of the Excel Academy Charter School community knows that our students' destination is higher education. Beginning in the fifth grade, Excel Academy students are introduced to the educational opportunities that await them if they work hard every day. On September 16th, Excel Academy's fifth, sixth and seventh grade classes explored the possibilities firsthand, visiting Brimmer and May School, Pingree School and Noble & Greenough School.

"We speak to our students about Excel Academy being a college-preparatory middle school and drive home the importance of moving on to a college-preparatory high school. Setting foot on the campuses of these schools makes the dream tangible for our students; they return to Excel reinvigorated and reinvested in their futures," states Excel's Principal, Ms. Komal Bhasin.

Excel Academy students affirm Ms. Bhasin's observation. "It was awesome!" reported Xavier, a fifth grade student. "I loved how the teachers and the students got along and how many activities they had. I'm going to work hard so I can go to Brimmer and May or a school just like it."



Sixth grade students pose for a picture following a tour of the Pingree School in South Hamilton, MA. Students explored the campus and learned about Pingree's culture, curriculum and enrichment opportunities.



Seventh grade students face off in a "how well do you know your classmates" competition in Community Circle.

OUR COMMUNITY OF SUPPORTERS

At Excel Academy, we encourage every member of the school community to share his or her unique talents, background and energy with the group. When every person on the team contributes, we learn about each other and ourselves. Our community of supporters is just as diverse, possessing a number of skills, professional and personal experiences and motivations. Whether serving as a mentor, tutor, volunteer or friend, your contributions enable us to deliver a top college-preparatory education to our students.

We are hopeful that you will come and share of yourself and celebrate our students' success at our third annual Evening to Excel event:

Thursday, November 6th from 6:30pm-10pm
Foundation Lounge (at Hotel Commonwealth)
500 Commonwealth Avenue, Kenmore Square

Tickets are \$25 in advance/\$30 at the door. Visit <http://www.excelacademy.org/get-donors.html> to purchase your tickets online.

All members of the Excel Academy Charter School community are also invited to visit the school and see how our students express their commitment to higher education on a daily basis. If you would like to schedule a tour of Excel Academy, please contact Audra Peek, Director of Resource Development, at apeek@excelacademy.org or 617.561.1371.

If you are interesting in a making a gift to our Annual Fund, please visit www.excelacademy.org or mail your gift to:

Friends of Excel Academy, Inc.
P.O. Box 285268
East Boston, MA 02228

We appreciate your support of Excel Academy!

Established in 2003, Excel Academy Charter School currently serves 211 fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students from East Boston, Chelsea and surrounding cities. The school's mission is to prepare middle school students to succeed in high school and college, apply their learning to solve relevant problems and engage productively in their communities.

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