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PRESS RELEASE

**EXCEL ACADEMY OUTPERFORMS OVER 90% OF MA SCHOOL DISTRICTS ON 2006 MCAS**  
*Consistently scoring higher than students across state, Excel students achieve dramatic academic success*

October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2006. East Boston, MA. Students in Excel Academy Charter School’s first 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduating class outperformed students from nearly every district in the state, scoring in the top 9% statewide on the 2006 English MCAS exam and in the top 6% statewide on the 2006 math MCAS exam.<sup>1</sup> With a majority (67%) of Latino students, Excel Academy posted a 100% passing rate on both the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade English MCAS exams – one of only 10 districts across the state to achieve such success.

Excel Academy is a public, charter, middle school that has been in operation since September of 2003. During the 2005-06 school year, the school served 170 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students from East Boston, Chelsea and other neighboring communities, all of whom were admitted through a public lottery. Sixty-seven percent of students are Latino and 71% qualify for the federal free and reduced price lunch program.

“Our MCAS results are a testament to the fact that every student – regardless of ethnicity or socio-economic status – can achieve the highest levels of academic success if they are consistently held to the highest expectations,” states Yutaka Tamura, Excel’s Founder and Executive Director. “We are particularly pleased that our students achieved such tremendous success in what was only the third year of the school’s existence.”

Excel Academy’s 8<sup>th</sup> graders performed at high levels on the 2006 English MCAS. The school posted:

- The **highest** Advanced/Proficient rate (94%) of any school in the state with a Latino student majority.
- A **higher** Advanced/Proficient rate (94%) than students from all but 24 of 277 school districts in the entire state, placing Excel in the top 9% statewide.
- A **higher** Advanced/Proficient rate (94%) than the districts of Boston (54%) and Chelsea (43%), from where Excel draws the majority of its students, as well as a **higher** rate than suburban districts such as Newton (90%) and Weston (89%).
- A **100% passing rate** – one of only 23 districts with a perfect passing rate.

<sup>1</sup> Based on Advanced and Proficient rates.

Excel Academy's 8<sup>th</sup> graders performed at high levels on the 2006 math MCAS. The school posted:

- The **highest** Advanced/Proficient rate (72%) of any school in the state with a Latino student majority.
- A **higher** Advanced/Proficient rate (72%) than students from all but 16 of 277 school districts in the entire state, placing Excel in the top 6% statewide.
- A **higher** Advanced/Proficient rate (72%) than the districts of Boston (23%) and Chelsea (20%), from where Excel draws the majority of its students, as well as a **higher** rate than suburban districts such as Newton (65%) and Weston (66%).
- A **97% passing rate** – one of only 6 districts statewide to achieve this level of success.

Excel Academy's 8<sup>th</sup> graders performed at high levels on the 8<sup>th</sup> grade science MCAS. The school posted:

- A **higher** passing rate (86%) rate than the districts of Boston (42%) and Chelsea (53%), from where Excel draws the majority of its students, as well as a **higher** rate than the state average (75%).

Like their 8<sup>th</sup> grade peers, Excel Academy's 7<sup>th</sup> grade students performed at **high** levels on the 7<sup>th</sup> grade English MCAS. The school posted:

- A **higher** Advanced/Proficient rate (71%) than the districts of Boston (43%) and Chelsea (33%), from where Excel draws the majority of its students, as well as a **higher** rate than the state average (65%).
- A **100% passing rate** – one of only 24 districts in the state with a perfect passing rate.

Excel Academy's 7<sup>th</sup> grade students performed at high levels on the 7<sup>th</sup> grade math MCAS. The school posted:

- A **higher** Advanced/Proficient rate (47%) than the districts of Boston (22%) and Chelsea (13%), from where Excel draws the majority of its students, and a **higher** rate than the state average (40%).
- A **higher** passing rate (92%) than students from all but 34 of 281 school districts<sup>2</sup> in the entire state, placing Excel in the top 12% statewide.

“Our MCAS results confirm that our teachers – through their relentless commitment to our students’ success – have prepared our graduates to face the demands of the very best, college-preparatory high schools to which they have transitioned this year,” adds Scott Given, Excel’s Principal. “They have taken with them the skills they demonstrated on the MCAS exams to the next, critical stage of their journey to college.”

For the 2006-07 school year, Excel Academy is serving sixth, seventh and eighth graders and will begin serving fifth grade students in 2007-08. 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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<sup>2</sup> There were 281 school districts that participated in the 7<sup>th</sup> grade MCAS as opposed to the 277 school districts that participated in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade MCAS.